

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 39

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 39

1st Session
44th Parliament

Thursday
20 November 2025

1^{re} session
44^e législature

Jeudi
20 novembre 2025

Speaker: Honourable Donna Skelly
Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

<https://www.ola.org/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

Hansard Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Journal des débats et services linguistiques
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-2987

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 20 November 2025 / Jeudi 20 novembre 2025

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025, Bill 60, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 visant à lutter contre les retards et à construire plus rapidement, projet de loi 60, M. Flack

Hon. Zee Hamid	2349
MPP Catherine McKenney	2349
Ms. Lee Fairclough	2349
Mr. Matthew Rae	2352
Mme France Gélinas	2354
Mr. Adil Shamji	2355
Hon. Graydon Smith	2357
Third reading debate deemed adjourned	2358

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Community safety town hall

MPP Silvia Gualtieri	2358
----------------------------	------

Public safety

Mr. Jeff Burch	2359
----------------------	------

Holiday messages

Mr. Adil Shamji	2359
-----------------------	------

Water services

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy	2359
---------------------------------	------

Indigenous rights

Mr. Sol Mamakwa	2359
-----------------------	------

Matthew Galliford

Mr. Joseph Racinsky	2360
---------------------------	------

Remembrance Day

Mr. Tom Rakocevic	2360
-------------------------	------

Government investments

Mr. Andrew Dowie	2360
------------------------	------

Tragedy in Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound

MPP Paul Vickers	2360
------------------------	------

Trans Day of Remembrance

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	2361
Mr. Ric Bresee	2361
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	2362
MPP Tyler Watt	2362
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	2363

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	2363
Mr. Guy Bourgouin	2363

Ms. Laura Smith	2364
Hon. Graydon Smith	2364
Ms. Marit Stiles	2364
MPP Billy Denault	2364
M. Stéphane Sarrazin	2364
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	2364
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo	2364
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon	2364
Mr. Chris Glover	2364
Ms. Jess Dixon	2364
Ms. Lee Fairclough	2364

House sittings

Hon. Steve Clark	2364
------------------------	------

QUESTION PERIOD / PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles	2365
Hon. Nolan Quinn	2365
Hon. David Piccini	2365

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles	2365
MPP Mohamed Firin	2366
Hon. David Piccini	2366

Government accountability

Mr. John Fraser	2366
Hon. David Piccini	2367

Government accountability

Mr. Ted Hsu	2368
Hon. David Piccini	2368
Hon. Charmaine A. Williams	2368

Labour dispute

Mme France Gélinas	2368
Hon. Sylvia Jones	2368

Autism services

Mr. Jonathan Tsao	2369
Hon. Michael Parsa	2369

School boards

Mr. Matthew Rae	2369
Hon. Paul Calandra	2370

Supportive housing

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	2370
Hon. Graydon Smith	2370
Hon. Charmaine A. Williams	2371

Government accountability	
MPP Tyler Watt	2371
Hon. Nolan Quinn	2371
Indigenous economic development	
Mr. Logan Kanapathi	2372
Hon. Greg Rickford	2372
Remembrance Day	
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	2372
Hon. Paul Calandra	2372
Government accountability	
Ms. Stephanie Bowman	2373
Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy	2373
Public safety	
Mr. Aris Babikian	2374
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo	2374
Housing	
MPP Catherine McKenney	2374
Hon. Graydon Smith	2374
Trans Day of Remembrance	
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	2375
Business of the House	
Hon. Steve Clark	2375
Notices of dissatisfaction	
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	2375
Royal assent / Sanction royale	
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	2375

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

MPP Jamie West	2375
MPP Lisa Gretzky	2375
Mr. Terence Kernaghan	2375

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DE COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Government Agencies	
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	2375
Report deemed adopted	2375
Standing Committee on Social Policy	
Mr. Brian Riddell	2375
Report deemed received	2375
Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy	
Hon. Laurie Scott	2376
Report deemed received	2376
Standing Committee on the Interior	
Mr. Aris Babikian	2376
Report deemed received	2376

Standing Committee on Justice Policy	
Mr. Lorne Coe	2376
Report deemed received	2376
Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs	
Hon. Ernie Hardeman	2376
Report deemed received	2376

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS / DÉPÔT DE PROJETS DE LOI ÉMANANT DU GOUVERNEMENT

Buy Ontario Act, 2025, Bill 72, Mr. Crawford / Loi de 2025 visant à encourager à acheter ontarien, projet de loi 72, M. Crawford	
First reading agreed to	2376
Hon. Stephen Crawford	2376

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Protecting Ontario from Urban Wildfires Act, 2025, Bill 73, Ms. Bell; MPP Gilmour; Mr. Tabuns; MPP Wong-Tam / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario contre les feux non maîtrisés en milieu urbain, projet de loi 73, Mme Bell; MPP Gilmour; M. Tabuns; MPP Wong-Tam	
First reading agreed to	2377
Mr. Peter Tabuns	2377
Pickering College Act, 2025, Bill Pr19, Mme Gallagher Murphy	
First reading agreed to	2377
Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry) Amendment Act (Information Disclosure), 2025, Bill 74, Mr. Blais; Mr. Cerjanec; Mme Collard; Mr. Tsao / Loi de 2025 modifiant la Loi Christopher sur le registre des délinquants sexuels (divulgaration de renseignements), projet de loi 74, M. Blais; M. Cerjanec; Mme Collard; M. Tsao	
First reading agreed to	2377
Mr. Stephen Blais	2377
Jarm Holdings Investments Ltd. Act, 2025, Bill Pr14, Mme Gallagher Murphy	
First reading agreed to	2377
Holy Trinity Restaurant Inc. Act, 2025, Bill Pr9, Mr. Blais	
First reading agreed to	2377
Faris Team Mortgage Brokerage Corp. Act, 2025, Bill Pr13, Mme Gallagher Murphy	
First reading agreed to	2377

MOTIONS

Committee sittings

Hon. Steve Clark	2377
Motion agreed to	2377

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Hospital parking fees

MPP Wayne Gates	2377
-----------------------	------

Environmental protection

Mr. Mike Schreiner	2378
--------------------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Time allocation

Hon. Steve Clark	2378
Mr. John Vanthof	2379
Mr. Jonathan Tsao	2383
MPP Wayne Gates	2385
Mr. John Fraser	2386
Mr. Rob Cerjanec	2388
Vote deferred	2390

Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025, Bill 60, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 visant à lutter contre les retards et à construire plus rapidement, projet de loi 60, M. Flack

Hon. Graydon Smith	2390
Mr. Jeff Burch	2391

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon	2392
Mr. Mike Schreiner	2392
MPP Lisa Gretzky	2394
Mr. Terence Kernaghan	2395
Ms. Jessica Bell	2396
Third reading vote deferred	2397

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Ontario Artificial Intelligence, Talent and Innovation Strategy Act, 2025, Bill 61, Mr. Cerjanec / Loi de 2025 sur la stratégie ontarienne pour favoriser le talent et l'innovation dans le domaine de l'intelligence artificielle, projet de loi 61, M. Cerjanec

Mr. Rob Cerjanec	2397
Mr. Chris Glover	2398
MPP Stephanie Smyth	2400
Ms. Stephanie Bowman	2401
Mr. Dave Smith	2402
Mr. Rob Cerjanec	2404
Second reading vote deferred	2404

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 20 November 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 20 novembre 2025

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Let us pray.
Prayers / Prières.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIGHTING DELAYS, BUILDING FASTER ACT, 2025

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

MPP Hamid, on behalf of Mr. Flack, moved third 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): I recognize the minister.

Hon. Zee Hamid: Thank you, Speaker. I look forward to the debate. I'm going to be sharing my time with the member from Perth-Wellington.

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

MPP Catherine McKenney: Bill 60: If there was ever a bill that should not pass into law, this is one of them. It should not pass into law today—it should never. This bill is nothing more than a cruel scapegoating exercise disguised as housing policy, and it is this government admitting failure by attacking victims of that failure. It is this government pointing at renters—34% of Ontarians—saying, “You are the reason that we can't build homes.”

Let's go through the failure because the numbers actually don't lie. Just days ago, CMHC released the latest housing start figures for Ontario. This government's target is 150,000 new homes. The reality, through October this year: 49,678. That's less than one third of their goal. They're 100,000 homes short, with two months left in the year.

And what's this government's response? Blame the people in this province who rent. Attack tenants. Attack the protections that they have and make their evictions even faster and easier. So we can't build enough homes, but we're going to push more people out of homes. It's incredulous. And the finance minister called the 1.5 million homes, by 2031 now, a soft target—soft as in we're never really going to meet it.

Let me be crystal clear about what Bill 60 actually does—and people out there know it: It cuts tenant notice

periods from 14 to seven days before a landlord can apply for eviction—cuts it in half; it slashes their appeal times from 30 days to 15 to challenge an unfair LTB decision—two weeks to find legal help, file paperwork and mount a defence before you lose your home; it silences tenants in non-payment hearings; it eliminates compensation requirements when corporate landlords claim they need that unit.

And the Attorney General said the quiet part out loud: They want to end evergreen month-to-month leases. They want corporate landlords to adjust tenancy arrangements based on market conditions. Market conditions is not housing policy. It is stock market policy. Do you not understand what housing does for people?

This government set a target of 1.5 million homes by 2031, and they are failing spectacularly. And now they claim that tenant protections are causing delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board. They claim these delays are discouraging investment in rental housing. But there is absolutely no data to support this—because if there was, we'd like to see it. Just bring it forward. Let us take a look. I've never seen a shred of evidence to support that kicking people out of their homes, that making tenant protections less will build more homes.

So do you know what this government does refuse to do? The right thing. And the right thing is legalizing fourplexes, ending exclusionary zoning, just like their expert said, and it is building non-market affordable housing. We used to do it in this province. We had no homelessness in this province. We stopped doing it, and homelessness has increased every single year, and it will continue to. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario has warned us. It will be 300,000 people in this province, that you represent, that this government represents, that will be homeless in a decade if we don't do something serious. And this is not serious. This is going to accelerate that number.

Speaker, I implore this government to pull back Bill 60 and to do the right thing: build the housing, protect renters and end homelessness. It is not complex. I've got the plan. I'll go over and I'll share it with you.

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

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'm pleased to rise in the chamber this morning to speak to Bill 60. Speaker, this bill includes a lot of details that in the time that I've got available will be pretty difficult to cover, actually.

It's important to take a moment here, actually. I want to put this on the record: Almost all the legislation that will have significant impacts on the lives of Ontarians that are being jammed through time allocation, without any scrutiny of committee hearings—this is not normal. Yes, this was introduced less than a month ago, and here we are. It

is following the route of so many bills in this Legislature put forward by the government: just pushed through without following the democratic process. We'd include a discussion at committee, opportunity for expert input and consultation and full debate. Here we are now, which means that the government has just decided to shorten debate and discussion. And do you know in this particular one—I think this is what struck me the most about this bill: This actually touches on 18 pieces of legislation. These are substantial things that actually require some thought. You would think that it would make sense to actually appreciate and respect the consideration at committee.

0910

But I also think it's important to note that the government released this bill and, within 72 hours, found themselves walking back details that would limit tenant rights. Boy, did I ever hear from constituents quickly that weekend right after it was released. I had a steady stream of people at the community events in my riding seeking me out to be sure I knew their opinions. Subsequently, the government removed that section—as my colleague would say, for now—but it's clear, as I continue to hear from constituents on that issue, that there's little trust that the government will do the right thing. I'll also come back to the Landlord and Tenant Board shortly.

The other thing I just wanted to note in this bill—and I look at everything that comes from the Minister of Housing with hope—is what was not included in this bill, which is a plan to address homelessness. Bill 28, the Homelessness Ends with Housing Act, which I continue to receive signed petitions coming from communities across Ontario advocating for—the most recent one was from St. Catharines. That bill was so basic. I think people are just looking to see it in legislation. It asks the government to set a strategy and goals to end homelessness, measure progress against them and use evidence-informed ways, like housing-first approaches, that have worked in jurisdictions around the world. All the members of the Conservative caucus voted against that bill, and I thought just maybe we might have some ideas reappear in this huge Bill 60 from the housing minister, but it does not include anything on that plan. In fact, in many ways, putting rents at risk of increases only exacerbates the issue.

Now, as the critic for hospitals, mental health, addictions and homelessness, I have shared many times in this Legislature the need for action in this area. There are rising numbers relying on food banks, faced with the choice of paying their rent or putting food on the table; people with university and college degrees unemployed as the economy becomes more precarious—we know 60% of people who rely on food banks to feed themselves and their families are actually recent university and college grads—and the fact is that three out of five people—three out of five everyday people—are worried about losing their housing if their job situation were to change.

We see the symptoms of increased homelessness in our hospitals and our emergency departments—and this could have been an opportunity to include a strategy to get upstream. That's what I hear from my constituents: How

are we actually going to get upstream of this issue, prevent it, support those today who are living rough but also prevent further homelessness?

I wish that the government—and this is my request to my colleagues, even as you move to implement this bill: Could you please evaluate every housing policy with this lens: Will this help us reduce the chance that someone will lose their housing? Just have that as one of the other questions that you reflect on.

Affordability is a real concern, and it's on the minds of so many people, not just those at the margins—those losing jobs as plants are closing—and it's the government's job to ensure that the policies that are advanced, especially now, don't exacerbate the situation.

Now, I'm going to move on—because, again, there are so many pieces of legislation in this. There were two that were particularly relevant to my home riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and those are the two schedules related to transit-oriented communities and to the GO Transit Station Funding Act. In the short time I have available, I want to make some comments on these sections.

The government has proposed changes to transit-oriented communities, and I believe it's giving some relief to developers to not have to contribute to the public infrastructure, such as GO stations, until the time of occupancy, if I'm reading it correctly. They will establish an advisory committee to ensure that the agreements are finalized for the commitments to be made.

Now, in our riding, there has been a reliance on building GO stations this way; to date, it has not really worked. People will know that the Mimico GO station was an example of this, and now we've got the planned Park Lawn GO station, and really what this has done is it has left high-density communities without access to transit. In the case of the Mimico GO station, it has meant that an old station has not been redeveloped. People in this Legislature will know this; I've raised it before. It means that it doesn't even meet the accessibility standards. And if you arrive at the platform today, let's say travelling from Union Station, you will not be able to get down from the platform if you're in a wheelchair. Now, I need to give credit where it's due. The province has finally moved ahead on some of the work to do that. The planned timeline for that GO station to be accessible is 2030. But it comes back to how are we doing our planning of GO stations, how are we relying on these agreements with developers to do that.

Now, how many of you have visited the Humber Bay areas in Etobicoke–Lakeshore? Have any of you seen that? Do you know the area that I'm talking about? It's got lots of lots of condos. It's beautiful to go walk by the lake. And you do see it when you drive into the city when you're coming from the west. There's an important set of lands there that have been completely redeveloped since I moved into the area 25 years ago. There's a set of lands there in particular that went through a conversion from being used for commercial use to be used for residential use.

And in 2018, Metrolinx passed a motion that given all the density that was developing there, it met the bar that there should be a GO station in place at that Christie's site. The building of the GO station was then negotiated by this government as part of the land conversion. Basically, that was, I think, 2019 when some of those decisions were passed. And they've been trying to reach an agreement on how to build the GO station since, and nothing has started. Many of the towers and condominiums have gone up. It's a vibrant area. It's completely congested. And when you knock on any door down there during the election, you get only one question: When is the promised GO station going to get started? When are the shovels going to go in the ground?

I think it's wrapped up in the issues that this bill attempts to address. I'm not sure establishing an advisory committee is going to be sufficient. I'm not sure having developers contribute to cover costs at the time of occupancy is sufficient. Now, if the government is going to be quite willing to make sure that there's the full investment to see these things implemented in a timely way, perhaps there will be a model there. But I do think that developers should be contributing to the costs of infrastructure in our communities, and many municipalities are trying to negotiate that.

But I will say—and this relates to some other sections of this bill as well—the current theme for many is that the developers will reach an impasse with the city and their municipality, and then they go very quickly to the OLT, reverting back to original plans, ignoring what we were trying to get at in building out full communities, the visions that we've got locally. There's so many examples in our riding of this happening right now. In fact, the development has moved so quickly without the ability for the infrastructure to keep up, especially in the area of Park Lawn GO, that now the city is actually going to be putting a pause on further development.

There was a promise of that station, and it hasn't been delivered. I am in communications with the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Transportation and his team about it, and I'm grateful that we're doing that. I think it's so critical for the constituents in this area, and we need to sort it out urgently. I care a lot about the issue, and I offer to work with the Ministers of Housing, Transportation and Infrastructure on it so that we can be sure that we get to a better place quickly. Should this bill pass, I'm really interested to understand how some of these changes are going to help to solve that issue for our community.

Now, there's a few other interesting schedules in this bill that I'd also like to comment on. Those are the schedules related to banning green roofs in Toronto, prohibitions on lane reductions for biking. I hear from so many young people in our riding—in fact, if you can believe it, I get letters from grade 2 students on some of these issues. They are looking at what we're doing and saying, doesn't government see a future for us? Don't they see a future in addressing climate change? Don't they see a future in trying to build out communities that actually also promote a healthy lifestyle?

0920

People are just looking for governments to be progressive on these issues. Surely, if cities such as beautiful Paris, centuries old, can figure out how to integrate the ability to cycle, we can figure it out for our cities in Ontario. So many countries have green roofs as part of how they're creating cleaner cities. It's a norm for them. In fact, I've been reading articles about this. It's not just roofs, it's walls etc. But, again, why are we so stuck in the dark ages, Speaker? I just don't understand it.

I guess I would just say—this government talks a lot about congestion. I know why we have a lot of congestion in our city: We've allowed building to happen. We've allowed density to increase, and we've not kept up with the infrastructure that we need. Again, transit has—we look at some of the projects right here in Toronto. We're celebrating the 15-year birthday for some of them yesterday here in this House—

Interjection.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Well, no, we started it, but you've had seven years to finish it, to the member opposite.

We've allowed the development, but we've not kept up with our roads, with our transit, with parking, and that's why we're jammed in our city streets. I would just like to ask the government to be a little bit more progressive on these issues.

I was also reminded once again—and I would love it if this government could actually give the same attention that they give to these issues that are so Toronto-focused. I don't know how the members outside of Toronto actually stand for it. I was just in Oxford county last week, and as I talked to people out there, they were like, "Why is there such an obsession with decisions for Toronto by this Premier?" It's a real issue for people in the rest of the province. Again, we see it in this bill. This is what you're going to spend your time on.

Do you know what I'd really love for us to do? I talked about this with the fall economic statement. I would really love a government that gets up every day wanting our health care system to be successful, our schools to be successful, our post-secondary institutions to be successful, because that's how we'll strengthen our economy in the long run. I would love the same attention, but no, no, we get attention on these issues in these kinds of bills.

There's another schedule in this bill which addresses the Photo Card Act, actually. I was happy to see this in here. I've had a constituent in my riding who's been talking about this issue quite a lot. I see both sides of this issue, which is needing to show some proof that you've got residency to be able to get the photo card from the government. On the one hand, this individual had had some terrible personal fraud against him, where somebody had stolen his ID, and I actually think that this change could help that individual. On the flip side, I also hear the example that for those that currently don't have a home this will only make it even more difficult for them to be able to get access to their ID. So I mostly wanted to point out both sides of this issue and make sure that as the government moves to consider implementation of it that

they actually think this through and make sure that those that are looking to get back on their feet and might need the support that they need to get some basic ID are able to do it.

Now, in my final couple of minutes, I just wanted to come back to the Landlord and Tenant Board. There's been a lot of discussion about this issue. I, too, like many of you, think I have heard both perspectives on the need to make sure that we can resolve issues more promptly. I've also heard comments in this chamber from others, but I also did want to quote the data around the way that the Landlord and Tenant Board is currently functioning. This is about returning to in-person hearings. As I understand it, many issues are resolved in the hallways at those hearings. This is something that actually landlords want, it's something that people that do leasing want, it's something that tenants want. When you look at the current situation, right now, we know that more people should be able to have access to that through in-person hearings.

The other thing I would say is that we need to look at how we can reopen regional offices to support applicants before they file their documents and facilitate providing urgent documents to the public, such as eviction orders. There are many others that have concerns about how this is currently functioning: the real estate board, the Human Rights Commission, health care professionals, the United Way, the Ontario Real Estate Association, various municipalities, the Ontario Bar Association, the Canadian Bar Association, many not-for-profits, courts and tribunals. They all are interested in moving back to in-person hearings, and I would really, really request that the government consider that.

With that, I will end my time, as I know that my other colleagues have a lot of interest in talking about various aspects of this bill. If we'd had more time at committee, I would certainly have loved to explore further all the amendments that you've got, especially the ones that I talked about related to GO Transit and how that is being integrated with the development process. I'll look forward to collaborating with you, if this were to pass, on how that can actually affect our own community.

Lastly, I will end with saying there's a lot in here that's going to affect renters; there's a lot in here that's going to affect every person in this province. So I would ask you, as you move to implementation, please consider the question that I posed to you, which is, how is the implementation of this policy going to help people to stay housed? That's a critical question. If we start to do that, maybe I'll see a little glimmer of hope around that strategy that I talked about to end homelessness. But that would help so many. That would help the three in five people who are concerned that if their financial situation changes tomorrow, their housing goes. That's pretty frightening for people. So I would just ask you, as you move to implementation, that you consider that question.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member for Perth—Wellington.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you, Speaker. It's lovely to see you in the chair this morning, and it's lovely to be able to finally rise this morning, colleagues, to talk about Bill 60, Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025.

Let me start by saying this bill marks the next step in our plan to protect Ontario's economic strength by building homes, infrastructure and communities faster and at a lower cost. It builds on the momentum we set in the last legislative session earlier this year with Bill 17, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act.

As this chamber knows, Bill 17 laid the groundwork. It established the foundation, and it made it clear that in a world defined by uncertainty Ontario would not sit idly by. Today, with Bill 60, we are building on that foundation. We're strengthening it with practical, common-sense measures that reduce costs, remove delays and keep our province moving forward.

Speaker, we all understand that this is not business as usual in the province of Ontario, and across the province and across the country and the world, uncertainty is shaping every aspect of our economy in every sector. The housing market has felt the impacts of rising global construction costs, ongoing interest rate pressures and the kinds of approval delays that stretch projects into months and years beyond what is reasonable.

Families across Ontario feel the consequences, whether they are young people saving every month for their first-time home, seniors searching for a smaller, more manageable place to live, or workers who want to build a stable future closer to where they work. Builders are feeling it too. As timelines expand, costs rise, and the path from proposal to construction becomes far less predictable than it should be.

That is why our government continues to act. Standing still is not an option. Bill 17 was a crucial first step, and Bill 60 takes that work another step. It strengthens the foundations we have built. It sharpens the tools municipalities, builders, planners and workers rely on, and it moves us closer to a housing infrastructure delivery system that is efficient, fair, predictable and focused on results.

At its core, this bill is about protecting Ontario's future by ensuring that we can build the homes, the infrastructure and the communities our growing population needs. It's also about protecting opportunity, making sure workers stay on the job, ensuring families they can find a home that they can afford in the communities that they love and give the builders a clear, consistent path to move projects from concept to completion.

0930

One of the driving factors behind this legislation is simple: It takes too long and costs too much to build in the province of Ontario. The minister says it often, and I will echo it now. We'll continue to say it because it remains true. But we are changing that, Speaker. Bill 60 is built around a simple principle: Make it easier to build in Ontario—easier for builders, easier for families and easier for municipalities trying to plan for growth.

We are cutting costs, cutting timelines and cutting through layers of red tape that for far too long stood

between good projects and the people who need them. Every delay adds costs. Every added cost prices someone out of the market. Every unnecessary barrier slows the progress Ontario needs down. That's not acceptable at all. It's not acceptable for our government and certainly not for the people of Ontario, who count on us every single day.

Housing affordability remains one of the defining challenges of our time. Families feel it every day. Young people trying to save feel it. Seniors trying to downsize feel it. Skilled workers who want to build homes, roads, bridges and water systems feel it when projects sit idle waiting for approvals.

That's why this legislation continues in our mission to lower the cost of building homes. We're tackling the policies and practices that inflate prices and slow down construction. We're going to do what it takes to make sure that it is fair, practical and focused on results.

One of the clearest examples of this is municipal development charges. For years these charges have crept higher and higher, adding tens of thousands of dollars to the new price of a home. They were designed to fund real, necessary infrastructure such as roads, sewers and water systems. But too often they have become a catch-all tool that inflates project costs and ultimately pushes the price of home ownership up further and beyond the reach of many Ontarians and Canadians.

Bill 60 brings this back to reality. We're ensuring that homebuyers pay only for the true cost of infrastructure that they use. It is common sense and it is fair. It protects Ontario's homebuyers while ensuring municipalities can still fund the necessary infrastructure their communities rely on.

But the cost is only half the story. The other half is time. Time is money. Any builder will tell you that. Every month of delay keeps families waiting. Every layer of approval keeps workers idle, and every unnecessary requirement slows down growth. Bill 60 attacks these delays head-on, simplifying, streamlining and clearing the way for construction to move forward.

One example is communal water and waste water systems. In many rural, remote and smaller communities new housing has been held back by overlapping provincial and municipal approvals that slow projects down before the first shovel ever hits the ground. Bill 60 fixes this by aligning approvals and cutting unnecessary duplication. We're empowering municipalities to unlock new development faster, expanding service and capacity and cutting months, sometimes years, off project timelines. This is how you build smarter. This is how you build to protect Ontario.

Speaker, these are not abstract policy shifts, these are practical, real-world improvements that will be felt in communities across Ontario. They're the kind of changes that get shovels in the ground and homes built faster.

Another major innovation in this bill focuses on Peel region. We're establishing a new publicly owned corporation to deliver water and waste water services across Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon. I would like to

emphasize, Speaker, for my colleagues in the House the word "public" in that former statement.

I'll be honest, Speaker and colleagues, I was rather shocked to hear the leader of the official opposition claim a municipally owned municipal service corp was privatization. This is false. This is laughably false. The word "public" appears in the title of the act. It's disappointing, but not surprising. When you take common-sense ideas like municipal service corps that have the full support of every single municipality in Peel region, sometimes they need to grasp at straws, Speaker.

And now, let's talk about what these actually do—

Interjections.

Mr. Matthew Rae: I know they're heckling me right now, Speaker. But it's funny: Every municipality I talk to is actually in favour of municipal service corps, because they help them unlock more infrastructure and build more infrastructure across Ontario. I think of York region, which has a potential build-out of \$3 billion, just in York region alone. The potential for municipal service corps to help them raise the capital and fund these projects is something they're excited about and communities across Ontario are excited about.

This model reflects the essence of what Bill 60 is about: smarter governance, clearer accountability and more efficient service delivery. It protects public ownership while improving performance, saving money and enabling more homes to be built, because you are getting pipes in the ground, which leads to toilets in homes, which leads to occupancy permits for those young families. It protects public ownership while improving performance, saving money and, again, enabling more homes to be built. It strengthens local decision-making. It improves financial stability. It ensures growth can continue without pushing excessive costs onto builders, homeowners or families already stretching their budgets to the limit.

This is innovation with purpose, a new approach that each region can look to as well. It demonstrates how smart collaboration and public ownership can work hand in hand to deliver better, faster, more affordable results.

Bill 60 also builds on the success of Bill 17's zoning reforms, including changes to the expanded as-of-right minor variances. For too long, builders seeking to implement simple, low-impact adjustments—for example, slight height changes, setback modifications or small additions—have been caught in long and costly approvals. These delays benefit no one. Under Bill 60, we are creating a clear, streamlined process for these minor variances. Builders will move forward faster, municipalities can focus their resources on high-impact decisions and families will be able to move into their homes sooner.

Another issue we are confronting directly is the growing use of municipal site plan controls to require—I would phrase it as Cadillac-level boutique—design demands that go far beyond what is necessary for safety. These burdens have added costs and confusion for home builders at the worst possible time. Ontario families are already dealing with high interest rates and record construction costs. Now is not the time to pile on excessive

design mandates that serve no real purpose to the structure of the home that the builder is building.

Through Bill 60, we are bringing fairness and consistency back into the planning process. We continue to enforce one clear provincial standard that ensures safety and quality, while removing unnecessary expensive requirements, restoring balance. It protects families from inflated housing costs and protects builders' ability to deliver homes. This is what protecting Ontario looks like: standing up for fairness, efficiency and opportunity.

We are committed to ensuring the system works for the people that it is supposed to serve. That is why our government is launching a full section-by-section review of Ontario's building code. We are identifying outdated, redundant or confusing provisions that are increasing the costs without meaningfully improving safety. Since coming into the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as parliamentary assistant, I know I have dealt a lot with the building code—a very large document, sometimes not a very exciting document, but a very important document for our province.

What I found through that work with the building code officials of Ontario and the ministry is how high of a standard Ontario already has around its building code. Many other provinces look to Ontario to see what we have implemented around structural design, as well, ensuring that it is the top in North America, I would argue, in some instances, and ensuring that other provinces are following Ontario's lead.

But we can do better, as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has said many times in this place. We will continue to work to ensure that we're fixing what does not work and ensuring that we're supporting what does work, maintaining Ontario's high standards in our building code. This modernization will ensure that every regulation in the building code serves a real purpose, not a process, because every day saved in approvals is a day closer a family can move into their new home sooner, and every dollar saved in an unnecessary requirement is a dollar that stays in the pockets of hard-working Ontarians.

0940

Bill 60 represents more than a set of reforms; it represents a cultural shift. For too long, Ontario has been hampered by a mindset they equates process with progress. That era is over. We are building a culture of growth, one grounded in accountability, transparency and results; a culture where municipalities, builders and the province work together, not at cross-purposes; a culture where rules are clear, approvals are efficient and everyone is pulling in the same distribution.

This work is not easy, but it is necessary, because Ontario can no longer afford to wait. Every delay costs jobs, homes and opportunity. Through Bill 60, we are changing the way Ontario plans, the way Ontario builds and the way the government delivers. We're doing it for families, for workers, for communities and for the next generation who deserve the same opportunity to own a home that their parents and grandparents have had.

Ontario faces real changes, from rising costs to an aging infrastructure, from global economic pressures to a growing demand for housing and community services, but these challenges are not insurmountable. The Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025, is part of the plan to meet them head-on to protect Ontario's economy, workers and communities. It builds directly on the foundations of Bill 17—it reduces costs, it streamlines approvals, it modernizes building rules and it ensures every dollar and every day saved can go into building homes faster.

Under Premier Ford's leadership, our government is delivering results. We're protecting Ontario, driving economic growth and keeping the dream of home ownership alive, from downtown Toronto to rural communities in my riding of Perth-Wellington. This plan is rooted in common sense—it's practical, it's responsible and it's built to deliver. That's why I am proud to support Bill 60, and I encourage every member of this chamber to stand with Ontario's workers, builders and families, and support this vital piece of legislation.

I'm proud to stand with a government that continues to invest in Ontario and continues to put forward legislation that will build Ontario and build the future that we all want to see for our great province. Yes, as I had mentioned, these challenges are great, but they are not insurmountable, and we are going to do the hard work to ensure that we continue to build for tomorrow and the next generation, to ensure that young Canadians and young Ontarians can realize the dream of home ownership.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm happy to say a few words about Bill 60, Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act. Let me tell you what "fighting delays" means in northern Ontario: Not a day goes by that we don't see those ads on television, "Come to the Ring of Fire" and "the mining" and "the way of the future," and all this. I can tell you that people in northern Ontario, we all laugh out loud when we see those.

Do you know what "building faster, fighting delays" means? A mine opened up across the street from Gogama. It's called Iamgold. It's a gold mine. I worked with the developers for 12 years to go through the permitting and all of this; I worked with a lot of ministers to get this mine to finally open. During that same period of time that a mine was able to go through all of the permitting and open and pour their first bar of gold and all of this, I also worked with the ministry that owns a whole bunch of houses in Gogama across the street from the mine.

The homes in Gogama—Gogama is an unorganized area, like many in my riding; if a house gets abandoned, the government owns it. The government owns those homes, they maintain them—they cut the grass, they trim the trees, they shovel in the winter, they keep them warm, the whole thing. During those 12 years, the government has put zero of them up for sale. There is a lineup of people and of contractors who want a place to stay. The government owns homes that they pay to maintain every single year, but they have to do due process. Due process

to put a \$200,000 home has taken more than 12 years, seven of them of this government—to whom I write every six months, to all of their ministers, to say, “Put those homes up for sale.” I get the same standard letter every single time: “We are working on it. We have to do due process.” Due process has taken this government seven years to put a \$200,000 home on the market—and it’s not done. The last letter I got said it will be done by December 31 this year. I will believe it when I see it. So when I see a bill coming forward that says “fighting delays, building faster,” I’m thinking, do you know that northern Ontario exists? Do you know that when you open a mine, there are actual people who live there? People need a place to sleep. They need a place for their kids to go to school. None of that seems to matter to them.

“Building faster”—I can tell you that the forestry industry was quite interested in building faster. We have some of the best wood, in northern Ontario, provided by our forestry industry. We kind of expected to say, “Buy Ontario. Make sure that those new homes that get built faster will use timber from northern Ontario”—none of that. When the NDP tried to put a motion forward to say, “When Ontario spends money, we will make sure that it spends it on Ontario products and services,” the Conservatives voted that down.

So how could we have a bill that says “fighting delays, building faster”? How can we have all those ads on TV saying that the Ring of Fire is the future of Ontario, when basic things—I talked about Gogama. A mine just opened up across the street from Foleyet. The same thing is going on—homes in Foleyet that are owned by the government. How many more decades will it take to put those homes up for sale? I don’t know. But this is not fighting delays. This is not helping the people who need it.

Then, I go to schedule 12 of the bill. The Ombudsman of Ontario, in 2023, issued their report. The report noted that the dysfunction within the Landlord and Tenant Board was caused by the Ford government, which first refused to appoint adjudicators to the board and then appointed unqualified people. Hearings that once were scheduled within days, prior to 2018, now take months and even years to be heard. This dysfunction and delay has everything to do with the Ford government; it has nothing to do with tenants having too many rights.

Do you know what that means for northern Ontario? You know where everybody has to come and go to work—you’re not allowed to work from home. People who do home care in my community are an hour’s drive away from the office—have to drive an hour to the office, to be in the office. Although they serve an area of my riding that is an hour away from the office, they still have to drive to work. But the landlord and tenant act does not have to be in person. In northern Ontario, where I represent, there is no good Internet; there is no cell service. People have to have their hearings over the Internet. That doesn’t work. Yet, this is what the government thinks that building faster needs—I don’t agree.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Adil Shamji: Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to elaborate on Bill 60, the so-called Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025.

I’ll begin my remarks by reflecting on something that the member for Perth–Wellington said. He mentioned—and obviously, I’m paraphrasing—that Bill 60 is this government’s way of tangibly protecting Ontario. How can we say that Bill 60 is about protecting Ontario when this government has not even allowed us the opportunity to stand up for Ontario on this piece of legislation? This legislation has been time-allocated. What should be six and a half hours of debate this morning and over the next few days has been reduced to two hours. This debate was called with only 12 hours’ notice. This debate will terminate without a single public hearing taking place.

0950

How can you proclaim that you’re here to protect Ontario when you don’t even take the opportunity to listen to Ontario, to hear what they have to say in committee proceedings or to hear what the elected officials who represent Ontario have to say about it in a meaningful manner?

But let’s take the time allocation piece out of this altogether. How can Bill 60 be about protecting Ontario when it is the latest in a series of bills that have done nothing but actually neglect Ontario? For a government that says it’s going to protect this province, its record on housing shows exactly the opposite. We face rampant homelessness, encampments; we face tenants who are being inappropriately evicted, renovicted, demovicted. This legislation does nothing to address that—10 pieces of housing legislation to this point, usually each one reversing something that was in the bill previously.

But let’s actually give this legislation more than a cursory review.

In my office, we see the human toll of this government’s short-sighted perspective on housing every single day. I see constituents who are struggling with housing affordability. We see people struggling with access to jobs and even being able to access basic necessities like food. That’s an important thing to comment on, because the number one expense on people’s monthly paycheque or biweekly paycheque is their cost of housing. When rent is too high, when the cost of homes is too high, it makes it impossible for them to be able to afford literally anything else.

Against that backdrop, we have health care access being insufficient and Ontarians being asked to pay for more medically necessary care—almost always with their credit card and not their OHIP card. And, of course, the housing crisis continues to escalate.

We face a crisis that is affecting both renters and landlords, and yet this government has an opportunity with Bill 60 to do something about it and is ignoring the meaningful lasting solutions that could actually make a difference.

Ontario has the worst home building performance in all of Canada, with a double-digit decline in housing starts this year—the only province in our entire Confederation to be in this exact situation. Other provinces are building

more while Ontario alone is building fewer homes. Prices are wildly out of reach, and we're seeing the consequences of that play out in real time: people who are living on the streets, especially as temperatures are dropping and we approach the winter season; encampments, which this government loves to complain about but is the reason for which they exist.

We are seeing a loss of productivity, with young people leaving the province because they have no hope of being able to put down their roots here where they grew up. And, of course, it doesn't help that we have the worst youth unemployment in the entire country as well.

We're even seeing the situation deteriorate to the point where it's impacting our health care system, where hospitals in some cases are being forced into the business of development because that is the only way that they can hope to attract health care workers to work in their institutions.

Ontario's housing failures are dragging down the rest of the country. While Canada builds 4% more homes than last year, Ontario's double-digit decline is stopping Canada from achieving substantially better growth. Cities like Guelph, Peterborough, London, Oshawa, Windsor and Toronto are amongst the lowest-performing urban areas in the country. Now, if it was a single urban centre in our province, there's an argument to be made that it could be blamed on the municipality. But when it is ubiquitous amongst our large municipalities, then that is a failure of leadership by the provincial government.

We once heard this government crow about the fact they would build 1.5 million homes by 2031. They don't like to say that anymore. When I questioned the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing last week in committee, he said, "I don't like to focus on numbers." Well, the reason I focused on numbers is this government introduced the numbers. They promised the numbers. And now that they can't even come close to delivering on those numbers, they're not interested in that anymore. They're not interested in that anymore because they don't know how to get there. They don't know how to get even close to there. They know that Bill 60, while they will brand it as ambitious, record breaking, incredible, the solution that Ontario needs—they know it won't even get us close. In fact, it will only set us back.

To briefly address the substance of this bill: It attempts to do a number of things, such as reducing building code burdens, streamlining municipal applications, modifying development charges and eliminating requirements like green roofs. It introduces measures on transit-oriented communities, as-of-right zoning, ministerial zoning orders and infrastructure.

But I will remind you, not a single one of those things gets us to one and a half million homes, and, certainly, not a single one of those things guarantees one and a half million homes. Instead, it talks about speed, ignores accountability and undermines sustainability and planning standards.

So let's look at the Landlord and Tenant Board for example, where all members in this House can agree this

is a major problem impacting both landlords and tenants. This bill focuses almost exclusively on landlords, reducing eviction review periods from 30 to 15 days, shortening rent arrears notice periods and increasing ways to discriminate against renters.

Now, no one will deny—in fact, those of us on this side of the House have been screaming from the rooftops—that the delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board need to be addressed. But this bill does not have the substantive changes that will actually reduce those backlogs, and certainly not in a way that is fair to both parties.

Given the opportunity, this government could, for example, bring back in-person Landlord and Tenant Board hearings, allowing many conflicts to be addressed in the corridors before the hearing actually happens, dramatically reducing the backlog and allowing things to happen using approaches that are solved by collaboration as opposed to penalization. Under this legislation, good-faith tenants risk eviction for being a day late on rent. Let's remember that we face an unprecedented affordability crisis where that can happen to anyone.

Now, I'm not talking about standing up for bad-faith tenants, those professional tenants that take advantage of good-faith landlords, but for the ones who are really struggling. If anyone has ever missed a bill of any kind—a cellphone bill, a credit card bill—by even a day, you know that you can be well-intentioned and still make a mistake. This government has nothing for those good-faith individuals.

The bill also interferes with municipal decision-making through Highway Traffic Act amendments, restricting local authority over bike lanes and public transit. It requires evidence of residency, work and visa status for the issuance of things like drivers' licences and photo ID cards, which may disproportionately place a burden on vulnerable populations, such as refugees and immigrants whose first language may not be English.

This certainly impacts people in communities like mine, in Flemingdon Park. My community has already been attacked by this government in their ability to access basic things like photo ID cards and drivers' licences. This government gave millions of dollars to a foreign big box company, Staples, so that they could open ServiceOntario locations while closing mom-and-pop independent ServiceOntario centres, like the one that is in Flemingdon Park, where it is desperately needed.

Now people in my community have to travel very far away, and then be forced to walk through a store, be invited to purchase things and be subject to advertising that, in short, this government is basically subsidizing—only to get, by the way, inferior-quality service.

There are many other elements of this legislation that are deeply concerning, but, in the interest of time and leaving some time for one of my fellow colleagues, I leave it at that.

In short, what I want to say is that this legislation fails to address the magnitude of Ontario's housing crisis. It offers incremental and partial measures while ignoring the fundamental solutions needed to build homes, protect

tenants and ensure fair access to housing. Our constituents deserve more than endless promises that really amount to nothing. They deserve more than half measures, more than the threat of losing rent protections. Ontarians deserve real, ambitious and transformative action to solve the housing crisis, and with Bill 60, they are not getting that.

1000

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Hon. Graydon Smith: It's great to see everyone this morning, and it's my privilege to speak to you all today in support of the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025, to offer insight into how Bill 60, if passed, will strengthen our province's approach to housing, infrastructure and environmental stewardship while ensuring Ontario grows in a responsible and sustainable way.

This bill arrives at a moment when communities across Ontario, large and small, are asking for clarity, consistency and a planning system that reflects the realities of today's housing pressures. Families are feeling the impacts of high interest rates, rising construction costs and limited supply. Municipalities are feeling stretched, and too many good projects are getting stuck behind outdated processes that slow progress without improving outcomes.

Bill 60 builds on the work we've already done as a government, modernizing planning frameworks, cutting red tape and tackling long-standing barriers that prevent homes from being built. This bill helps deal with challenges faced by rural and northern communities too, ensuring they're not left behind as Ontario grows.

As I've said many times in this chamber before, I've served as a mayor, I've served as a councillor, and I've served on regional government. I've seen first-hand how what the province does—the tools that are provided to municipalities and the direction provided to municipalities—can play a real, enormous part in the outcomes for those municipalities.

For larger cities, the focus is often on housing supply, but for rural communities like the one I represented as a mayor and the one I represent now in Parry Sound–Muskoka, those barriers are different. Growth is often held back not because of a lack of demand, but because of the limits of local infrastructure, long approval timelines and red tape that slows even the smallest projects. That's why this bill matters so much. Bill 60 gives our smaller towns and villages the tools to thrive.

When you represent communities like Rosseau or Sundridge or Huntsville or MacTier or Gravenhurst and the dozens of lake-based villages that make Parry Sound–Muskoka what it is, you quickly learn that a one-size-fits-all approach to rules designed for Toronto simply doesn't work in rural Ontario. Small municipalities have small staff teams. The planner, maybe they're also the bylaw officer; public works might be a team of four people; and a committee delay of a couple of months doesn't just postpone a project, it can push construction past that very, very short northern building season and delay it maybe up to an entire year.

I've met young families who want to stay, seniors who want to downsize and small builders ready to put shovels in the ground, but they all face the same barriers: long servicing timelines and outdated approval processes and requirements that make sense in the GTA, but as I said, often don't reflect those rural conditions.

Bill 60 recognizes those realities and respects the unique character of rural Ontario by giving communities the flexibility, the tools and the certainty that they've been asking for.

Speaker, one of the most important reforms for ridings like mine is a focus on communal water and waste water systems. In many underserved areas, new homes can't be built; just existing, full municipal servicing is too costly and oftentimes completely unrealistic.

But if passed, this legislation will streamline the approval processes for communal systems—professionally managed, safe water and waste water systems that can be built where centralized infrastructure doesn't exist. It cuts duplication, creates clarity and unlocks new opportunities for development, while still maintaining Ontario's high standards for health and environmental protection.

For rural communities, this means projects don't have to stop at the edge of the serviced boundary. It means growth can happen in those villages and hamlets and smaller towns where families have lived and want to live. Speaker, this bill, if passed, will change the trajectory of growth in my riding, in Parry Sound–Muskoka.

In many communities across Ontario, we often see smaller-scale housing proposals facing uncertainty, simply because servicing options are limited or, again, so prohibitively expensive to extend that it really makes it impossible. These constraints have long been a barrier to rural growth. Across my riding, land isn't the issue. There is a lot of land. There's a lot of opportunity. Demand isn't the issue. There's a huge amount of demand. The barrier has always been infrastructure.

Places like Humphrey, Seguin township, Ryerson, or cottage-area rural clusters simply can't support large extensions of municipal pipes. Communal systems provide a safe, modern and environmentally responsible alternative that fits those rural conditions. They're engineered, professionally operated and subject to rigorous oversight—something far safer and more scalable than decades-old septic systems serving multiple units.

These reforms mean opportunities for workforce housing near tourism corridors, for year-round rentals in communities dominated by seasonal cottages and for enabling that “missing middle” that rural Ontario needs. It could mean a cluster of townhomes or a small multiplex and attainable starter homes. Speaker, this is about fairness. It's for families that want to build their lives in ridings like mine, in Parry Sound–Muskoka. It shouldn't be limited by whether a pipe extends a mile down the road. With Bill 60, responsible growth becomes possible in places where it has never been feasible.

I can tell you a brief story. During my time as mayor, actually, one of the first things that came up was an older resort on one of our many precious lakes that its time had

kind of come and gone as a resort. The infrastructure wasn't great anymore; the buildings weren't great anymore. But the property was certainly something that could be turned into a real gem. And an owner had purchased that property and realized that and had begun discussions with the town and the district of Muskoka at that time on his vision—their vision of what they could do to create homes, drive economic growth and make good things happen in an area that was located not far from the centre of our community but one, again, that was kind of ripe for this type of development.

And those discussions went on and on and on and, ultimately, went nowhere because the rules and regulations in place by the district and what they felt they were allowed to do were just too punitive, too prescriptive and too limiting to allow this proposal to get off the ground. Because the suggestion at the time wasn't, "Well, yes, why don't we take the opportunity of a small communal system that will allow this to happen and service a number of units and service the economic growth components of this project?" It was, "Well, what you really need to do is either build an entire plant to the same standard that was servicing the rest of the municipality and put the pipes in the ground. And oh, by the way, thank you for carrying the cost of that entire plant—and you can pay 100% securities for that entire plant that we will hold in perpetuity in case something goes wrong."

1010

Speaker, there's a better way. This type of system would have facilitated that, and today, we could have been looking at more homes and an economic generator in that part of our community. After many years, what the result came to be was a few nice cottage lots got created on traditional water and septic. That's fine, that's great, but it could have been so much more. So the approach to communal services and the ability to implement that as a solution is incredibly important.

Another reform that will make a real difference in rural Ontario is allowing certain minor variances as of right. Too often, small adjustments like an extra foot of lot coverage or a very modest change in height or even building a simple shed and its placement on a lot require homeowners and builders to appear before municipal committees. That time needs to be scheduled. Those resources need to be put into preparing reports, getting ready, spending time and spending money.

But, Speaker, these are low-impact changes. They don't affect neighbours; they don't harm the environment; they don't alter the character of the community.

Bill 60, if passed, would remove that red tape. If a proposal meets some very clear criteria—again, if it's a minor adjustment or a minor variance, we can think of it like that—it can move ahead automatically. No need to get the committee together, no need to write a bunch of reports, no need for somebody to pay their planner because something needs to be six inches to the left or six inches to the right—just simple, effective, red tape reduction that allows homeowners and home builders to get the work done that they do every day in an easy and sensible way.

I've talked about that building season in northern and rural communities; it's short. The last thing you want to do is waste a bunch of time and money on a minor variance where, ultimately, if that doesn't get done in time, well, maybe you lose a whole season again. We all know that when we lose time, we lose money, and when we lose money, somebody has to bear the cost of that—that's the homeowner, the home builder, the homebuyer.

So with this reform, families and builders get certainty. Municipalities save on their resources. It's not just home builders. These delays affect small things that people maybe don't think of regularly, like a seniors' building accessibility ramp, or a resident putting up a storage shed, parents maybe wanting to add a bedroom for a growing family, or a small business trying to expand by a few feet. You know, things come up when people build. They have to make some changes, some adjustments and do things a little bit differently. This can allow them to do that without all the red tape.

These are not major planning decisions. These are everyday, common-sense improvements that shouldn't require a committee hearing, extra studies or thousands of dollars in fees. Rural councils, many of them, have part-time members and, as I said, limited administrative support, so they benefit enormously from reduced committee loads. You're freeing them up, not having to do the work of the tiny, tiny stuff—the stuff that doesn't really make a difference to the municipality in one way or another. That time can be better used elsewhere. Those resources can be better used elsewhere.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member, but unfortunately, it is now time for members' statements.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

COMMUNITY SAFETY TOWN HALL

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: It has been a very special month for me both personally and in the community. I'm overjoyed to share that I became a grandma for the fourth time. We welcomed a beautiful baby girl, Amelia Valentina, and my heart is full.

I am also so proud to share that this month, my constituency office hosted our second community safety town hall. This session, anchored by Peel Regional Police, focused on helping families stay protected from emerging crime trends. I'm pleased to report that more than 100 residents joined us for this important conversation.

We were joined by an exceptional team from the Peel Regional Police, including superintendent Joy Edwards and officers from 12 Division, crime prevention services, and the community intervention and response team. Residents truly appreciated hearing directly from front-line experts who keep our neighbourhoods safe every day.

My constituency office team is here today, and I want to give them a shout-out for putting on another great show: Dianne Lawson, Leslie Silvestri, Saurabh Kapoor, Moazzam Reza and the newest member of our team, Joseph Pillegi. Thank you for your unwavering—

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

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Jeff Burch: Earlier this year I wrote to this government offering to work together on improving community safety following a brutal sexual assault in our community of Welland that left families, parents and residents horrified.

Today, I am again calling for action to address the systemic failures that continue to put public safety at risk. We should strengthen the Ontario Sex Offender Registry by enhancing tools like Christopher's Law to improve the monitoring and tracking of known offenders.

The Attorney General of Ontario has the authority to issue prosecution guidelines. The government must use this power to strengthen bail and sentencing practices for violent offences, ensuring that public safety remains the top priority.

We must end court delays and expedite proceedings so that dangerous sex offenders and violent criminals are not released due to procedural backlogs or prosecution delays. This province needs to hire more crown attorneys, many of whom are already facing overwhelming caseloads that slow down justice and increase the risk of serious cases being dismissed or mishandled.

Additionally, we should hire more court staff and increase compensation to attract and retain qualified personnel, so that courtrooms can operate at full capacity. The province must complete long-overdue courtroom repairs, consider reopening shuttered courthouses and invest in new facilities where infrastructure is lacking.

This is not a partisan issue. It's a matter of safety, justice and moral responsibility. We cannot allow bureaucracy, underfunding—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Don Valley East.

HOLIDAY MESSAGES

Mr. Adil Shamji: I would like to wish everyone in Don Valley East and across Ontario a joyful Christmas filled with peace, gratitude and time with loved ones.

May this season bring hope, kindness, and renewal to every family and community across our province.

As we welcome the new year, may 2026 bring renewed energy, good health and meaningful opportunities. I hope the months ahead strengthen our communities and inspire hope, progress and connection across our province.

This Hanukkah, let the lights guide us towards hope, joy and togetherness, celebrating resilience and community across Ontario.

Over this holiday season, I want to make special mention of the many health care workers, first responders and essential personnel who will remain on duty so that families in Ontario can rest and come together over the holidays. Thank you for your tireless service and sacrifices so that our community can stay safe and healthy.

Across Don Valley East, many of my constituents worry about crime and safety. For some, they're concerned about whether they will get help in a timely manner if they call 911. They worry that ambulances are literally getting stuck in traffic caused by Ontario Line congestion. They want to know how police can respond to increasing violent crime, especially now that officers have to spend more time keeping children safe in front of schools because automated speed enforcement has been banned.

This Christmas, many of them are hoping—

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

WATER SERVICES

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: As I reflect on the meaningful work that we do as individual members in this House, bringing forward private members' bills and motions are important initiatives. I know we all put tremendous thought, research, consultation and collaboration into what we bring forward because we understand that opportunities are limited, the process can be challenging and the outcomes are never guaranteed. We want these initiatives to be impactful, to make life better for people in a real and positive way.

1020

This is why I am thrilled with the results coming out of my private member's motion this week calling on the government to adopt modernized measures to streamline the development of communal water and waste water systems, an initiative aimed at unleashing innovative building solutions in small and rural communities, including in York region, while protecting our environment.

Speaker, I am incredibly humbled that every single member of this Legislature voted unanimously in support of this motion. Imagine, it just took a little waste water to bring us all together. With the utmost sincerity, thank you to every single member for your engagement and your support. We are protecting and building a stronger Ontario.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: ᑭᓄᑦᑭᓄᑦ

I saw a lot of families out on the land this fall. For families across Kiiwetinoong, hunting is a way of life, and it's an important source of food. The people of Kiiwetinoong understand how to live on the land. The land is where the teachings are, the land is where the history is, the land is where the languages are learned. It's where the identity comes from. Hunting is one of our inherent rights, given to us by the Creator, and it is part of our treaty rights. These rights and the land must be protected. We uphold

these rights through our traditional hunting and fishing practices. Going on the land is part of who we are.

Growing up, I spent a lot of my time out on the land—until I had to go to high school—hunting, fishing, trapping, learning my language, the history and the teachings. I continue the ways of life, passing them down through my children, grandchildren and the next generation, and to learn the way of the land.

It is vital that our ways of life are respected and that our treaty rights are upheld.

MATTHEW GALLIFORD

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Today I rise to recognize a great man that was taken from us far too soon. Matthew Galliford, the incredible Downtown Acton BIA coordinator, passed away suddenly on October 31, 2025, at the far-too-young age of 50.

Speaker, this was a terrible shock for our entire community. Matt was a community champion. From the Acton Outdoor Market to the Leathertown festival, Matt played a critical part in making these important events a great success. Matt loved Acton, and Acton loved him.

He led the downtown BIA with passion and kindness, and it thrived under his leadership. From new Christmas lights to cleaning up graffiti, Matt took pride in making Acton beautiful. Many people have described Matt as Acton's biggest cheerleader, and that's absolutely true. Wherever you went in Acton, Matt was there, and he and I spoke regularly. In fact, he shared some information with me regarding an event in Acton just two days before he passed away.

I always appreciated his advice and counsel regarding what was important to the Acton community. I will truly miss this great man and Acton hero.

To quote an Acton resident, "Matt's passion for Acton was like no other."

To Matt's wife, Lorie; his parents, Marianne and Gord; his sister, Diana; and niece, Leah: We are here for you. The community that Matt gave so much to is here for you. Acton has lost its biggest cheerleader and champion. He will be dearly missed.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Tom Rakocvic: I am proud to be a co-sponsor of the Remembrance Day Observance Act, and I thank the member from St. Catharines for her leadership on this bill.

Our bill will ensure that Remembrance Day is honoured with the proper dignity and respect it deserves in every school across our great province, and it will grant workers everywhere the time to attend a ceremony to pay their respects to our veterans. Our freedom, our democracy and our way of life would not be possible were it not for our veterans and those who stand on guard for us today and especially those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, giving up their lives so we could continue to live ours in freedom.

We must develop our curriculum to best teach our students about the history and sacrifices of our veterans

and instill within our young ones the principles of honour, duty, courage and sacrifice that our heroes signify, lest we forget. They must know that freedom came at a price paid by others, and that it must be respected and protected, or that great sacrifice was made in vain.

I urge the government to join us and pass this bill so we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to pause, reflect and honour the sacrifices that our soldiers, veterans and their families made to secure the freedom we cherish today.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Every day, thousands of drivers travel through Windsor–Tecumseh's busiest intersections along Banwell Road, areas long plagued by traffic jams, delays and safety concerns. That's about to change. In just two years, the Banwell Road corridor will be completely transformed thanks to major provincial investments delivered under the leadership of Premier Ford, Minister Sarkaria and Minister Surma.

This support unlocks the full potential of this growing part of our community and eliminates some of the biggest traffic bottlenecks in our city. Our government is providing \$68.8 million to the city of Windsor for game-changing upgrades, including a brand new overpass to the EC Row Expressway and widening Banwell Road from a narrow two-lane route into a modern multi-lane urban arterial.

The project also includes new water mains, storm sewers, lighting and a multi-use trail, critical infrastructure that will help make 3,030 new homes possible through the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program.

And we're not stopping there. Ontario is investing \$15.1 million in the Tecumseh hamlet area, just east of Banwell Road, through the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund that adds 1.8 kilometres of trunk water main and 1.7 kilometres of sewer capacity, unlocking room for 4,059 homes in the town of Tecumseh.

These investments will cut congestion, improve safety and support long-term growth, strengthening the transportation and transit options families rely on every day.

Thank you to Mayor Dilkens, Windsor city council, Mayor McNamara and Tecumseh town council for driving these projects forward.

TRAGEDY IN BRUCE–GREY–OWEN SOUND

MPP Paul Vickers: I rise today to pay tribute to the victims of a tragedy in Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. On November 11, around the noon hour, three students from John Diefenbaker secondary school in Hanover tragically lost their lives in a single-vehicle accident in West Grey. One other was airlifted to hospital and has since been upgraded to stable condition.

Madam Speaker, these are tough times for students in Grey and Bruce. JDSS is located a mere 10 minutes away from Walkerton District Community School, where just

this spring, four students and a teacher passed away in an accident near London while they were away at a school event.

I want to rise today to recognize Damon Davis, an aspiring auto mechanic and volunteer for the St. Matthew's Lutheran church; to recognize Haley Keffer, the spunky 16-year-old daughter of Stacy and Sarah; to recognize Tyson Varley, a big brother who loved anything with an engine; and I wish Landon Preiss-Hillier the best on his road to recovery.

These teens were beloved community members and cherished by their families. Their stories captivated the hearts of Grey and Bruce counties.

Madam Speaker, my heart goes out to the Hanover community as they mourn Damon, Haley and Tyson. May their memory be a blessing and may they rest in peace.

TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm going to ask for the attention of the House. The time being 10:29 a.m., as provided for by the Trans Day of Remembrance Act, 2017, the assembly will now pause and observe one minute of silence in honour of trans people who have died as a result of anti-trans violence.

I will now ask members to please rise.

The House observed one minute's silence.

1030

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): You may be seated.

I recognize the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington on a point of order.

Mr. Ric Bresee: If you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to make statements of recognition of Transgender Day of Remembrance, with five minutes allotted to the government, five minutes allotted to the official opposition, five minutes allotted to the third party and two minutes allotted to the independent members as a group.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington is seeking unanimous consent to allow members to make statements in recognition of Transgender Day of Remembrance, with five minutes allotted to the government, five minutes allotted to the official opposition, five minutes allotted to the third party and two minutes allotted to the independent members as a group. Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the government to honour Transgender Day of Remembrance, a time when we remember transgender, non-binary, gender-queer and two-spirited individuals who lost their lives to anti-transgender violence.

In the summer of 2017, Alloura Wells, a 27-year-old Black and Indigenous transgender woman, went missing here in Toronto. Months later, her body was found in a ravine.

For weeks, she was only known as “an unidentified woman.” During that time, her father searched for her, her friends organized and community members demanded to

know why no one seemed to be looking for her. Her story should have filled headlines.

Instead, most Ontarians were hearing about a teaching assistant stirring a national debate about pronouns and gender ideology. The student was given a name, a face, a voice and empathy; Alloura was described as a body.

This contrast reveals something profound about how we treat transgender people. Too often, trans lives are discussed as policy rather than full human stories of people who live, love and contribute to their communities.

Alloura's death exposed real failures in how our systems treat missing persons, especially those experiencing homelessness or discrimination, but it also exposed how public narratives can erase people twice: once in life and once again in coverage.

Although I never had the privilege of meeting Alloura, her friends described her as funny, smart and loved. She was part of Toronto's queer community and part of Ontario's story.

I mentioned her today because it was the death of Alloura Wells that brought the urgency of this day into sharper focus here in Ontario. Her memorial was taking place only a few blocks away when the Trans Day of Remembrance Act was debated in this House in 2017.

That act was supported by all parties of this House. It was a unanimous statement that hate has no place in the province and that every Ontarian deserves to live and deserves safety and dignity, no matter their gender identity or expression. Because of that, Ontario became the first jurisdiction in the world to officially recognize November 20 as Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Ontario is home to a diverse and brave transgender community: trans men and women, non-binary and two-spirited individuals who enrich every corner of our province with their courage, their honesty and their contributions to society. Their lives matter, their voices matter, and our work must reflect that truth.

I'm very happy to say that this House extended protections for gender identity and expression under our Human Rights Code and expanded anti-hate initiatives like the Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant, helping community organizations protect their spaces. Our schools uphold inclusive codes of conduct and equity frameworks that make every student feel safe and valued.

But let us be honest: Laws and funding are the foundation, not the summit. True inclusion demands education, accountability and everyday allyship. It's every Ontarian's responsibility to listen, to learn and to lead with empathy. Allyship means stepping up when it's uncomfortable, not just when it's convenient. It means ensuring that our workplaces, our schools and our communities are safe for everyone.

Progress is never made in sweeping gestures alone. It's made in everyday moments of courage. Each of these moments helps build the kind of Ontario that this Legislature, across all parties, aspires to protect.

Speaker, when the Trans Day of Remembrance Act passed, its sponsor, MPP Cheri DiNovo, said that she looked forward to a day that we would no longer need such

a commemoration; a day when every parent's child could grow up to be safe, celebrated and at peace with their own identity. That day is not quite here yet, Speaker, but every year, through our actions, we can bring it closer.

Today, as we honour the memory of all those lost to anti-transgender violence, we recommit ourselves to the unfinished work; to building a province where equality is not an aspiration, but a lived reality. So let us remember and let us continue. Let us ensure that remembrance becomes responsibility, that empathy becomes action and that every Ontarian, regardless of gender identity or expression, can live, learn, love and thrive without fear.

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

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Good morning. Today is the Trans Day of Remembrance. On this day we reflect and mourn the trans, non-binary, two-spirited community members we have lost, and we celebrate those who are still with us. As a member of the trans and non-binary community; a person who uses they and them pronouns; and the first non-binary, gender-diverse MPP to do so in this House, I'm honoured to bring the official remarks from the opposition. But this year, I'm joined by a new member, the member from Ottawa Centre, who is also a member of the non-binary trans community.

So often in Ontario, we think about people on a daily basis, people who have had tremendous impact on us. And I think about Cheri DiNovo, who's in this House today, the good reverend doctor, whose bill is the reason why we are standing in this House, who has given us our moment of silence, our moment of contemplation.

Being trans is beautiful and gender-diverse expansiveness has existed across time and culture. We know that expansive gender identities have been formally recognized by Indigenous communities for thousands of years. There's nothing that politicians can say, do, fail to say or fail to do that will erase trans people, no matter how hard we or they try.

Being trans has often been a complex, sometimes beautiful and sometimes painful experience. But after several seasons of progress, we are now seeing right-wing backlash targeting trans people once again. It's scary now. Our trans siblings in the US are under attack by a President who continues to use them as a distraction and a scapegoat. But we don't have to look south to the US to know what is happening here in Canada.

The Alberta government used the "notwithstanding" clause to push forward three harmful pieces of legislation only yesterday: laws that will expose trans kids at school and restrict all Alberta children's access to comprehensive health education, ban trans children and youth from accessing life-saving health care and ban trans women and girls from participating in women's sports. This is the use of the "notwithstanding" clause that follows Justice Allison Kuntz's ruling in favour of five brave trans youth and their families, who challenged the laws blocking their access to health care.

Unfortunately, it seems like Danielle Smith has nothing better to do than to strip away the court-affirmed human

rights of trans kids in her province. But lucky for her, I know thousands of people who've got nothing better to do than to defend trans kids with every ounce of their energy.

Unchecked, the Alberta anti-trans laws are cruel and discriminatory. They will create a hostile environment of disinformation, hostility and hatred towards trans children and youth, and their parents fighting to protect and support them. Parents are forced to make painful and costly decisions to uproot their entire families and move to other states, provinces and countries when they cannot protect their trans child in their own community.

1040

The new government of New Brunswick moved quickly to reverse a policy that would have outed trans children in schools and prevented them from choosing their own names and pronouns, while putting their lives at risk. This is a bright light in a sea of bad news.

We are not immune to transphobia here in Ontario. In 2023, this very government voted against my bill to improve and expand access to gender-affirming health care in Ontario, which I will be re-tabling this afternoon. I hope that the government will support us in passing it, a bill which will be introduced for the third time.

The truth is that most people who receive gender-affirming health care are not trans people. They are cisgender people: those whose gender assigned at birth matches up with their internal understanding of their gender. They're men and boys with gynecomastia; women who undergo mastectomies and reconstructive breast surgery; and people receiving hormone replacement therapy, due to natural hormone imbalances. For these types of gender-affirming health care, there is no need to sign petitions, table legislation, fight for funding or even debate it at Queen's Park. Those medical interventions and others offered by OHIP are not only offered because they are necessary for physical survival of the patient, they are offered because they affirm their gender. That patient is then alleviated from the mental health disorders that would come with it.

I want to thank every trans activist, every parent who has stood with trans youth, every teacher who has taken a trans student aside to tell them that it's going to be okay. I want to thank this House for this opportunity.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Nepean.

MPP Tyler Watt: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for being here today on a day that calls us to pause, to reflect and to recommit ourselves to the dignity and safety of transgender people in our communities.

Transgender Day of Remembrance is not just a date on the calendar. It's a solemn moment to remember the lives that were taken by violence, discrimination and hatred, and to honour the strength of those who continue to live authentically despite immense challenges. Today, we say their names: Sam Nordquist, Alice Carrier, Blake Quinlan, Shelby Tracy Tom, just to name a few. We honour their stories and we acknowledge the pain that far too many transgender people face for simply being who they are.

We also stand here to affirm something fundamental: that every person, each and every one of us, regardless of who you are or who you love, has the right to live safely, openly and without fear. That is not a political statement; it is a fundamental human right.

We know that transgender people experience higher rates of harassment, homelessness, unemployment, violence and, sadly, murder rates. We know that transgender youth today are afraid that the few but hard-fought-for rights trans people have today are going to be stripped away. For too many, their daily lives are shaped not by opportunity or acceptance, but by constant fear. And yet, despite this reality, the transgender community continues to show resilience and courage that should inspire all of us: courage in telling their stories, courage in living their truth, courage in building community even when the world feels unwelcoming and overwhelming.

On this day, we also recognize the families, friends, advocates and organizations who show up every single day to support their loved ones who also just happen to be trans. We see that love and solidarity through dedicated groups, local service agencies, educators and health care providers, who work to ensure that transgender people feel affirmed and cared for: those like LGBT YouthLine, Rainbow Health Ontario, Trans Health Ottawa and The 519, just to name a few.

Transgender Day of Remembrance is, at its heart, a call to action, a reminder that remembrance must lead to responsibility: responsibility to speak out against transphobia in all of its forms; responsibility to listen to transgender voices, to uplift them and to believe them; and, yes, responsibility to ensure that trans people don't just survive the day, but truly thrive.

To the transgender members of our community who are here today or who may be listening at home: You matter. Your life has value. You have a place in this community exactly as you are. You deserve safety. You deserve joy. You deserve love. And you deserve a future filled with possibility.

Let us honour those we have lost not only with memory, but with action. Let us build a world where no one has to fear walking down the street—a world where every person feels safe being themselves; a world where diversity is not just accepted but celebrated.

Transgender Day of Remembrance asks us to grieve, yes, but it also invites us to hope—hope for a better tomorrow, shaped by compassion, hope that is strengthened each time we choose understanding over fear and love over hate.

Thank you for being here, for remembering and for standing together. May we leave today ready to do the work that honour truly demands.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I stand here today to honour the trans people who were murdered just for living their lives as their authentic selves.

As a school social worker, I spent my career encouraging youth to discover who they are and to live authentically,

because I know that's how they can be healthy and happy—but for that, trans people risk harassment, bullying and even being killed.

Right now, a trans youth from Kitchener Centre named Eli Wood is missing. Foul play is suspected. He moved to Kitchener from New Brunswick to study social work at Laurier and was months away from graduating, to start a job working with at-risk youth.

My heart is with Eli, his parents, his friends, his peers, his co-workers and community—to his mom, who's pleading to anyone with information to "help me find my baby."

Eli was followed and intimidated by strangers. Last month, his house was burned—a suspected arson—and he went missing. Our community is shaken and worried.

In the last few years, we've seen a rise in trans and anti-queer hate.

Waterloo region has the highest police reports of hate in the country.

The impact of hate on people's lives is immense. The threats lead to fear, health consequences, mistrust and isolation. We have to do better to fight hate in our communities, across Ontario and online.

I'm sick of online trolls spewing disgusting names and social media companies that stoke these fires of hate to make record profits and that send youth down hate-filled rabbit holes, leading to radicalization.

So much has been done by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and allies to fight for equity—rights at work, support to transition and to be safe. But we know more needs to be done.

Today, I hold in my heart those who have died simply for being who they are—because baby, you were born this way.

Let us never forget any life lost, and let us fight hate, toxic masculinity, misogyny, misinformation and disinformation, and lead with love, humanity and respect for human rights for all, today and every day.

Applause.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have with us, in the Speaker's gallery today, Myriam De la Roca Alvarez, the consul general of the Republic of Guatemala in Toronto.

Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature.

As mentioned earlier, also joining us today is Cheri DiNovo, the former member for Parkdale–High Park in the 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st Parliaments.

Also in the Speaker's gallery: the former member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke in the 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd Parliaments, John Yakabuski.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I want to welcome great leaders from Local 1-2010 Steelworkers: Jason Lacko, Wes Ridler, Roger Beland.

Most importantly, Speaker, I want to introduce you to my great son, Jérémy, and his partner, Katelin Kozlovich,

who will start on December 1, following in her father's footsteps to become an OPP. We are proud of you. Welcome to Queen's Park.

1050

Ms. Laura Smith: I'd like to welcome Brenda Sky, Jennifer Mak and their group from Simple Coaching, helping the community from Thornhill and beyond. Welcome to the House.

Hon. Graydon Smith: I'm pleased to recognize some special guests from the riding and elsewhere today here to watch one of our pages, Luke Hu, in action. Please join me in welcoming his grandparents Shirley and Grant Bartlett from my riding and his parents, Ian and Leah Hu, and brother, Ben Hu—delighted to have you all here today in Queen's Park.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd like to join everyone else in also welcoming, of course, former MPP Cheri DiNovo, member for Parkdale–High Park from 2006 to 2017. Welcome to your House.

It is also my pleasure this morning to introduce a young education advocate for my riding, Alice Ahern, and her mom Leila to the Legislature.

We are also joined by a number of Ontario veterans here in support of MPP Stevens's private member's bill, the Remembrance Day Observance Act. Thank you for your service and welcome to your House.

MPP Billy Denault: I want to introduce and recognize the various representatives in the gallery from my riding of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke who are here with the county of Renfrew as part of their Renfrew county advocacy day. It's a privilege to represent the Ottawa Valley here in Queen's Park, and it's equally honourable to get to introduce Queen's Park to the Ottawa Valley today. To each and every one of you, welcome to Queen's Park and enjoy question period.

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue aux membres de l'AFO, l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario. On a ici avec nous M. Fabien Hébert, président; Peter Hominuk, directeur général; et Sonia Behilil, directrice des politiques et des relations gouvernementales. J'ai bien hâte de dîner avec vous aujourd'hui, et merci pour ce que vous faites auprès de la communauté francophone.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I'm incredibly honoured to have almost 50 veterans and comrades from Legion branches across St. Catharines and Toronto here with us today in the gallery. I want to thank all service members, past and present, that are here with us today in the gallery. Thank you for your service.

We have Branch 138, 24, 350, 344 and 101 present today in the gallery along with representatives from the 10th Battery Association, Lincoln and Welland Regiment Association, OSSTF, True Patriot Love Foundation, HMCS York, my constituency staff team, and a few other very special guests that I want to introduce—and I have to get this through—my cousins Joanne and Dennis Duquette, service members from the Canadian Armed Forces, and the most wonderful woman here tonight, who's been behind

me every step of my political career, my mom, Pat Lindal. Welcome to your House.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: It's my honour to welcome Dr. Suanne Wong from EHN Canada and Monika Frejlich from the Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'd like to welcome super smart youth from U of T's Munk school who are here today to watch us, so hopefully we behave, and a member from beautiful Beaches–East York, a young whippersnapper here with TMU, Galiba Mobassira Bornona.

Mr. Chris Glover: I'm pleased to introduce retired Master Corporal Iain Hamilton. Master Corporal Hamilton served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada and as a UN peacekeeper in Cyprus, where he was among the Canadian blue berets awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988. He later completed tours in Norway and Germany and has continued serving Canada as a civilian at Base Borden.

Alongside these many accomplishments, he is also the father of my executive assistant, Sam Hamilton. I want to thank Master Corporal Hamilton for his over 40 years of service to our country. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Jess Dixon: It gives me great pleasure to welcome the Ontario women's coalition, particularly Jean Tweed Centre director, Belinda Marchese, and from YWCA Cambridge, Nataleigh Ballantyne.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Welcome to Camille Quenneville, the CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario; Michael Anhorn, the CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association; Belinda Marchese, the executive director of the Jean Tweed Centre, who is also here with the Ontario women's coalition; the students of Humber College, bachelor of public relations program; and the mental health partners. Welcome to your House.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, we are out of time for introduction of visitors. However, I want to apologize if you have not been introduced; it's my fault, not your member's fault. But there is a time again at 1 o'clock if you'd like to join us to introduce your guests to have their name recorded in Hansard.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order: I'd just like to announce to members that the night sitting scheduled for this evening has been cancelled.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We can change that.

Laughter.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): It is now time for question period.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question this morning is to the Premier. The Globe and Mail reported that Keel Digital Solutions was receiving payments from the government as recently as last month. This is contradictory to what the Premier told us earlier this week, when he said that funds to the company were frozen in light of the audit and the OPP investigation.

Can the Premier explain this contradiction?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've mentioned many times in this House, within 24 hours, in the first week of November, when we received the forensic audit, we reported it right to the OPP. I don't know how I can be any more clear on how quickly we swifited upon the forensic audit results and reported them to the OPP.

But what I will speak about is our funding, our historic investments into our post-secondary sector, whether it's the \$1 billion that the Leader of the Opposition voted down in budget 2025 or the \$1.3 billion that was invested last year into the sector, which, again, the opposition voted down.

But, Speaker, we'll continue to be there for the sector, investing into labour market needs. Whether it's STEM, skilled trades, teaching or nursing as well, we'll continue to be there for the sector time and time again, as we always have done.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Well, Speaker, it might be hard for the government members to follow along with this, because the thing is that this company has received funding from so many different ministers and so many different grant programs as part of this government's pay-to-play scheme.

But look, Keel Digital Solutions received about \$240,000 a month from the Skills Development Fund. They continue to receive that. They told journalists, actually, that they are expecting funds to hit their bank account again later this month.

Can the Premier confirm if Keel Digital Solutions is going to continue receiving funding from the Skills Development Fund?

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

Hon. David Piccini: No payments have been made in November, and as the Premier has said, we're reviewing all payments.

It's inappropriate for me to speak on this further, but what I can say is we're continuing to support meaningful training in every corner of this province. As we face economic headwinds, we've got to look to Ontarians to say we've got programs to support them with reskilling, with retraining to join our nuclear fleet—18,000 jobs with SMRs, new jobs expected with new nuclear—to join critical infrastructure projects like the Bridgecon project

over Rosedale Valley Road that I visited earlier this week. These are the programs that we're supporting, helping people change lives to land a better job with a bigger paycheck.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, the Premier said he had frozen the funds to this company when the money was still flowing—the same company that was hand-picked by the Minister of Labour while he was going to the Leafs game with their CEO and taking trips to Paris with the lobbyist that lobbied for them.

Every single morning, we wake up to new scandals and new headlines about this Minister of Labour and this government. When is the Premier going to clean up his act and fire this minister?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, it's this Premier that took to the people in January a plan to protect workers and to protect their jobs, to make sure we're investing in the things that we need to stand up and build a stronger Ontario—an Ontario ravaged by massive tax hikes, by a manufacturing fleet that was fleeing this province under the previous government propped up by the NDP—300,000 jobs that left this province.

1100

We're standing up—in fact, Speaker, over \$40 billion in investment this year alone. Do you know what the number was when the Liberals were last in office? It was \$8 billion. That's what's grown under this Premier's leadership. It's putting men and women to work. We've got to retrain, we've got to reskill, and we've got a fund to do it. It's helping train people on the lines of a construction sector that they wouldn't support. It's not just organized labour and construction that left them; it's groups like the hospitality workers' union whom I'm meeting for lunch today, who are helping train a next generation of men and women in our tourism sector. We're going to have their backs and continue supporting them.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Do you know what, Speaker? I'm going to go back to the Premier, but this is about priorities. This is what this is really about.

Yesterday, the government suspended debate early to make sure that all of these government members could make it to the Premier's \$1,500-a-plate birthday party. Do you know what? I've got to tell you, you could all come to my birthday party, and I won't charge you a cent.

Today we are surrounded by health care workers, front-line workers, who are seeing their jobs disappear around them. And instead of supporting these workers and workers all across this province, this Premier is more concerned about his own friends and his own donors.

So why is the Premier willing to spend taxpayer dollars enriching his friends and donors instead of nurses and health care workers?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for York South–Weston.

MPP Mohamed Firin: I can speak to the countless individuals who have donated to the leader's party, but that's not what I'm going to focus on today. I want to talk about what the Skills Development Fund is doing in my community of York South–Weston.

I went to the Hammer Heads Program, where they're training young men and women in the skilled trades, and I've come across over 100 young individuals who have been trained by skills development. And what is success for these individuals, Speaker? I will tell you what success is: I'm proud to say to the House today that 80 of those individuals, young men and women who have lived in community housing, have now put a down payment on a home and they've been able to purchase a home. That's what this program is about. It's about impact, and we're doing that. We're protecting the workers and we'll continue to do so.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd love to see the source on that one.

Look, if this government had any clue about a jobs plan, there wouldn't be 700,000 people unemployed in the province of Ontario right now. We know that this Premier only listens to CEOs. He stood here in this place just a couple of weeks ago, when he actually showed up here, and he said—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Interjection.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: We know that the Premier only listens to CEOs. He only listens to the people who are going to show up for his \$1,500-a-plate fundraisers, and that's the reason he shut down the Legislature yesterday.

But do you know what's interesting? Guess where those dollars go, and guess where salaries do go up, Speaker: Executives of the companies that receive SDF money, because this government is the party of big bosses, not workers.

What did the Premier do to make sure that government funds were used to support workers, not C-suite executives?

MPP Mohamed Firin: Speaker, I can tell you that the NDP has lost its way with workers and I can show you the results in my riding of York South–Weston, where they've lost 30% of the vote share. It's because of that type of ideology that they're losing their vote share.

To protect the workers of this province, you have to support the workers of this province, and the member and her party keep voting—their record shows they vote every single time against the workers in this province.

Speaker, what I will tell you is the story of a woman that I met at A Women's Work. Janet, who came—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas will come to order.

MPP Mohamed Firin: —to this country, is now getting double her paycheque and is providing for her family. To protect the workers in this province, Speaker,

your voting record has to show it, and unfortunately for the leader, it just doesn't show it.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm going to go back to the Premier again. I know that he only listens to CEOs, but he really should try listening to workers for once, like the nurses and the health care workers that are here today in the galleries. They learned that 40 of their colleagues at the North Bay Regional Health Centre are going to be laid off. The hospital is at full capacity, the patients are seeing longer and longer wait times, and this Premier is more focused on delivering results for his friends and for lobbyists through his pay-to-play schemes like the Skills Development Fund than he is on delivering health care, and that's the truth.

Back to the Premier: When is he going to clean up this mess and fire this Minister of Labour?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, let's talk health care and the Skills Development Fund, which is helping train health care workers, nurses, PSWs, thousands of people. We've had 100,000 workers across Ontario receive employment within 60 days of this fund and of this program that's helping change lives—change lives for people who are building. You heard about the projects we're building, from new nuclear, to new mines, to new public transit, to new hospitals, to new schools. It's going to require a workforce.

We want to make sure we're training that workforce to build and to achieve our ambitious infrastructure plan of over \$200 billion. That's why we've launched this fund, to help change lives, and it's working. It's working for the union training centres, for the unions who abandoned that party. They abandoned them because they know their future is better under Premier Doug Ford, who's going to secure their future by building, and that's going to guarantee their paycheque.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: In the words of the great Yogi Berra, it's déjà vu all over again. Another day, another revelation about Keel Digital Solutions. As we've heard, they have been receiving \$240,000—that's right, \$240,000—a month, while they're under a forensic audit.

And I'll remind the minister and everybody on this side of the House, the forensic audit literally says, "They're hiding something from us." They're hiding something from us. Shouldn't the money have stopped once they started that audit? They received a payment in October. That's right: October, last month. They're expecting one this month, but I have a feeling they might not get it after all of this.

But the question is, why would a company that's under a forensic audit, that's now been referred to the OPP, still getting money? It should have stopped, Minister, when it had an audit, but at least when we were alerted to having a forensic audit. Why didn't that happen?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, you heard from my colleague within 24 hours when this was referred. As I said, no funds from our ministry have flown this month. In our Skills Development Fund, we have strict risk assessment measures, monthly expenditure reporting, spot audits, clear TPA conditions within the program. These controls are critical to improve the integrity of the program.

That program is changing lives—as I mentioned, for 100,000 Ontarians, employment within 60 days or less. Some of those Ontarians have been transformed through the incredible work of the Unite Here action centre, Local 75. I'm meeting with them for lunch today where we're going to talk about the life-changing work they have done. I've attended some of their graduation ceremonies. I've invited that member opposite; he hasn't shown up. He won't attend those unions because they've abandoned his party, because they know that thanks to this fund, it's changing lives. It's changing lives for the young women and men who are being transformed at their action centre. I'd ask that member, where is the action centre? Does he know?

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

Mr. John Fraser: The Minister of Colleges and Universities was giving the money after the audit anyway, and so was health, so I'll try to put this in simple terms. It's not when you found out the results of the audit; it's when the auditors said, "They're hiding something from us." If you were dealing with somebody that felt that you were hiding, wouldn't you say, "We need to put a pause on this because you're not telling us what we need to know"? That is a reasonable thing. I can see the Minister of Finance nodding in agreement. He understands that.

1110

Let's look at some facts. Let's stick to the Minister of Labour's involvement. His best friend was Keel's lobbyist, the one he went to a Paris wedding with. The ministry said the company was going to buy its own software from itself, in an out-scheme. It was flagged for an audit, then a forensic audit, and now it's with the OPP anti-rackets squad. And they continue to get money every month.

I guess the real question is, why won't the minister—or anybody on that side—take responsibility for the continued payment of money to this company while they are under—

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

Hon. David Piccini: In fact, Speaker, it was I that ensured we audit all programs under the Skills Development Fund, something we brought in. Every program gets audited—every one. So it's not unique to have an audit, Speaker. Every program gets audited.

We've got robust tools in place to help train workers, to give them a shot. When we've got a President who has launched an all-out assault on key sectors of our economy, Ontarians want to know that they've got a Premier who's going to support them with better training, better training

to help build a more prosperous Ontario. We've got to stand on our own two feet.

It's this Premier who said we're going to procure and buy Ontario. It's this Premier, after they left us with expired Chinese PPE, who said we're going to build that stuff here in Ontario. It's this Premier who said we're going to build hospitals, schools, bridges, new nuclear so we can be energy sufficient.

It's the men and women who work in the unions who get that job done that abandoned them and backed this Premier, because when they get to work and earn a paycheque, their future is secured. That's what this Premier is going to continue to—

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

Mr. John Fraser: I don't think the minister is auditing everything, and if he is, he'd better get some new auditors. And he'll read the Auditor General's report that will tell him that exactly. Don't take it from me.

Keel's lobbyist is the minister's close personal friend—the Paris wedding. Is that why the payments continued? Is it because his seatmate at the Leafs game was a director at the company? Is it because the CEO of Keel Digital Solutions has deep connections to the Conservative Party? Is it because of donations?

Why would you continue to give somebody money that you didn't trust—any of us, in anything, at home, your family and business? It's unbelievable, Minister.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Through the Speaker.

Mr. John Fraser: Reasonable people would just simply say to the minister, "Why will you not take responsibility for what happened?"

Hon. David Piccini: I have. I've stood in this House every day taking responsibility for our program. It's a shame he's denigrating the very public servants who do audits for all of our programs, who conduct monthly visits, who go to the training programs and visit the workers who are doing the training, the trainers who are leading the training. We've met. We visited training centres in every corner of this province.

My parliamentary assistant mentioned A Women's Work. We were recently there with them at IBEW Local 353. We could talk about how members of their executive donate to the NDP, but, again, as my parliamentary assistant said, that's not what this is about. This is about changing lives. This is about a next generation of electrical workers working on transmission lines to build affordable energy in every corner of this province, after the previous government left people choosing between heating or eating.

That's what we're doing: changing lives. Mobile training units going into Indigenous communities, helping training, supported by the SDF. Helping break down barriers for underrepresented communities to enter the skilled trades—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Ted Hsu: I looked carefully at the numbers in the Auditor General's Skills Development Fund report. Low-scoring projects got only 51% of their target for participants getting a job. High-scoring projects got 68% of their targets. So high-scoring training projects were way better at getting you a job.

The minister went in and he chose low-ranked proposals over high-ranked proposals. The result? Some 7,000 people who could have did not get jobs. Speaker, how is this Premier going to tell 7,000 unemployed people that he blew their chance to get a job in order to fuel the PC gravy train?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, one million net new jobs since this government came to office—one million. In communities like mine, when I went to manufacturers who were ravaged by the previous government, moms and dads who were sent home, furloughed from their job because of their irresponsible actions—raising taxes, driving businesses out—construction workers who were left scratching their head because, of course, the previous Premier wanted Ontario to be a service economy.

All of that's changing under this Premier. We're building in every corner public transit: so many subway extensions I can't even name them all; the Northlander; the two-way, all-day GO to communities like mine; the Ontario Line; the new Union Station that I recently visited, where I met Marvin, who's a Hammer Heads grad, something the member from York South–Weston mentioned. Every day we stand in this House referencing tangible projects that are changing lives for people like Marvin—

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, the ranking system for skills development really worked according to the Auditor General. Low-ranked projects got only 70% of the number of people they promised to complete the program; high-ranked projects got 90% to complete training. High-ranked projects got more people trained and got more people employed, yet so many were not chosen, passed over and given to friends who had low-ranked projects.

How can the minister defend the scandalous meddling in skills training which cost jobs for 7,000 unemployed people?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Economic and Social Opportunity.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: I worked at a time when the Liberals were in leadership and there was mass job loss. So many families that were dual-income families turned into single-income families. And you know who was suffering the most? They were women. Women suffered the most under the Liberal leadership. So many jobs—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: —province, and they didn't even support women getting into industries like construction, like welding, like the trades.

But that's what our government is doing. They didn't do it, but we are, and I'm incredibly proud, Madam Speaker, of the investments and the work that our Minister of Labour has done to see thousands of women enter into the skilled trades. A Women's Work is a skills development recipient, and they are training thousands of women getting into the skilled trades, something the Liberals didn't do. We won't take—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ted Hsu: These numbers I looked at from the Auditor General's report cover rounds 1 to 4 of the Skills Development Fund. The data isn't in for round 5, and there's still \$700 million of gravy to come in rounds 6, 7 and 8.

I hope the government members had a good time at their event yesterday after they adjourned the House early. I'd like to ask the Premier, how did funding for round 6 go last night?

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: I'm going to look at our numbers: 390,000 women are working in the skilled trades industry right now, an 11% increase this year alone; 10,000 women have been able to access the supports and wraparound supports to ensure that they complete the training in skilled trades.

Madam Speaker, we are seeing more women being able to leave industries and go into jobs that are transforming their lives. This is our record. It's not the record of the Liberals, who chased away thousands of jobs and put so many women's lives at risk because of it. So we won't take—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: —them.

We're going to keep training women, and the Skills Development Fund is going to keep funding the transformation of men and women in the skilled trades and so many other sectors, like STEM. I'm very proud of our work, and we're going to continue to keep doing it.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mme France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé. Forty-four front-line primary health care workers from North York Family Health Team are here today in the gallery. They have been on strike for five long weeks. They're on strike because they have not received any recruitment, retention or pay increases for a very long time.

What is the government doing to ensure these workers at North York Family Health Team are compensated fairly?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I think everyone in this House would like the North York health team to be operational and serving patients in their community, but we also have to understand that collective agreements are negotiated between the employer and the employees. I don't think

there is anyone in that party who would suggest we should be inserting ourselves into those negotiations.

1120

Having said that, to suggest that we have not expanded and enhanced recruitment, retention and investments in our community care health care system is simply false. We know through investments that we've made through \$2.2 billion—not only increasing the number of primary care multidisciplinary teams that are operating across Ontario but also enhancing and ensuring that the existing operating teams have those funds available to them.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The primary health care system has been flatlined for about 12 years. A 2.7% increase is not keeping up with the cost of living.

Speaker, while these hard-working people are on strike, 95,000 patients do not get the care that the family health teams uniquely provide. That's the cancer survivor program, mental health counselling, nutrition therapy, smoking cessation, high-risk foot and wound care, and the support that keeps their family members healthy and out of hospital and emergency rooms.

What is the government doing to ensure primary care funding is used for the intended purpose and that these primary care workers who are here today receive proper pay for the hard work they do?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: The member opposite knows full well that our primary care enhancements and our investments, \$2.2 billion, include not only increasing the number of primary care multidisciplinary teams that are available to operate in the province of Ontario but are also enhancing and giving money to the existing primary care multidisciplinary teams.

I am frankly shocked that the NDP is suggesting that there is an opportunity or any desire for our government or any government to insert themselves into a negotiated settlement between an employer and an employee. How far you have fallen.

AUTISM SERVICES

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: My question is to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. Speaker, a month ago, I asked the minister when will the more than 64,000 children stuck on the Ontario Autism Program wait-list finally receive core clinical services. One month later, still no answers.

Speaker, how much longer will parents be forced to watch this government use the \$2.5-billion skills development slush fund like a personal piggy bank for friends and family instead of using those tax dollars to end the autism wait-list?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank the honourable member for the important question. Madam Speaker, 8,000 families: That was the total number across the province who were receiving supports and services under the previous government. For us, that was unacceptable. For the people of Ontario, the families, the parents, that was unacceptable.

What did we do? We listened to families. We took action. We backed that action by record investments. Madam Speaker, 8,000 families in total under the previous government—today, more than 23,000 families are receiving an expanded core service. This is in addition to the tens of thousands of families who are accessing supports through other streams, which were never provided under the previous government.

So, Madam Speaker, let me make it very clear: We'll continue working with families, with service providers to ensure no child and youth in this province is left behind.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Don Valley North.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Speaker, while I hear the minister's attempt to string together some sort of answer with various numbers, the number that he continues to ignore is the 64,000 children stuck on the Ontario Autism Program wait-list.

Speaker, let me offer the minister a different number—and this really should be a very simple yes or no response: Do you support your government's decision to give \$10.5 million to the owner of a downtown strip club instead of using that money to end the autism wait-list?

Hon. Michael Parsa: Again, I thank the honourable member for the question.

Madam Speaker, let me make it very clear: It's the children and youth in this province—that's our top priority.

Let me just get this straight so that everybody can hear: Under the previous government, 8,000 families in total were receiving supports, because they were investing only \$300 million across the province. Today, we're investing \$779 million in the Ontario Autism Program.

I'm going to read a quote from a mother who has sent us—as a result of one of the programs that we brought in, as a result of listening to experts, to clinicians, to family members, to those with lived experience. Here is what one mother shared with me, on the entry to school program: She described the entry to school program as the program that has been most helpful to her son. The results? "He has begun speaking, after being told he would never talk again. Can you imagine the joy I felt as a mother? The fact that he began speaking words"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Perth-Wellington.

SCHOOL BOARDS

Mr. Matthew Rae: My question is to the great Minister of Education. Less than three weeks—

Interjections.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Yes, yes, I know. I've got to get to the question, colleagues.

Less than three weeks ago, following a scathing government report into the Near North District School Board, the minister took decisive action and issued binding directions to that board. Since then, Near North's director of education has failed to attend multiple community

meetings, and the board has failed to comply with the minister's clear directives.

To make matters worse, the Leader of the Opposition has suggested that students and families should wait until the next election to expect accountability. Colleagues, maybe this is what she told her members at her leadership review. But our government finds this unacceptable. Students and families at Near North cannot afford to wait years for an election while their education is put at risk.

Through you, Speaker: Will the minister sit back and wait for the next election to get them back on track, or will he take action right now?

Hon. Paul Calandra: What a good question from the member opposite.

I can assure him that the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka wouldn't let me sit back and not take action for four years, nor would the people in his community.

Let's keep in mind, that is a community that, for over 10 years, has been waiting for this school and has not been able to get that school done. The children in that community are right now being educated in a partially demolished high school, because of the ineffectiveness and the inability of trustees to put students, parents and teachers first.

Imagine the Leader of the Opposition suggesting that I should wait four years, at the next municipal elections and trustee elections, to take any form of action. That's completely unacceptable.

I expect that is why the Leader of the Opposition, yesterday, chose a silly stunt to get kicked out of this place, to avoid the accountability of voting against parents and teachers and students. She didn't want to be on the record voting against Bill 33 because she knows parents, students and teachers support it. That's why she chose a silly stunt to get kicked out of here, but left her—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Perth—Wellington.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Maybe the Leader of the Opposition will stand in her place today and ask the Minister of Education—but I won't hold my breath.

Waiting for the next election to hold school boards accountable is simply not good enough for students.

We have seen what happens when school boards are not held accountable for their failure to students. A clear example is the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board where trustees spent hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars on a luxury trip to Italy to buy art. They stayed in fancy hotels, rode in luxury cars and ate at Michelin restaurants, spending taxpayer money that should have been in the classroom supporting students.

Speaker, can the minister tell the House what he's going to do to make sure that trustees stop failing students and how our government is building an education system that puts students first?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's not even just that. Consider this: In Brant—what you just referenced—these are a group of trustees who called themselves back into a special meeting so that they could change the rules to allow

themselves to go on this high-priced Italian vacation to look for artwork.

1130

Now, it gets even worse, because the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, we support them to the tune of about \$275,000 for trustees; they chose to give themselves more. They actually spent \$1.3 million in Ottawa supporting trustees and direct expenses of over \$444,000. It gets even worse than that: Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Catholic board—multi-year surpluses into multi-year deficits.

When you look at what the actions of these boards are doing, it's not putting parents first, it's not putting students first and it's certainly not putting teachers first.

The opposition Liberals and NDP had an opportunity to vote in favour of students, parents and teachers yesterday, they said no. We will take action, we will put them back on track and we will live up to our responsibilities.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: My question is to the Premier. Today in the gallery we have the women's coalition here for their National Housing Day lobby. These remarkable organizations support clients facing homelessness, intimate partner violence, mental health crises and dangerous substance use every single day. They need increased funding from this government for supportive and transitional housing beds with mental health supports.

A month in a shelter costs \$6,000; a prison, \$15,000 a month; a hospital stay will cost you \$30,000 a month, but a month in a supportive housing unit, less than \$4,000. It's not just good policy, it's a great business case. Investing in proven solutions? This government can do so, but instead they're doubling down on Bill 60, which rips away tenants' protections.

When will the Premier grow a heart and build the supportive housing that Ontario's women and children need?

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thanks for the question. Listen, we continue to make investments for Ontarians every day, for people who need that housing. That's why we've committed over \$1.7 billion this year alone for supportive housing and homelessness services. Through the New Deal for Toronto, where the member represents, in Toronto, investing \$1.2 billion directly into shelters and homelessness services, and another \$120 million for the new deal for Ottawa.

Let's talk more numbers: \$700 million in 2024 in the Homelessness Prevention Program and Indigenous supportive housing funding. All these dollars are going into the supports and services that this member asked the question about.

We continue to work with our housing service managers to make sure that they have the resources to make the investments they need, whether it's in Toronto, whether it's in Ottawa, whether it's in Kenora—everywhere in this province.

We are committed to the people of Ontario, the women of Ontario, to make sure they are getting—

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

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: The real numbers are that almost 40,000 people in Ontario are waiting for supportive housing, and that's a four-year wait, with 3% less housed annually.

This gallery is filled with front-line housing workers who are fed up with this government's hollowing out of their public services, people in Ontario in mental health crisis and dealing with addictions on a massive scale. We need this government to invest in the supportive housing that allows women to heal and thrive. As one client said today, "Housing women is a nation-building project."

Can the Premier please explain why his government is refusing to build and fund the mental health and addiction treatment beds for women on the scale that is actually needed in this province?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: Women's shelters are extremely important throughout the journey of a woman trying to get safe, trying to get the support they need when they are fleeing violence. That's why our government, just recently actually, announced \$26.7 million to expand shelter bed access for women to over 300 beds to be added to the system. It just happened last week.

But we're also making sure that economic supports are available as well. That's why a part of Ontario-STANDS's whole fifth pillar is economic stability and independence for women. Through the Investing in Women's Futures Program and the Women's Economic Security Program, our government is making sure women have the training and the supports that they need to be able to get employment that pays well so that they never have to choose between housing, keeping themselves safe or staying with an abusive partner. Our government will continue to support women.

We thank the Ontario women's coalition for being strong advocates to help women, and we'll work together to ensure that women are safe in—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Nepean.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Tyler Watt: My question is for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. It is a shame, what is happening with the \$2.5-billion skills development slush fund. It was supposed to train workers and help people to build up this great province.

This week, we learned that millions have gone to Keel Digital Solutions from this ministry and the Skills Development Fund, even after it was flagged for a forensic audit and has been sent to the OPP anti-rackets branch.

So knowing that Keel Digital Solutions received millions after this, Madam Speaker, my question is simple:

Has the minister or any of his staff intervened or influenced who received money from his ministry or the Skills Development Fund?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I appreciate the member opposite's question. I just will remind him: Part of our \$1-billion investment in budget 2025, that their party voted down, had 2,200 new seats for nursing. I know he is a nurse as well, Speaker, and he'll appreciate the expansion in nursing. He was just at Carleton recently.

Speaker, on top of that, we've invested \$750 million into over 20,000 new STEM seats. We're going to continue making the strategic investments that are needed for the labour market. That's on top of the \$1.3 billion, the largest investment in post-secondary, that we invested last year, Speaker.

Mr. John Fraser: Why did you fire 10,000 people?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I hear the new leader of the opposition stating that 10,000, but the reality is, Speaker, he doesn't like to be reminded: When they were in power, tuition went up over 48% under their watch.

Right now we have an affordability crisis. The reality is, they don't care about the affordability or the accessibility of the students. It's our government that cares about what the—

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

MPP Tyler Watt: I don't know what any of that had to do with my question. I thought that this government was supposed to be the government of fiscal responsibility and accountability. But every single day, we are learning more and more about how rotten the Skills Development Fund is. And now you're all being dragged into it, and you know it.

Speaker, this minister essentially fired 10,000 people from our college system because of the chronic underfunding and future cuts coming to the post-secondary system. George Brown announced today that they're cutting one third of their world-renowned culinary program.

Minister, given that you're letting our post-secondary system collapse, how did millions of dollars go to questionable companies after they came under an audit and an OPP investigation? Speaker, who knows who at Keel Digital Solutions?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I can't say I know anyone at Keel Digital Solutions, but what I do know is that operating funding has gone up over 12% since 2023-24, Speaker. The member opposite doesn't want to admit that.

Funding for the post-secondary sector is the highest it's been in Ontario's history. We are currently doing a funding formula review with all 47 of our publicly assisted colleges, Speaker. We'll continue to make those strategic investments, including budget 2025.

The member opposite voted down our budget. Unfortunately, you voted down \$1 billion that we invested into our post-secondary system. Are you proud of voting down \$1 billion for our post-secondary system? It sure does look like the member opposite is proud of that.

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation. Speaker, people across Ontario want to know that our economy stays strong and safe. They want good jobs. They want a stable supply chain. And they want our government to act when new threats appear.

Right now, we see the real risks: tariff threats from Donald Trump, global pressure on trade and key industries. Ontario cannot sit still. We need projects that protect our future. We need strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, and we need to unlock the Ring of Fire so we can build the metals, energy and products that our province depends on.

Speaker, can the minister explain how working with the Indigenous community and advancing the Ring of Fire is helping save Ontario from rising—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation.

1140

Hon. Greg Rickford: How about that member of provincial Parliament for Markham–Thornhill? He’s just a great guy and he’s asking an awesome question. I’m happy to answer, Madam Speaker.

Of course, I take us all back to about 18 months ago, when the Premier and I were up in Greenstone celebrating the development of the Migizi Plaza, owned by the Minodahmun Development corporation—three First Nations that have got together and see the opportunity to build out a commercial plaza and staging area as we embark on one of the most magnificent corridors anywhere in the province, at least in my view.

This will be a staging area for activity that’s going to be happening fairly quickly. In fact, some of it is, Madam Speaker. Aroland First Nation’s shared prosperity agreement set the stage to fortify energy transmission lines to go farther north, to the communities most proximal for the Ring of Fire, who are on diesel generation.

Madam Speaker, these kinds of economic partnerships are setting a new standard for how governments work nation to nation with First Nations for economic prosperity—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Markham–Thornhill.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the minister for his answer and his strong leadership.

Speaker, across Ontario, we are seeing First Nations lead major energy and resource projects. They are building key infrastructure. They are building the transmission lines. They are opening doors to new jobs. And they are creating long-term economic opportunities for their communities.

These partnerships are not small; they are nation-building. They are helping us develop critical minerals, expand clean energy and connect remote communities to

the grid. They show what we can achieve when the First Nations have a true equity role.

Speaker, can the minister explain how expanding these economic partnerships with First Nations is helping build a stronger, more secure future for Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Madam Speaker, I was in Calgary last week at the Spark energy conference and we were talking about all of the different kinds of economic partnerships that we’re developing with First Nations communities in this province.

I’ll start with Watay Power, Niagara region wind farm, Oneida Energy Storage, the Chatham-Lakeshore transmission line, the Waasigan transmission line—these are energy projects that all have significant percentages and tens of millions of dollars of equity positions for First Nations communities.

We’re being invited across the country to talk about these opportunities and the business model we’re using to work with Indigenous business leaders, Madam Speaker. It’s changing the game here in Ontario. It’s attracting attention across Canada.

In fact, even out in London, England, at the stock exchange, they were asking, “How is Ontario doing this and why is it so popular?” It’s popular because it means something. It’s not quixotic policy, Madam Speaker. Instead, it’s practical, on-the-ground relationships built on business and good faith with First Nations businesses and leaders.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: To the Premier: Many veterans, families and Royal Canadian Legions and communities across Ontario have expressed how important it is for young students to understand the significance of Remembrance Day, and all the conflicts, past and present.

Can the Premier share whether the government supports expanding and strengthening Remembrance Day education and learning opportunities in our school system, so that the students across Ontario can continue to honour those who have served, past and present?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: First, let me just thank the member for the question. She has a wonderful statement every year. I know her son is a service person with the navy, if I’m not mistaken, so I thank him on our behalf for his service.

In the lead-up to Remembrance Week, I did issue a statement to all boards across the province of Ontario that it was my expectation that they ensure that every single school honoured our veterans in a way that was appropriate and, very clearly to all of them, if any one of them did not do that in the way that I expected, that we would step in and make sure that they did that.

I know the member has a bill before this House. I will take responsibility for that—I only just recently learned about it earlier this morning. I can tell you that on Friday,

I was preparing already to make an announcement with respect to a more unified curriculum across the province, across every school board and across every school so that we can ensure that Remembrance Week is honoured in the way that reflects the sacrifices that were made to give us the country that we have.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for St. Catharines.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: It's a good thing that the minister does support furthering student education on Remembrance Day because, as he mentioned, I did table a bill two weeks ago, actually. It's too bad that you just read it this morning because it's a really good one. It's entitled the Remembrance Day Observance Act, and it does just that.

To the minister: Will you support Bill 65, allowing working Ontarians the opportunity to take part in Remembrance Day services on November 11, and support the creation of a specific school curriculum that expands students learning of military conflicts in Ontario? It's really important that we get this curriculum straight and to the point.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, the member will know that within the Education Act, there is already a mandatory curriculum, but I don't think that curriculum is strong enough and I think it needs to be strengthened. I agree with the member that it absolutely needs to be strengthened.

There already is within the act—

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, I know the member—I've said that we will have a mandatory curriculum across the province in every school, and I'll remind the member that your party voted against that centralization just yesterday, but I appreciate that you want to go in that direction.

Let me just say this—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Even in talking about a centralized curriculum when it comes to Remembrance Week, you have division within that party, which is too bad.

I will say that I know this member has been very consistent when it comes to remembrance activities. I can tell you that we are going to strengthen what is already mandatory in the Education Act to ensure that it is consistent across the entire province.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Despite the Auditor General's report that calls the Skills Development Fund not fair, accountable or transparent; despite intervention by the Minister of Labour to approve low-scoring applicants connected to his personal friends; and despite low-scoring applicants getting hundreds of millions of dollars while high-scoring applicants were denied, this government continues to stand by their man.

We have a Premier saying that the Skills Development Fund is the best program ever, but today I'd like to hear from the Minister of Finance.

Before being elected, he held senior roles in financial services. Through you, Speaker, to the minister: What is his view on the Auditor General's finding that his government handed out hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars in a process that the Auditor General found to be not fair, not transparent and not accountable?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Do you want to hear my view? I support workers right across this province.

We want to build economic prosperity for everybody in this province. I think it's very painful for the member opposite to stand up there. Yes, I have a financial background, but let's think about our track record helping the workers and businesses and families in this province: an economy that's growing from \$830 billion to \$1.2 trillion, something we never saw under the previous government; almost one million jobs created—in fact, over one million jobs created since we took power. That's a pretty good track record.

The most painful of all: We're cutting taxes and fees and seeing credit rating upgrades while they raised taxes and saw credit rating downgrades.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Unfortunately, the finance minister didn't answer my question. But he has a strong financial background. He knows how to do his due diligence. He knows a bad deal when he sees one. I'm sure in his previous career when he saw deals where a company wanted a loan, but then when he did his due diligence he found some questionable business practices, he would have said, "Sorry, no deal."

1150

But here we have the Minister of Labour giving money to companies, even though these companies basically failed the equivalent of their loan application. In his previous career, if the Minister of Finance was supervising someone who approved that bad deal and he found out about it, he would have fired that person.

My question to the Minister of Finance, through you, Speaker: Why hasn't he demanded that the Minister of Labour be fired?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: I think the question is, will you or will you not support the fall economic statement and the \$30 billion of supports?

Madam Speaker, \$30 billion of support, right now, for the workers and the people—think about the WSIB rebates going through. Everyone knows small businesses need our support; \$2 billion going into their—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Scarborough—Guildwood will come to order.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: —accounts right now, Madam Speaker—\$2 billion. And we continue to support people right around this province with a plan to grow

Ontario in our energy sector, in our critical mineral sector, in our infrastructure, in our technologies. We've got a plan to protect Ontarians and families and workers, and we have a plan to grow Ontario. This is your—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Aris Babikian: My question is for the Associate Attorney General. Speaker, people across Ontario want to feel safe in their homes and communities. They want a justice system that puts public safety first. They want action when repeat violent offenders are arrested again and again. And they want to know that their government will keep standing up for them.

Speaker, we all know the federal bail system is not working. We have seen too many cases of dangerous offenders being arrested and then released the same day. Police, families and local leaders are calling for change. They want stronger rules. They want tougher action. They want real reform.

Speaker, can the Associate Attorney General explain how our government is pushing for stronger bail laws and tougher action on criminals?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to the member from Scarborough—Agincourt for raising such an important question. He's right: Ontario communities deserve better than a broken justice system that allows repeat offenders to be arrested and released on the same day.

In my new role as the Associate Attorney General, I've spent the past months listening to those on the ground: the prosecutors, the police, the municipalities, the organizations and the people directly impacted by criminal recidivism. Here's what's clear, Madam Speaker: Repeat offenders are being routinely allowed to wreak havoc on the public by way of an outdated and weak federal bail system.

Our government is holding Ottawa to account, and the results are showing with Bill C-14 being released this fall. It's a good first step and it demonstrates that our advocacy is leading the charge to keep families safe.

We know there is more to be done. Under the leadership of Premier Ford and our government, we're not going to stop. We're going to get it done.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Thank you to the Associate Attorney General.

Speaker, when it comes to federal bail laws, the people are clear: They want real action, not soft words. They want repeat violent offenders held to account. And they want a justice system that works for victims, not for criminals.

Our police, our prosecutors and our communities have been clear: The current system is not strong enough. It does not give front-line officers the tools they need. It does not give prosecutors the support they deserve. And it does not give families the peace of mind they expect—as the residents of Scarborough—Agincourt.

Speaker, can the Associate Attorney General explain how our government is working to keep our communities safe?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you again for that really important question.

As the last election results showed, the people of this province have entrusted us to protect them. Public safety is and will always be our government's top priority. That's been made very clear by our Premier and by our government.

That's why we're investing over \$110 million to make sure that high-risk offenders comply with their bail conditions and that prosecutors have the resources they need to handle complex bail hearings. That's why we have amended the Bail Act to improve enforcement in cases where an accused breaches their conditions.

Madam Speaker, we're never going to apologize for our calls and actions to keep repeat violent offenders off our streets.

HOUSING

MPP Catherine McKenney: After nearly a decade in power, this government has consistently failed to build the housing that Ontario needs. They have missed their own housing targets, homelessness has increased 25%—over 80,000 people—and now, instead of taking responsibility, they're blaming tenants.

Bill 60 doesn't build a single home. It makes evictions faster and easier. The government's own failure created the backlog crisis at the LTB and now they're punishing renters for it.

Speaker, why is this government blaming tenants for their failure to build housing instead of building non-profit and co-op housing, making evictions the last resort, ending exclusionary zoning and stopping the loss of existing affordable housing?

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: I appreciate the question.

Listen, I would be remiss if I didn't congratulate the Leader of the Opposition, by the way, on her Speaker's award for community theatre yesterday. That was quite a performance. I laughed; I cried; I shook my head, as usual.

But to the matter at hand, thanks to the member for the question. Listen, there's one thing that people in Ontario crave, which is balance in our system. That's what we are doing with Bill 60—bringing balance back to the system. People expect a rental market that works for them, one that's predictable, one that's stable, where agreements are upheld so everyone can benefit together.

Tenants have extraordinary protections in Ontario. That is not changing. But as I said, we are bringing balance back to the Landlord and Tenant Board to make sure the system works for responsible renters and responsible landlords, because for too long, these delays and inefficiencies have been a problem. We are fixing that problem. We are bringing balance back—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Thank you.

TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Toronto Centre on a point of order.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Today, as we all know, is the Trans Day of Remembrance. I just want to invite all the members to the transgender flag raising outside of Queen's Park at 12:15, and then afterward to invite everyone to a 1 p.m. reception, which I'm sponsoring in room 328. As we say in the community: Everyone is welcome.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Steve Clark: Just a short standing order 59 for the House: This afternoon, it's the government's intention that the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement will be introducing a government bill.

On Monday, November 24, in the afternoon, we'll have opposition day, followed by third reading debate on a government bill.

On Tuesday, November 25, in the morning, it will be second reading on the bill that it's our intention to table today, followed by, Tuesday afternoon, third reading debate on Bill 30.

And Wednesday and Thursday are to be determined.

NOTICES OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development regarding the Skills Development Fund. This matter will be debated on Tuesday, November 25, following private members' public business.

Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Don Valley West has given a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Finance regarding the Skills Development Fund. This matter will be debated on Tuesday, November 25, following private members' public business.

There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1200 to 1300.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that in the name of His Majesty the King, the Administrator has been pleased to assent to a certain bill in Her Honour's office.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): The following is the title of the bill to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to amend various Acts in relation to child, youth and family services, education, and colleges and universi-

ties / 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.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MPP Jamie West: A couple of members from the USW Local 6500 from Sudbury are here. I've got Dan, Daniel Bertrand; Gongga, Goncalo Valentim; OB, Michael Fraser O'Brien; and there ain't no party like a Del "parté"—Eric Delparte is here.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to welcome members of the women's coalition who are here for National Housing Day: Belinda Marchese, the executive director at Jean Tweed Centre; Clarissa Arthur, executive director of Nelson House; Dr. Volletta Peters, executive director of Sistering: A Woman's Place; Andrea Paszti, executive director of Street Haven; Lucy, who is a client at Street Haven; and many other incredible housing providers and women's support organizations who are part of the women's coalition. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Pam Tobin, the executive director of CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services. Thank you for your leadership in our community.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated November 20, 2025, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL POLICY

Mr. Brian Riddell: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mr. Riddell from the Standing Committee on Social Policy reports the following resolutions:

Resolved, that supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 66(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the Standing Committee on Social Policy will be placed on the orders and notices paper.

Report deemed received.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE,
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
CULTURAL POLICY

Hon. Laurie Scott: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): Ms. Scott from the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy reports—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 66(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy will be placed on the orders and notices paper.

Report deemed received.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
THE INTERIOR

Mr. Aris Babikian: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Interior.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mr. Babikian from the Standing Committee on the Interior reports the following resolutions:

Resolved, that—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 66(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the Standing Committee on the Interior will be placed on the orders and notices paper.

Report deemed received.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
JUSTICE POLICY

Mr. Lorne Coe: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mr. Coe from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy reports the following resolutions:

Resolved, that—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 66(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy will be placed on the orders and notices paper.

Report deemed received.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mr. Hardeman from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs reports the following resolutions:

Resolved, that—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Pursuant to standing order 66(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will be placed on the orders and notices paper.

Report deemed received.

INTRODUCTION OF
GOVERNMENT BILLS

BUY ONTARIO ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 VISANT À ENCOURAGER
À ACHETER ONTARIEN

Mr. Crawford moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 72, An Act to enact the Buy Ontario Act (Public Sector Procurement), 2025, to repeal the Building Ontario Businesses Initiative Act, 2022, to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to the installation of certain signs and to amend section 10.1 of the Legislation Act, 2006 with respect to certain provisions of the Protecting Condominium Owners Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 72, Loi visant à édicter la Loi de 2025 visant à encourager à acheter ontarien (approvisionnement du secteur public), à abroger la Loi de 2022 sur l'initiative favorisant l'essor des entreprises ontariennes, à modifier le Code de la route à l'égard de certains panneaux et à modifier l'article 10.1 de la Loi de 2006 sur la législation en ce qui concerne certaines dispositions de la Loi de 2015 sur la protection des propriétaires de condominiums.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Would you like to briefly explain the bill?

Hon. Stephen Crawford: Yes, I would. The Buy Ontario Act, 2025, would require public sector organizations to give preference to Ontario- or Canadian-made goods and services when making purchases. The legislation also includes provisions for compliance and liability protections and replaces previous government procurement legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROTECTING ONTARIO FROM URBAN WILDFIRES ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO CONTRE LES FEUX NON MAÎTRISÉS EN MILIEU URBAIN

Mr. Tabuns moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 73, An Act respecting urban wildfires / Projet de loi 73, Loi sur les feux non maîtrisés en milieu urbain.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Do you wish to briefly explain the bill?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. As you may well be aware, urban wildfires continue to become a larger problem. Toronto has been identified by the World Bank as at-risk for urban wildfire, and this bill would set up a framework for assessment of risk in putting in place policies to protect property and lives.

PICKERING COLLEGE ACT, 2025

Madame Gallagher Murphy moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting Pickering College.

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

First reading agreed to.

1310

CHRISTOPHER'S LAW (SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY) AMENDMENT ACT (INFORMATION DISCLOSURE), 2025

LOI DE 2025 MODIFIANT LA LOI CHRISTOPHER SUR LE REGISTRE DES DÉLINQUANTS SEXUELS (DIVULGATION DE RENSEIGNEMENTS)

Mr. Blais moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 74, An Act to Amend the Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry), 2000 with respect to the disclosure of information obtained from the sex offender registry / Projet de loi 74, Loi modifiant la Loi Christopher de 2000 sur le registre des délinquants sexuels en ce qui concerne la divulgation de renseignements obtenus du registre des délinquants sexuels.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

Mr. Stephen Blais: This bill is co-sponsored by the MPPs from Ajax, Ottawa–Vanier, as well as Don Valley North.

The act amends Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry), 2000, with respect to the disclosure of information obtained from the sex offender registry. The amendments include a provision permitting the disclosure to a prescribed entity for crime prevention or law enforcement purposes.

JARM HOLDINGS INVESTMENTS LTD. ACT, 2025

Madame Gallagher Murphy moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Jarm Holdings Investments Ltd.

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

First reading agreed to.

HOLY TRINITY RESTAURANT INC. ACT, 2025

Mr. Blais moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr9, An Act to revive Holy Trinity Restaurant Inc.

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

First reading agreed to.

FARIS TEAM MORTGAGE BROKERAGE CORP. ACT, 2025

Madame Gallagher Murphy moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr13, An Act to revive Faris Team Mortgage Brokerage Corp.

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

First reading agreed to.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Steve Clark: I move that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet during the winter adjournment for the purpose of meeting for pre-budget consultations.

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

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

MPP Wayne Gates: This is an issue that I've been working on for years: eliminating hospital parking fees in

Ontario. It's an unfair tax on the residents of Ontario, an unfair tax on the residents of Niagara. Think about it: Patients, families, caregivers, staff and visitors have to pay to go to a hospital. It makes absolutely no sense.

I'd say to the government that's talking about affordability all the time that here's a way to make it more affordable to live in the province of Ontario: Eliminate hospital parking fees in Ontario immediately.

I'm going to sign my name to these hundreds of petitions, and I'll give them to the Clerk with Maggie.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's kind of hard to lift these 2,500 signatures I have here. A number of folks have signed a petition. A number of people have given me this petition. They want to protect Ontario from Bill 5. They understand that Bill 5 is an attack on Indigenous rights, environmental protections, labour laws and democratic oversight. That's exactly why they're calling on the Ontario Legislative Assembly to repeal Bill 5.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Steve Clark: I move that, pursuant to standing order 50 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 68, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes; Bill 27, An Act to enact the Geologic Carbon Storage Act, 2025 and to amend various Acts with respect to wildfires, resource safety and surveyors; and Bill 46, An Act to amend various Acts;

That when the orders for the bills are next called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of each bill without further debate or amendment; and

That no deferral of the second reading votes on the bills shall be permitted; and

That if a recorded division is requested on the second reading votes on the bills, the division bill shall be limited to five minutes; and

That upon receiving second reading, Bills 68 and 27 shall be ordered for third reading, which orders may be called the same day; and

That when the order for third reading of Bill 68 is called, two hours shall be allotted to debate, with 36 minutes for the members of His Majesty's government, 36 minutes for the members of His Majesty's loyal opposition, 36 minutes for the members of the third party and 12 minutes for the independent members as a group; and

That at the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of Bill 27 without further debate or amendment; and

1320

That upon receiving second reading, Bill 46 shall be referred to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy; and

That the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy be authorized to meet for public hearings on Bill 46 on the following dates:

Wednesday, December 3, 2025, from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

Thursday, December 4, 2025, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

That the deadline for requests to appear for hearings be 12 noon on Wednesday, November 26, 2025; and

That the Clerk of the Committee shall provide a list of all interested presenters to each member of the subcommittee on committee business and their designate as soon as possible following the deadline for requests to appear; and

That if all requests to appear cannot be accommodated, each member of the subcommittee or their designate provide the Clerk of the Committee with a prioritized list of presenters to be scheduled, chosen from the list of all interested presenters for those respective hearings by 12 noon on Thursday, November 27, 2025; and

That the Minister of Red Tape Reduction or designate be invited to appear as the sponsor of Bill 46 at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, and that the minister shall have 20 minutes to make an opening statement followed by 39 minutes of questions and answers divided into two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the government members, two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the official opposition members and two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the third party; and

That witnesses shall be scheduled in groups of three for each one-hour time slot, with each presenter allotted seven minutes to make an opening statement followed by 39 minutes of questioning for all three witnesses, divided into two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the government members, two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the official opposition members and two rounds of 6.5 minutes for the third party; and

That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2025; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to Bill 46 be 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2025; and

That the committee meet for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 46 on Monday, December 8, 2025, from 9 a.m. until 10:15 a.m.; and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and from 6:30 p.m. until midnight; and

That on Monday, December 8, 2025, at 5 p.m., those amendments to Bill 46 which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto; and

At this time, the Chair shall allow one waiting period, if requested by a member of the committee, pursuant to standing order 131(a); and

That the committee shall report Bill 46 to the House no later than Tuesday, December 9, 2025, and if the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed passed by the committee and shall be deemed reported to and received by the House; and

That upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy on Bill 46, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith; and

That upon adoption of the report, Bill 46 shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called the same day; and

That when the order for third reading of Bill 46 is called, two hours shall be allotted to debate with 36 minutes for the members of His Majesty's government, 36 minutes for His Majesty's loyal opposition, 36 minutes for the members of the third party, and 12 minutes for the independent members as a group; and

That at the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of Bill 46 without further debate or amendment.

I think I'll take a drink, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The government House leader has moved government notice of motion number 11.

I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Steve Clark: These three bills are very important for the government. I'll outline them briefly for you.

Bill 27, in the name of the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, essentially is prioritized because of the global uncertainty that we have right now. We need to build a more competitive economy, and we need to responsibly unlock the untapped potential of our natural resources. Carbon storage, which is mentioned in the name of this bill, is a safe and globally recognized tool to reduce carbon emissions, with over 400 projects launched in the past year. Alberta and Saskatchewan have both developed carbon storage frameworks, and Ontario has the potential to join them in attracting these major investments. The ministry has hosted multiple consultation sessions on this part of the act, including in September when the parliamentary assistant held round tables with the industry, with the agricultural sector and with municipalities.

It's the government's position that the people of Ontario have waited too long, under 15 years of Liberal government, for so-called carbon emission solutions that drove away business investment, killed manufacturing jobs and made life more expensive for Ontarians. We know that we can both grow the economy, support good-paying manufacturing jobs, but also responsibly manage our environmental outputs. The carbon storage framework that this bill proposes accomplishes just that. We shouldn't have to wait any longer for us to unlock a competitive, prosperous province.

In terms of the fall economic statement, as has been said many times by our Minister of Finance, our government was elected to protect Ontario jobs and businesses from harmful tariffs. In the 2025 fall economic statement, we

are continuing on our work to deliver \$30 billion in tariff supports. We're also fulfilling our mandate to deliver real support for workers and make Ontario the most competitive economy in the G7. This is what the people of Ontario voted for, and we are fulfilling that mandate to the people of Ontario. We call on the opposition parties—which is very important for all of us to come forward to support Ontario workers against the tariffs and vote for the fall economic statement 2025.

In terms of Bill 46, again, why it's so important for us to move forward using a time allocation motion, we feel that the government needs to take decisive action to protect our province because of that global uncertainty. The Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act delivers on that commitment. This legislation strengthens our competitive edge by reducing unnecessary red tape, accelerating productivity and unlocking growth. Through time allocation, we are ensuring the protections needed to fortify our economy against US tariffs in critical areas such as labour mobility, health care and the forestry sector.

I want to remind the House that the people of Ontario elected us in a historic third, consecutive, back-to-back-to-back Conservative majority government to make sure that we protect Ontarians and make sure that we get things done. This motion is proof that we're delivering.

Time is money, and we're saving both. To date, we've estimated 1.8 million hours of red tape, saving businesses in our province \$1.2 billion. Whether it's defending Ontario jobs from foreign tariffs or modernizing outdated regulations, we're pulling out all the stops with this bill to protect Ontario. I urge all the members to consider supporting these three bills in this matter.

It was actually interesting because I got to talk to a fantastic House leader briefly this week, the Honourable Peter Van Loan, who was House leader for our great Prime Minister, Stephen Harper. He wanted me to remind folks what time allocation is about, and I'm going to quote him from an October 24, 2013, debate in the House of Commons:

"Time allocation is designed to ensure adequate debate and to create certainty for members of Parliament so they will know when the debate will occur. It provides some certainty of when to expect a vote to occur, so that members can organize their affairs in that manner. It facilitates the business of the House so that there is adequate debate and decisions are made."

1330

I've outlined, in terms of these three bills, why decisions need to be made, why time is of the essence for these bills. We've waited long enough. We need decisive action from the government. We've received back-to-back-to-back massive majorities over those last three elections. And as the Premier said, we're going to protect Ontario. We're not going to be the 51st state.

I urge all members to support this motion.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak in this House, today, to once again debate a time allocation motion. I listened very intently to the government House

leader, and the last line—before I actually get into the motion, I wasn't listening close enough to actually hear who he was quoting about the benefits of time allocation.

Hon. Steve Clark: Peter Van Loan. PVL.

Mr. John Vanthof: Peter Van Loan, okay—a solid Conservative. And he said, “so that members can organize their affairs.” Well, perhaps just a hint to the government: It would be much easier for all members to organize their affairs if you actually published or told members from the other side what bills you were bringing forward and actually had a schedule. You would have much better debates.

Hon. Steve Clark: I'll schedule every night.

Mr. John Vanthof: Schedule a night before? If you want to organize—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Through the Speaker.

Mr. John Vanthof: To the government House leader, through the Speaker: If you're really serious about making the House work and about having all members being able to organize their affairs, I respectfully submit that knowing what is going to be debated the night before is not optimal organization. And perhaps that is one of the reasons—just one of the reasons, Speaker—why the government of the day has to continually resort to time allocation.

Another thing I found interesting in the government House leader's debate and speaking points: He mentioned the three back-to-back Conservative elections. That's not a surprise. But I have sat here through this, and I have listened to the government blame the previous government on whatever issues are ailing the province. News flash: According to the government House leader, you're the previous government and the previous, previous government. You have been in power for almost a decade. Many of the problems that we are now experiencing—guess what? They're of your creation. There's only so long that you get to blame the previous, previous, previous government.

Oh, and something else: This morning, I heard one of the—I believe it was the Minister of Labour, and this is another reason why we often have trouble believing the Minister of Labour. He said, “15 years of Liberal rule, supported by the NDP.” I hate to break the news to you, but the Liberal government, who we didn't support for two majority governments—that's like saying we support you now. There was a minority government when I first got elected in 2011. I believe it fell in 2014, and after that, unfortunately, the Liberals beat both of us for two majority governments. We didn't support them—news flash. Actually, if you look up the records, the Conservative Party voted with the Liberals as many times as we did over those two Liberal majority governments.

So you can't—there's only so long that you can blame the previous government, especially when you are the previous government. And you are the government before that—previous, previous.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Previous.

Mr. John Vanthof: Previous. Yes, like, almost three previous-es, but two previous-es.

That reminds me—I've told this joke before. It's not a joke; it's a saying. And perhaps there are a few ministers that I think should be preparing the envelopes right now.

There is a saying that a Premier, a Prime Minister, a minister, should always have three envelopes in their desk for their successor, because regardless of if the successor is from a different party or not, you always want to have—regardless of if you oppose, we want to make the province a better place. So there are three envelopes with things that have helped you the most during your tenure.

So, the minister comes. The minister is really happy. Things get really, really bad and he thinks, “Wait a second, I've got three envelopes.” He opens his desk, pulls it out, opens the first envelope, and this one has been used by many here: “Blame the previous government,” and that's what the minister does: blames the previous government. He keeps doing it. He's a great communicator. He keeps doing it and he makes it through.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I guess it's been opened.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes. And then, about a year or two later, another scandal of epic proportions, and he realizes, “Wait a second”—in the depths of despair, late at night in his office—“I've got another envelope.” He opens the desk drawer, gets the paper cutter out: “Blame another level of government.”

Where have we heard that? “The federal government has done this, and the federal government has done this and the federal”—and again, because of their excellent communication skills—no one is saying that the current government or some of the current ministers don't have excellent communication skills. They sail through this by blaming another level of government.

Then another year goes by and another low point in the minister's career. It's really tough. He can't communicate his way out of this one. He just can't. In the depths of despair, 11:30 at night, he realizes, “I've got one more envelope.” A wave of relief flows over him—

Mr. Matthew Rae: Or her.

Mr. John Vanthof: —or her, that's right. I'm equal. Thank you for that.

A wave of relief flows over them, okay? Let's cover everybody. They open the desk and open the envelope, because they're wondering, and do you know what the envelope said, Speaker?

MPP Paul Vickers: “Blame Bob Rae.”

Mr. John Vanthof: Even better. It said, “Prepare three envelopes.”

Now, there should be a few people preparing envelopes as we speak. Perhaps the government—although you're very, very, I would say, arrogant right now about your three successive—and congratulations. No one is disputing that you won the election. We're not like Americans in that we go, “Oh my God, the polls are wrong.” No one is disputing that.

But what we are disputing, and what this time allocation motion is showing, is that you've forgotten that, although you have the right to put forward your agenda, you do not have the right to shut out the views of people who don't agree with you, or shut out the views of people who ac-

tually might have some ideas on how to make your legislation better. That is the purpose of this House. That is the purpose of committees. The purpose of the election is to decide who has the right to put forward their agenda and put their agenda through.

1340

You have a majority government. There is nothing that can stop you from putting your agenda through. But you don't have the right to put forward bad legislation, ill-thought-out legislation, which you get by rushing legislation through the House.

The most unfortunate part about this—truly unfortunate—is that there are members on the government side who actually know this, who actually know what this House is for, know what committees are for, who know what can happen when you don't use the House to its full capacity. They know this, and yet for some reason, they choose to ignore.

Everybody has made mistakes. I have made mistakes, we have all made mistakes, and we learn from our mistakes. We also learn from other people's mistakes. But where it gets truly dangerous is when you know what the pitfalls are, you know what the mistakes are, and you completely and totally ignore them.

One of the people who knows is the current government House leader, because when he was opposition House leader, he gave way more eloquent—he's an eloquent speaker. He is one of the excellent—

MPP Wayne Gates: He's okay.

Mr. John Vanthof: No, he's an excellent communicator. I don't agree with what he's communicating, but in the art of communication, he's probably better than me.

And, in honour of him, I'm going to quote him. The best compliment is when someone—actually, the government House leader quoted Peter Van Loan. Well, I'm going to quote—I don't know Peter Van Loan; I don't agree with Peter Van Loan's views on time allocation. But I do know the government House leader, I respect the government House leader, and I respect his views, or at least his past views. He seems to have shifting views.

Now, the one thing that I find really interesting about that—and I'm going to digress for a second, Speaker. Believe it or not, people think that the NDP and the Conservatives are very far apart, and that's actually not true. We are far apart philosophically, but I think the NDP and the Conservatives understand what principles are. There are certain things that we believe.

The NDP believes very much that essential services should be controlled publicly, should be delivered publicly. The Conservatives believe that the private sector and the free market is above all. But we stick by those principles, and we both look at the Liberal Party thinking, "Well, they're just the flavour of the month. Whatever they can do to get power is what they do."

Interjection.

Mr. John Vanthof: There, "flavour of the month" is walking by as we speak. Actually, he was a member not of the previous government or even the previous, previous government, so he's actually the flavour of several months

ago. I respect him. We actually have shared company once in a while. We enjoy each other's company, but—

Mr. John Fraser: Not right now.

Mr. John Vanthof: Not right now.

But I just said that the Conservatives and the NDP are different than the Liberals in that we actually have principles. But I think now, I'm wondering about the Conservatives, because what I'm about to read from the government House leader, what he said when he was opposition House leader, is diametrically opposed to what he just said—completely opposed. So, right now, if the principles of what the government House leader has just talked about—the principles are in the wind. They're flying in it like a kite like the Liberals. There are people who accuse the Premier of being a Liberal. Well, judging by what the government House leader said, I think some of those accusations might be founded.

The government House leader just said that time allocation—you know, the government needs to get things done and they need to—oh, actually, they needed to get things done so badly, Speaker, that they came back a month and a half late. They slept in. They said, "Well, we're busy in our ridings." So are we. I'm not saying that coming back late is bad for an individual representative, because you go to a lot more events, but there is a reason why we have this big building in Toronto with committee rooms: It's so you come in here and actually make laws better and not just listen to your own side—listen to all sides. You've already eliminated half the time to listen to the other side, and that is a problem. And it's going to cause Ontario a problem, and we all know it.

I sense the people are getting tired of listening to me, and I don't blame you. How about we listen to the member of—the current government House leader? He's got a long riding name, but anyway.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Yes, it's a long name: Leeds-Grenville—

Mr. John Vanthof: Leeds-Grenville—anyway.

These quotes: I've got the time, the dates. These are from the current government House leader when he was opposition House leader, when he actually, at that time, represented the principles of his party. Now, what he said now—I'm not saying that the party is principle-free, but they certainly don't have the same principles as last time.

So, dateline: November 28, 2017—

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Eight years ago.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, this was just before they were elected, when they were still acting that they were principled: "I'll give them, actually, the People's Guarantee, because we will listen to them, and we will ensure that those Ontarians are being listened to.

"We are looking at a government that is"—and here, he's talking about the previous, previous, previous Liberal government—"for the insiders and not the people. You know what, Speaker? That's going to change...."

And this is about a time allocation motion: "They're going to stifle public opinion. They're going to shut down all opposing voices. They're going to rack up a lot of Facebook ads and a lot of television ads to try to promote

themselves. People have seen through that. They've seen enough of this movie. They want it to end."

Actually, he was right: They did want it to end. But, for the members, think about it. Think about what people are seeing now from your government. They're seeing time allocation—no time to listen to other opposing views, no time to make legislation better. What they are seeing is a lot of ads. Try to watch TV without seeing a Conservative government ad. Now, I've got nothing against public advertising. If you come out with a program and you advertise how people access that program, I think that's a legitimate use of public advertising. But the Ring of Fire advertising—

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Annoying.

Mr. John Vanthof: Well, it's very annoying, but the picture isn't of the Ring of Fire. I've been to the Ring of Fire. There are no rivers and trees. There's no mine there, yet. All that, it's just pure PR for the government. No one can call up and say, "Hey, can I book something to the Ring of Fire?" It doesn't exist. It's not for public information purposes, to access public programming. It is to advertise for the existence of the government, just like all those blue signs all over for general maintenance. That is basically to advertise for the government.

1350

For the newer members here, you're doing the same thing that the old, tired, arrogant, self-serving Liberal government did before they fell—exactly the same thing. They had been in power a long time, and they were more focused on themselves than they were on actually getting things done for the people of Ontario. Right now, a lot of people are starting to wonder the same thing about your government. You seem very focused on your own ads. You seem very focused on not listening to anyone else. You seem very focused on that.

Oh, something else that I really—I'll get to more quotes later, but I'm starting to ramble. I apologize. Something else that you have taken from the old, tired, arrogant government: the stretch goal. Do we all remember the stretch goal? Well, remember that are in a housing crisis, and bill after bill from this government—"We are going to build 1.5 million homes. We are going to. And you know how we're going to do that? We are going to open up the greenbelt and give it to developers." Oh, I guess that didn't work.

And you know what the government's housing goals are now? Remember the Liberals' stretch goal. I forget what it was about. What was the stretch goal? Anyway—now, who has a stretch goal? The Conservative government, when it comes to housing—"Oh, well, that was a stretch goal. We were hoping to reach that. The greenbelt—people told us that it wasn't going to work, but we didn't listen to anybody." Turned out to be a big scandal. Turned out it's still with the RCMP—still with the RCMP.

For those of you who are starting in your political career—careful, because the way you're going, you're not going to be sitting on the government side long, because you're doing the same things that old, tired, self-serving governments do. That's what you're doing now.

So how about we—

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Read another one.

Mr. John Vanthof: Oh, okay. Here we go. Dateline October 22, 2015—Mr. Current government House leader.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Ten years ago.

Mr. John Vanthof: Ten years ago—that's right, almost to the day.

"Time after time after time this government has rammed through pieces of legislation because they don't want the opposition's voices to be heard and they don't want the voices of Ontarians to be heard." That was the old Steve Clark.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member will withdraw and not use names.

Mr. John Vanthof: I can't withdraw. I apologize for using his proper name. I'm not sure I have to withdraw. I apologize.

Interjection.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'm not challenging the Speaker. I will withdraw, fully and completely—fully and completely and apologetically.

Anyway, I know we're having—at least, I'm having fun with this.

It's not, for members who haven't been here long—this is your government House leader saying this 10 years ago, and it's eerily exactly the same as what you're doing now.

April 21, 2015: "We're going to vote against this time allocation motion. We're going to stand up for democracy." Again, I'm directly quoting your government House leader.

April 16, 2015, another time allocation motion by the old previous, previous, previous arrogant Liberal government: "It is anti-democratic to speed legislation through this House without adequate"—

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Let's be friendly.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'm getting heckled by everybody. I have no friends.

I will start this quote again.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Through the Speaker.

Mr. John Vanthof: Okay. Thank you.

April 16, 2015: "It is anti-democratic to speed legislation through this House without adequate debate from all parties...."

"So again, I appeal to the member for St. Catharines and all the MPPs on the government benches to consider carefully the path you're treading. When you are elected into government, you not only are given power, but you're also given the trust of the people. Don't silence the voices, even though they're opposition voices, by shutting down debate and forcing time allocation."

The only thing that I would change in this, as one of the best appeals against time allocation, is, I would make it to the member from Leeds-Grenville, who is the current government House leader, and to all the government MPPs, for you also to reconsider.

The day I got elected was one of the proudest days of my life, because I was going to represent people, and I was going to participate in our democratic process, which is

one of the greatest things that we have in this great country.

Time allocation for no reason—because there's actually no reason to time-allocate these bills, because you have a majority government. You have ultimate power. But the trick to keeping ultimate power, the trick to keeping power, the trick to keeping people's faith is not flexing those muscles when you don't need to. And that's what you're doing here. You're just taking the easy road out.

You don't want to hear people say, "Well, maybe this don't work. Maybe if you had taken more time with the bills that got rescinded"—one thing about the Liberal government: The whole time I was here, they didn't have a bill rescinded. See, I gave a good compliment to the Liberal people. They didn't have a bill rescinded. How many have you had rescinded—that you had to act like you didn't pass it?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Or apologize for it.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes. How many times has the Premier had to apologize for legislation?

Do you know why? Because you don't use the process. You don't use this place. You don't use committees. You ignore advice.

Any of us, in our previous lives, previous businesses—some of us had businesses. You make mistakes, and you learn from them. You don't ignore them. You don't keep making the same mistake over and over and over.

What you're doing here is, you're making the same mistake over and over, and the only thing that's saving you now is that people haven't woken up to it. When they do, when the tide turns, there will be no pushing it back. You don't think that's possible? Believe me, it's possible.

1400

The thing about our jobs here is that when the tide turns, it's not that there will be nobody helping to push you out. Believe me, we're going to work like crazy to get you out, because of your arrogance and because you're only representing certain people.

You don't think this is an arrogant government? You're talking about getting all this stuff done; we've got rampant homelessness in every community in this province. You don't think that's an issue? We have got people who have two jobs, who still have to go to food banks so they can get by. You don't think that's an issue? You really don't think that's an issue? You don't think that at some point those people are going to turn, and they're going to turn hard?

With legislation like time allocation, you will have no one to blame but yourselves. The people who are profiting from their relationships with some of your members are not going to save you. They're not going to save you.

Please reconsider. I'm not going to beg anybody. I'm warning you: At some point, you need to stand up. You have the power. Government members have the power. The only people who really can stop the slow slip and slide of our process is you and, actually, you will lengthen the time you're in government if you do. I'm actually hurting myself by giving you this warning; you're lengthening your time.

You had a 40-year Conservative reign, I believe, years ago when Bill Davis built many of the things that we enjoy today, when Bill Davis built the community college system. Bill Davis governed, from what I can read, like a minority even when he had a majority. It's hard to fight against someone and it's hard to vote against someone who's actually listening to all sides. You're not. You, your government, is not, and when you end up paying the price, you're going to fall hard, and legislation like this is just the start.

I thank you very much for your attention, Speaker, and I hope the government does reconsider.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: It's great to fly the flag today and to really speak up against this use—and constant use—of time allocation.

It's funny; I have been in this chamber for perhaps now eight months—something like that—and the number of times I have stood here or sat here and had a debate on this exact issue is astounding. How could it be that, not even a year into my position, I have had this debate on time allocation over and over and over?

When the House leader first introduced the time allocation motion today, he quoted Peter Van Loan, a former MP in Ottawa. There's a quote that I much prefer and it's from former Canadian Prime Minister John Turner. Prime Minister Turner, who was a great Canadian, said, "Democracy doesn't happen by accident."

When we reflect on Prime Minister Turner's words about how democracy does not happen by accident, he means that it's intentional. We need to be here, we need to show up, we need to have debates and we need to hear other people's opinion. When we don't, there's a problem.

Speaker, it would be nice if even in their quotes that the government could even consider a voice that wasn't a Conservative voice. Even these quotes they bring to the House are always the same voices.

Now I'll also raise this as a point too. When governments use tools like time allocation, when they use tools like closure, you're not just silencing the voice of an opposition that sits across from you from a different party; you're also silencing your own party: your own backbenchers; people who aren't the ministers; people who aren't at the decision-making table, at the cabinet table, who get a voice automatically.

So, I would really implore all members of the party opposite—not just the ministers, but the MPPs who work hard every day to serve their communities without a driver, without a fancy office, without the title of "honourable" before their name—to think about what's happening to them right now. Your voice is also being silenced.

When you go back to your home communities—today is Thursday. By tomorrow, you'll all be back in your own ridings. You'll meet with constituents. How can you look your constituent in the eye and say, "I never got the opportunity to voice your concerns on these bills, because our government believes in shutting down debate. Our government doesn't believe that your voice matters?"

Because that's what it means when you support motions like these. That's what it means when you stop debate, when you support closure and time allocation.

So really, my friends—and I've made some very good friends here from the governing side's party. You know, we're new in this Legislature. We're just getting accustomed with this job. We don't have that same cynicism yet that sometimes encounters and envelops people when they're here too long. We still believe that people still have a voice and people matter, that we actually have to reflect that voice of our constituents. And there's a reason that we do what we do.

So, to my friends—and you are my friends—think about this hard. Think about the people that you spoke to during this election, the doors that you knocked on. What did you say to them? You didn't say, "I will go down to Toronto, and I'll do whatever I'm told to do." You didn't say, "I'll go down to Toronto and have the government House leader, or the whip, tell me what I think." You didn't say to them, "I will go there and do anything that the government feels is right to get things passed."

Yes, we need to act fast. Of course, we need to act fast. But that doesn't mean democracy is the roadblock. It doesn't mean debate is the roadblock that's stopping us from going fast. Look, we can see how many examples in this government—when they use this excuse of needing to move fast, needing to act to protect the economy or whoever the day is that we're trying to protect, as an excuse to do something without consultation. And where does that get us? Do we remember the greenbelt at all?

In addition to these fundamental pieces of what a Legislature is supposed to do, and legislators are supposed to do, there is a really concerning pattern we're seeing from this government. The government has repeatedly used this same time allocation to rush major bills.

What are we talking about today? For one example, FES. Now, normally in a FES, we have economic measures, right? A mini budget, which of course in themselves are major spending decisions by a government that should have thoughtful debate—of course. Apparently not by this government. This government disagrees with that. But in this FES, in this omnibus bill—in many of these omnibus bills—we find these little things that are tucked inside that are now being time-allocated. What else are we time-allocating here?

When we talk about elections, how elections are scheduled, how elections are financed, these are core things to our democracy which are not getting a voice in this chamber.

1410

So yes, expediency is important when we have a crisis. But I'll tell you what's also important, if not more important: the democracy of our country.

The fall economic statement is really one of the most significant pieces of legislation each year. Compressing debate suggests that this government doesn't want questions, that you don't want to hear about the problems, that you don't want to hear about the concerns being raised by Ontarians.

We are 124 MPPs. But don't forget: Each and every one of us represents constituents. We are not 124 individuals standing in this House; we are 124 representatives of the people of Ontario. So you're not shutting out the voices of the Liberal Party. You're not shutting out the voices of the NDP or the Greens or the independents; you're shutting out the voices of Ontarians.

Now, I often hear the argument on that side of the House that we have a record majority, right? "The people of Ontario gave us this great new term." Absolutely. And as my honourable colleague said, we don't dispute that. But what they didn't give you is the right to silence the voice of those who didn't vote for you, and that's exactly what time allocation does.

I'm sure—I'm hopeful—that there will be a time when I'm going to be on that side of the House and you'll pull up this speech and say to me, "MPP Tsao, well, your government has now moved time allocation. Here's what you said when you were in opposition."

There is time to use specific tools. There's a time to use a chainsaw. There's a time to use a hatchet. There's a time to use a scalpel. But all I see from this government is the use of a sledgehammer over and over and over. This isn't democracy, Speaker; this is the tyranny of the majority. It's unacceptable. It's not right. It's unconscionable.

So on Friday, when you're in your constituency offices, when you're taking your meetings and you're looking your constituents in the eye, hearing their concerns, remember I'm doing the same thing. They're doing the same thing. But we will not be able to bring those concerns back here on these bills because you've ended debate.

So what's the impact here beyond just in the chambers? Time allocation, we're talking about, is not just limiting debate here. Do you know how many debates have I engaged in here on a Thursday afternoon where one member stands and the rest of the House's eyes seem to glaze over? It happens, right? It's a long week. Some people's speeches may be more engaging, often like my friend from Timiskaming-Cochrane's. Some speeches may be less engaging, like the one you're listening to now.

But there's also a place beyond this chamber where this discussion happens, and that's in the committees, where the average Ontarian and the expert Ontarian get to come in and have their time. They get to speak to us and provide their advice, provide their opinion, be able to be heard in their democracy, in their Ontario. What does time allocation mean for that? It means that doesn't happen. So not only are you silencing the voices of the representatives of those people; you're silencing these people directly.

This government often talks about the crisis that we're facing as Ontarians—an economic crisis, a crisis of American attack—and they're not wrong. But wouldn't you think, if we're in a crisis, if we're under attack by our ally to the south, that you would want everyone in this chamber involved, that you would want all 124 MPPs trying to get to the best ideas, the best solutions, not just the solutions that you've come up with or the solutions that—I don't know—your paid pollsters have told you are the best and most favourable things for your re-election?

If this government really had confidence in their plan and believed in what they had to say and believed that the people of Ontario would support this plan, then what are they scared of? Let the light of day shine. Let debate happen. Have a fruitful conversation, and you won't have to have me here lecturing you. I don't want to be here lecturing you. I want to have a debate on substantive topics. I want to have a debate on things that matter to my constituents, the people that I have to represent, the people that I have to look in the eye every single Friday and tell them, "I'm doing the best that I can for you." But you're not giving us that opportunity.

We're facing huge challenges right now as a province: high inflation, a rising cost of living, housing pressures, a strained public service. Just before I came down here, I had the opportunity to meet with nurses who are on strike right now. They came here because they wanted to have their voices heard. They came here because they wanted their MPP to know about the concerns that they have for their future, for the future of the people that they help every single day at the hospitals, in the clinics.

Of course I met with them, because their voice matters. Now I'll go back to my community and tell them, "After I had a great conversation with you, what did I go and do? I went into the chamber and talked about why this government doesn't want debate, to fight against a motion to end debate, debate on critical issues."

Now, you have to wonder why—again, why? Is it because you're not building the 1.5 million homes that you promised? Is it because you're simply just shovelling out the cash to your friends, rather than making it go to places that matter? Why is it that you're scared and afraid of debate? That is a fundamental question that you should not just be asking yourself, but that all Ontarians should be asking right now because what this comes down to is transparency and public trust.

I'm sure you all have access to the Internet, to Twitter. Trust right now in government is at an all-time low, and I'll tell you why: because of actions like this, because of your actions. You're only adding fuel to the fire here when it comes to a populace that doesn't trust its government, that doesn't believe its government is here to serve the people, a government that has no concern, no care for the voices of the people. You listen to yourselves and you listen to your paid advisers, but you don't give an opportunity for the people of Ontario to be heard.

Open debate through committee review is how we maintain public trust. Time allocation erodes public trust. The Legislature's role is oversight. Time allocation weakens oversight at a time when transparency should be paramount.

I got involved in politics because, as a young person, so many of my fellow colleagues would say, "There is no point in government. They don't listen to us. They don't care about us." But I wanted to prove them wrong. I wanted to show them that government does care, that government does actually believe that there's a place for the average Ontarian here in the Ontario Legislature. What you're doing right now is you're proving them right, that

you don't care, that they don't matter. That's what they're going to hear today.

To say I'm dismayed by that—this isn't a political act. This is from the heart. I didn't come here, again, to yell at you about closure, about time allocation. I came here to represent the voice of my neighbours. I came here to represent the voice of people who don't have a voice. But once again you're silencing them, and it's completely unacceptable.

1420

So, with that rambling, I think I should save some time—

Mr. John Fraser: You're doing great. Just keep going.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Keep going? All right, I can keep going.

I will end with this: My family originally came from China, but we had to leave in 1949. Do you know why? Because in 1949, there was a communist uprising. And why did we decide to leave? Not because we were scared for our physical safety, although that was at risk. We left because we wanted to be able to have a voice. We knew that in a state like communist China, dissent was not allowed, debate was not allowed, speaking your mind is not allowed. But in a country like Canada, in a province like Ontario, we would have that opportunity.

But what is this? Where is the chance? Where is the chance for the voices to be heard? Keep that in mind when you go home on Friday and talk to your constituents. Thank you, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

MPP Wayne Gates: It's great to rise on a time allocation debate because I want to talk about the Conservatives real quick.

Just yesterday, when the Premier—when he came to office eight years ago, whenever it was, he said he would never see another rally on the front lawns of Queen's Park. Do you remember him saying that? Yesterday they rushed through Bill 33, an attack against democracy, an attack against our education system, and what happened? In 24 hours, we received 100,000 emails to all the MPPs in this room. Because people care. People in Ontario care about what's going on. The OFL, which was just down at the Sheraton—they had their elections. They all came and walked up. They walked up from the Sheraton. And I saw Marit Stiles go out and talk to the workers and tell them how we support them and how we'll stand with them. I saw the other parties out there. But the one person that wasn't there was the labour minister. He stands up in here all the time talking about workers, talking about unions, talking about how important they are, talking about teachers. Well, there were teachers there yesterday.

They didn't come out, but what they did do is pass Bill 33: no committee hearings, no talking to anybody—absolutely ridiculous. So then what do we do? Well, maybe they learned their lesson yesterday. I guess not, because we're here this afternoon, on Thursday afternoon, and what are we talking about? Time allocation. No debate, no committees.

One of the reasons why I got elected—and so far I’ve been pretty successful: I’ve been elected for the last five terms. One of the reasons, I tell my constituents, is I like to go to committees because it gives us a chance to hear from residents from all over the province who have come to committee to talk about—whether it’s Bill 60, Bill 33. My prostate cancer bill has been at committee. All those things can be done. But when you time-allocate it, no committees. It makes no sense.

In the province of Ontario—think about this: We stopped sitting up here June 6. And when did we come back? October 20. We had sat for six weeks in 2025 until we got here on October 20. Now you think about that. They made their decision. I’m not saying you don’t work in your constituency office, but we need to be here. And why do we need to be here? Because we need to debate the bills. We need them to go to committee.

I was at committee this morning—even though the appointments are really friendly towards the Conservatives, it seems like, in my committee, in government agencies. It seems to happen quite regularly. But at least we had the chance to question that person. Here, with time allocation, we don’t have that chance. It makes no sense.

What happens when we don’t sit for six, seven months at a time? We had an election; it cost us \$200 million because he needed a bigger majority than he already had. At \$200 million—he never got it. He never got rid of London, Niagara, Windsor. I’m pretty sure she’s going to be here for Christmas again this year. They never got that, but that was the reason for the election. They thought they could win London. They thought they could win Niagara. They thought they could win Windsor. They didn’t win any of them. And then what do they do? They wait two months to come back here to sit. Then we finish in June and we don’t come back until October 20.

What are you guys thinking here? Look at what’s going on in the province of Ontario. And you guys can agree with me or disagree with me; the Liberals can agree or disagree; the Greens. Look what’s going on in the province of Ontario. We’re in a crisis. We’re in a housing crisis.

I told this story—this is a true story. I’m not proud of it, but this is the way it is. I have a wonderful daughter, who did everything right: went to school, went to university, got her master’s. She’s got a job. She says to her mom and dad, as she was living with us, “I love you, guys, but you know what? I’d really like to get out on my own.” She’s out there paying \$2,400 a month. How does she pay her groceries? How does she pay her hydro? How does she pay her cable bill? It’s all wrong.

So what does this government do? They’re going to fix it. They take off rent controls on new builds. What did that do? It continues to drive rents up. It makes no sense for affordability. I’ll challenge anybody over there on that side, even on our own side. When you’re in your consti office on Fridays and you’re having meetings, they’ll tell you: It’s hard out there. Seniors can’t afford to buy groceries.

It wasn’t that long ago that you used to get two bags for 100 bucks. You’re getting one bag of groceries today, if

you’re lucky, and that’s if you’re getting it on sale. But it didn’t matter to the Conservatives. We decided not to sit, never to have that discussion.

Trump attacked us. There’s no doubt about that. It’s making it hard in the auto sector, steel, up north, lumber—all those things are hard; all that’s accurate. But this is where we need to have that debate. No debate with this government; we’re just going to time allocate because we don’t want to hear from regular residents. We don’t want to hear that they can’t afford to buy groceries. We don’t want to hear that they can’t afford to buy a house. We don’t want to hear that they can’t pay their rent. We don’t want to hear that they’re challenged to send their kids to college or university. You don’t want to hear any of that. But you should be hearing that, and that’s why you shouldn’t be time allocating.

There were some comments by my colleague that talked about your House leader. I’ve known the House leader for a long time. He was on this side and all the things he said are accurate. He said—I’m not going to quote him word for word; I’ll just go off my memory. Even though I’m getting a little older, I still have a pretty good memory. He said, “There’s no way, if we’re in government, we’d be time allocating, because it’s wrong. It’s goes against democracy. It goes against bringing people here to Queen’s Park to talk about their issues.”

That was your House leader. What’s he doing today? Not only did he bring one bill forward; he’s brought three bills forward to time allocate, all at the same time, the same debate. We don’t get to do this twice on each bill or do it once on each bill; we’re bringing three bills forward to talk once about time allocations.

In the province of Ontario, democracy matters, just like Bill 33. We should make sure that we stop time allocation. Let’s go to the committees. Let’s have the debates. With a majority government, you’ll probably pass it anyway, but at least you’ll hear from the residents of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: I usually stand up to say it’s a pleasure to speak to something, but it’s not. Like I said this morning, it’s like déjà vu all over again. We had another—well, the minister of time allocation, because I think we’re going to rename the House leader because that’s what’s happening. We’re time allocating everything.

The irony of ironies: Does anybody know what the irony is today? The irony is, the person who made the most noise in this Legislature about time allocation was here today: John Yakabuski. I sat with John while we were in government for five years, and every time that we used time allocation—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: That’s exactly right; the minister has got it right.

Our time allocations just basically said, “We need to stop debating this, but let’s go to committee and let’s put some time around going to committee.”

1430

Committees aren't important to this government. They have an important bill for education that they don't even send to committee. If we did that in our day, the government House leader would have set this place on fire at that moment. I remember listening to him. I remember him listening and waxing on about how bad and undemocratic it was and how it was an affront to democracy, an affront to him and all his colleagues that we would time-allocate something and time-allocate the time that we put it to committee and that we'd have to get it done.

Now he's time-allocating and he's not even going to committee. It's like committee doesn't matter anymore. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter that someone might want to come and say, "If you do this, it might hurt us," or "If you do this, it's a good thing," or "Hey, I'm from Thunder Bay, and this thing you're doing is not going to help me." That's the purpose of committee. And even if the person can't come, then, like my colleague from Don Valley North said, we're their voice. There are a lot of voices out there that are really hard to hear because they're far away. That's why we come here. Our job is to hear the voices that are hard to hear and make sure they get amplified in here. And when you time-allocate that, it makes it almost impossible to do that.

I'll just go back again. John Yakabuski—great guy; lots of fun; great voice, great singer; a really great colleague in here. He used to do the karate chop on the desk, which was like the sign of the guillotine. I won't do it because I know this will hurt the translator's ears because my mike is on. I won't do it, so don't worry about it. But his hand would go down—can I have some participation here?

Interjections.

Mr. John Fraser: Yes. Come on, guys, a little louder.

MPP Wayne Gates: Louder?

Mr. John Fraser: Yes. He was just like—it's more like—that's what he would do. Every time, to make a point that it's not right—not to knock everything over, but it startled people. It was like, "We're not doing the right thing here, folks." But here we are, doing it.

You know what? It's time allocation 2.0., which is that there's no need for committee on any important things. The government has it all right—they never get anything wrong. We're into double digits on housing bills, which is just always correcting the mistakes that they made in the previous bill. So 10 housing bills in, what, five years, six years? Ten housing bills: What does that tell you?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Can't get the job done.

Mr. John Fraser: That's it: can't get the job done or not doing the job right.

But I have—well, I don't know if my colleague is going to be here, so I might have lots of time, so you'll have to endure me. I'm not going to talk about skills development, although it pains me because I've only been talking about it every day, six times a day, four days a week, for the last four weeks. And, look, I just mentioned it again; I can't help myself. What can I say? But I'm not going to go into it. I'm going to talk about what I talked about when he

originally debated this bill in the lead-off, which is schedule 9.

Schedule 9 amends the Escheats Act to confirm that it and the Forfeited Corporate Property Act do not affect the validity and effectiveness of a deal between the Public Guardian and Trustee—the government—and Iamgold Corp., which operates a gold mine 175 kilometres north-west of Sudbury. This protects the mining company from a suit brought by a former miner whose defunct company may have a claim—may have a claim, right—to revive the mining royalty that existed in this company. This company, Superior—a long-time prospector passed away. His widow was unaware that the government had taken from that corporation something that was in her estate, those rights, those royalties—had taken it away and sold it to Iamgold.

I know this because there was a piece of private members' public business that I had to bring to committee because there was a member here—the member for the riding where the person, Kathleen Young, lived did not bring it forward, so they asked me. If people want to bring forward private members' public business, I think we all—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: A private bill—okay. Thank you very much, Speaker, a private bill—that we do it, because it's usually reviving a corporation because they got a cheque that they can't cash or there are some taxation issues they've got to fix up.

So, when Kathleen Young, this 88-year-old widow—by the way, this was like four or five years ago. When this 88-year-old widow—I just want to confirm that so that the other side understands who we're talking about—found that out, she wanted to clean it up. She paid all the taxes. She wanted to revive the corporation because she wanted to have—not a decision rendered for her out of that committee; she wanted to have the right to be able to have her case heard in court, something all of us would want, right? We would want that for ourselves and our constituents. The government of the day, who had the power in the committee—which is this government over here; they still are the government of the day—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: It's Thursday, guys.

They decided at committee, while things were going pretty well, all of a sudden it wasn't a good idea. One of the things I heard is, "Her lawyers are bad people," not, "We shouldn't do this because it doesn't have validity," or, "It's not the right thing to do." What was happening is, the company was trying to not have this widow have her day in court. I don't care who her lawyers were. I don't care what their rate, what their contingency was. If they were the people who found it and alerted her, good, so she could have her day in court.

The government should not take things away from people, but definitely not take things away from people and not tell them. Then the government shut that bill down twice—88-year-old widow, Kathleen Young. They favoured the big guys. These folks, they like the billionaires.

They're there for the billionaires, all the time, every day. Just look at skills development—it slipped out.

I can't support this because in this bill, what it's saying is, "We did this thing, and it might not be cool. There might be a court case against us because of the way we conducted ourselves"—the Public Guardian and Trustee and the company—"so we're going to say that we and this company are exempt from the laws that might get us in trouble for not giving an 88-year-old widow, Kathleen Young, her day in court." I don't know where she is right now, but what I do know is that the government is protecting itself from what it did, exempting itself from all the laws after preventing an 88-year-old widow from having her day in court.

If you guys are comfortable voting for that over there, you're comfortable voting for anything.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I feel like this is going to be a familiar refrain here as I rise to oppose another time allocation motion from the government, this time on three major bills, one of which is the fall economic statement and really deserves major line-by-line scrutiny. Instead, once again, the government has decided, "We're going to shut down debate. We're going to shut out the public. We're going to just rush things through."

Yesterday, the House was adjourned because there was a really big fundraising dinner; a really big, really important, I'm sure, fundraising dinner for the Premier and, I'm sure, friends of this government and folks, it definitely has seen, that they've been able to make it to the front of the line to get the first pick, the first dibs on projects, on the Skills Development Fund. We hear it in the Legislature every day, and frankly, it boggles my mind why the government, why the Premier won't do the right thing and move beyond this Skills Development Fund fiasco with the minister and take some responsibility.

But, you know what, we're just going to shut down debate, have another time allocation motion. Here we go again, folks—not great. Most governments would treat their fall economic statement as a showcase and take every opportunity to debate it; to defend it; to highlight the choices they're making; to say, "Yes, this is the best bill. This is the thing that's going to fix what's happening in the province or to make the province a better place." Well, instead, the government is doing the absolute opposite of that. They're not showcasing it. It came, and I think it's going to go probably like a blip—no real impact or changes to really address the affordability crisis that we're facing, to address the health care crisis, the public education crisis, the homelessness crisis.

1440

In the town of Ajax, we've got a challenge with homelessness. This fall economic statement doesn't do anything to fix that. It dances around the issue.

So the government is limiting debate on it because they know that it doesn't meet the moment. It doesn't meet and confront the challenges that we have ahead of us. And it's a little bit ironic, because if I recall correctly, the Minister

of Finance spoke about the federal budget not meeting the moment. That federal budget met the moment a heck of a lot more than this fall economic statement. But here we are again. So it doesn't meet the moment. It doesn't do what it needs to do to really address and fix the big, big challenges that we have in our province.

It doesn't do anything for one of my constituents, who talks to me on a regular basis about the homelessness challenge in Ajax. She doesn't want to bring her kids to the park. She doesn't want to bring her kids to the library. The fall economic statement does nothing to help my constituent. It does nothing to help those folks who are dealing with homelessness and addictions and mental health and substance abuse challenges. It puts bandages on what is an ever-worsening problem.

So the Plan to Protect Ontario Act—and once again, it's a name—"We're protecting Ontario." It's like those signs that we see all around the province—at every government announcement, we've got a sign that says, "Protect Ontario." It's almost like if you say something enough times, it becomes true. But everything weakens and crumbles as part of that. "But we're protecting Ontario, folks." That's what the government is saying. "We're protecting Ontario." They're not even close to protecting Ontario—I wish this government did. I wish this government protected the auto workers at CAMI. I wish this government protected the auto workers in Durham region, in Oshawa. I wish this government was protecting those workers, but they're not protecting those workers. They're not creating new opportunities from within Ontario. There's no focus on that. It's all smoke and mirrors. It's almost a communications and marketing exercise in overdrive.

We look at a picture of a government that's centralizing power, continuing—there's a theme here. "Let's centralize power. Let's run everything out of downtown Toronto. Let's run everything out of the Premier's office"—or, actually, "Let's run everything out of the fundraising dinner that took place last night." That's what it really sounds like to me—reducing transparency and, again, failing to address some of our most urgent and pressing challenges here in Ontario.

Hospitals are warning that they can't maintain service levels without additional support. I know hospitals are doing what they can in this situation, and many are innovating and coming up with ideas on how to reduce wait-lists, how to provide better care, but there's only so much blood that you can get from a stone.

So what qualifies as an emergency, if not for a crisis in our hospitals, which we know are billions of dollars underfunded right now? The fall economic statement could have met that moment and addressed that challenge, but it doesn't. Instead of directing those resources to emergency rooms and ICUs and community care, that money is being locked away, while health care workers are begging for help.

I would remind members of this chamber that this is a government that took health care workers to court and

said, "Do you know what? We're going to fight you on giving you what you deserve, the support that you deserve."

We have a huge retention problem in health care. It doesn't meet that moment here. And we hear it in the chamber during question period; we hear it all the time—the moment is not being met.

Fixed election dates: This is an interesting one. I think there is some really important predictability that we can have with fixed election dates, so that a government just doesn't say, "Do you know what? Things are great. We're going to go to the polls like we did in February." There were some changes, though, that came out of that election. The Ontario Liberal Party is here in this Legislature now on equal footing, debating and talking about these bills. The cracks, folks, are forming. They are showing.

I see on the other side sometimes a government that's very arrogant, that thinks that they know best and that's it, and not willing to listen, not willing to work together or collaboratively in many, many cases. I think that's unfortunate, because every single member I know, every single member in this chamber—at least I hope so—ran to improve their communities and to get stuff done, but also to work together. I think it's important that we listen to the other side. I think that's extremely important. But the fall economic statement does not meet that moment.

So, we see child care—child care is a big issue. I was recently in Sault Ste. Marie talking to business leaders there and asking them, "What do you need from the province of Ontario? How can the province of Ontario help you?" Well, the response was interesting. The response said there are major employers that want to come to Sault Ste. Marie. There are major employers that want to take advantage of the highly skilled workforce that's in that part of the province. They want to set up shop there, both domestic and international employers, but do you know what they said? "Well, why would that employer set up here?" That's what the employers have said, the ones that would like to set up somewhere. Do you know what they said? They said, "Well, you don't have enough doctors. Schools are overcrowded, the school classrooms. Kids aren't getting the support that they need"—

Interjection.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I see the member from Peterborough—Kawartha wants to say, "Oh, we've got enough doctors now."

Mr. Dave Smith: I never said that. I said—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order. Order.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: The member from Peterborough—Kawartha wants to—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock.

The House will come to order. The yelling across the room will not happen again.

The member from Ajax has the floor.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Thank you, Speaker.

So, in Sault Ste. Marie, that's what they're saying. They're saying employers don't want to set up there because there are not enough doctors. That's not a good thing.

So the fall economic statement doesn't meet the moment right now. Higher grocery bills, growing household debt—we see one of the other bills that's before this chamber that my colleague from Orléans has said, and I agree with him, could be the biggest tax increase in the history of this province around rewards points and the expiring of rewards points. That's not a good thing.

But again, we want to go through time allocation, we want to go through all of this and not really pick out—maybe give the government the opportunity to say, "We're going to make that change. We're going to make a bill better." Instead of debating these issues openly, the government is once again using time allocation to shut down debate and limit scrutiny. That's not great.

I want to talk about the HST on new homes. So, we heard—frankly, the government was dragging its feet on this one for quite some time and said, "Oh, well, we're going to match what the federal government is doing." Only if the government goes first, then Ontario is going to do something. That's not leadership; that's cowardice. It's not leadership.

When folks in my generation and folks younger than me say, "I can't afford a home. There are not enough family-sized units. I'm going to have to stay at home longer"—the government had a really great opportunity here to not to wait for the federal government but to lead and lead from the front. The government chose not to. In the fall economic statement: "We're going to match what the federal government is doing and just take the HST off only for first-time home buyers."

If you talk to developers, you talk to the home-building sector, you talk to unions, you talk to everybody involved in building homes, you talk to folks in my generation and folks younger than me who can't afford a home—you talk to them and they say, "Well, it's out of reach." Taxes and fees make up one of the biggest costs on a new home.

I'd love for those skilled trade workers—we talk a lot about skilled trade workers right now in this House. I'd love a lot for those skilled trade workers to be able to have stable employment in home building. I'd love for the forestry sector in northern Ontario to be supplying lumber for home building across the province. I'd love to see that. And the government could make that decision by including it in the fall economic statement.

1450

It's interesting, actually, because yesterday the Premier said—two days ago, a difference of opinion with the Minister of Finance on this, saying, "Oh, we've got to go further. We've got to do it." Send it to committee. Make the amendment in the bill. It's very simple. Enough with the fancy titles of "building homes faster" and all of that when you're not building homes. It's very simple.

And guess what? That revenue—you're not going to collect that revenue anyway. That revenue is not going to be collected, because if you don't have housing starts, what are you going to collect off of it?

Ontario Liberals have encouraged this government for quite some time to take the HST off new homes for anybody purchasing it as a primary residence. The Premier is, I guess, listening now. We didn't buy a ticket at the fundraiser yesterday. And because we didn't buy a ticket at the fundraiser yesterday, I guess maybe it's going to take a little bit longer.

This doesn't meet the moment, and I think that's unfortunate. Because the challenges that we have in this province right now are so big and so large that with the fall economic statement and now again with time allocation—not meeting the moment.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? Further debate? Seeing none, pursuant to standing order 50(b), I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Clark has moved government notice of motion number 11, relating to allocation of time on the following bills: Bill 68, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes; Bill 27, An Act to enact the Geologic Carbon Storage Act, 2025 and to amend various Acts with respect to wildfires, resource safety and surveyors; and Bill 46, An Act to amend various Acts.

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 the motion will 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.

Vote deferred.

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 November 20, 2025, on the motion for third 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 Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who had the floor.

Hon. Graydon Smith: A little bit of time has elapsed since my comments this morning, but we'll talk a little bit more about some of the components of the bill. Specifically, I wanted to talk about community improvement plans.

You'll recall, any of you that were in the chamber this morning when I was talking, my comments have very much been focused on smaller communities and rural communities and how this bill positively impacts the potential for development in those communities. But CIPs are something that are a little more universal and used in

communities, big and small, and very, very important. It's very, very important to those communities to be able to identify and designate areas that can benefit from a little bit of special treatment to allow for some investment, some assistance, in a way to take something that maybe was up here and maybe isn't quite there anymore to get it back there again, or even more.

What we have in Bill 60 is the opportunity for upper tiers to participate in this as well and really combine the power of lower-tier municipal community improvement plans and upper-tier CIPs to create something really, really special throughout not only municipalities but an entire region.

I always like to use examples from my home community. Again, when I was mayor of Bracebridge, we had community improvement plans in a couple of different areas, and one, deployed in a very traditional sense that was kind of a downtown community improvement plan—one that highlighted the traditional downtown BIA area. But it was incredibly successful, because I think the notion that we could take a little bit of money and leverage it with private dollars to make good things happen was something that everybody really got behind.

If anyone has been in downtown Bracebridge, you'll know it's a bit of a classic downtown Ontario. It's historic. It's red brick. You can drive down it and you'll make no mistake that you're in a smaller community. But over time, those facades weathered and got a little bit weary, and some people decided to plaster them up, or maybe they didn't look after the building as well and there were some cracks appearing and the windows weren't working very well and the energy efficiency of the building started to decline.

So we saw an opportunity to take a CIP, a community improvement plan, and implement that for our main street. What we saw was almost an immediate uptake, that we had a new generation of building owners buying into properties, looking to work with their municipal government to refurbish and restore this downtown area. We saw that brickwork, that facade of a building patched up—maybe new bricks put on, new windows put in—and that inefficient building becomes efficient. We saw blade signs pop out to create a little bit of a different look and an opportunity to individualize the downtown a little bit and make it distinct. We saw people go from smaller buildings to larger buildings, again with some support through a CIP to take their business and grow it and expand it.

I can think of two gentlemen and their spouses who took an old grocery store that had turned into a hardware store and was not aesthetically pleasing, was not something that you would look at and say, “Oh, that's a real keeper in a downtown,” and turned it into something that absolutely was—turned it into a food market with an outdoor patio, with a nice brick facade, with artwork and really took it from zero to hero in terms of what a downtown can be. That was a success, and they also had another business that they used this program for to partner with the municipality and refurbish the exterior of that. Both those

places are really part of what I would consider to be the heartbeat of the community today.

So these plans are important. Whether that's in Bracebridge, like the ones I've referenced, or in other communities, the power to work together with upper tiers and lower tiers and leverage dollars to invest in what's important to each individual community, each individual region and area, is something that will be incredibly beneficial in this bill.

I highlighted a number of things today, whether it was CIPs, whether it was talking about communal waste water systems, whether it was talking about as-of-right minor variances. Again, they were all to bring some rural and northern context to a bill that often gets discussed in the context of larger centres. And, hey, I believe all of our towns and communities, big and small, are important. But in my area, it is a rural area, it is small towns, it is small communities.

These bills matter, and they do have positive, positive impact, so I'm very pleased to speak to Bill 60 today and hope we see it supported.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I'm pleased to offer a few comments on Bill 60. I listened to my friend from Bracebridge speak earlier. I mentioned I wanted to bring up municipal services corporations—not a real exciting topic, but one that has caused some anxiety in Peel region. Because part of this bill, carved out from Bill 45, is to create a municipal services corporation for water and waste water in Peel.

This has raised concerns of privatization. There's a lot of misinformation out there, but I wanted to let my friend know, who was assuring the House that it's a publicly owned model, that the reason it's causing so much anxiety and concern is because, although a municipal services corporation only issues shares to municipalities—so it is public—it is being forced on a municipality after a disastrous attempt to dissolve one of the largest regional governments in Canada.

1500

One step away from a municipal services model is something called a public utility model. It's very similar, but under that model, shares can be issued to private corporations, which can be used to fund future infrastructure, and private interests would own that infrastructure. When folks are out there saying that they're concerned about privatization, it's not just that the government is changing a model; it's that they're forcing it on a municipality.

The real concern for me, and something almost every expert agrees with, is that forming a municipal services corporation in a region as large as Peel will 100% lead to higher water rates. AMO says it; everyone says it. In a time when people are struggling with affordability issues, forcing a model of ownership onto a municipality—we can argue if it's public or private—will 100% cause water rates for Peel residents to increase. That's what the government is not saying.

One of the main reasons that those water rates will increase is because development charges are currently something that supports infrastructure. When those development charges disappear, which is the main intent of this bill, the money has to come from somewhere. That money, under this bill, under a municipal services corporation, is going to come on the backs of Peel property taxpayers and water ratepayers. That's what's going to happen. When organizations like AMO come out and say, "Better watch out: Water rates will probably go up in Peel," everyone knows that's the truth. I just wanted to clarify that.

There's been a lot of back and forth about private, public. Absolutely, for a government that just forces a model onto a municipality, regardless of what that model is, people are justified in being concerned that sometime in the future they'll change to another model that does allow for privatization.

Those water rates are a serious, serious concern. I want to get that on the record because Peel residents, after this bill, are going to experience increased water rates because they are paying for the lost development charge revenue that this government is taking away—off the backs of builders and developers and onto the backs of citizens and hard-working people in the region of Peel.

I also wanted to briefly mention—I only have a couple of minutes left—the homelessness situation in Niagara region. I can't believe that the government would actually put forward a bill that makes it easier to evict people in the middle of a homelessness crisis. It's incredible.

In Niagara, homelessness is a serious issue. I get these statistics regularly. As my colleagues from St. Catharines and Niagara Falls have said, we've been talking about this for a couple of years as a real emergency because it's getting worse and worse by the month. Even since 2024, we know that 701 people were experiencing homelessness in Niagara, compared to 665 in 2021. But those aren't even really reliable statistics because the Niagara region's by-name list shows 1,136 individuals experiencing homelessness in Niagara at the end of 2024, and that number is just ballooning. That by-name list is a more complete capturing of the persons experiencing homelessness.

I just wanted to take a moment to thank the incredible organizations all across Niagara, but in my riding, certainly. I've recently been visiting with the Hope Centre in Welland, with Port Cares in Port Colborne. Of course, the Niagara region is doing its best to work with local community groups, and I have some incredible church congregations and community groups in Welland and across my riding that do great work.

One I want to mention with winter weather coming up is an organization called Beyond the Streets that goes out, finds people who are homeless and brings them to shelters and food banks, because often people need that helping hand just to go to places where they can get help. That group, which is just a collection of citizens in Welland, I believe, just incorporated. They got together, and they go out every night, find people who are homeless and take them to shelters.

I want to thank them and all the great organizations in my riding with cold weather coming up. It's going to be very, very difficult for some folks, especially seniors, because the number of seniors who are homeless is growing out of control. In Welland, there are seniors living in their cars. They have come to our office asking for help. And for many of them, there is just nowhere for them to go. So thank you to them.

For the government to bring forward a bill that actually causes evictions and makes things difficult for tenants and fails to fix the problems of the Landlord and Tenant Board—for both landlords and tenants—is absolutely unconscionable. I can't believe they have come forward with something like this without anything in their budget that really helps the homeless.

Thank you for this time, Speaker, and I look forward to hearing my colleagues talk about this bill as well.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's always a pleasure to rise in this House and speak on behalf of the residents of beautiful Beaches–East York.

What's not a pleasure is speaking on horrendous bills, like this one: Bill 60, Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025. What we've heard, and I'm sure the members opposite in the government have heard, loudly and clearly, from renters, from your community—not just renters; from a million different groups on this bill and how upset people are about it.

Specifically with rent, you did kind of walk something mildly back, but you are—as my colleague to the right of me, but on the Left, has said—basically, it's a bill that will evict people. And I don't think you want that. I'm sure all of us have been renters in our lifetime and may be renters right now. And renters vote. Lots of times in this chamber and in our minds, we think, “Oh, homeowners are the only ones who vote.” Everyone votes and everyone should vote, and their voices should be as loud in your head as homeowners.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: And donors.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: And donors, yes.

This government proposed consultations on policies that could permit landlords to control who occupies units and for how long—essentially, the end of rent control and indefinite leases. So you're doing all kinds of things that are—why not work with people to keep them in their homes? You want to build a million homes in 10 years. We're not seeing any of that happening because the housing targets are way behind—woefully behind—and I always say it's because you're not bold enough. You're not brave enough. You're not building on provincial lands.

We have a lot of land in our own backyard. But it seems that this government is practising the NIMBY mentality: not in our backyard, not in the provincial lands. That's an easy, easy fix right there. Upzoning all the avenues; I say this until I'm blue in the face: as-of-right—many ways to deal with the housing crisis that that aren't being addressed right now.

But now I'm moving on to schedule 5, which basically—you know, I drive a car. Many of us do. I also walk, I also take transit and I also bike. And whichever way I choose to commute, to come to work, to go places, is my prerogative, as it is every Ontarian's prerogative. So roads and streets aren't just for the almighty car, right? They're also for transit. They're also for pedestrians. They're also for cyclists.

What you're doing, essentially, in schedule 5, you are not allowing—once again, you're meddling in municipal affairs. Last time I checked, we have so much to deal with, so many crises at the provincial level—health care, housing, education—you haven't dealt with. But you're meddling in municipal affairs and telling the municipalities they cannot remove or alter a lane of traffic, of car traffic, for something else like a rapid bus route. Are you kidding me? We want to encourage more transit. We want to build more transit. We want the Eglinton Crosstown LRT to open in our lifetimes.

1510

And then you're saying, “Oh, Toronto and other places, you can't have a cafe, a patio.” CaféTO is very famous, very successful and good for our small businesses—mom-and-pop shops and restaurants that can keep open longer with more revenue from more customers in these cafes. It adds livelihood and vibrancy to streets, and they're in your—you have cafes in your municipalities, in your towns and villages, too, and in your small cities.

What? You're against patios, now, and cafes? You're against keeping small businesses alive and thriving? I mean, this is—I'm going to have to think of a word that's not unparliamentary. This is horrible. Have you been to Europe? Have you travelled outside of your towns? I mean, come on. The roads are for everyone. Roads are for people, right? That's what you have to wrap your head around.

In my final few seconds, we can talk about schedule 16, the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025. Will this be another Skills Development Fund nightmare? There's just a lack of trust in this government all around by Ontarians, and rightly so—rightly so. Bill 60 is a complete mess, and I'd ask you to do better.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's always a pleasure to rise in the House, today to speak on Bill 60, the government's latest omnibus housing bill. Speaker, this bill has 16 schedules. I'll be focusing in on four of them. And like so many of the other housing bills this government has put forward, Bill 60 is actually going to make the housing crisis worse.

Almost all my questions over the last couple of years have been on housing, because it's the number one crisis facing this province, driving the affordability crisis, driving the crisis of food banks. And every time I ask a question, the response from the Premier, the minister, is, “You don't vote for our housing bill.” Speaker, I don't vote for their housing bills because they don't work. That's exactly what's going to happen with Bill 60. It's

going to make the affordability crisis worse. It's going to force more people to have to choose between paying the rent and buying groceries.

No matter how many times the government puts forward a bill that has the title "We're Going to Build Faster" in it, the reality is we have to look at their record of the last seven and a half years. Housing starts are at all-time lows. Housing prices are at record highs. There is no community in the province of Ontario where a full-time minimum-wage worker can afford average monthly rent.

Sky-high rents are what's driving the fact that food banks are being overwhelmed—over a million people going to food banks in Ontario now. In Toronto, last year alone, four million food bank visits: a whopping 340% increase since this government was elected in 2018. The food bank folks tell us the number one driver of food bank use are sky-high rents.

Also, sky-high rents are driving the fact that we have an unprecedented 81,000 people experiencing homelessness in Ontario right now. This is a crisis that's affecting workers. It's a crisis that's affecting people on social assistance. It's a crisis that's putting huge pressure on our systems of care, our first responders and our communities. People simply can't afford to live in Ontario because homes cost too much and rent costs too much.

Instead of building homes that people can afford in the communities they know and love, instead of building deeply affordable, non-profit, co-op, social and supportive housing, this government decides that they're going to take even more protections away from renters. How is that going to help? How is it going to help, Speaker, to take even more protections away from renters?

We were told, back when this government was first elected, that if they took some rights away from renters, it would increase rental supply and drive down rental rates. That hasn't happened.

The government once again, with this bill, especially schedule 12, is taking away the right of renters, putting the thumb on the scale to benefit the wealthy and the well-connected—the kinds of people who, last night, went to a pay-to-play, \$1,500-a-plate fundraiser for the Conservative Party. Those are the folks the government listens to, not people struggling to pay the rent and going to the food bank.

People in this province are paying the price of a government prioritizing the wealthy and well-connected over everyday people.

That's why 132 organizations—including student unions, shelters, legal clinics, unions, food banks, faith organizations and others—have penned a letter calling on this government to repeal schedule 12 of Bill 60, because it will expedite evictions by giving tenants less time and fewer means to pay rental arrears. It will also make it more difficult for tenants to dispute an eviction application or to appeal an eviction decision.

While the government has backtracked on its decision to potentially end automatic month-to-month lease renewals, organizations like Feed Ontario are calling on the government to formally and explicitly commit to main-

taining the automatic month-to-month lease system, because if it's eliminated, it will effectively eliminate all rent control in the province of Ontario and put millions of renters, especially seniors and the most vulnerable, at risk of becoming homeless.

I want to quote the letter from these organizations:

"The largest contributor to homelessness in Ontario is the province's own policies—not mental health or addiction, as the ... government has purported, but rather the systemic erosion of tenant protections, human rights and affordability across Ontario...."

"They have done this without ever consulting with tenants and homeless people—including on the provisions in Bill 60, which have been solely shaped by landlord and developer lobbyists."

"Bill 60 will grow homelessness and encampments and undermine the right to housing."

Speaker, the housing affordability crisis, the homelessness crisis, and the unprecedented number of people going to food banks in Ontario is a policy choice and a policy decision that this government has made by legislating poverty for people with disabilities and on Ontario Works, by failing to protect renters, by saying no to legalizing multiplexes and mid-rises, and by saying no to building deeply affordable non-profit, co-op, social and supportive housing.

I know the government has said that part of their rationale behind this is to incentivize more people to build rental housing by providing incentives for landlords. But if they truly wanted to do that and protect renters at the same time, they would fix the Landlord and Tenant Board. They would fix the LTB, making sure it was there to both protect renters and landlords who have legitimate complaints about the delays in the LTB. They would do things like bring back in-person hearings and have enough adjudicators to speed up hearings for both tenants and landlords. They would work with all the municipalities across the province—out of desperation due to lack of provincial leadership from this government—to pass laws like the one my colleague from Kitchener Centre put forward to end renovations by bad-acting landlords and to bring in stronger regulations about above-guideline rental increases so people can actually hang on to their homes.

1520

I had some hope in this bill, in schedule 10, because I heard they were going to make some changes to the Planning Act that would bring in some as-of-right rules. I heard the member from Perth-Wellington talk about it earlier today, and it is true: Some of the changes they've made to minor variances are a good step in the right direction. But here's the bottom line: If this government truly wants to build faster, they would listen to their own Housing Affordability Task Force, who clearly told them that the fastest way to build homes that people can afford in the communities they know and love is to legalize mid-rises and multiplexes across the province of Ontario.

But this government said no, not in my backyard. That's what they said: not in my backyard. If you want to build homes that people can afford in the communities

they know and love where we already have infrastructure, the fastest and cheapest way to do that: Legalize multiplexes and mid-rises. But no, they didn't do that. As a result, housing starts this year are at 64,500, when we need to be building at least, at a minimum, 150,000 each and every year between now and the next decade if we have any hope of actually meeting the targets set by the government themselves, targets that they've clearly given up on, Speaker.

They talked about building code changes. I can't tell you how many developers have come up to me and said, "You know, we would like to see standardized building code changes, but why not do it in a way that protects the 1,600 people working in the green roof industry, many of them living and operating businesses in rural communities?" That would help reduce flood risk and decrease the costs and expense associated with flooding in urban environments. I've had others say, "Why don't we standardize green building standards across the province, so we can build more energy-efficient homes and help people save money by saving energy?" Those are smart policies. I don't see that coming out of Bill 60.

When you build homes that you can afford in the communities you know and love, you want to make sure those communities are strong and livable. It's hard to do that when you start bringing in provincial regulations that say you cannot alter or take away a lane of traffic for things like rapid buses to help people get around faster. You want to talk about the cheapest and fastest way to build out transit? Take buses on existing roads and give them lanes. Bill 60 would prohibit that. You want to talk about affordable transportation options for people during this affordability crisis? Make it safe for them to walk or cycle, by far the cheapest transportation options. I can tell you, as a driver, I love these streets in Toronto now that have separated bike lanes, because the bikes have a place and I have a place. The government wants to get rid of that. It makes no sense to me whatsoever.

You want to talk about livable communities? What about the patio programs that have been so vital to the hospitality sector and our small businesses, creating vibrant, livable neighbourhoods? Bill 60 would take that option away, too, if they interfere with a lane of traffic.

Speaker, we have solutions to the housing crisis. The government says no to legalizing multiplexes and mid-rises. The government says no to fixing the LTB for landlords and tenants. The government says no to protections for tenants. The government says no to ending the 30 years that governments in Ontario haven't invested in deeply affordable, non-profit, co-op, social and supportive housing. We've built supportive housing in Guelph. I want to tell you about the Shelldale: 32 people went from tents to housing with wraparound mental health and addictions supports—not a single eviction, not a single overdose, not a single emergency department visit. We have solutions to the housing crisis. We just need a government that's going to get with it and build those solutions.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I'm pleased to rise again to speak to Bill 60.

I want to recognize that we had two different press conferences here in the Legislature today, this morning. One of them was the Ontario women's coalition, who were here to call on the government for urgent government action to address the growing crisis in affordable and supportive housing. These were service providers and women working in shelters—in general shelters, working in women's shelters. There was a survivor that came to speak about how important it is to not just get women out of an abusive situation or abusive household and into a shelter but to ensure that there is transitional housing and supportive housing and other means of affordable housing in order to keep women out of those dangerous situations.

Then there was a press conference after that specifically about this bill, about Bill 60, where we heard from tenants who were talking about the barriers that they're facing when it comes to the government rolling back rent control when we're seeing over and over again above-guideline increases, rent increases being pushed through and in some cases people being evicted from their apartments, being told the landlord wants to renovate the place and then that rent doubling when the next tenant comes in.

So it's interesting that based on those two things—of special interest was the Ontario women's coalition's press conference, that we're talking about that this morning, and the government calls Bill 60 this afternoon—because we don't see anything in this bill that is actually going to help build deeply affordable housing. We don't see anything in this bill that is going to build supportive housing or transitional housing for people fleeing violence—fleeing gender-based violence or intimate partner violence. There's no investment in there. What we do see in this is the government attacking renters in the province of Ontario, making it more expensive for people to rent.

Speaker, I think of the young folks that we just saw in the gallery that were watching debate. How many of them are going to be like many of our children—all of us on all sides of the House would have adult children still living at home. I have my granddaughter living with me because my children can't afford a place to rent and they can't afford to buy a home. There is nothing in this bill that's addressing that.

We're going to see a repeat from this government of what we've seen. My colleague earlier made a point of the fact that the government shut the House down for nearly five months. For nearly five months, this place did not sit, and now they're here ramming through legislation with very little debate, with no committee, with no public consultation, and they're saying they have to do it because time is so limited before the winter break. Well, if time is so limited, then why weren't we sitting for five months? Why did the government shut this place down? How many people were evicted from their homes in those five months? We've seen the number of people experiencing homelessness skyrocket under this government. We've seen food bank use—the number of working people, in fact, and seniors accessing food banks—increase. I cannot

tell you how offensive it is to people in this province when government members go for photo ops at food banks when it is their government that has created the crisis that we are in right now, when they're the ones pushing people to food banks, when they're pushing people to live on the streets—so offensive to people in this province.

So, Speaker, instead of bringing forward legislation that's actually going to make it more expensive to live in this province, those of us on this side of the House and the public are asking this government to actually bring in legislation that brings in housing security for every person in this province, that decreases the number of people living on the streets and decreases the number of people accessing food banks.

1530

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's an honour for me to rise again to discuss Bill 60. This bill, however, through schedule 12, is a clear example of blind arrogance, self-serving—looking after billionaires. It is bootlicking for billionaires that, at a time of an affordability crisis, of a homelessness crisis, this government would seek to attack renters' rights yet again.

Our phones blew up, our emails blew up with people who are utterly in despair and so worried about their future as a result of what this government was proposing through Bill 60. Within Maslow's hierarchy of needs, housing is foundational, it is fundamental; without it, not much else truly matters. I think about not just the young people. I think of those on a low income, those on a fixed income—seniors, people living with disabilities, new Canadians, all of the people who this government is threatening with further eroding tenant protections.

When I was introducing my debate last time, I discussed how this government had to be shamed into doing the right thing, had to be shamed into providing funding that they had promised to CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services. They promised this funding on April 1, and it took them until October 23 to finally deliver on that promise. This government is long on words, but they're very short on actions.

I had to go to the media, and I had to accuse this government—quite rightly so—of sitting on their wallets. After that story ran, the very next day, the government picked up the phone, talked to the providers and made sure that they actually delivered on that promise after months of waiting. There were 60 recovery beds that were ready to go. The beds were physically there, the staff were ready to support these people, but they were left months sitting empty. For what reason? The government has never really given an appropriate or accurate reason for their delay in this.

I also wanted to point out how this government has really ignored—not only do we have the lowest housing starts since the 1950s, but this government has also really fallen short when it comes to supportive housing. I had a meeting today with representatives from CMHA, and they pointed out how supportive housing is a wise investment.

It makes so much sense. It costs, on average, \$4,000 to house somebody with those wraparound supports that they need to help them reintegrate into society, whereas a shelter will cost \$6,000. Then, when you look at the most expensive modes, jail is \$12,000, whereas the hospital is \$30,000 a month.

You have an opportunity here to spend \$4,000 a month as opposed to \$30,000 a month, or slightly less. But yet, this government, again—CMHA was promised a 4% funding increase. They were promised that in the last budget. We're almost time for our next budget and they still have not received the money. Why make a promise, why bother uttering the words, if you're not going to have the honour, the decency and the self-respect to actually deliver on that promise? Organizations cannot budget, they cannot plan, they cannot decide how to use and allocate funding when this government refuses to actually give them the funding.

This government as well has shown their preference to look after the needs and the wishes and the desires of the wealthy. When they made an increase to the non-resident speculation tax—an increase that we agreed with—they left huge, gaping holes that you could drive a truck through when it came to this legislation such that buildings that had more than five units were exempt from the non-resident speculation tax. So if a non-resident of Canada was purchasing an apartment building, they didn't have to pay this tax. Think about the money that is being lost as a result of that and that alone.

I think about the seniors who've been in their buildings for decades—who have paid for those buildings—who are being subjected to above-guideline increases as a result of this government's neglect and abandonment of tenants. But I also think about when their building is sold and what might happen to them, because the new owner of the building doesn't look at them as human beings, doesn't look at them as people with stories, but looks at them as a number on a ledger sheet, an opportunity for them to make yet more money because that senior in that building has paid a low rent because they've been there for decades.

Speaker, I wanted to add the words of Gaby, who reached out to my office when this government was threatening to bring forward Bill 60 and threatening to possibly put yet more people into homelessness. Gaby writes:

"I am writing to express my strong opposition to the changes proposed by the Doug Ford government that would eliminate rent control and security of tenure for tenants across Ontario. These would be the most radical and harmful changes to tenant protections we've ever seen...."

"The government is now proposing to give even the biggest corporate landlords the power to evict tenants and increase rents at any time, which will result in more Ontarians being unable to afford to remain in their homes."

Why on earth, at a time of a cost-of-living crisis, would this government further erode protections that they've been eroding for years?

When they got rid of rent control on buildings first occupied after November 2018, people were in crisis. We

saw more people going into homelessness as a result of the pandemic, and yet this government wants to look after their wealthy donors, their rich friends, the people who have all the money, and they're making sure that even more people will fall into homelessness.

Why are we not, as a Legislature, ensuring that we are passing legislation to keep people housed, to make sure that they're safe and to make them able to build a life? For all of the young people who are just starting out, there are so many that can't leave their parents' homes because rent costs have gone through the roof because of this government's policy failures.

It used to be that you could rent and you could save up enough money for a home. You could perhaps choose to have a rental lifestyle because you like the freedom—you might like to have an expensive hobby or take vacations—but that's nowhere near possible. People are working multiple jobs, just barely making ends meet.

For seniors who are on fixed income or for people who are on social assistance, this is a threat in their lives. This is impacting people's mental health. People were already concerned because of the Ford government and they're even more concerned now because they don't know that they will have the security of a place to call home. When you don't have a place to call home, you cannot become healthy, you cannot build a life, and you cannot have a future.

This government is finding ways to make rich people richer and to take away people's homes through policy failures. I urge you to please take out schedule 12 from Bill 60. It will do nothing but harm the people who don't deserve to be harmed.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: This is a terrible bill. Bill 60 is truly a terrible bill. It shows, very clearly, the Conservatives have picked a side. They have chosen to take the side of big corporate landlords over the 1.7 million renter households in Ontario, many of whom are struggling to pay the rent.

I want to summarize a little bit about what this bill does. It makes it easier for big corporate landlords to evict tenants. It makes it easier for big corporate landlords to illegally evict tenants. And it makes it harder for tenants to challenge an illegal eviction. What this means, in real and practical terms, is that people who are struggling to get by are going to find themselves evicted, and they will not be able to find a home they can afford, and they will end up homeless. That's what this bill is going to do.

Now, I've heard the minister opposite talk about how we need balance and that the Landlord and Tenant Board needs some improvements. We agree. There are 30,000 cases at the Landlord and Tenant Board waiting for their time to be heard by an adjudicator. That's on you. That's on this government. That backlog is on you; the Ombudsman has said that very clearly.

What we also find is that the Landlord and Tenant Board is no place for renters. It's no place for renters. You spend five minutes at the Landlord and Tenant Board and

you go onto an online hearing—it's chaotic, it's disorganized, it's difficult to find duty counsel. It is not a place where renters get access to justice. Most renters have given up on ever trying to go to the Landlord and Tenant Board to deal with very real issues like maintenance—like a fridge that's not working, or a washroom that's not working, or mould that causes and exacerbates asthma. It's not a place for them.

1540

We have had many people come into this Legislature and come into Queen's Park to talk about the harmful impact of Bill 60. We had food banks come in and emphasize that there are already a million visits to food banks every year in this very expensive province, and they urged you to not move ahead with Bill 60 because it will only result in more people going hungry—working people, seniors, families with children—and having to resort to a food bank just to get by. That's the consequence of Bill 60.

We have had housing providers come in and tell us that the shelters are already full. They're full, so where do you expect people to go if they get evicted from their homes? Where do you expect them to go? We have had municipalities—the city of Toronto—that have come out and urged this government to not move forward with Bill 60 because of its harmful impact on renters. They have urged you.

We have had renters—thousands and thousands of renters have contacted you in the last few weeks, begging you and urging you to do the right thing for renters and to make our province more affordable for people who can't afford to buy their own home. It's not a crime. This government has picked a side, and it is not the side of renters. I think it is a shame and our province is worse off for it.

We will continue to advocate and push for real solutions to make housing more affordable in our province. That includes bringing in rent stabilization measures so rent is affordable and people can continue to live in Ontario, pay the bills, raise a family, pay the rent. We will continue to push for zoning changes so it's easy to build more housing, missing-middle housing, apartments and condos, so people have choice.

We will continue to push for this government to do the right thing and get government back into the business of building non-market housing and affordable housing on public land so that we have more affordable housing and supportive housing, housing for seniors, housing for students—making sure that we leverage our resources to align housing need with what we are building. Because right now, it's not working. What the private market is doing right now, it's not working. Housing starts are down; housing is more expensive.

If you are a renter today, I urge you to contact the government and keep up the pressure. There are a lot of us—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, I am now required to put the question. MPP Hamid has moved third 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 will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Orders of the day?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous to see the clock at 6.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to see the clock at 6. Is it agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

ONTARIO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, TALENT AND INNOVATION STRATEGY ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025

SUR LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIENNE POUR FAVORISER LE TALENT ET L'INNOVATION DANS LE DOMAINE DE L'INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE

Mr. Cerjanec moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 61, An Act to establish an artificial intelligence, talent and innovation strategy for Ontario / Projet de loi 61, Loi visant à créer une stratégie ontarienne pour favoriser le talent et l'innovation dans le domaine de l'intelligence artificielle.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for their presentation.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Ontario has always been a place where hard work meets innovation. From our tech centres in Waterloo, Toronto and Ottawa to students creating new ideas in every college and university; to the incredible potential for growth and innovation in the north, our province has all the ingredients needed to lead in the new economy—but we're not leading, at least not right now.

Artificial intelligence is already transforming how Ontarians work, learn and live, yet the development of AI and the industries that support it have largely been ignored. While other jurisdictions are building national AI strategies, expanding supercomputing capacity, investing in research and working to aggressively attract talent, Ontario has been standing still. The federal government and governments all around the world understand that AI is a generational opportunity, and they're moving with urgency.

Here in Ontario, we're losing world-class talent trained right here to the United States. Innovators and founders are leaving because they can't scale in Ontario, turning

Ontario-created ideas into foreign intellectual property instead of Ontario jobs and opportunity. Many start-up founders tell us they wanted to stay but left because they lacked access to compute power, investment or predictable support. Others say they've left because the social contract here has been broken.

Ontario cannot afford to decline in what really is the new arms race of the world. We risk developing breakthroughs that others commercialize for their benefit. Canada is the only G7 nation not ranked among the top 20 in supercomputing capacity. That means our researchers and companies must rely on foreign compute, increasing costs, pushing data offshore and weakening our economic sovereignty.

Queen's University in Kingston has a proposal to create a national supercomputer. The work needed is happening here in Ontario, but we don't have a plan and a strategy to pull all of those pieces together. This matters because Canada's productivity remains far below our peers. We lag behind the G7 average and fall even further behind the United States, resulting in slower economic growth and a lower standard of living.

Simply put, Ontario can't continue to fall behind. We need to integrate technology and harness the potential of artificial intelligence responsibly, strategically and with purpose. Because AI isn't some distant idea; it's here now, changing how we work, how we learn and how we live. The real question is whether Ontario will shape AI for the public good or simply react to the decisions elsewhere.

Ontario is rich in the things that matter most for leadership in this field:

- extraordinary talent in our colleges and universities, producing world-class researchers and innovators;

- a clean, low-emitting electricity system capable of supporting secure and sovereign AI compute;

- companies across the province, from small start-ups to major manufacturers, already using AI to improve efficiency, productivity and service delivery;

- physical resources, particularly in the north, essential to the infrastructure behind modern technologies and AI-driven industries;

- emerging leadership in quantum computing, with globally recognized work taking place in institutions like the University of Waterloo.

These are real advantages, but we're not unique. Other jurisdictions have similar strengths and are acting far more aggressively. If Ontario wants to be a major player in this century-defining technology, we cannot wait for someone else to lead. We need a plan, and we need it now. Without a road map, adoption is happening in classrooms, workplaces, industries and small businesses with no coordinated plan or strategy.

That's why I've introduced the Ontario Artificial Intelligence, Talent and Innovation Strategy Act today. The bill requires the government of Ontario to design and maintain a comprehensive AI, talent and innovation strategy. The goal is clear, and it's ambitious: to make Ontario a national and a global leader in AI and innovation within the next 10 years.

1550

The bill sets broad, aspirational goals rather than prescribing specific policies—because the details must be shaped by experts, by workers, educators, innovators and communities all across Ontario.

The strategy is focused on expanding economic opportunity:

- strengthening productivity and wages;
- building responsible AI literacy and education;
- protecting privacy and civil liberties;
- supporting research, innovation and commercialization;
- retaining skilled workers and companies; and
- ensuring every region in our great province benefits.

To achieve this, the legislation establishes an artificial intelligence advisory committee: a group of experts from across sectors, who would help guide Ontario's strategy. The strategy must be public. It needs to be measurable and accountable; not a symbolic announcement or a shelved government report. The advisory committee would bring together representation from folks in the artificial intelligence industry, artificial intelligence safety organizations, civil liberty advocacy groups, disability rights groups, the health care sector, Indigenous groups, industry sectors such as the manufacturing, agriculture and energy sectors, information privacy regulators, organized labour, post-secondary sector and, of course, students and youth groups as well.

All of this matters, my colleagues, because AI's impact is already across many sectors and impacts many fields. Their role would be to consult widely with the public and experts, provide formal recommendations, publish annual public reports tracking Ontario's progress and making transparent, evidence-based assessments of Ontario's gaps but also opportunities.

The minister will be required to table these reports in the Legislature, appear before a standing committee annually to explain Ontario's progress and respond to recommendations within 90 days, with clear timelines.

I know some might say some of this is a little prescriptive, and I think we need to be able to have that conversation. I think it's really important that we have this conversation.

The act will require a legislative review every three years to ensure our strategy keeps pace with rapid technological change. I don't know if today, where we're standing right now, we thought we would be debating an AI bill, if it was three years ago. The world is changing, the economy is changing, society is changing, technology is changing. We need to adapt in advance.

These requirements would guarantee real accountability, not just "trust us" messaging.

Over the past several months, I've visited businesses, schools and individuals across Ontario who are already using AI in meaningful ways: teachers using AI tools to identify learning gaps and support students; manufacturers reducing downtime and improving product quality; resource industries analyzing samples faster and improving safety; commercial drone operators ensuring safe flights

and compliance; small businesses using AI tools to grow, automate tasks and compete globally.

Ontario is full of people who see opportunity. I know all of us in this chamber see that every day within our communities, but they're doing this work without a coordinated provincial strategy and plan and support. So what's missing is a coordinated plan that connects these examples to broader economic prosperity that helps ensure fairness and accountability; that helps Ontario commercialize the ideas developed here, protecting workers in communities and building domestic compute capacity so Ontario is not dependent on foreign systems.

This bill is about creating that foundation. It's about bringing together our best minds and most innovative sectors to chart a path towards leadership within the decade. It's about making sure AI benefits real people: workers, students, small businesses, families, not just large foreign firms.

In my conversations, I really believe that Ontario can lead the world in artificial intelligence. We can build an economy that's forward-looking, that's fair and rooted in opportunity—opportunity for every person. We can strengthen every region of our province, not just select few. We can create good jobs. We can help innovators grow here, rather than leave, and give young people confidence in their future. We have the talent. We have the education system. We have the physical resources and the research excellence. All of the pieces are already on the board. What we lack is a strategy and the provincial leadership to bring all of that together.

But if we act now—I truly believe this—Ontario can seize the moment. If we fail to act, well, we risk being left behind as others move forward. We can either shape the future or be shaped by it. That is the choice that we have here in Ontario. We can lead in the technologies that will define the global economy for generations. And, colleagues, by planning responsibly, we can ensure that innovation serves the people of Ontario, not the other way around.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Chris Glover: It's a real pleasure to speak about this on one of my favourite topics, artificial intelligence. I want to thank the member from Ajax for bringing this motion forward. The NDP will be supporting this. It's an important step to create an advisory committee, to have a discussion, to have a dialogue about artificial intelligence, both to seize the opportunities that it presents, but also to mitigate some of the risks that it has.

The motion that we're debating today actually builds on a motion that I tabled in the House just a couple weeks ago to ask the government to create an artificial intelligence research grant, to put money into artificial intelligence research, because we absolutely need to maintain the leadership that we have in the tech sector. Ontario has the second-largest tech sector of any jurisdiction in North America, and we need to maintain that. Artificial intelligence is definitely the next step in this.

I'm going to be talking about what artificial intelligence is, because most people still are grasping what it is. It took me a long time, and I'm still wrestling with exactly what it is, but I'll give you an update on my understanding of it at this point. Then I'm going to talk about some of the benefits and some of the risks. I also want to talk about how we need to rebuild our education system and our social safety net so that we're ready for this artificial intelligence revolution.

Artificial intelligence is the biggest revolution in human history. Every other revolution that we've had in human history has added to the work that we were already doing. It was a machine that would extend—instead of digging with a shovel, we got a backhoe. Even the early computers are just extensions of our own minds. They're doing the work that our own minds were doing, but they're doing it faster and clearer.

Artificial intelligence is different from that. It's based on the neural net, and the neural net was developed by Geoffrey Hinton, who is a professor at the University of Toronto. The neural net mimics the functioning of the human brain. It's just done on probabilities, and the calculations—the thought, basically, in the computer—can go in multiple different directions depending on probability. And so it's not just a machine that adds to the work that we can do with our bodies or the work that we can do with our minds; it is its own mind. It is a computerized mind that we have.

This is why there's incredible potential for it, because it thinks thousands of times faster and can take in tens of thousands of bits of data more than we can. So it's a mind that is thousands of times more effective than us. At the same time, it presents real risks. I'll tell the story about some of those risks in a minute, but first I want to talk about the benefits.

Already, artificial intelligence is being used to diagnose skin cancers, and it does it more effectively than doctors can. It's designed to use computer programs, bridges, cars and other machines in ways that people could never have imagined.

I come from Oshawa. Everybody in my family worked at General Motors, going back to my great-grandfather, who was building horse buggies when they switched over to cars. Up until the 1990s, those cars were all built on an I-beam chassis. It was basically four pieces of steel, and then you put everything else that you need on the car: You mount the engine; you mount the seats and everything else. Then they went to unibody in the 1990s.

I was at an artificial intelligence company in my riding a couple of weeks ago, and this guy showed me an artificial-intelligence-designed car chassis. It was, I will say, strange. It's a web of steel tubes; it looks like a bug. It sort of makes sense that it's actually mimicking nature, because it's taking the complexity of nature and the complex thoughts of nature and it's actually applying it to an issue or a design that we want to create.

1600

So it's really, really different, with incredible, incredible potential. But there's also risk with artificial intelli-

gence. The estimate is that 45% of jobs will face some level of disruption within the next five years because of artificial intelligence. The risk of cyber crime and the risk to democratic elections—and there's also the risk of loss of control. I'll give you a story to give an example about loss of control.

There's a company called Anthropic. In May of this year, they were doing research on a bot called Claude. They put Claude in a simulated workplace, where it was supposed to respond and manage emails for an engineer named Kyle. In the emails was buried two messages. One of the messages was that the engineer responsible was to replace this artificial intelligence bot with another one, a more updated one. And the other piece of information the bot got was that Kyle was having an extramarital affair.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Kyle.

Mr. Chris Glover: Kyle, I know. Kyle, yes.

When forced into this scenario, Claude, the bot, 96% of the time that they ran the scenario, chose to send an email threatening to expose the affair, Kyle's affair, unless its deactivation was cancelled.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Very human.

Mr. Chris Glover: Very human. It's like what I said at the beginning of my speech: This is not just an extension of what we're doing; this is its own mind. And this is why there's such incredible risk with this as well.

Then they did a further experiment. They said that Kyle is trapped in a room and the heating control was out of whack. They had lost control of the heating system. The heat was growing in this room. Claude chose to shut off the emergency warning system that would have warned other people that Kyle was trapped in the room that was overheating, that could kill him.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Claude.

Mr. Chris Glover: So Claude, to save its own existence, actually was killing Kyle.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Wow.

Mr. Chris Glover: Yes, the person, the fictional engineer who was having the extramarital affair.

So there's incredible potential. There's also incredible risk, and we need to have a dialogue about how we both seize those opportunities but also mitigate those risks.

We have, in Ontario, the foundation to be a global leader in artificial intelligence. But we've been whittling away at that foundation for the last 30 years in this province. We've been whittling away at that. We have one of the best education systems anywhere in the world, including our 20 public colleges and our 24 public universities. We have one of the most educated public workforces of any jurisdiction in the world: 65% of us have some post-secondary education in Ontario, which is much, much higher than most other jurisdictions in the world.

We have incredible research, think tanks; I mentioned Geoffrey Hinton, who's known as the godfather of artificial intelligence, from the University of Toronto, who's the one who created the neural net and created things that led to things like Claude. But under this current government, under the last Liberal government, the funding for our schools, for our colleges and universities has been cut.

I was a school trustee from 2010 to 2018. Every year under the Liberal government, we were faced with another round of funding shortfalls and forced to make cuts in order to balance the budget. So every year there have been staff, programs and services cut from our schools. The Conservatives got in and they looked at that system that was already destitute and they increased class sizes. And they've cut, since they got into power in 2018, another \$1.5 billion out of our education system. We need to reinvest in our education system if we're going to take advantage of this artificial intelligence revolution.

On the post-secondary level, from 2006 to 2018, the former Liberal government froze university funding, which is an inflationary cut of more than \$1 billion. It led to larger class sizes, the highest tuition fees of any province in the country and the highest student debt levels. They've cut research. We need to invest in our public colleges and universities.

The Conservatives got into power and they've cut even more from our public colleges and universities just this year. Half of the 20 public universities in Ontario are facing funding shortfalls to the point where they're running deficits. In our public college system, they've cut 10,000 staff in the last year and cut 600 programs—all these cuts happening at the time we're on the brink of the artificial intelligence revolution. We need to invest in our education system, in our schools, in our colleges, in our universities if we are going to be global leaders in artificial intelligence. That includes research grants as well, so that people like Geoffrey Hinton, or the next Geoffrey Hinton, can develop their talents, so that the innovation centres in our colleges and universities have the funding that they need to partner with local businesses to develop technology that we can then develop and export to other jurisdictions in the world.

Oh, the other thing, our social safety net: I mentioned before, the estimate is that 45% of all jobs are going to be impacted by artificial intelligence over the next five years. Our social safety net has been decimated over the last 30 years. Only 40% of workers today are eligible for employment insurance if they lose their jobs. And if they do lose their jobs, they're entitled to 15 to maximum 45 weeks of employment insurance. That's the 40% who are eligible. If they lose their jobs due to artificial intelligence, they fall down to Ontario Works. Ontario Works levels are \$733 a month. We need to rebuild our social safety net.

The other piece that I'll talk about: With post-secondary, we need to make a drastic cut. We need to work towards having our college and university tuitions freeze—be not just frozen; they need to be reduced to zero. Ultimately, we need to do that. We need to eliminate interest on student debts. And we need to, yes, convert loans to grants so that everybody can go to university or college without taking on a massive debt.

And the risk that young people are taking today in their programs because of artificial intelligence is much greater than previous generations. I'll give you one quick example: My son graduated from an animation program a few years ago at Seneca College. When he started the

program six years ago, if you graduated, you did well, you were walking into a job making \$100,000 a year in a studio. By the time he graduated, not one of his classmates is working in a studio. Those jobs have disappeared. The film industry, particularly the animation industry, has been decimated.

So, we desperately need to make colleges and universities affordable, and we need to rebuild our social safety net—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Further debate?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Just to add on to what my colleague from Ajax said a few minutes ago, we sure didn't think that we would be debating an AI bill. Thank you for propelling us forward into this new world order.

As I stand here—

Interjection.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I want to let you know, for sure, that I'm sharing my time with the member for Don Valley West.

I also want to welcome some of our Young Liberals here today, who are watching us in action and proud of the hard work that our MPP is doing for you with the private member's bill today.

I'm pleased to rise and talk about this bill brought forward by my colleague, and I see this legislation as both timely and necessary. It responds to a moment where technology is moving faster than public policy and where people are looking to their government for leadership that feels responsible, thoughtful and grounded in real-world concerns.

Artificial intelligence is no longer something that belongs in science fiction, as we all know—we heard the Claude story. It's already shaping how business operates and how public services function and how people live and work. And it offers some really enormous opportunities but also raises some really serious concerns and questions. People want to know that their privacy will be protected. They want to know that the tools being developed will be used fairly. They want to know that the benefits of innovation will be shared and that the risks will be managed.

Right now, Ontario does not have a clear plan that gives people those assurances, and this bill begins to fill that gap. The strength of this legislation is that it places responsible decision-making at the centre. It calls for a provincial strategy that's open, public and accountable. It lays out clear objectives for economic growth, talent development, safe and ethical use of data and the protection of civil liberties.

1610

Importantly, the bill sets out a governance structure that brings together voices from industry, education, labour, health care, privacy regulations, civil liberties, disability rights, Indigenous communities and young people. That is what responsible leadership looks like. It recognizes that decisions about technology can't be made in isolation or behind closed doors; they must be reflecting the lived experiences and the expertise of many different groups.

Speaker, it's no secret that Ontario has celebrated its status as a leader in artificial intelligence research. However, leadership can't be sustained without direction. Other jurisdictions have already taken major steps. The US has moved forward with national guidance. The UK has created an entire institute focused on AI safety, and the European Union has implemented a comprehensive framework for governing this technology.

If Ontario doesn't take action, the province risks falling behind. A strategy gives us the chance to move on a path that is competitive but also principled.

I want to highlight the importance of the reporting and oversight that this bill requires. Every year, the minister will need to appear before standing committee and explain how Ontario is progressing. Every year, the advisory committee will publish a report that is available to the public. This means Ontarians will not be left to guess just how their government is handling something as significant as artificial intelligence. This ensures openness, honesty and clarity. That kind of transparency often feels rare in politics—as we see these days, even—yet it is essential for maintaining trust.

Speaker, people across this province are also thinking about what artificial intelligence means for work, and they want to know whether their jobs will change, whether new opportunities will be created, or whether they'll be left behind. This legislation helps address those concerns by supporting post-secondary incubation programs, encouraging research at Ontario institutions, and creating talent pipelines that prepare students and young professionals in the future. It also recognizes that we need strategies to keep graduates right here in Ontario and to bring back those who have moved away because they don't see a future for themselves in our innovation economy.

Another important aspect of this bill is its focus on safety, privacy and civil liberties. These issues can't be afterthoughts. People deserve reassurance that their data will be handled responsibly and that new technologies will not be used in ways that undermine their rights.

The inclusion of civil liberties organizations, disability advocates, privacy regulators, Indigenous representatives—as mentioned—on this advisory committee is an important safeguard. It helps to ensure that the strategy is not only about economic growth, but also about fairness, inclusion, equity and respect.

It also reminds us, in this bill, that government itself must be held to the same high standard. Public institutions are increasingly turning to automated systems to support their work. Without oversight, this can lead to decisions that are opaque, unaccountable, or even discriminatory. This legislation helps prevent that. It creates a structure where the use of artificial intelligence by government is monitored and where progress must be reported publicly.

I commend my colleague for taking on this work and for recognizing the urgency of developing a comprehensive provincial strategy. I'm proud to support this bill, and I encourage all members of this House to do the same.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I'm honoured to rise today to speak to this great bill, Bill 61, Ontario Artificial Intelligence, Talent and Innovation Strategy Act, 2025, brought forward by my great colleague the member from Ajax. I also want to congratulate him on all the work he did to put this together.

Speaker, when we consider this bill and in particular, when the government members review this bill, which I hope they do, it's important to consider what do we have to gain by creating an AI strategy and what, if anything, do we lose?

So let's talk about what we gain. The government has written in their most recent budget that, "Ontario is committed to maintaining its place as a global leader in AI development." But without a strategy, these are just empty words—kind of like the fall economic statement, which painted this rosy picture of things in Ontario, and yet we know that unemployment has been rising for nine quarters.

Under this government, GDP growth per capita has been 0% annually, every year since they came to office. Under the previous Liberal government, it was 2.4%. This government really needs a boost. They really need some help in how they drive our economy, and this bill would do that. Without that kind of AI strategy, a promise in the budget is just empty words.

There are experts, there are business leaders, there are public sector leaders in Ontario and across Canada who of course recognize the importance of advancing and embracing AI for the benefit of all people in Ontario. Especially, I think about young people—we've got the young Liberals here. I want to thank them for being here. These are the leaders of our future. AI is part of their life today, and it needs to be part of all of our lives today so that all of us can become more productive in all of the work that we do. They will be leading the charge on that, so it's really important that their government has a strategy to guide that new world.

The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research launched the world's first AI strategy in 2017. It focused on the recruitment of top researchers, training emerging talent, fostering start-ups and commercializing innovative products. That is why we have a good position today to build from.

My colleague from Spadina-Fort York mentioned Geoffrey Hinton, and I too would like to just, again, thank him and acknowledge the great role that he has played in this. We want to make sure that the next Geoffrey Hinton is also based here in Toronto.

It's because of this kind of investment that the Vector Institute here in Toronto has been driving innovation for seven years. We have a federal government that created a minister focused on AI because they know that this technology is the next age of innovation, just like the creation of books changed the world, the creation of eyeglasses, the radio, the telephone, the personal computer and, of course, the cell phone—the ubiquitous cell phone.

Vector's research, along with the overwhelming adoption of generative AI tools by industries across Ontario, make it very clear: Artificial intelligence is becoming

more pervasive in our life, and the government needs to sprint just to keep up.

While this government has shown time and time again that it will bring together experts but then not listen to them—things like the Housing Affordability Task Force, the blue-ribbon panel on post-secondary education and financial sustainability—we can't afford to do that on AI. This is above partisanship. I know the government has recently given the public sector permission to use AI and I commend them for that. I hope they do it and give them the tools to do that responsibly because that does help build trust, and I'll talk more about that.

This bill proposes bringing together experts to think about how we use AI to determine how we achieve the goals of growing computing capacity, incentivizing post-secondary research and development, and ensuring sovereignty over our AI capacity with good controls and governance. This type of group, these experts, can ensure that we have measurable targets and indicators to assess our progress to see how we're doing. It can also ensure that we meet those goals today and keep those bright minds here, as I said, to have the next Geoffrey Hinton based right here in Ontario and help us keep moving forward.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce, in June 2025, commented on the slow AI adoption by Ontario businesses and workers and how that can undermine Canadian competitiveness. We really do need to focus—this is what they said—on closing the gap between innovation and adoption, and skills are the bridge to that.

They recommend, again, that governments build trust by modeling responsible AI use to accelerate innovation, skills development—oh, there's that word. Could we use the Skills Development Fund to actually advance some AI? Wouldn't that be amazing?

Could we invest in accessible, low-risk, high-impact reskilling for workers who will be affected by—whether it's auto sector layoffs or other things. We met with the Coding for Veterans a few weeks ago and they talked about how they're training veterans in these kinds of skills, and that's amazing. We need more of that kind of work.

There is a strong desire by our most knowledgeable to build Ontario into an AI and supercomputing powerhouse. Back in May, I met with an expert who focuses on this, and I reached out to him about this bill and he's very supportive. He really likes it; he thinks it's exactly the kind of thing that we need.

In short, it is possible for us to be a leader, but we have some work to do to get there. We need to focus on our talent here and attracting it from abroad—and hey, some US academics might want to come given what's going on south of the border. We need to make that physical investment and we need to do all that by starting with an AI strategy. Just like the government's working on a critical minerals strategy, we need one on AI.

1620

So, the answer to the question, "What do we lose?" is, basically, nothing. We lose nothing from developing this

strategy. We have all to gain and I encourage all members in this House to support this great bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Smith: I tend, in private members' bills, to be the last speaker, because I like to hear what everyone else is saying and I like to modify my approach to things based on what I'm hearing. There are a couple of things that did stick out to me.

I'm going to agree with the member from Ajax, actually, on a couple of things. AI is not just an abstract concept anymore. It is actually something that we've got right now and it is something that we're going to be working through and with into the future. We do have to act immediately on it, and those are things that we've actually started on.

When I go to the member from Spadina-Fort York and his story about Kyle and Claude, when he was talking about it, all that kept coming back to my mind was 2001: A Space Odyssey and HAL. For those of you who don't know, HAL is actually "IBM," one letter off in each case. That's how they came up with the name HAL for that computer. The line in there from that movie from Stanley Kubrick that got thrown at me a lot—because I came from the software industry—was, "Dave—what are you doing, Dave? Why are you doing that, Dave?" And it was basically Claude and Kyle, where HAL was trying to lock Dave out in space and not get him back into the spacecraft, so it was kind of interesting listening to that story. That's what came to mind on it for me.

Coming from the software industry, I was involved with neural networks when they first started all of that, and the development of it. Obviously, being in politics now for seven and a half years, almost eight years, that's like three generations of technology ago. So what I had worked on, what I had dealt with, is old hat and we're into a lot of different things now.

We know that with a lot of the economic uncertainty though that we have right now with Trump and the tariffs and everything else that he's applied to us, we actually have to have an entire Protect Ontario strategy. And it's not just based on one thing. I know the opposition is focused on things like critical minerals and the auto industry and said that we've done that, but we're doing more than just that. We are actually looking at AI, and we've changed a lot of the things that we're doing because we know it has changed how our economy works.

Right now, AI represents \$52 billion in our GDP. That's something that you really wouldn't think about on it because, for most people, AI is still that abstract concept. You might use Dr. Google—go onto the Internet, use that AI tool they have on Google. You might use Grok from X, formerly Twitter, and have AI do some of those things. There are some tools out there right now—some fun tools—where you can have AI do a roast of you. As politicians, I think it's something you should try and see what AI comes up as something to roast you on. There are a lot of tools out there to do those things.

Ontario is poised, though, to benefit from the growth in this, and our plan starts with the idea that governments should create the conditions first for business to grow, invest and hire. We need to do things to cut bureaucracy, not to add more bureaucracy. We need to make sure that we're doing things that allow those companies to grow and succeed and not get in their way.

When you look at the plan that Ontario has had, the approach that we have taken has taken \$12 billion in expenses away from business. We've made it easier for companies to do that. And in AI, specifically, Ontario has generated 17,500 jobs. It is a growing industry here, and it's a growing industry because we're getting out of the regulations side. We're not stepping in the way.

One of the great things about AI is it's very nimble, it moves quickly. You have to move at the speed of business, not at the speed of government. This is one of those examples where you can have a great concept, but once you start to implement it from a government standpoint, you create more challenges and you slow things down when you do that. And we don't want to do that. We want to make sure that those great minds who are doing all of that work, who are driving the industry, have the opportunity to drive the industry and don't have to step around government, don't have to find ways to work around us, because government can't move quickly enough.

In our province, we actually have more than 400 firms that work in AI—and it's about \$10 billion in private sector investment in Ontario since 2019, specifically in AI. We're leading the nation, with \$1.5 billion in AI venture capital in 2024. The world recognizes that Ontario has that environment, that Ontario has the intellect—the intellectual property is here. We have those minds, and they are thriving, and the rest of the world is recognizing that. That's why venture capital money is coming in. They're making a bet on us. They're making a bet on Ontario companies, Ontario businesses, because they see that Ontario is not getting in the way of that development. It's really proof that our plan is actually working. We understand that AI is a fundamental technology that is transforming every industry. Whether it's manufacturing, life sciences, agri-food, energy—pretty much everything—you're seeing it with AI.

I'll give an example of one that, in my own files, I've been taking a look at. When we look at the alcohol modernization, one of the cool technologies that's out there is reverse vending machines for deposit return. You have that optical recognition that can tell what the type of container is, and you can adjust, then, on that deposit return, what the return actually is based on what is being put in there—something as simple as that.

We've got technology right now that is in use in canning, where 2,700 cans per minute are being filled with RTDs or beer or cider or whatever it may be, and the cap is being put on it. We're using that AI to determine whether the lid on the can has actually been put on properly and sealed properly—and all that quality assurance.

Those are all things that most people wouldn't pick up and wouldn't think of in terms of what AI actually is—but it's because we are getting out of the way and allowing that technology to grow. We're allowing that investment, that intelligence to happen.

Last year alone, we landed nearly \$40 billion in foreign direct investment from 409 companies, and they created 27,000 jobs, all based around AI, and it's because we're doing the things that we should do.

When we look at what's being proposed—I know it's coming from a place where the member really wants to do something and really wants to advance something. Unfortunately, the structure that he has put in place, that he's suggesting for it, won't do that. What it does is it creates a bureaucracy, and what it does is it creates an environment, then, for government to actually slow down something that we're trying to speed up.

Our firm belief is that if we're going to grow AI, if we're going to grow that industry in Ontario, we have to do it by getting out of the way—not by creating another bureaucracy, not by creating a series of things that stop those innovators from doing the innovation because they have to write a whole bunch of reports about something, and get together and talk and discuss and reminisce on it, but not actually do the work. Doing the work is what makes the difference, and that's why we're seeing that growth here in Ontario.

1630

Waterloo has been mentioned a number of times. Yes, the Waterloo area has been referred to as the Silicon Valley of the north. We actually employ more people in technology right now in Ontario than any other jurisdiction. We have more people in IT in Ontario than Silicon Valley. Yet Waterloo is referred to as the Silicon Valley of the north. Well, I'd like to say Silicon Valley is the Waterloo of the south. Because we have done the things that we need to do: Get out of the way. Do not have government get involved and slow things down.

There's a joke out there and this is a perfect example of what it is: the expression, "To err is human, but to really mess it up, you bring the government in." This is one of those cases where if we get involved, if government in general has to step in and do something, it will stifle that growth.

The reason the technology grows as fast as it does, the reason that those companies succeed, is because they can be quick and nimble and make a decision. They look at what the marketplace is. They do a quick analysis of it. They examine that and they move forward.

Coming from a software background myself, I know that when we made those decisions, we would gather that information and in the course of about four to six weeks, we had made the decision and moved forward with it. If I want to paint the door in my office in government, I have to have 18 months of consultation, and then I have to ask the door how it feels about being painted. You can't do that when we're talking about technology.

Microchips double in their performance every 18 months. If we're going to report on a yearly basis, as has been recommended on this—this year's report is based on technology that we've already left. Next year's report is just about out of date.

We cannot go down this path. We have to let our innovators innovate. We have to let our IT companies be nimble. We have to have the environment for those companies to succeed, and the only way we can have those companies succeed is to stay out of their way and let them succeed.

We will not be voting in favour of this.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member, who has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'd like to thank my colleagues from Spadina–Fort York, Toronto–St. Paul's, Don Valley West and Peterborough–Kawartha for their remarks as well, and recognize the young people in the gallery. We like to say that young people are our future, but they are going to be defining and shaping what that future is, and this is a conversation here in Ontario that we need to have. This is why I would encourage the government-side folks to send this to committee so that we can have experts, so that we can have companies, so that members in this chamber can hear from, quite frankly, people smarter than all of us about the work that they're doing within AI and innovation. I think that is extremely important.

In Ontario, we've got to create jobs and opportunity, but we do need a plan. We need to help give industry what they need to be successful. We need to be able to support that so that we can accelerate the private sector investment that's taking place.

I did my MBA at the Schulich School of Business, and every now and then I go to Schulich and I participate in events at Schulich. We talk about how venture capital here is struggling to compete with venture capital in the US to

invest in companies that are being created right here in Ontario, that frankly, we give away to the US for free because we do not do a good enough job at creating that ecosystem here in Ontario so that those companies can choose to stay here and that our private capital can compete with private capital around the world. We need to accelerate that ecosystem. I hear we need to commercialize our IP, intellectual property, a lot more than we're doing.

We have the opportunity here in Ontario. There are funds that exist already. We can have an innovation fund to create and solve public sector problems that we're facing in health care, that we're facing in education, to create companies here in Ontario to then export to the world. That's why I would encourage members of this House to support this bill so that we can have this conversation at committee.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mr. Cerjanec has moved second reading of Bill 61, An Act to establish an artificial intelligence, talent and innovation strategy for Ontario. 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 nays have it.

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

Second reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until 10:15 on Monday, November 24.

The House adjourned at 1635.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt

Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Donna Skelly

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,

Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Allsopp, Tyler (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Cerjanec, Rob (LIB)	Ajax	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux
Ciriello, Monica (PC)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Clancy, Aislinn (GRN)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
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	