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Mardi
28 octobre 2025

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CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 28 October 2025 / Mardi 28 octobre 2025

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Supporting Children and Students Act, 2025, Bill 33, Mr. Calandra / Loi de 2025 sur le soutien aux enfants, aux élèves et aux étudiants, projet de loi 33, M. Calandra

Mme Lucille Collard	1693
Mr. John Fraser	1696
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	1699
MPP Lise Vaugeois.....	1699
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon	1700
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	1700
Mr. Chris Glover	1700
Mr. Deepak Anand.....	1701
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	1702

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Community safety

Mr. Lorne Coe.....	1702
--------------------	------

Post-secondary education

Ms. Chandra Pasma.....	1702
------------------------	------

Le Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans

M. Stephen Blais	1703
------------------------	------

Jewish Medical Association of Ontario

Mrs. Michelle Cooper	1703
----------------------------	------

Ticket resales

Mr. Tom Rakocovic	1703
-------------------------	------

Six Nations Chiefs lacrosse team

Mr. Will Bouma	1704
----------------------	------

Tenant protection

Ms. Peggy Sattler	1704
-------------------------	------

The Great Pumpkin Trail

Ms. Natalie Pierre	1704
--------------------------	------

Housing

Mr. Anthony Leardi	1704
--------------------------	------

Tenant protection

Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1704
--------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)	1705
Hon. Trevor Jones:.....	1705
Hon. Caroline Mulroney	1705

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1705
MPP Billy Denault	1705
Ms. Lee Fairclough	1705
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1705
Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto.....	1705
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	1705
Hon. Michael Parsa	1705
Mr. Rob Cerjanec	1705
MPP Wayne Gates	1705
Mrs. Michelle Cooper	1705
Mr. Amarjot Sandhu.....	1706
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo	1706

QUESTION PERIOD / PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles	1706
Hon. David Piccini.....	1706

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles	1707
Hon. Doug Downey.....	1707

Government accountability

Mr. John Fraser	1708
Hon. David Piccini	1708

Government accountability

Mr. John Fraser	1709
Hon. Doug Downey.....	1709

Immigrants' skills

MPP Alexa Gilmour.....	1710
Hon. David Piccini	1710
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1710

Government accountability

Mme Lucille Collard.....	1711
Hon. David Piccini	1711

Housing

MPP Silvia Gualtieri	1711
Hon. Graydon Smith	1711

Manufacturing jobs

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	1712
Hon. Stephen Crawford.....	1712

Government accountability

Mr. Jonathan Tsao.....	1712
Hon. David Piccini	1712

Affordable housing

Mr. Mike Schreiner	1713
Hon. Rob Flack	1713

Red tape reduction

Hon. Laurie Scott	1714
Hon. Andrea Khanjin	1714

Foreign-trained doctors

Ms. Doly Begum	1714
Mr. Anthony Leardi	1715

Government accountability

Mr. Stephen Blais	1715
Hon. David Piccini	1715
Hon. Steve Clark	1716

Correction of record

Hon. Andrea Khanjin	1716
---------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

**Housing Equity and Rental Transparency Act, 2025,
Bill 64, Ms. Bowman / Loi de 2025 sur l'équité en
matière de logement et la transparence dans les
modalités de location, projet de loi 64,
Mme Bowman**

First reading agreed to	1716
Ms. Stephanie Bowman	1716

**Remembrance Day Observance Act, 2025, Bill 65,
Ms. Pasma; Mr. Rakocevic; Mrs. Stevens;
MPP West / Loi de 2025 sur l'observation du jour
du Souvenir, projet de loi 65, Mme Pasma;
M. Rakocevic; Mme Stevens; MPP West**

First reading agreed to	1716
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	1716

**Kids' Online Safety and Privacy Month Act, 2025,
Bill 66, Mr. Blais; Mme Collard / Loi de 2025 sur le
Mois de la sécurité et de la protection de la vie
privée des enfants en ligne, projet de loi 66,
M. Blais; Mme Collard**

First reading agreed to	1717
Mr. Stephen Blais	1717

2163694 Ontario Ltd. Act, 2025, Bill Pr18, Mr. Blais

First reading agreed to	1717
-------------------------------	------

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Education funding

Ms. Jessica Bell	1717
------------------------	------

Education funding

Ms. Chandra Pasma	1717
-------------------------	------

Tenant protection

Ms. Jennifer K. French	1717
------------------------------	------

Autism treatment

MPP Jamie West	1717
----------------------	------

Social assistance

Ms. Chandra Pasma	1717
-------------------------	------

Health care

MPP Jamie West	1718
----------------------	------

Repeal of government legislation

Ms. Chandra Pasma	1718
-------------------------	------

Soins de santé

MPP Jamie West	1718
----------------------	------

Health care

Ms. Chandra Pasma	1719
-------------------------	------

Workplace safety

MPP Jamie West	1719
----------------------	------

Public safety

MPP Jamie West	1719
----------------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Time allocation / Attribution de temps

Mr. Steve Clark	1719
Mr. John Vanthof	1722
Mme Lucille Collard	1724
Ms. Peggy Sattler	1724
Mr. John Fraser	1725
M. Guy Bourgouin	1727
Mr. Stephen Blais	1728
Ms. Chandra Pasma	1731
Mr. Ted Hsu	1732
Mrs. Karen McCrimmon	1733
Vote deferred	1733

**Supporting Children and Students Act, 2025, Bill 33,
Mr. Calandra / Loi de 2025 sur le soutien aux
enfants, aux élèves et aux étudiants, projet de loi
33, M. Calandra**

Mr. Deepak Anand	1733
Ms. Chandra Pasma	1734
Mr. Lorne Coe	1735
Ms. Chandra Pasma	1735
MPP Tyler Watt	1735
Mr. Lorne Coe	1736
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	1736
Ms. Jennifer K. French	1737
Mr. Lorne Coe	1739
MPP Jamie West	1739
MPP Paul Vickers	1740
Mr. Tom Rakocevic	1740
Mr. Lorne Coe	1740
Ms. Lee Fairclough	1741
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	1741

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 28 October 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 28 octobre 2025

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 27, 2025, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

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

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Good morning, Madam Speaker. Je vais reprendre la parole aujourd'hui pour exprimer ma réelle préoccupation à l'égard du projet de loi 33. En fait, j'avais amorcé mon intervention hier, et je souhaite maintenant poursuivre en français, puisque bon nombre de mes préoccupations concernent directement le système d'éducation francophone, un système qui est déjà fragilisé par des défis majeurs que le gouvernement semble peu pressé de résoudre. Alors, l'entièreté de mes notes de débat aujourd'hui seront en français.

Lorsque le ministre a présenté ce projet de loi au printemps, j'avoue avoir cru—naïvement, peut-être—qu'il allait enfin proposer de vraies solutions aux problèmes criants de notre système d'éducation. Après tout, avec un titre comme « loi sur le soutien aux enfants et aux élèves », on avait le droit d'espérer pour des ressources accrues en santé mentale pour les élèves, du soutien pour les enfants ayant des besoins particuliers ou encore un plan d'action clair pour s'attaquer à la grave pénurie d'enseignants qui prend des proportions inquiétantes et affecte directement la qualité de l'enseignement dans nos écoles.

J'espérais aussi voir des engagements fermes en matière d'infrastructure scolaire, comme la modernisation de nos écoles vieillissantes, la construction de nouvelles écoles là où les besoins explosent, notamment dans le réseau francophone. Parce que la réalité, madame la Présidente, c'est que la demande pour des écoles de langue française

dépasse largement l'offre actuelle. On estime, en fait, qu'il faudrait au moins 80 nouvelles écoles francophones en Ontario pour répondre à la croissance de la population et assurer à chaque élève le droit fondamental à l'éducation dans sa langue. Malheureusement, le projet de loi présenté par le ministre de l'Éducation ne fait, en fait, rien de tout ça : aucune mesure concrète pour soutenir nos élèves, aucun plan pour renforcer nos écoles, aucune vision pour l'avenir de l'éducation francophone.

Pire encore, plutôt que de s'attaquer aux véritables besoins de nos écoles, le ministre choisit d'élargir ses pouvoirs. Le projet de loi 33 ne parle pas de soutien aux élèves; il parle de contrôle accru du ministère sur les conseils scolaires. On y trouve des mesures de centralisation qui éloignent la prise de décision des communautés locales et qui risquent d'affaiblir encore davantage la voix des parents, des enseignants et des francophones dans la gouvernance scolaire.

Ce que le gouvernement appelle « responsabilisation », c'est en réalité une recentralisation du pouvoir entre les mains du ministre. Et cela est particulièrement inquiétant pour les conseils scolaires francophones, qui ont été créés justement pour garantir une gestion par et pour les francophones, conformément à nos droits constitutionnels. Chaque fois que le ministère s'arroge un nouveau pouvoir, c'est un recul pour l'autonomie scolaire francophone et pour la capacité de nos communautés à décider de leurs priorités éducatives.

Et pendant que le ministre se dote de nouveaux leviers administratifs, les problèmes réels demeurent entiers : des écoles surpeuplées, des classes combinées, le manque d'appui en santé mentale, les retards dans la construction d'écoles francophones et un personnel enseignant qui est à bout de souffle. Nos élèves méritent mieux que des réformes bureaucratiques qui ne règlent rien sur le terrain. Le projet de loi rate sa cible. Il ne soutient pas les enfants ni les élèves : il soutient le pouvoir du ministre. Et cela n'aidera ni nos enseignants, ni nos familles, ni surtout nos élèves à réussir.

Monsieur le Président, le projet de loi 33 introduit en effet des changements majeurs dans trois domaines essentiels, soit l'éducation, la protection de l'enfance et le post-secondaire. Et bien qu'en apparence ces changements visent à renforcer la transparence et la reddition de comptes, ils traduisent en réalité une tendance inquiétante vers la centralisation excessive du pouvoir au sein du ministère, qui est au détriment de nos communautés locales.

Commençons par le secteur de l'éducation. Le projet de loi accorde au ministre de nouveaux pouvoirs qui lui permettent de procéder à des examens financiers, d'intervenir directement dans les affaires internes des conseils scolaires

et même de nommer des conseillers spéciaux qui pourraient contourner les décisions des conseils élus. C'est une ingérence directe dans la gouvernance scolaire locale. Les conseils scolaires, rappelons-le, sont des instances démocratiques élues qui existent pour refléter les réalités de leurs communautés, qu'elles soient urbaines, rurales, francophones ou anglophones. Les remplacer ou les neutraliser par des directives ministérielles, c'est affaiblir la voix des parents et des éducateurs sur le terrain.

Pour les conseils scolaires francophones, cette dérive est particulièrement préoccupante. Nos conseils servent des populations plus petites, souvent réparties sur de vastes territoires, et doivent composer avec des défis linguistiques et culturels qui sont uniques. Leur autonomie n'est pas un privilège : c'est une garantie constitutionnelle qui a été reconnue par la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés et qui a été confirmée de nombreuses fois par les tribunaux. Toute mesure qui permet au ministre d'imposer des décisions uniformes à l'ensemble des conseils risque de nier la spécificité du système francophone et de compromettre sa mission de protéger et de promouvoir la langue et la culture françaises en Ontario.

Le deuxième volet touche la protection de l'enfance. Ici encore, le gouvernement justifie ses nouvelles prérogatives par la nécessité d'assurer la reddition de comptes et la bonne utilisation des fonds publics. Mais dans les faits, il s'arroge le pouvoir de nommer des superviseurs, de retenir le financement et d'imposer des directives aux sociétés d'aide à l'enfance. Or, beaucoup d'entre elles—notamment celles qui servent des communautés autochtones, racialisées ou francophones—sont déjà confrontées à des défis structurels profonds : un manque de ressources, une surcharge des dossiers, difficultés dans le recrutement. Le contrôle accru du ministère, sans investissement correspondant dans les services de prévention et de soutien communautaire, ne fera qu'alourdir la bureaucratie et éloigner encore davantage les décisions des enfants et des familles qu'elles concernent.

Enfin, le troisième volet du projet de loi concerne l'enseignement postsecondaire. Le gouvernement veut imposer que les admissions reposent uniquement sur le mérite. Mais qu'est-ce qu'on entend par mérite? Si le mérite est défini uniquement selon les notes ou les résultats standardisés, alors on ferme la porte à ceux et celles qui n'ont pas eu les mêmes chances d'accès ou les mêmes outils de réussite. Les programmes d'accès, de transition ou de soutien aux groupes sous-représentés—qu'ils soient francophones, autochtones, issus de milieux ruraux ou à faible revenu—risquent d'être remis en question, voire supprimés. Et en donnant au Cabinet le pouvoir d'imposer des directives aux universités et collèges, le gouvernement menace l'autonomie institutionnelle et la liberté académique qui sont au cœur de la mission éducative.

Monsieur le Président, sous couvert de transparence, ce projet de loi concentre le pouvoir entre les mains du ministre et affaiblit les structures locales, démocratiques et représentatives. C'est une pente dangereuse qui menace la diversité du système ontarien, y compris la vitalité du réseau francophone. Le projet de loi 33 s'inscrit dans une

tendance plus large que nous observons depuis plusieurs années, soit la réduction graduelle de la démocratie scolaire en Ontario. Les conseils scolaires, qui devraient être des espaces de représentation et de débat public, voient leur rôle constamment diminué au profit de décisions centralisées à Queen's Park.

0910

Or, il ne faut pas oublier pourquoi ces conseils existent. Ils sont nés de la conviction que les communautés doivent pouvoir participer directement aux décisions qui touchent leurs enfants : les programmes offerts, les services de soutien, les infrastructures scolaires. Quand le ministre se donne le pouvoir d'intervenir, et ça, sans consultation, de nommer des conseillers spéciaux ou de réviser de façon unilatérale les finances d'un conseil, il envoie un message clair : il ne fait pas confiance aux élus locaux, ni aux communautés qu'ils représentent.

Cette concentration du pouvoir est d'autant plus préoccupante pour les conseils scolaires francophones. Nos conseils ont été conquis de haute lutte par la communauté franco-ontarienne, à la suite de décennies de revendications et de batailles juridiques. Ils incarnent un principe fondamental : celui du contrôle, par et pour les francophones, de leur système d'éducation. C'est une question de droits linguistiques, mais aussi une question de survie culturelle.

Monsieur le Président, la réalité, c'est que les écoles francophones font face à des défis croissants. On a une pénurie aigüe d'enseignants francophones, des manques criants en infrastructures—parce que plusieurs régions attendent encore la construction d'écoles promises depuis des années—et des ressources limitées pour soutenir les élèves ayant des besoins particuliers ou issus de l'immigration récente.

Les conseils scolaires francophones travaillent avec acharnement pour offrir un environnement où la langue, la culture et l'identité francophones peuvent s'épanouir. Mais sans moyens adéquats et sans autonomie réelle, leur mission devient de plus en plus difficile à remplir.

Et maintenant, avec le projet de loi 33, le ministre veut se donner le droit d'intervenir dans leurs affaires internes sans garantie de consultation et sans respect du principe de gouvernance distincte. C'est un recul inacceptable. Ce projet de loi risque d'affaiblir l'un des piliers les plus importants de la vitalité francophone en Ontario.

Si le gouvernement veut réellement soutenir les enfants et les élèves, il doit commencer par écouter ceux qui les accompagnent au quotidien, soit les enseignants, les directions d'école, les conseils scolaires et, bien sûr, les parents. Ce n'est pas en retirant le pouvoir à ces acteurs qu'on améliorera l'éducation, mais en leur donnant les moyens et la confiance nécessaire pour agir.

Monsieur le Président, le projet de loi 33 ne se limite pas à l'éducation. Il s'étend aussi à un autre domaine tout aussi sensible, soit la protection de l'enfance. Là encore, le gouvernement prétend vouloir renforcer la reddition de comptes et la transparence, mais ce qu'il propose en réalité, c'est une centralisation sans précédent du pouvoir ministériel.

Selon ce projet de loi, le ministre pourrait désormais intervenir directement dans les sociétés d'aide à l'enfance, nommer des superviseurs et même retenir ou rediriger des fonds publics à sa discrétion. Or, ces organismes sont souvent déjà fragilisés par un sous-financement chronique et par des demandes de plus en plus complexes : crises de santé mentale chez les jeunes, pénurie de familles d'accueil, manque de ressources spécialisées—je pourrais continuer. Les défis sont immenses. Plutôt que de leur donner plus de moyens pour prévenir les situations de crise, on leur impose plus de surveillance et de contrôles administratifs. C'est une logique punitive plutôt qu'une approche de soutien.

Et dans le cas des communautés francophones, cette centralisation est particulièrement inquiétante. Les services en français dans le domaine de la protection de l'enfance sont déjà trop rares et trop fragiles. Les sociétés d'aide à l'enfance francophones ou bilingues—comme celle d'Ottawa ou dans le Nord—peinent à recruter du personnel francophone qualifié et à offrir des services culturellement adaptés. Si le ministre s'arroge le droit d'intervenir sans égard à ces réalités, c'est toute la spécificité du service en français qui risque de s'effriter.

Monsieur le Président, la protection de l'enfance exige de la confiance, de la collaboration et de la proximité avec les familles et les communautés. Une gouvernance trop centralisée risque d'imposer des décisions uniformes et déconnectées des besoins locaux, surtout dans les régions rurales ou minoritaires. On ne protège pas mieux les enfants en éloignant la prise de décision de ceux qui les connaissent et les accompagnent au quotidien.

Si le gouvernement veut vraiment améliorer le système, il doit investir dans la prévention, renforcer les capacités locales et soutenir les travailleurs de première ligne—pas les surveiller davantage depuis Toronto.

Le troisième volet du projet de loi 33 touche au secteur postsecondaire, et là encore, le gouvernement prétend agir au nom de la transparence et de l'équité. On y introduit notamment l'idée que les admissions doivent être fondées sur le mérite et que le Cabinet pourrait désormais imposer des directives aux collèges et universités sur leurs politiques internes.

Mais, il faut le dire clairement, la notion de mérite n'est pas neutre. Dans les faits, elle tend souvent à favoriser celles et ceux qui ont déjà les meilleures conditions de départ : les étudiants qui ont eu accès à de meilleures écoles, à du soutien privé, à des ressources familiales. Le mérite, sans contexte, devient un filtre qui reproduit les inégalités plutôt qu'il ne les corrige.

Nos établissements postsecondaires ont développé, au fil des années, des programmes d'accès et d'équité pour corriger justement ces désavantages : programmes passerelles pour les étudiants issus de milieux défavorisés, initiatives pour les jeunes autochtones, pour les étudiants francophones en milieu minoritaire ou pour ceux en situation de handicap. Ces programmes visent à assurer une véritable égalité des chances, et non une égalité de façade.

Avec ce projet de loi, le gouvernement risque de délégitimer ou de restreindre ces initiatives au nom d'une

définition étroite du mérite. Ce serait un recul majeur pour la diversité et l'inclusion dans nos universités et nos collèges.

Et pour le réseau postsecondaire francophone déjà fragile, les conséquences pourraient être encore plus graves. On le sait, l'offre postsecondaire en français en Ontario reste insuffisante et menacée. Les étudiants francophones sont souvent contraints de poursuivre leurs études en anglais faute de programmes disponibles près de chez eux, ce qui accélère l'assimilation linguistique.

Plutôt que d'accorder au Cabinet plus de pouvoir pour imposer des directives uniformes, le gouvernement devrait renforcer l'autonomie des établissements francophones comme l'Université de Hearst ou l'Université de l'Ontario français, et leur garantir un financement stable et prévisible. Car la survie du postsecondaire en français, c'est aussi la survie de notre culture et de notre communauté.

Le projet de loi 33 prétend vouloir soutenir les enfants et les élèves. Mais à y regarder de plus près, ce qu'il soutient surtout, c'est la centralisation du pouvoir entre les mains du ministre, au détriment de la démocratie locale, de l'autonomie des conseils scolaires et de la vitalité de nos institutions francophones.

Ce dont nos écoles ont besoin, ce n'est pas une surveillance accrue depuis Queen's Park, mais de ressources, de respect et de confiance.

En matière de protection de l'enfance, il en va de même. La supervision ne peut pas remplacer la prévention. Les sociétés d'aide à l'enfance ont besoin de soutien réel pour répondre aux réalités des communautés autochtones, racialisées et francophones, et non d'un contrôle bureaucratique qui alourdit leur travail.

Et pour le postsecondaire, il faut redonner un nouveau souffle à nos établissements, particulièrement les établissements francophones, en leur permettant de croître, d'innover et d'assurer un accès équitable à la formation en français partout en Ontario. Parce que le mérite sans égalité d'accès, ce n'est qu'un mirage.

Monsieur le Président, ce projet de loi fait partie d'une tendance inquiétante : celle d'un gouvernement qui concentre le pouvoir, qui réduit les voix locales et qui prétend tout savoir mieux que les gens qui sont sur le terrain. Mais l'éducation, la protection des enfants et la vitalité de nos communautés ne peuvent pas se gérer à distance. Elles se construisent avec les communautés, pas contre elles.

C'est pourquoi je ne peux pas appuyer le projet de loi 33 dans sa forme actuelle. Je demande au gouvernement de revoir sa copie, de consulter sincèrement les partenaires du milieu et d'intégrer des garanties claires pour protéger la gouvernance francophone, l'autonomie locale et la transparence réelle.

Soutenir les enfants et les élèves, c'est leur donner les outils pour réussir, pas les enfermer dans un système centralisé où les décisions se prennent loin d'eux. C'est leur offrir une éducation de qualité dans la langue de leur choix et un avenir où chaque voix compte.

Alors, je veux vous remercier pour votre écoute, monsieur le Président. Je vais céder la parole à mon collègue d'Ottawa-Sud. Merci.

0920

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Merci, monsieur le President. I beg your indulgence just for a second. I just want to say that there's a terrible storm in the Caribbean right now that is going to be affecting a lot of people, particularly in Jamaica but not just Jamaica. We have a lot of families in our ridings who have family back there, so think about them, say a prayer if you pray, and I think as individuals and as a government we have to be ready, because what it looks like is the destruction that's possible down there is going to be terrible. I just wanted to say that because I know I have a lot of families in my community who are worried, who are concerned—we all do—and I know that we're all sharing our concern with them.

I'd like to start talking about Bill 33 by talking about a couple of things in the bill that I don't find particularly offensive. Often, what isn't in bills—what we talk about isn't the important stuff, so I'm going to start with schedule 1 and the Child, Youth and Family Services Act. The changes in there, they look reasonable. There is some grab for power there. They're not all back; it's not a surprise. The government doesn't get it when it comes to children's aid societies. They actually don't realize what is affecting the children's aid societies is the stuff I'm going to talk about later in special education, which is in schedule 3, I believe—schedule 2, I should say.

Right now, we have a huge increase in the number of families who just can't cope anymore because their kids aren't getting what they need, either at school or in services. They are desperate. How desperate are you when you take your child, who's part of you, probably the most important thing to you in the world, and say, "Please take care of this; I can't"? And the government is upset because money is being spent at children's aid societies because we can't house all these kids who are coming in because their families can't cope—honestly can't cope.

All of us know families in our ridings—families that we know that are trying to cope with an exceptional need. For the government to say, "We're going to audit these guys. We're going to audit children's aid societies; it's their fault." The Premier is great at pointing a finger, but what I would really hope is that he would just lift a finger to make sure that they had resources that they need to ensure they could properly house—hotel; whatever you want to call it. Provide a safe space. They have to be safe places. You're not going to warehouse kids.

So I think that the changes here—and you can see where the government is trying to insert more power over children's aid societies. What I really wish they would do is provide the resources that are necessary to ensure that children—not just children who are there because their parents just are at the point of breaking, but children who, through no fault of their own, find themselves needing us. We're their parents, the government. We are. That's what our job is. That's our responsibility. So I think the government needs to focus more on that responsibility and work with children's aid societies to provide the resources that are needed.

Now, I didn't get the answer to this question—maybe somebody can ask this question or answer this in the questions after. We used to have post-secondary scholarships for wards of the crown—I know that; I worked for the Premier who did that. I was talking to someone the other day, and they said, "Well, no, that's stopped; we're doing it differently. It doesn't come from government anymore. It comes from somewhere else." I could be wrong, but if that's the case, I think the government's missing the point, because they're certainly missing the point with what's happening with families of children with exceptional needs who just can't do it anymore. They've given up. It's too hard. They feel that their child is not safe anymore. They're exhausted.

I want to talk a bit about schedule 3.

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: What's that? Sorry. I thought he was heckling, but he was just yelling at his colleague.

Hon. Steve Clark: He was yelling at me.

Mr. John Fraser: He was yelling at you. I heard it. I don't know why.

Schedule 3, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act: This feels like another heavy hand coming in, a very heavy hand. It's interesting, particularly with colleges: There's a difference between colleges and universities. Universities should be independent, right? Governments aren't the only funders; students and their families are, other people, donors. So the government is trying to assert way more control over something that they don't fully pay for.

In the case of colleges: The college system that a former Premier, Bill Davis, who I think was a Progressive Conservative, because I haven't seen a lot of them lately—I remember, back then, he created the college system. It's something that governments of all stripes continued and built up because we wanted it to be there for our young people.

We had a great college system, but this government is allowing it to wither. Ten thousand people who work at colleges lost their job last year—10,000 people. Algonquin College—it's not in my riding but it's in my city. Their first tranche of programs was 37 programs. So all over this province right now colleges are letting go of staff, cutting programs, and guess what? You've got a \$2.5-billion Skills Development Fund—the thing they do at colleges. But it's not going to colleges. It's going to friends and insiders and donors and lobbyists.

So they're pulling apart our college system, letting it wither, while they're funding their friends. And you know who's getting the short end of the stick? Our young people.

Where does skills development mostly happen in this province? It's happening in apprenticeships at colleges and with trade unions, and it's happening in colleges, where we can adapt to the labour market. Hello? You don't need to give \$27 million to bars and restaurants and nightclubs in downtown Toronto. You've got colleges that can do that. But you're not doing that. You're giving it to somebody, and I think what you're doing is actually just backfilling somebody's payroll. You're not really training; you're just paying for the people who are going to

work for them that they have to pay to be trained, that they have to pay anyway. We all know that. It's not rocket science.

So the government is coming in with its heavy hand in schedule 3, and at the same time, with its other hand, it's taking money away. And then it's passing that money to a whole bunch of people—insiders, donors, friends, people with connections—and our students suffer.

I can't support schedule 3, and not just because the government is letting the college system—that one of them, one of the longest-serving Progressive Conservative Premiers, built and started, because he understood. He understood that it's important for us to do things together for each other that we can count on, that we can make solid, that's going to be there for the future. This government is letting it wither.

0930

I'm just going to go right on to schedule 2 now. It's actually ironic—totally ironic—that the egg farmers are here today. Because if the Minister of Education wants to make an omelette out of school boards, it only needs four ingredients: It needs to be local, democratic, transparent and effective. I don't care what it looks like: Make the omelette. That's not the problem in our schools.

Governance always has to be fixed, it always has to be worked on. For God's sake, in here, our governance—we didn't sit. We sit for 14 weeks. We have a \$230-billion corporation here. That's what we run. The government doesn't think they have to be here. It's like, "We don't have to have a board meeting. It's not important. Nobody gets to ask any questions." So, again, he wants to make an omelette? Make sure it's local, democratic, transparent and effective. That's what governance should be.

Schools belong to the families and the communities they serve. It's been that way for 200 years. It's been that way for 200 years for a reason: because that's how it works best. Schools are local. The idea—the minister's idea, and it's very clear in this legislation—that we're going to run everything from downtown Toronto and that's going to be okay for Timiskaming or Essex or Niagara or Brantford: It's not going to work. On top of that, 90% of the decisions—maybe not quite 90%; maybe 85% of the decisions—and control over education is already there, and it's not working.

Our problem is, we don't have safe schools, and we don't have safe schools for three reasons. Class sizes continue to grow. Special education is in a mess. Boards—they're not short \$1 billion; they have to find \$1 billion somewhere else—\$850 million, but it's probably more like \$1 billion. They get \$850 million less than they need to serve the kids who have the highest needs.

We have a mental health problem in our schools that's just a reflection of the society that we live in. By that, I mean—I don't know if you've noticed, but when I go into a bank or phone my insurance company or walk on a bus, I see a sign or I hear the message, "Foul language and harassment won't be tolerated."

We've got a problem, and it's in our schools. It's not the kids' fault. We just came through a pandemic. The

mental health needs of our children are not being met in school. They're not even being recognized. There's lots of lip service—tons of lip service, tons of historic investments. Every investment is historic, folks. I'm glad you've stopped saying that, or at least I think you've stopped saying that.

I went to Hamilton; I went to Brantford—I did a little local matters in education tour. I went to Niagara; I went to Thunder Bay; I went to Windsor and a bit of my city of Ottawa, and I heard the same things—a lot of the same things. And you know one of the things I heard consistently? "We don't have enough adults in the school." There are not enough adults in the school to manage what's going on. That's incredible.

The government has got a piece in here about policing in schools. I've always had a good, healthy relationship with the police. I do believe that we should have healthy, strong relationships with the people whose job it is to protect us. The most important thing we do in here is public safety. So we have to build those relationships. But simply using police in schools as just another adult—that the government doesn't have to pay for, by the way, that somebody else pays for—is not the right way to go. You need mental health workers. You need social workers. You need youth workers. It's no good doing that, it's no good policing in schools if you're not going to have the other things, because they need those tools. For God's sake, we have mental health workers with police in the community, right?

I know the government likes to push these buttons by saying this, but what I'd really like for them to do is to have a coordinated plan that dealt with this, that dealt with mental health. It's a big problem. It's a really big problem.

The ministry and the boards across the province are leaning really hard into a policy of inclusion and I think that that's important. But what it's done is, when you have inclusion and you have children with exceptional needs and you don't meet the needs and you include them, that's not any good. It doesn't work.

I talk to parents and educators and kids, and I'm going to tell you, every day in every board in this province—maybe more than one in a board—there's a classroom that's evacuated because a six- or seven-year-old is dysregulated, or a 10-year-old or a 12-year-old. That's what happens.

I had one mom say to me, "They called me because it happened at the school and I got the message." We'll say little Billy; I can't remember his name. "Billy came home, and I said to Billy, 'How was your day at school?' Billy's usually pretty forthcoming and he basically said, 'Well, I had to do this with Bobby in the schoolyard' and this and that. He didn't even talk about the fact that his classroom was emptied out."

I talked to a principal who lives in my riding—a really good principal, one of the best principals I've ever met. He says, "We've got a problem." I said, "Well, explain it to me." He said, "Well, this is just this week. Thursday, I had a desk thrown at me by a 12-year-old." A 12-year-old, okay? And then he said, "It was just another day."

What's happening in our schools, especially in the elementary panel, is shocking. I've got a sister who's an educational assistant, an SSL, they call them as well. She's been doing that for six or seven years. The incivility, the physicality—people are getting injured. People are being threatened—teachers, other kids. There's a problem, folks, and we're not paying attention to it. It's just not happening.

There's a whole cohort of kids who are struggling because of the pandemic. They're struggling with their mental health. They're struggling with special needs. They're struggling with getting caught up on math and reading. They're struggling and there's no plan for them.

But the government wants to say, "These bad trustees." You know what? Yes, what they did was bad. I'd actually say stupid in the case of the trip. But we've got a bill and we're perseverating on this stupid mistake while hundreds of thousands of children with special needs aren't getting what they need because the government is not giving enough money per student. It's that simple.

Don't say funding formula. I'm tired of hearing funding formula. It's not the formula, it's the factor. It's the amount of money that you're using per student.

If boards in this province are spending \$850 million more than you give them to help those kids, where is that money coming from? Anybody have an answer? No answers? Class sizes. It's coming from class sizes. Classes are getting bigger—split grades, right?

0940

I've got a school in my riding between grades 2 to 7. They're all split grades. What's that all about? I don't know when you went to school—I mean, I did go to school in an urban school, so I can see that happening in a rural school where you really didn't have enough to have a classroom. But this is an urban school where there's enough to have a classroom of grade 5s or grade 6s. You don't have to split them up.

Why does that happen? The government is not paying attention to what's happening in schools. Because you know what the problem is right now? This government, although it likes to tout itself as great fiscal managers, is approaching half a trillion dollars in debt and they created for themselves a revenue problem. But you know what, Speaker? You got a free licence plate or two. But in your riding right now there's a child with special needs not getting what they need. I don't know about you, Speaker, but I don't mind paying for my licence plate if a child is going to get what it needs—not just because it's nice, not just because it's the right thing to do, which it is. It's because it's the smart thing to do. It's the smart thing to do.

The smart thing to do is invest in people, to make sure that child can succeed, that that child will be successful. You got a free licence plate, but there are two million people out there who can't find a family doctor. I'm happy to pay for my licence plate if they're going to get a doctor. You know what? I want there to be enough adults in school and enough EAs. You know what? I don't need a free licence plate. I need for those kids to have the help that they need. I need for them to have a smaller class size.

The government is missing the boat on the things that are important and focusing on, "Look at these folks over here"—pointing the finger—"they're the problem; they're the problem; they're the problem." The government makes 85% of the decisions in education; trustees have like this much. I'm not going defend the stupid things that some of them do, but there are a whole bunch of good ones out there too. People do stupid things in here all the time. The Premier is not pointing the finger at them, like the Minister of Labour and the Skills Development Fund. But we won't go into that.

But here's the thing: What's the Premier's priority this week? Not education and kids. No—not even close. He wants donation rates to go up by 47%—raising the limits. I guess they're not getting enough money in the Skills Development Fund.

While kids in schools are not getting what they need, when there's a mental health crisis in our schools—and there is. Everybody, you might want to pooh-pooh it and say, "No, you're exaggerating"—there's a problem. While we have that, the Premier's priority is, "Let's change election dates and raise the donation limits." I'll tell you what: With all this stuff going on, that one thing that I just said, what the Premier is doing, is all you need to know about him. He's not worried about the kids in school, he's not worried about the 700,000 people out of jobs, he's not worried about the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of kids who have to rely on a food bank. He's worried about his party, he's worried about his donors, he's worried about his friends. What the heck is that all about? Honestly.

Our kids are not getting what they need. We built this province on education. We had a great education system. This government has allowed it to wither. You know one of the builders of that great education system? Bill Davis—Progressive Conservative. Again, I haven't seen one in a while—well, I've seen a couple. I've got to be fair; I've seen a couple over there. I can spot them. They're good people—they're all good people.

Educating people, investing in our kids, investing in our young people is the smartest thing we can do. It's not just the right, moral thing to do—it's smart. Because the most valuable thing in a global economy—it's not minerals, it's not water, it's not oil. It's us. It's people. We're the most valuable thing. Our kids, our children: They're the most valuable thing. What that is is that the most highly educated, highly trained workers are where people want to go.

Now that we're in the midst of this trade war, the government is allowing, and actually encouraging, the diminishing of our systems of education by—quite openly, with the Skills Development Fund—sending \$27 million to bars and restaurants and night clubs, giving it to a law firm, giving it to a dental clinic, giving it to harness racing.

You've got a college system—and an elementary and secondary system—that was amongst the best in the world. You've allowed it to wither because the government is just happy to hand out money willy-nilly to whoever hires Kory Teneycke or Michael Diamond or Nico Fidani-Diker or—I mean, the list goes on. I don't have time to list them all.

I'd like to encourage my colleagues to spend a morning in a school. Go into an elementary school and talk to elementary teachers, talk to SSLs, talk to principals. Talk about what happens in our schools. If you take the time to do it, you'll be shocked.

We don't actually have the context because when we were in school, the things that are happening in our schools right now didn't happen. It's not because the kids are any different. They're kids; they just have different pressures. When they're not getting what they need, and they have an exceptional need, it makes it really hard for them. When they're suffering and having mental health problems—because it's pervasive; it's throughout our society—we somehow try to believe that it's not happening in our schools because it didn't look that way when we went to school.

Go into a school. Talk to a teacher; talk to SSLs. When they say that there's stuff happening in schools where people are getting injured and hurt—whether they're an SSL, an EA, a teacher or a principal—they are. There's a problem in our schools. The biggest problem is—it's not the boards of trustees; it's safe schools. They aren't safe places to work. They aren't safe places to learn.

The minister and the government are missing the point. While they try to have us focused over here on governance, all this other stuff is happening. This part's easy and political. You don't have to do a lot of work; you just need to make a lot of noise. That's what the government is doing and that's what the minister is doing: just making a lot of noise.

The hard work is, how do we actually make sure that every child is getting what they need? Or almost what they need, which they would be happy with right now, because some of them are getting nothing. The harder part is, how do we actually get back to smaller class sizes? It costs money. It requires thought and effort.

The mental health problem that we have in our schools, which is just reflective of what's going on in the broader society, and is maybe a bit more acute because of that cohort of kids that have gone through the pandemic and their learning being messed up—figuring that out is hard. But it's easy to point the finger. It's easy to make a lot of noise. It's easy to stand, puff yourself up, point the finger at somebody else and go, "You're the problem." No. The problem is bigger than that, folks. It's way bigger than that. And our kids are hurting.

The hard stuff that needs to be done is that we need to fund special education properly. Like I said, Speaker: I don't know about you or anybody else in this room—well, I do know about a few; I'm hoping everybody feels the same way—I can pay for a licence plate if that child that needs the EA for half a day is going to get that EA. I'm happy to pay for my licence plate if my grandkids' kids', my grandkids' or any child's class is smaller and better. I'm glad to pay for that if the mental health needs that are in our schools are being met—that we're investing in people there, that we're investing in people like mental health workers, youth workers, social workers.

I'm getting close to the end of my time.

0950

Interjection: Yay.

Mr. John Fraser: Yay. There we go.

There are three things I want you to remember, okay? Number one: Our schools are not safe to work or learn in, and that's because class sizes are growing, special education needs are not being met—that's the government's responsibility—and we have a mental health crisis in our schools that's reflective of what's going on in broader society, but may also be more acute because of the impact the pandemic had on a cohort of kids.

What I would strongly suggest to all of you, if you haven't done it—I know some of you have done it, and I know some of you have probably seen what I've seen, and you realize that it's a big problem, and you realize that it's going to take a lot of work: Get into a school. Spend half a day there. Go and talk to people. Talk to educators, SSLs, EAs, principals, vice-principals, teachers. They know what's going on. They're not the enemy. Talk to kids, because the paradigm of schools that we have in our heads isn't matching what's going on today. We have no context.

I'll leave seventeen seconds on the clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the member from Ottawa–Vanier. As Ontario students and families across the region of Durham navigate through times of economic uncertainty, they deserve to know exactly where their post-secondary fees are going. Last year, the government took action to make the cost of textbooks and other learning experiences and resources more transparent, to give students a better idea for their post-secondary planning. With members from both the NDP and the Liberal Party voting against Bill 166, it's evident that they stood against the idea of fee transparency, in addition to policy supporting student mental health and combatting hate on campus.

But as we take fee transparency one step further this time, the opposition, third party and independent members—they're going to get another chance to demonstrate their commitment to hard-working Ontario students.

Will the member opposite, Speaker, through you, support Ontario students by voting to enhance fee transparency and student choice?

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you for the question. I'm all for transparency. I think transparency should apply to everybody, including the members of the government that are doing shady deals on the backs of Ontarians and abusing public funds.

Do I want transparency? I do. But, through you, Speaker, what you need to do is really trust our institutions. My colleague said, "We built our province on education." We've created those institutions, those school boards, those colleges and universities. Well, give them trust, and give them the resources that they need to accomplish their mission. That's how we're going to have a better system.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I'll address my question, in this case, to the member from Ottawa South.

The persistent underfunding of schools is having a devastating effect on all students, but especially students

with special needs. Disability advocate David Lepofsky has pointed out that every board has a special education advisory committee for students with disabilities that advocates for reforms, hears from parents with gut-wrenching stories, and has active engagements with senior board officials.

But now that livestreaming is forbidden, parents of children with disabilities are being blocked from accessing critical information about their school, their children and the work of the advisory committee. In your view, is there any justification for the Ford government's decision to cancel the livestreaming of school board meetings in Toronto or anywhere else?

Mr. John Fraser: I don't think there is a justification but there is a reason. And the reason is, they don't want people to see. They don't want people to watch. They don't want people to know what's going on in schools. They don't want to know that children with exceptional needs—their needs aren't being met. They're afraid of criticism. It's actually quite shocking. The most vulnerable children in school, whose parents are there and they have a life of advocacy—they've got to do it every single day for their kids—this government is shutting them down, shutting them out, trying to put them under a bushel basket and keep them in the shadows. It's despicable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Good morning, everyone. It's great to see all of you.

This is to either of my colleagues from the Ottawa area, so they can arm wrestle over it. This government is messing around with things like bike lanes, road safety, speed cameras and things that are not broken when they should be focused on fixing things that are broken. What do you think this government should be focused on right now for Ontarians?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: I'm glad you brought up automated speed enforcement cameras. I talked about safe schools, and the thing that's kind of shocking to me, at least in my city: Those cameras keep the schools safe, the streets safe in front of the schools. Smyth Road: two high schools, one elementary school. Alta Vista: one elementary school and two high schools. Walkley Road: French elementary school. Heron Road: French elementary school. They're there to keep our kids safe, keep our roads safe. Instead of throwing the baby out with the bath water, why didn't the Premier just get it right? Why does he want to make the streets less safe for all our kids?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further questions? The member for Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you, Speaker. And through you, please, to the member from Ottawa South.

As the government continues to make strategic investments in our world-class institutions, we're also ensuring that the most qualified students will be fuelling the workforce of tomorrow. Through Bill 33, we're going to be consulting with the sector to understand all of their current admission policies and how we can provide better transparency for prospective students looking to study in Ontario.

We've heard from the students and their families that the current process is still unclear to them. And students applying to our post-secondary institutions, like Ontario Tech and Trent Durham, deserve to know the objective evaluation criteria that is directly related to their academic achievements and potential for success at an institution.

For the member opposite, support Ontario's most qualified students by voting in favour of a more transparent admission process to colleges and universities.

Mr. John Fraser: What they deserve first is a college to go to, a program to have. That strategic investment? That meant 10,000 people are out of jobs in colleges—10,000 people. Where does that go? Is that the Premier's job creation plan? They deserve a place to go to school and they deserve the course. Yes, you wave your hand. Wave your hand all you want, but that's what's happening. Those are the facts. You know it; I know it.

Algonquin College, first cut: 37 programs—37 programs, 10,000 people. If that's your strategic investment, you can take your strategy and—thank you very much, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to give the member from Ottawa South an opportunity to complete his sentence, but he ran out of time, I guess.

1000

From 2010 to 2018, I was a TDSB trustee, and every year, the TDSB trustees were forced to make cuts because of a funding shortfall.

Since then, the Conservative government has taken over and they've cut another \$6 billion out of our education system. You mentioned an \$850-million shortfall in special-ed services. That's just based on what the school boards are using, what they're paying for those services, versus what they're getting. But it doesn't actually meet the needs of the special-needs students.

I look at Bill 33 and the takeover of the school board trustees in four different boards. I think this government is trying to privatize our education system. I think that's the goal. The students who are suffering in our schools right now are just pawns in this privatization scheme. Do you agree?

Mr. John Fraser: I don't give them that much credit for thinking, because it's rather obvious.

I think what it is, is they've got themselves in a bind. They've spent money on things that aren't important. They've foregone revenue on things that aren't important like licence plates.

And so, what ends up happening is now they're—who are the four supervisors? What are the most distinguishing things about the four supervisors? Well, they're all Conservatives pretty deeply, and they're all CPAs—nothing against CPAs for all of you folks over there who are CPAs, or over here. CPAs are good people. But if you're going to send somebody in to fix something, you wouldn't go to General Motors and send a CPA in who didn't know anything about building cars.

So it's obvious what the government is doing. They see our school system as an accounting problem, not a people problem. That's what the problem is with this government.

They've got to figure that out. It's about people. It's not about the ledger sheet.

And you know what's going to happen? Here's what's going to happen: The supervisors are going to go in, because I've seen it before—

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): You ran out of time.

I recognize the member from Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Speaker. I was waiting for the temperature to cool down a little bit. Thank you, sir.

It's always a pleasure to be here and to continue presenting on another key component of the Supporting Children and Students Act.

Before I start, I want to tell you: I still remember the journey when I became an MPP in 2018. We walked into those doors knowing almost nothing. And then slowly and steadily we read it, we understood it, and today we can proudly say, after seven years, we have a system which we are so proud of.

Let's look at the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. Within Ontario, we have 23 publicly assisted universities, 24 publicly assisted colleges and over 600 private career colleges. And there we have over 524,000 students in publicly assisted universities, over 350,000 students in publicly assisted colleges and over 100,000 students in private career colleges. And it doesn't stop here. We have over 75,000 STEM graduates.

Speaker, this data which I just gave you is not just data, it is the future of our province. When you know you have a strong future, a bright future, you want to make sure that you're investing into that future.

Thank you to Premier Ford and our Minister of Colleges and Universities, who's been working tirelessly this summer meeting all the colleges and universities. We can give him a round of applause if you think he's doing a good job.

We made notable investments of \$750 million over five years to fund 20,000-plus STEM seats annually, and it doesn't stop here. All the time we hear from the other side, "Are we making investments?" Yes. We have a debt, yes. We know the value for the money. We want to make sure, at the same time, that we make strategic investments. That's why we invested \$1.3 billion to stabilize and modernize the post-secondary sector. And we didn't stop here: over \$5 billion annually to publicly assisted colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes through operating and capital grants.

So, Speaker, this bill—I will be talking primarily on what is the impact on the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, and if I do have time, I'll briefly touch education as well.

Over the last seven years, if you look at the post-secondary institutions, research institutes, hospitals, they have generated substantial research output. More than ever, our government needs to keep this momentum to protect Ontario.

We hear it all the time about the investments. Are we making enough investments? I'll share the data and you can make that opinion.

Since 2018, we have invested over \$2 billion into the research sector, supporting 1,600 research projects. If you look at the data, and it's very simple: There are 5,000 universities in world, but when it comes to health research, we have University of Toronto, who is ranked seventh and ninth in two different sectors. That is the strength of the education sector that we have in our province.

With the investments that we've made, we are successfully leveraging an additional \$1.5 billion in federal and private sector funding. With all this money coming together, we're able to support world-class research. This funding is attracting and developing top talent, supporting state-of-the-art facilities and enabling the discoveries that will drive our economy forward and make a real difference—not just to the people of Ontario, but to the people across the globe.

I had the opportunity to visit some of these places with the minister. I do remember we went together to the University of Toronto. We met organizations like HDAX Therapeutics—wonderful work they're doing—along with SpinUp, the program that they have.

These are the things which we are doing helping support these organizations. What happens is a virtuous cycle. We hold their hand, we give a little bit of funding, they take that money, they invest into the research, they come up with a great idea. When they take this great idea and commercialize it, we're increasing the revenue—not only for the students but for our province.

We're making sure all these technologies, all these discoveries, are helping support not just Ontario but across the globe. That's why our investment has driven more than 120,000 training opportunities for research and students across the province, supported 406 patents, resulted in more than 70 start-up companies and created multiple jobs. These are the results—that our research sector is not just a key driver of innovation; it is actually helping support commercialization and the economy. We are contributing to protect Ontario's long-term economic growth.

Let's talk about the research institutes that we have. We are protecting Ontario's global competitiveness productivity through our support for research institutes and by investing \$117 million to support eight leading research institutes in our province. We have a unique mandate to support the centres of excellence.

A great example I can talk about is the Ontario Institute of Cancer Research—something which, again, the minister and I had the opportunity to visit, and to see first-hand how they were supporting the discoveries of new medicine. For example, OICR, in partnership with University of Toronto, recently launched OncoGAN, a new AI tool that generates synthetic cancer genomes to aid researchers in testing and improving algorithms without using real patient data. What does that mean? It helps to do things faster with less destruction, making sure we achieve those results at a speed, resulting in faster innova-

tion, early cancer detection and more effective cancer treatment for the people of Ontario.

I recently was at UHN and I was looking at—they have seven Tesla MRIs. I do remember when Dr. Andrew Smith talked to me with a passion about how it is important. He said, “Typically, we have two to three Tesla MRIs. But with this, it’s not increasing the wavelength or frequency to twice, but it actually gives five times better results.” I stood up, I thanked them and I said, “It’s not five times better results; it’s actually five times better hope that you give me.”

1010

I’ll give you a small example, Speaker. My own father-in-law was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. By the time we found out, we only had four and a half months before he passed away. Think about these things with the innovations and discoveries our wonderful youth, our students in the universities, are doing. Even if we were able to increase that by a month, this is a second life, 25% more than what we got. Every second counts at that point of time.

Speaker, our investment in research does not end here. We have recently announced \$18 million to support the expansion of the McMaster nuclear reactor. Thanks to this investment, the reactor will be able to expand its operation to 24 hours, seven days. Many of my colleagues were there. We all went together to see first-hand the impact it creates to address the growing demand for affordable, patient-specific cancer treatment.

The reason I’m saying all this is to convey to the people of Ontario that we have a colleges and universities system which is designed to give back, to support the world—not just Ontario—making a difference in the lives of nearly a quarter of a million Canadians who are diagnosed with cancer each year.

That’s why, at its core, Bill 33, the Supporting Children and Students Act is about ensuring the safety, integrity and accountability of Ontario’s education and research systems. The legislation focuses specifically on research security, recognizing that while collaboration and innovation remain the backbone of our progress, they must be protected from interference, misuse or theft. You understand, Speaker: When we know interference, somebody having their own interest can result into something which could mean somebody is going to take away that research, demoralizing the researchers, who are not able to come back and are not able to build something to support.

That’s why, through this bill, our government is proposing to require all publicly assisted colleges and universities to develop and maintain institutional research security plans. These plans will outline how institutions assess risk, safeguard sensitive information, and train researchers to identify and manage potential security concerns.

We’re not doing it alone. We’re doing it with collaboration. We’re doing it with transparency. The Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security will work closely with these institutions, security experts—somebody I actually met at the University of Guelph—and

research organizations to develop clear guidance and share best practices.

I think about a situation when—I remember I was talking to the VP of research at the University of Guelph. You have your researchers doing the research. All of a sudden, your data is hacked, your data is manipulated or your data is removed. Either you have to start again or you just shelve it. It’s not shelving the project; it is shelving the hope. It is shelving those not able to bring the technologies to the world, to serve the communities. That’s why regular updates and reviews will help ensure that these measures evolve alongside global research trends, emerging technologies and new security challenges.

Simply put, Bill 33 strengthens our ability to support open, world-class research while protecting the intellectual property, discoveries and data Ontarian researchers work so hard to create. We’re here to support that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Sorry to interrupt the member, but that has completed our time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS’ STATEMENTS

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Lorne Coe: I’m pleased to share with my colleagues that the Durham Regional Police Service will shortly be receiving additional money to continue the great work that they’re doing, keeping the region of Durham safe. And part of that money is going to be part of our government’s more than \$91-million investment to help protect hard-working families and their communities. This funding is being delivered through the Community Safety and Policing Grant Program and will build on the work that began with Project Salus and the 2022 community safety and policing grants.

This project focuses on protecting our borders through the expansion of marine patrol, enhancing monitoring through the integration of video technology and strengthening the gun and gang unit of the Durham Regional Police Service and developing a new field intelligence officer program. The Durham Regional Police Service project is one of 127 projects being funded across Ontario for 2025-26 with the leadership of the Solicitor General.

Without a doubt, our government is proud to invest in projects to support our police and help keep people safe across the region of Durham. The grant initiatives build stronger partnerships between the police and community, improve crisis response and harness new tools to fight crime and keep communities safe.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Ms. Chandra Pasma: The Academic Assistance for Adults with Developmental Disabilities program at Algonquin College has been supporting young adults with developmental disabilities for nearly 30 years. The program allows these young people to continue their

academic studies beyond high school, while also teaching critical life and employment skills and offering job placements.

I had the opportunity to meet with students and their families over the past few months and all of them have shared just how much the program means to them—getting to go to college like their peers to study, to work and to develop strong friendships.

But all of this is going to be lost for young adults in Ottawa. The AAADD program will be closing because of budget cuts at the college. Thanks to underfunding of post-secondary education by this government, Algonquin is facing a deficit of \$60 million. They are closing more than 40 programs as well as the Perth campus.

The AAADD program is one of these cuts, but this cut is uniquely harmful, Speaker, because there is literally nothing else for these young people. Come next May, these students and others who were hoping to attend will no longer have access to post-secondary education.

The biggest shame of it all, Speaker, is that the difference between what students are paying in tuition and what the program costs is just \$80,000. Eighty thousand dollars, and the government could save the program. I hope they will find it in their hearts to do just that, Speaker, and to protect the right of all young people in Ottawa to pursue post-secondary education.

LE MOUVEMENT D'IMPLICATION FRANCOPHONE D'ORLÉANS

M. Stephen Blais: C'est avec fierté que je prends la parole aujourd'hui pour souligner un développement important pour la communauté franco-ontarienne d'Orléans : le nouveau centre culturel du MIFO.

Hier, j'ai eu le plaisir de participer à la première pelletée de terre du nouveau MIFO. Le MIFO est un pilier de la communauté franco-ontarienne d'Orléans et de l'est de l'Ontario depuis qu'un groupe d'étudiants a lancé ce mouvement en 1978. Merci à la communauté franco-ontarienne, dont la détermination et l'engagement ont permis cette réussite exceptionnelle.

Le nouvel édifice de trois étages sera près de quatre fois plus grand que le site actuel. Il comprendra un gymnase, une salle polyvalente, un studio insonorisé, des salles de classe, une galerie d'art, une école de musique, un café, un jardin et des bureaux administratifs.

Cette expansion offrira beaucoup plus pour notre communauté, créant un lieu de rassemblement vivant, dynamique et intergénérationnel.

Le MIFO est un symbole de fierté pour les Franco-Ontariens d'Orléans et de l'est de l'Ontario. Le MIFO continue d'affirmer la fierté, la richesse culturelle et la force de l'identité franco-ontarienne à Orléans pour aujourd'hui et pour demain.

I'd like to thank Minister Lumsden, whose ministry helped fund MIFO 2.0, for his support. In gratitude, I'd like to challenge him to a friendly game of pickleball when the minister comes to open the new MIFO facility in the fall of 2027.

JEWISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: Last week I had the privilege of attending a screening of the film *The Road Between Us*, by Barry Avrich—this was in the riding of Eglinton—Lawrence—a powerful and moving film that has sparked conversation around the world. The movie challenges the audience to confront difficult truths of a father trying to rescue his son and family from the horrors of October 7, 2023.

1020

The Road Between Us had been the subject of, surprisingly, controversy prior to the premiere at TIFF. and after public and worldwide outcry in support of the film, it was premiered and then went on to win the TIFF People's Choice Award, showing how deeply its message resonated with audiences.

The event was hosted by the Jewish Medical Association of Ontario, who are in the House today. This organization brings together health care professionals to reaffirm our shared commitment to inclusion, respect and the values that define this province.

The Jewish Medical Association of Ontario is made up of dedicated Jewish medical professionals who have come together in response to the rise of anti-Semitism they have faced in their profession.

When we choose courage over silence, compassion over division and respect over hate we build a stronger Ontario for everyone.

TICKET RESALES

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Speaker, we're all cheering for the Jays, and their World Series run is a story for the history books, with moments of both excitement and heartbreak. It feels like the 1990s all over again and there's hope in the air.

But Speaker, in the 1990s, you could buy a World Series ticket in Toronto for 30 bucks. Today, that won't even get you a hot dog and a beer at the game because ticket resale prices are out of control. This isn't a free market; it's a rigged market. You think you can click faster than a bot? Think again. You want to take your child or your dad to be a part of history? Get ready to pay in the thousands. These resellers are like greedy vultures circling over every special moment. They swoop down and put their hands so far into your pockets, they're stealing your socks.

And Speaker, this government is a part of the problem. They helped create this greedy and rigged resale market. There was a cap on ticket resale prices, but this government ripped off the cap so that resellers could rip us all off.

Speaker, it's time to level the playing field. It's time to fight back against this greed and end this rigged game. It's time to put fans first and support our motion to ban ticket resale prices above face value in Ontario. Let's get it done.

SIX NATIONS CHIEFS LACROSSE TEAM

Mr. Will Bouma: I am honoured to rise and acknowledge the historic achievement of the Six Nations Chiefs lacrosse team, who have secured a third consecutive Mann Cup championship.

In a thrilling game 7 showdown which saw the game tied until early in the third period, the Chiefs were able to pull away and defeat the New Westminster Salmonbellies.

Congratulations to the Chiefs players, coaches, staff and the entire community of the Six Nations of the Grand River on what is an extraordinary milestone in Canadian box lacrosse.

By completing the revered three-peat and winning the Mann Cup for the third straight year, a feat achieved by only a select few in the history of the sport, the Chiefs have not only upheld their legacy but elevated the standard of excellence in lacrosse.

The perseverance, talent and teamwork shown throughout this championship run reflects values that align closely with the values that many of us in the Brantford–Brant community cherish. The Chiefs serve as an example of the very best Brantford–Brant has to offer. This victory honours tradition, inspires the next generation of athletes and reinforces how sport can unite and uplift.

On behalf of the of Brantford–Brant and the government of Ontario, we thank the Chiefs for their dedication, congratulate the team on this landmark achievement and look forward to cheering them on in their future endeavours. Thank you, Speaker. Go, Chiefs, go!

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, never has my office received such a deluge of calls and emails as over the last few days since this government tabled a bill that would strip away key tenant protections and open the door to ending rent control as we know it. Thousands of London West tenants have reached out, terrified that they will be homeless if this government gets its way. I've heard from seniors and others on fixed incomes, working families struggling to afford rent, parents with adult kids who can't move out, tenants who prefer to rent and those who are saving to buy.

Bill 60 is an attack on tenant rights and it comes in the midst of a housing and homelessness crisis in London, with more and more Londoners worried about the rising cost of living and how they will pay the bills.

This government made a mess of the Landlord and Tenant Board, and now they want us to believe that the only way to fix it is by taking away tenant rights. There is nothing in this new bill to stop unethical landlords from making bad-faith evictions. There is nothing about unnecessary rent evictions and demovictions. There is nothing to prohibit sky-high, above-guideline increases for unnecessary work.

Speaker, people in London West want rental fairness, they want housing stability and they want solutions to our homelessness crisis. Bill 60 is the exact opposite.

THE GREAT PUMPKIN TRAIL

Ms. Natalie Pierre: I rise today to recognize one of Burlington's most cherished fall traditions: the Great Pumpkin Trail at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

From October 16 to 26, the Hendrie Valley at the RBG was transformed into a magical autumn experience, illuminated by the soft glow of thousands of jack-o'-lanterns guiding visitors through the trails. This annual event brings together families from across Ontario to celebrate the season with live entertainment, delicious fall treats and pumpkin-themed activities that highlight the creativity and the community spirit of Burlington.

This year, the Royal Botanical Gardens took things to the next level, featuring over 14,500 pumpkins arranged in stunning artistic displays throughout Hendrie Park, creating an unforgettable experience for guests of all ages.

The dedication of the RBG staff, the volunteers and the local partners made this event a signature celebration of the fall season, drawing visitors from across the province of Ontario and showcasing the beauty of Burlington.

Thank you to everyone involved in bringing the Great Pumpkin Trail back to life again this year, and for continuing to make Burlington a vibrant and welcoming destination for everyone.

HOUSING

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Today, I have the pleasure of informing this house of some historic news. Under the government's Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund, millions of dollars are available to municipalities to build infrastructure to build housing.

This summer, in the town of LaSalle, I had the pleasure of announcing the number-one largest grant that the town of LaSalle has ever received from the government of Ontario. The town of LaSalle, under the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund, will be receiving \$22 million to build water infrastructure to solve problems related to flooding, and to build thousands of new homes—homes of every type: semi-detached homes, single-family homes, multi-residential homes.

That means, if you're from the town of LaSalle, you will find a home that is right for you. You will be able to stay in the town of LaSalle, stay close to your children and your grandchildren, and retire and live your best life.

I want to congratulate the town of LaSalle and thank Mayor Crystal Meloche for working with us on this fantastic, historic grant.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: Today, I want to congratulate the tenants of 250 Frederick Street in my riding. Recently, they faced a year-long battle—assault—from a landlord that they've never met named Michael Klein, also known as the "king of renovictions."

After being served N13s—a piece of paper anybody could print off—they were bullied and lied to, mainten-

ance issues were ignored, and they were locked out of their parking garage.

I spoke to so many tenants who were exhausted by the attacks, and so they quit. They left to pay higher rents and move out of their community. Others lost sleep, had panic attacks and moved out for fear of becoming homeless.

These are rent-paying seniors, newcomers, folks with disabilities, students—people who are paying their rent and are being attacked by a famous misuser of N13s.

I want to thank Waterloo Region Community Legal Services, ACORN and the social development centre, Les, Thelma and Louise, Nancy Drew—you know who you are; we organized.

But now Mr. Klein is back. He has hired a fancy Toronto lawyer, allegedly, to appeal this LTB decision.

1030

I call on the government to listen to these tenants and act to stop these bad actors who are clogging up the LTB with fraudulent claims, harassing tenants. Stop blaming tenants for the housing crisis. Help these people who are tired and who are sick of being held hostage by their alleged landlord.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Please join me in welcoming a visitor to the Clerks' table today. Visiting from the Alaska state Legislature is Keira Alkema, deputy secretary of the Alaska Senate.

Keira is with the Office of the Assembly this week as part of the Association of Clerks-at-the-Table Canadian-American exchange program.

Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

Hon. Trevor Jones: Let's welcome our Egg Farmers of Ontario—chair Scott Helps, vice-chair Dan Veldman, CEO Ryan Brown, and the entire team with the golden aprons—for sharing your insights with us today and cooking us a beautiful breakfast. Welcome.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: It's my pleasure to welcome and introduce my niece Victoria and the entire Ms. Ryner class from Branksome Hall, as well as my sister-in-law Katy Mulroney. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I am very proud to stand to welcome a number of people who are gathered here in the chamber. They sit on both sides of the gallery today. There are over 50 people from the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program who submitted their application, and they're waiting for the government's reply.

I look forward to meeting all of you this afternoon. I recognize that there will be a protest outside to call for speedier approvals.

I want to say a special welcome to my constituent Vincent, who's one of the applicants, his Canadian-born daughter and his family.

Thank you very much for being here.

MPP Billy Denault: It's my great privilege to welcome, in the centre gallery, to question period a fellow young lad from the Ottawa Valley: William Moreau,

who's the son of my constituency assistant Krystal, back in my office in Pembroke.

William and I have a couple of things in common: (1) our first names and (2) he's a bit of an enjoyer of all things political at a young age, as I was and still am. So you never know; he might be the next Billy the Kid from the Ottawa Valley.

William, welcome to your House, and enjoy question period.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'm pleased to welcome Scott Brookshaw from the Egg Farmers of Ontario, who is from the Bruce county area and is representing up there, and also has the largest egg-breaking facility right in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. So, welcome, to Scott Brookshaw—and also to Joshua Zhuang, who's a very dedicated volunteer in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. Welcome, Joshua.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to introduce members of the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce who are with us this morning—if they'd stand and be recognized.

Thank you to all the members who took time to come to their reception this morning.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Today I'd like to introduce Heather Kenny and Katrina Dollano from Traditional Chinese Medicine Ontario.

I would like to invite everyone to the dining room this evening for their reception.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I want to wish a warm welcome to my cousin Joanne and my cousin Dennis Duquette, military service members with the Canadian Armed Forces, along with their beautiful daughter Lilly.

Having retired three years ago as a sergeant major—Dennis served for 30 years, and Joanne has been serving for 26 years in our air force as a sergeant.

Thank you, both of you, for being here. Welcome to your House. And thank you for all your years of service for our great country.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I'd like to introduce visitors joining us today from the deaf-blind community, hosting today's reception focused on intervenor services, following question period in rooms 228 and 230: the Canadian Helen Keller Centre, the CNIB Deafblind Community Services, DeafBlind Ontario Services, Lions McInnes House, and Sensity Deafblind and Sensory Support Network of Canada. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'd like to welcome Patrick J. Dillon, the former business manager and secretary-treasurer of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, and Michael Martin Dillon. Welcome back to Queen's Park.

MPP Wayne Gates: Joining us from the Niagara Prostate Cancer Support Group is David Flus, Gord Strain and Rod Hudson. Thanks very much for coming to the press conference this morning, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: I want to welcome the Jewish Medical Association of Ontario sitting up here in the House, Dr. Aaron Orkin, Dr. Ayelet Kuper, Dr. Lisa Salamon, Dr. Jessica Gilbert, David Belous; and from

Baycrest Health Sciences, Michael Ferman. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the parents and family of our page Mansahaj Sandhu, who is also acting as a page captain today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'm delighted this morning to welcome my friends from the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations: Ali Demircan, Bilge Işıkdoğan and Barış Kafadar, who is also joined by the consul general for Türkiye, Mr. Can Yoldaş. I look forward to joining them later today for the Turkish flag-raising. Welcome to Queen's Park and happy Republic Day, even though it's one day in advance.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Ajax on a point of order.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'm seeking unanimous consent that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, the order for second reading of Stop Ripping Off Fans Act (Ticket Resale Price Caps), be immediately called; and

That the Speaker shall immediately put the question on the motion for second reading of Bill 63 without debate or amendment; and

That upon receiving second reading the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order shall be immediately called; and

That the Speaker shall immediately put the question on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment; and

That the votes on second and third reading of the bill shall not be deferred; and

That if a recorded division is requested on the second or third reading votes on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Mr. Cerjanec is seeking unanimous consent that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, the order for second reading of Stop Ripping Off Fans Act (Ticket Resale Price Caps), be immediately called; and

That the Speaker shall immediately put the question on the motion for second reading of Bill 63 without debate or amendment; and

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That the Speaker shall immediately put the question on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment; and

That the votes on second and third reading of the bill shall not be deferred; and

That if a recorded division is requested on the second or third reading votes on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

I heard a no.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Good morning, Speaker. My question is to the Premier.

Last year, when Ontario Health atHome switched its medical supplies vendor to Bayshore Ltd., patients all across this province saw dangerous shortages. We'll remember that. Remember? Seniors and palliative care patients went without wound care, without bandages, without basic medical supplies. One patient with three forms of stage 4 cancer was left waiting for supplies that were intended to ease that end-of-life pain. Those supplies didn't arrive until 10 minutes before that patient died. A doctor involved said the patient "died choking and in pain."

So how can the Premier justify giving Bayshore Ltd. over \$18.6 million through the Skills Development Fund?

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

Hon. David Piccini: This government has been focused on improving our health care system. That member is right: That's unacceptable. That's why, Speaker, we work hard every day to make sure we have talent pipelines to support a next generation of health care workers; 52,000 have been trained through the Skills Development Fund.

1040

I think to PSWs in my own community who've been trained to care. We have an aging population, without question. That's all over Ontario in communities like mine. We have to support a next generation of PSWs.

I think to groups like SEIU. This was a group, colleagues, that protested outside my office, but we sat at the table with them, we worked with them and we've reduced dependency on agency staff through supporting them for meaningful careers. I've quoted in this House what the president of SEIU had to say about the Skills Development Fund. We'll keep working. Without question, we have more to do, but we're relentless in our pursuit to make things better for the people of Ontario—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I don't understand how things get better for people if you're giving them \$18.6 million to accompany with that kind of record.

The government members say they want us to talk about people; I'm going to do that. A 61-year-old patient who relied on catheter supplies was given the wrong-sized tubing. That patient suffered excruciating pain. Just imagine the suffering for a moment. The government knows these stories because we raise them with you day after day after day: patterns of mismanagement; patterns of neglect.

Back to the Premier: Please explain. How did Bayshore Ltd.—after these cruel, absolutely catastrophic failures—qualify for \$18.6 million in funds?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I think it's important to work with every single health care partner in the province of Ontario to make care better, closer to home, for the Ontarians we serve.

In my own community, I think of the challenge we had with nursing staff. I think of the merging of the in-patient units under the previous Liberal government. We sat down with them and we worked hard to reduce dependency on agency staff. We worked hard to train more nurses. This government is relentless in that, sitting down and working with partners to improve it.

Through the Skills Development Fund, as I said, 52,000—we've taken 100,000 people off of unemployment, given them meaningful careers.

We've got to attract people to care for our aging population. Not everyone wants to do it, but this government is supporting meaningful pathways for those meaningful careers. We're going to stay focused on doing that.

Every single investment we've made in health care—increasing the number of hospitals, long-term-care facilities—they voted against.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm at a loss, Speaker. That was a pretty straightforward question. Ontarians deserve to know how this decision was made. The minister will not give us a straight answer, but I'm going to tell you. I'm going to tell you why: Bad actors like Bayshore Ltd. continue to benefit from this government because they are represented by Upstream Strategy. That is a lobbying firm that—guess what—is owned by the president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, Michael Diamond. That's who represents Bayshore Ltd.

The Premier and his minister need to come clean. It is absolutely clear that decisions are being made based on preferential ties to the Conservative Party. This is absolutely indefensible. Will the Premier demand his minister's resignation?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Education will come to order.

I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I'll tell you how things get better: When we face unprecedented economic threats south of the border, when we face the economic turbulence we've seen, we roll up our sleeves and get to work. The Premier took this plan to the people, a plan to bolster our health care system. We've got more hospitals under construction today in this province than at any point in Ontario's history—any point.

I'll tell you how things get better. Things get better through working with groups of people who previously protested you, Speaker; rolling up your sleeves, making unprecedented coalitions with organized labour—groups like SEIU—to make things better; to sit down with them; to acknowledge where things went wrong in the past and to do things better. That's exactly what this government is doing, Speaker.

But when we make these commitments for new hospitals, when we make these commitments for new long-term-care beds, they vote against every one of these measures. They vote against the men and women who get a paycheque to go to work building these hospitals. We're going to keep focused on that. I was just in Ottawa, saw the new hospital this government is building, supported by local energy systems—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: It's getting a little tired, Speaker.

Look, it's really something: Communities across Ontario are being devastated by the collapse of our auto sector, the loss of forestry jobs, the absolute jobs disaster that is this government, but still, this government's priority seems to be, how do we make our friends and family richer? Was the Premier's response to fire his minister because of this scandal that he's immersed in? No. Do you know what, instead? He decided to up the annual donation limits—that's right—to \$5,000, a 47% increase. He is widening the trough so more of his friends can sidle on up to that trough right now.

Instead of cleaning up the mess, the Premier is just raising the ticket price for his pay-to-play government. Can the Premier explain this, please?

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

Hon. Doug Downey: As we talked about yesterday, we're following several of the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer in terms of reform, in bringing balance to public and private and how the spending works in elections.

The opposition want to talk about the economy and they talk about logging and they talk about the automotive sector. They would have our government just roll over—we will not do that. We will fight for our economy, we will fight for the auto sector, we will fight for the forestry sector, the mining sector, the skills sector. We will fight for every sector in Ontario while they're focused on minutia and distractions.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay, democracy is minutia, right? Okay, great.

While the government members talk about how to make more money, well, I'll tell you what; I've been talking to workers. What I'm hearing is that people are terrified. They are terrified. They are losing their jobs. People are putting their groceries back on the shelves because they can't afford them, and now, because of this government, they are wondering if they're going to lose their very home. And what is this government's preoccupation? How to funnel more ad dollars to their friends, how to help out the lobbyists who run their campaigns.

So to the Premier: Do the people of Ontario have to hire one of his lobbyist friends to get the attention of this government?

Hon. Doug Downey: Madam Speaker, if we did nothing, nothing would get done, and that's what the NDP would have us do. The party of no is the party of do nothing. We are fighting hoof and tong with the American instability situation. We are working very hard to make sure that the auto sector workers, the workers in every sector—the service industry that they tried to crop, but at the expense of manufacturing—we're supporting manufacturing in every sense. We're supporting training. We're supporting the trades. We are supporting every part of our sector, and we're being loud about it—and being loud takes money. We are investing in the interests of the people of Ontario, and we will not apologize for that.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: That's the question, isn't it, Speaker? How much money does it take to buy this government's decisions? That's what it takes.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'll ask the member to withdraw.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Withdrawn.

All I'm seeing from where we sit is a government that has completely lost touch with the people they are supposed to support. While 800,000 workers are lying awake at night wondering how they are going to pay their bills, this jobs-disaster Premier is busy rewriting the rules to make it easier for his friends and his donors and his well-connected insiders to cash in. With the latest changes to donation rules, the Premier has just slapped a for sale sign on the future—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Response?

Hon. Doug Downey: I notice the Leader of the Opposition is quietly cashing the Elections Ontario addition to her bank account in Davenport to the tune of \$11,700, in 2024. She hasn't said anything about that, Madam Speaker, and yet she throws daggers that we go to the public. Some people participate by knocking on doors; at least for our party we come knock on doors. Some people participate by policy development. Some people participate by donating. It's important that we allow people to participate in the way that they want.

1050

She would be shocked to know that Manitoba, Alberta and Nova Scotia all have similar limits. It's just shocking to me that she's out of touch with the rest of the country.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: I know you were all up late last night watching TV—and not the Premier on Fox News. But I was watching TV, and I was thinking about old movies. Has everybody seen the Wizard of Oz? Yes? Right, we know the Wizard of Oz. So there's Dorothy and the Tin Man and the Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion, and they go in search of the wizard. This wizard is this big, blustery thing—there's smoke coming out, lots of noise, really scary—kind of like the Premier.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Mr. John Fraser: And then they actually find that the wizard is not this big thing that they see; it's somebody behind the curtain. And you know what? Guess who's behind the curtain here? Kory Teneycke. We like to call him Premier Kory or Kory Teneycke, depending on the day.

So, to the Premier: Why is he allowing the Minister of Labour to reward lobbyists like Kory Teneycke while hundreds of thousands of children are relying on food banks in Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I don't want to start warning members, but I will.

I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, that's a great movie. I'm glad the member brought it up. It's one of my favourites.

But what's very serious, that we're focused on, are the economic headwinds that are coming our way and have come our way because of President Trump's tariffs having a very real effect on workers. That member doesn't choose his opportunity to ask a question about those workers, about the round table we just had with Unifor workers, about the Premier who visited the Brampton plant, who sat down with their business manager and spoke with them, who visited Windsor, who sat down with the team in Windsor about how we can support their workers. That's what we're focused on.

This Premier has created a low-tax environment. I know they don't want to talk about it, because they elevated taxes and drove industry out. This Premier has brought manufacturing back to Ontario. They don't want to talk about it, because they have to confront their 300,000-plus jobs disaster when they were in charge.

We're going to keep working hard for workers, the talent—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: We're on Jeopardy! here—and we're stuck on TV shows, okay? For \$200, has anyone seen Better Call Saul? A few of you have. Well, if you haven't, we have a saying over here: "Need a Skills Development Grant? Better Call Saul. Looking to Free Up Your Land in the Greenbelt? Better Call Kory. Need an MZO? Better Call Kory."

If you're one of the 700,000 people out of work in Ontario, don't bother calling Kory.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Is your favourite movie Dumb and Dumber?

Mr. John Fraser: That's when I direct the questions to you, Minister.

Speaker, 700,000 people are out of work in Ontario, and they've got nobody to call. So, to the Premier: If they can't call Kory, just who can they call?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, they could call their MPP. In the case when you're a max-out donor to a leadership candidate, you call the Liberal MPP and ask him to push favours for a fund. So they have no credibility on this.

The bottom line is, when people call our Premier, when they text our Premier, they get a response right back from our Premier. This is the most accessible Premier we've

ever seen in the province of Ontario. Doubt it? Just text him.

Speaker, what he's focused on is actually standing up to President Trump. When everybody is putting their elbows down, this Premier is standing up to President Trump. He's fighting for our auto workers. He's fighting for the workers at Diageo who have called on him and thank him for his support. He's fighting for those workers by offering meaningful training opportunities by creating the conditions—

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

Mr. John Fraser: The Premier's ad was about the Premier playing checkers while everybody else was playing chess, but I'm not going to go any further on that.

If you want to get something done in this government, call Kory Teneycke. I'm just saying the quiet part out loud, because all you ministers know it: Anything that gets done here, if you need something, you've got to call him. It's Premier Kory, Premier Teneycke. Lobbyists are running this government. You all know what I'm talking about, because I can see in your eyes when I tell you. I can see in the cabinet ministers' eyes. They know it.

The problem is 700,000 out of work, hundreds of thousands of children rely on food banks, two million people are looking for a family doctor—and they can't call Kory. He's too busy representing Skills Development Fund clients.

So, Speaker, to the Premier: Just how long have lobbyists been running your government?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, he's far too familiar with this, because that's how they operated when they were in power for over a decade.

What we're focused on—what he can do, he can speak to the workers, the workers we're fighting for, the workers in the manufacturing sector who have been given a job thanks to the work this Premier is doing to attract investment—an automotive sector slated for zero investment because of their disastrous legacy. We're fighting for those workers, Speaker.

When we talk to building, what does he have to say to the workers we're putting through training to actually build? He'd have to be confronted with his reality that they didn't build long-term care, they didn't build hospitals.

They closed schools in rural Ontario. In Norwood, they were going to close the high school. We're building high schools, like the new one in Newcastle in my own community—schools all over ridings.

He's going to have to say to those workers, he's confronted with the ugly truth: He doesn't want to support those construction workers who are building the 413, the Bradford Bypass, because they voted no to every one of these measures to build a more self-reliant and a stronger Ontario, Speaker.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: Again, back to the Premier: It's been a really busy week, the Premier inserting himself in trade

negotiations and, as I said, playing checkers while everybody else is playing chess. You've got the never-ending story of the Skills Development Fund, which feels a lot like Dean Del Mastro's in-and-out scheme. You're from Peterborough, right, Minister?

So the government tries to distract us by threatening renters, right? And then, as if this isn't enough—and the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this—the Premier is raising donation limits by 47%—47%. That's his priority.

So, Speaker, through you to the Premier: Is the Premier raising donation rates because the Skills Development Fund is not meeting the PC Party's fundraising expectations?

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

Hon. Doug Downey: Madam Speaker, we're aligning with Manitoba, Alberta, Nova Scotia—several jurisdictions—in terms of what they do for donation limits and then indexing it for the future.

We're following several of the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer, as we discussed yesterday, in terms of tightening up third-party advertising and third-party participation. We're building trust in the democratic system by being transparent and fair and current.

Madam Speaker, there is nothing else to this. They've read it in the papers. You know, it's quite simple: We're just aligning with other jurisdictions, and there's nothing extraordinary about any of the rest of it.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: The Skills Development Fund is rotten. It stinks. We know that. But it's really telling that, with this mess going on, all that we've been talking about for the last six days that the Premier is raising donation rates in the middle of a fundraising scandal.

There's 700,000 people out of work, hundreds of thousands of children visiting food banks in this province, more than two million people are still looking for a family doctor—40,000 of them in the Premier's riding—our schools are crumbling, and the Premier's priority is raising donation rates and changing election rules.

I think that tells you all you need to know about this Premier: He's taking care of his friends, he's taking care of insiders and he's taking care of his party.

So through you to the Premier: Is the Premier raising donation limits because the Skills Development Fund has not met the PC Party's fundraising expectations?

Hon. Doug Downey: The leader of the third party forgot to turn the page. He asked the same question twice, so he's going to get the same answer twice.

We are following several of the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer in terms of making the system tighter and more relevant. We're aligning with other jurisdictions in Canada: Nova Scotia, Alberta, Manitoba. Madam Speaker, we're making sure that the system works on a go-forward basis by indexing those increased limits. And we're extending the per-vote subsidy to all members, and beyond members that are in this Legislature, for parties that get a certain percentage of the vote, to make sure that we have a healthy democracy and a good debate.

1100

That is what's happening in the proposed future legislation, and I'd be happy to take more questions if he wishes. But I would like a different question.

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

Mr. John Fraser: He wants a different question because he can't answer this one, because it's obvious what's happening here. Premier Kory has upped the ante, right?

I've just got to say this—I'm trying to say to you, the Premier is doing this stuff to help himself, his party and insiders, while there are hundreds of thousands of people in this province going to food banks—a million of them.

And you know where the Premier lost me? It's not on this. Three or four weeks ago, when he was telling people while he was eating an ice cream bar that he had one every night—he was bragging about it, and he was answering questions with a mouthful of ice cream. I said, "This guy is out of touch. This guy doesn't know what's going on in this province. He doesn't know that people are going hungry. It's like he doesn't care. He's out of touch."

So I'll ask the same question: Is the Premier raising donation limits because the Skills Development Fund has not met the Progressive Conservative Party's fundraising expectations?

Hon. Doug Downey: Madam Speaker, when I was a very young child, my grandmother told me, "There are two ears and one mouth." So I've answered the question. He doesn't appear to hear me.

We're raising the limits to catch up with the cost of things. We're raising the limits to align with other jurisdictions—those massive, massive provinces of Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Alberta. We're making it possible for people to participate in our democracy in the way that they choose. Some knock on doors. Some do policy.

I'm refraining from recounting the 15 years that that government was in government. I will not go through the litany—because I only have a minute—of all of the things that they did. And so it's a little bit rich coming from them in imputing motive. I would rather have an ice cream in my mouth than what's coming out of there.

IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Speaker, the Premier's jobs disaster is far-reaching, and some of the people most hurt are sitting right here in this gallery. These skilled labourers were invited by this government to apply to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program. They followed every rule, they paid their fees, and they have been waiting for over a year for an answer that was supposed to come in 150 days.

Their work permits are expiring, but we can ask the federal government to extend them. Please—their lives are on hold. Their employers need them. Their families are counting on them.

When will the minister act to end the insufferable wait and save their jobs?

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

Hon. David Piccini: You know, Speaker, as the grandson of an immigrant who came here to work hard to contribute to this economy, I appreciate the value immigrants bring to this country, and I appreciate the work that's done.

I think it's important for the member—and I appreciate her advocacy on this. In 2024, we met our full allocation: over 21,500 through our draw. That's 21,500 people we can nominate to the federal government through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program. That was then, midway through this year, cut after draws etc. were made by this government.

So what you have is you have a case of more people who have been offered draws than spots we have. What we have said—and we had a meeting of ministers of immigration last year. We talked about making sure we're extending permits for those who are currently employed. We launched an employer portal so that employers can nominate people directly through our government. It's the first time we've done it.

We've made improvements to our system to bring more integrity to that system, and I'll have more to say in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: This government talks a big game when it comes to workers, but they still haven't fixed the problem. After inviting skilled and qualified workers to apply for the OINP, this Premier then ignores them and their ready-to-hire employers, who have now been waiting one, two and three years.

My constituent Vincent, a construction supervisor with SKYGRiD, builds the much-needed homes that we want in Ontario. But because of this government's mismanagement, delays and silence on his OINP application, his work permit has now expired.

Vincent is now in the gallery with his family and his new Canadian-born daughter, and they're waiting for one question to be asked. And this question, to the Premier, is, instead of blaming others, when will his government take responsibility, fix the OINP backlog and approve Vincent's application?

Hon. David Piccini: As I said, Ontario has a limited number of allocations, which were cut in half by the federal government. We've advocated to grow our autonomy, to grow our allocation.

Citizenship is a privilege. It's not a right. That's why we have a robust system that goes through—that works. We added measures to this system to work with employers to prioritize employers and folks with active jobs—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order. The member for Toronto Centre will come to order. The member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas will come to order.

Hon. David Piccini: They're not interested, Speaker, because, knowing that, we've prioritized health care workers. We've prioritized workers in the skilled trades. We've prioritized workers in technology applications. We've increased administrative monetary penalties. We brought

in amendments to the act to increase fines for bad actors to ensure we have integrity in the system. And we're working hard to meet our allocations, which we will meet this year—allocations that were cut in half by the federal government. We're working hard to make sure we meet those drops.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

M^{me} Lucille Collard: This government constantly talks about accountability: accountability for school trustees, for city councillors and anyone in public office. But while they lecture others, they actually turn a blind eye when it comes to their own.

The Minister of Labour was caught using the Skills Development Fund as a political slush fund, rewarding donors with taxpayer money, and yet he remains in cabinet. So, Madam Speaker, if this government truly believes in accountability, why is the Minister of Labour still in cabinet?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, that's incorrect. The premise of that question is incorrect. What this government has done, in the face of unprecedented economic uncertainty, is we launched a fund in the wake of the pandemic to make sure workers had the ability to be trained.

Then we saw President Trump's tariffs, and we added additional priorities—which occurred midway through the fund—which focus on tariff-impacted jobs like our steel sector, like our automotive sector. The Auditor General acknowledged that that is the prerogative of a government, to look at those priorities that we were duly elected on, to make sure we stand up for those workers, to make sure we have training pathways for those workers, like the Unifor workers who we've supported through the Skills Development Fund in increasing access to training.

They want their jobs, Speaker. That's why this Premier is fighting to create a low-tax environment to attract manufacturing investments—manufacturing investments that they drove out of this province. We're going to keep fighting for those workers, regardless of what President Trump throws our way, and make sure we have the training to have their backs.

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

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Madam Speaker, this government further claims that centralizing control over education, city planning and public sector wages ensures accountability and transparency. But here's the problem: They clearly don't apply the same standards to themselves. What's good for the goose should be good for the gander, right?

So I ask the Premier, how can Ontarians trust this government when it refuses to hold its own Minister of Labour accountable?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, as I said, that member needs to talk to the actual workers who have been supported through this fund. I'll give you one who's here. Greg Horton, head of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, is here. Their program—how do you put a score and a value on saving a life?

This Premier said, and took it to the people, that we would prioritize our first responders. That's what we've done. We've brought training closer to home; we've launched mobile training sites—all of these things they don't support.

They don't have the backs of first responders, Speaker. They don't have the backs of our police officers. They want a revolving door of justice because they don't support bail reform. They don't support our police officers. They don't support our first responders who need better training as they run into danger while we all run from it.

1110

We're getting tough on crime, trying to keep our communities safe. They fight against each and every one of those measures, and when they had the opportunity to advocate to their federal cousins, they didn't, Speaker. They turned their backs on Ontarian families.

HOUSING

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: My question is for the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Speaker, Ontario's economy depends on a strong housing market. Too often, municipal red tape and overreach have stood in the way. Under the previous Liberal government, housing starts fell behind, red tape piled up and families were priced out. In my community of Mississauga, former mayor and still Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie talked a lot about housing but built very little, including just two housing starts in one month.

Our government knows that to protect Ontario's economy, we need to build more homes, not more bureaucracy. Speaker, can the associate minister please share how our plan is cutting red tape, restoring fairness and helping build more homes across Ontario?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thanks to the great member for the question. Listen, Speaker, our government has been clear: It's time to build homes, not more bureaucracy that stands in the way. So we are ending the misuse of enhanced site plan controls that have allowed municipalities to demand costly cosmetic design features that do nothing, frankly, to improve safety or livability. But it does drive up costs and threaten the viability of projects.

Too many builders have been forced to meet unnecessary Cadillac design standards which make homes less affordable and delay construction for months. This is ending. Our government will ensure that by the next building season, every builder in Ontario will operate under one clear, consistent standard. We're giving home builders certainty, we're giving homebuyers choice and we're making it faster and more affordable to get homes built across the great province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville.

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: Thank you to the associate minister for his continuing leadership. Speaker, Ontarians are counting on us to build homes faster and more affordably. They don't want more red tape, more costs or more delays caused by municipal overreach. They want a fair

consistency that lets builders build and families move into the homes they need. But for too long, local red tape and previous Liberal government mismanagement have stood in the way. They've driven prices up, delayed projects and made it harder for families to find a place to call home.

Speaker, can the associate minister please share how these new changes will make it faster, simpler and more affordable to build homes right across this beautiful province of Ontario?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Listen, the member is absolutely right: Ontarians cannot afford more delays or costs driven by unnecessary municipal overreach. That's why our government is continuing to bring back common sense to the housing system: removing redundant site plan controls, standardizing building requirements across Ontario. We're saving builders time; we're saving home builders money. Again, Speaker, it's just common sense: cutting costs, reducing duplication, ensuring every municipality plays by the same clear rules—one building code, one standard, one Ontario.

Our message is simple: We will not stand by while some municipalities impose expensive, unnecessary requirements that drive up costs and hold back construction. This is about building homes for people, not barriers for builders. We're going to get it done for the builders and the people here in Ontario.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: For over three years, I've worked with Biolyse Pharma, a St. Catharines-based oncology drug manufacturer who is losing procurement bids to overseas international companies. Their loss in revenue has caused a situation where moving their operations out of Canada seems to be the only viable option. For three years I've stood up, I've written letters and demanded the Premier work directly with Biolyse to prevent brain drain from Ontario, but nothing else has been done.

My question is to the Premier. Will you commit once and for all to implementing buy-Ontario policies that support homegrown companies like Biolyse and keep jobs here in Ontario?

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

Hon. Stephen Crawford: I can certainly commit to that. There are two types of people in this world, Speaker: We have leaders and we have followers. We have a leader in Premier Ford, who is leading Ontario, charging Ontario, promoting Ontario across Canada and the world. Let's make that very clear. We have the opposition talking a big game, but they've voted against every piece of legislation that we've put through this House supporting Ontario and Canadian businesses.

The Premier has said over and over again it's time for Ontarians, it's time for Canadians to stand up. Guess what, Speaker? They are doing that. For example, let's take a look at the LCBO right now. You live in the Niagara

region. You should be very happy to know wine sales from Ontario companies have skyrocketed 69% in the past few months. That's a direct result of Premier Ford taking action, supporting Ontario and Canadian businesses.

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I'm going to tell you something, to the minister: Biolyse has stepped in and saved the day more than once—I'll say, probably more than this Premier—when local hospitals in Niagara ran out of life-saving cancer drugs during the pandemic. We don't have to rely on other countries for critical health care needs.

To the Premier: Will you support our local manufacturing sector, save hundreds of local jobs in Niagara and introduce buy-Ontario strategies for hospital procurement?

Hon. Stephen Crawford: Again, I want to reiterate that we've been a leader in "Buy Ontario, Buy Canada." In fact, having travelled across the country, met ministers in other provinces—I was out in Kananaskis just back in September—I can tell you, everybody across Canada is looking to Ontario as the leader in Canada for procurement.

Speaker, it doesn't matter what sector. Whether it's the auto sector, the health sector, the alcohol sector, we are supporting Ontario businesses. In fact, we have legislation right now before the House, the Building a More Competitive Economy Act. I hope the opposition will support this legislation, buy Ontario and Canadian-manufactured vehicles. Support this legislation. Join us instead of chirping from the opposition benches with all words and no action.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Labour for recognizing my hard work with Habitat for Humanity yesterday. I'm proud to have worked with an organization that makes home ownership a reality for families across Ontario, including in the minister's riding of Northumberland–Peterborough South.

Unfortunately, though, I can't say the same for this Conservative government, who have failed to meet their own housing targets year after year after year. In Ontario, housing starts have ground to a halt—the lowest in this country—and 700,000 families are without a job. Yet for some reason, this Minister of Labour's priority is to continue to shovel out millions of taxpayer dollars through well-connected Conservative lobbyists to applicants the minister himself called "low-scoring projects."

Minister, will you finally clear the air and publicly release the SDF scoring card so we can finally move on?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I'm glad the member brought up Habitat for Humanity. I'm glad, and I appreciate the work he did with Habitat for Humanity. What that member needs to acknowledge is that's a group we've supported through the Skills Development Fund. When we look at things like our Housing Supply Action Plan to

make sure we have the young men and women to support that, we invest in projects like Habitat's project that's giving youth in my own community, in the Baltimore area, actual skills to enter a trade—a trade and apprenticeships, whose numbers were abysmal under the previous Liberal government.

Supporting Habitat in regions like Halton: The incredible member here from Burlington, who brought me down, who introduced me to the team who are inspiring our next generation of youth—women entering the trades; folks between the ages of 15 and 25 who are registering for apprenticeships—all to build houses and infrastructure.

1120

It's a shame they vote against every one of those measures to support those infrastructure projects.

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

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Speaker, I just don't think the minister gets it. The program is not the problem; you are.

Speaker, while the minister scrambles to pin the blame—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'll ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Direct your questions through me.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Thank you, Speaker. Right now the minister is worried about defending himself, but who he should be worried about is Ontario families. They're worried about how they'll make ends meet; they're worried if they'll even have a job tomorrow. But instead of showing leadership—leadership that the people of Ontario deserve—this minister is again busy shovelling out the cash to well-connected Conservative lobbyists and insiders.

I'll put the question to the minister through you, Speaker: Minister, if you're not going to release the scoring criteria, then will you at least do the honourable thing and resign?

Hon. David Piccini: They like the home run; they just don't like the batter. They struck out when it came to supporting our first responders. They struck out when it came to supporting our miners. When it came to supporting the men and women of our energy sector, whom they had the opportunity of supporting, they didn't.

They wanted to shutter Pickering Nuclear Generating Station. They don't support new nuclear build. They want us to be dependent on other countries. When it comes to supporting our miners in the north, they voted against each and every measure. They don't want us to be energy self-sufficient. They don't want us to be an energy superpower. When it comes to building highways, like the 413 and the Bradford Bypass, they don't support them. They don't support those young men and women getting training through programs like Habitat for Humanity, because they're anti-worker.

They're why organized labour abandoned that party in the last election: because they know when it comes to who's going to protect their members and their paycheques, it's Premier Ford and this government.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier. Millions of people in Ontario are going hungry—4.1 million food bank visits in Toronto last year alone, a shocking 340% increase since this government was elected. It's only going to get worse with over 800,000 people out of a job. Even if you have a job, you can't afford food in this province because this government's housing policies have resulted in the worst housing affordability crisis in Ontario's history and the worst of any province in the country. The housing and hunger crisis is a policy choice and a policy failure.

Speaker, will the government reverse course, help people afford a home and put food on the table by cracking down on above-guideline rent increases and reversing course in bringing back rent control in Ontario?

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

Hon. Rob Flack: Let me begin by saying we have a great piece of legislation before this House that is being debated, and I look forward to the members' comments and debate throughout.

That being said, it takes too long and it costs too much to get all kinds of housing built in this province. He may not have seen, but today we're lowering the cost of building by announcing that we're reducing the provincial portion of the HST, providing the federal government works along—we're confident that with their budget in November they will do just that.

That is why we introduced Bill 17: to reduce the cost and the time it takes, deferring DCs—eliminating DCs on long-term-care homes. We're creating these conditions. In Bill 60, we're going to continue on that path.

As the associate minister said earlier today, we're getting it done for the people of Ontario. Costs are going to come down, affordability is on the rise—we're good.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: With all due respect to the minister, the biggest impediment to building housing quicker in the province of Ontario is the Premier of Ontario, because the Premier says no to legalizing multiplexes and mid-rise housing in this province.

Even when the federal government says, "You know what? We're going to get back into building deeply affordable, non-profit co-op and social housing," which neither the federal nor provincial governments have done since 1995, the Premier says no. People are desperate to not be kicked out of their housing because they have no place to go, and instead of bringing back rent control, the Premier says no.

Speaker, will the government actually start saying yes to fixing the housing crisis by legalizing housing, protecting renters and building deeply affordable housing?

Hon. Rob Flack: We have been saying yes, and it's working. When we take a look at rental starts in this province—if you want to get lower rents, you need more supply—up 17,000 in the last year, over the year before.

That's 38%, Speaker, up 52,000 in the last three years. Let's also take a look at where we're investing through the National Housing Strategy: COCHI dollars up, COHB dollars up. We are investing closely with the federal government. Thanks to the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we're getting it done.

And with the new Build Canada Homes policy, we're going to work closely with Minister Robertson, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure in Canada. We're going to help get more affordable homes built in this province through unique and innovative ways. Using the National Housing Strategy, we're working closely with the federal government.

We'll continue to listen to your great advocacy but, ultimately, you've got to admit, the honourable member, we are getting it done and it's working in the rental housing market.

RED TAPE REDUCTION

Hon. Laurie Scott: My question is for the Minister of Red Tape reduction.

We know that Ontario's economy faces real challenges. Rising costs, global uncertainty and new trade and tariff threats from Donald Trump are a direct attack on our economy and our communities. For too long, red tape and over-regulation held our province back.

I remember when I was in opposition, spending many hours meeting with farmers and agribusiness with their frustrations when the Liberals and NDP worked together to stifle our economy. Businesses spent more time filling out forms than hiring workers or growing their operations. But through our government's leadership, for example, we've brought in the modernizing agricultural licence process, saving farmers 1,200 hours a year in paperwork. That's just an example.

But Madam Speaker, can the minister please share our government's latest legislation that will continue to protect Ontario's economy and stand up against global threats and keep jobs right here at home and in our rural communities?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you to the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for that great question. She's right. She's constantly standing up for all sectors of this economy, whether it's agriculture, whether it's small business. Because this government, through all our members, through our team approach, we get it.

What do small businesses want to do? We have the Sarnia chamber of commerce here. I talked to the Barrie chamber of commerce, the Brockville chamber of commerce. They just want to spend time running their business, hiring people and giving back to their community, but far too often, they were mired in bureaucratic red tape. They come from a government, the Liberal government, that put hours and hours of burdensome paperwork on them, taxed them to death. They couldn't move. This was a government that, if it moved, they taxed it. If it kept moving, they regulated it.

Gone are those days, Speaker. Through the work that this government has done, we have saved businesses \$1.2

billion annually, freeing up 1.8 hours of their time, because we recognize that businesses, agriculture, every sector of this economy, they want to do what they do best, which is run their business, give back to the community, and this government will not stop standing up for those businesses.

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

Hon. Laurie Scott: Thank you to the minister for continuing leadership on this file. We know that red tape doesn't just slow down businesses; it slows down progress, investments and opportunity. It makes it harder to build homes, expand factories and attract new businesses to our provinces and let our agriculture businesses expand also.

Under the previous government, we were stifled. Delays piled up and projects stalled. My agricultural and rural communities paid that price, but I am proud our government is changing that, giving them practical and impactful guidelines to succeed. We're taking action to get shovels in the ground faster and get Ontario moving again.

Speaker, can the minister please share more about how streamlining permits will boost investments and help create good jobs right here in Ontario?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: The member is right. We saw, under the Liberals, 300,000 jobs fleeing this province. We saw them adding \$33,000 of red tape for businesses per year. Again, Speaker, gone are those days. We're helping those businesses. We're helping those sectors.

1130

In fact, Building a More Competitive Economy Act, which is before this House now—we are standing up and we're saying "Buy Ontario, buy Canadian." We're seeing meaningful actions through this government's bills that we're tabling. While the opposition talk about buying local, supporting local, we are doing it. We're bringing results. We're supporting our forestry sector, our auto sector, sending a strong message that we're creating the right economy here in Ontario. We're not going to mire people in red tape. Rather, we'll roll out the red carpet for those businesses so that we have the right economic conditions to create those jobs, create those investments.

Speaker, it's about common sense. We had a mired permitting system in this province, over 300 economic permits that anyone who wanted to come, start a business, start a manufacturing plant, start anything in this province, they would have to go through. But finally, we're bringing common sense back. We're going to be reviewing these 300 permits, and we're going to be reducing them by 35% by 2028. We are going to continue to protect Ontario and continue to have a start-up economy.

FOREIGN-TRAINED DOCTORS

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, more than 2.5 million Ontarians are already without a family doctor, and the Ontario Medical Association warns that this number can rise to 4.4 million by 2026, by just next year. International medical graduates fill more than 60% of family medicine

residency spots. But this government is making it harder for these highly educated graduates by suddenly imposing a high school requirement for their first-round residency.

Speaker, my question to the Premier is, why does his government want to leave more and more Ontarians without qualified doctors to care for them?

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

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Of course, under the expert guidance of Dr. Jane Philpott, we are connecting more and more people in Ontario to a primary care provider. And this year, we are connecting literally thousands and thousands of more people.

With regard to internationally trained physicians, we want to make sure that those people who were raised and educated in Ontario and got their medical training overseas can come back and serve Ontario. For example, Sam, a medical student at the University of Limerick, writes the following: "I'm now excited for the graduating matching process rather than filled with dread. We all want to come home and be trained by the doctors near our homes and eventually practise there. This policy makes it easier for us. You, the government, have validated our hard work, a light at the end of the tunnel."

Sam, I'm glad you're coming back to Ontario. We want you. We need you to be a family doctor in Ontario. Thank you for coming back—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, maybe the member didn't understand my question. We already do not have enough family doctors, and 60% make up for that need. We do not have enough. So it's great to have Sam and everyone else who wants to become a family doctor, but we need more. More than 4.4 million people in Ontario may not have a family doctor, so you want those IMGs to be able to practise.

The chair of the OMA's family practice has warned that family medicine programs will be hit hard, since they rely heavily on internationally trained doctors. In the middle of a doctor shortage, a health care crisis, this government imposed this new rule right after the application window has already closed—so no, you didn't actually consult with people—and blind-siding hundreds of applicants who invested thousands of dollars in exams and coursework.

Why is this government pushing away these qualified doctors when millions are waiting for a family doctor right now?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Since this government took office, we've actually registered approximately 20,000 new physicians in Ontario, and of course we are connecting more and more people in Ontario with a primary health provider. Those include family doctors, nurse practitioners and family health teams.

Those people who were raised in Ontario and received their primary education in Ontario sometimes go overseas to get their medical education. Previously, under previous governments, they were treated as not being residents of Ontario. They were treated as foreigners. This government has preferred to treat residents of Ontario like residents of

Ontario, irregardless of the fact that they got their medical education overseas.

Let me quote again, from Morad, who is a medical student at the University College Cork. He is looking forward to coming back to Ontario to become a physician in Ontario—a policy which did not exist before.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Stephen Blais: The Premier says he is fighting for Ontario families, but the record tells a different story. When American pressure mounts, the Premier backs down. He tucks tail and runs. When insiders want land deals, rule changes or access to taxpayer cash, the government moves at lightning speed.

Ontarians aren't asking for favours; they're just asking for a fair shake. They're asking, "When will it stop? When will the bending, when will the backroom deals and the special treatment stop?"

Madam Speaker, when will the Premier stop working for his friends and family and finally grow a backbone and start working for Ontario families?

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

Hon. David Piccini: When this country was searching for a leader to actually stand up to Trump, to go down to meet with governors, to actually—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Hon. David Piccini: I know, Speaker. The truth hurts.

Then we were plunged into a national election. But this Premier stood up. He stood up to fight for our interests. He stood up a bully—a bully that's having a real impact on our steel sector, on our automotive sector. When we were faced with this uncertainty, it's this Premier that rolled up his sleeves and made sure we had a plan for tariff-impacted workers, to make sure we had a plan for our automotive workers, to make sure we had a plan for the steel sector workers. He's put aside partisanship to do all of that.

I didn't see the Ontario Liberals anywhere. In fact, the secret is, their own federal cousins run away from them because they know, when it comes to rolling up your sleeves and fighting for this country, we can count on Premier Ford to stand up for our workers.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: The Premier is great at exploding in outrage, but then he disappears. He backed a 25% energy surcharge on the United States until one phone call, and he backed down. He ran anti-tariff ads in the United States until a tweet, and he backed down.

Remember the Starlink deal, Madam Speaker? He cancelled it, then he uncanceled it and then he cancelled it again at a cost the government still has never disclosed.

Meanwhile, families are paying the price: higher bills, lost jobs, more stress. But the Premier's friends? They get land deals, they get zoning favours and they get access to special government cash.

It's time the Premier showed a backbone and fought for all Ontarians, not just his friends. When will the Premier finally stop bending to the powerful and the rich and start standing up for Ontario families?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Government House leader.

Hon. Steve Clark: You know, I can't understand this member, because we all know—Ontarians know—that when the chips were down and we were facing an unprecedented situation with Premier Ford, in this whole country of Canada, there was one person that led the charge, and that person was Premier Doug Ford.

The challenges that face our country, the challenges that face Ontarians right now—Ontario workers, Ontario companies—over and over and over again, we needed Captain Canada. We needed that person to say, “We need to focus on our fundamentals. We need to ensure that we build a more competitive economy, and we need to make sure that we've got legislation, regulation and policies that work for Canadians.” That person was Premier Doug Ford.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Red Tape Reduction on a point of order.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I just want to correct my record. As I was saying how our government saved businesses \$1.2 billion annually, I also said we freed up 1.8 hours. I meant to say 1.8 million hours.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 o'clock.
The House recessed from 1139 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HOUSING EQUITY AND RENTAL TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE DE LOGEMENT ET LA TRANSPARENCE DANS LES MODALITÉS DE LOCATION

Ms. Bowman moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 64, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 and the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000 with respect to residential tenancies / Projet de loi 64, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation et la Loi de 2000 sur les normes techniques et la sécurité en ce qui concerne la location à usage d'habitation.

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?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: The short name of the bill, the Housing Equity and Rental Transparency Act, 2025, would, if passed:

—require remote monitoring of an elevator's operating availability, and require reporting of outages that last more than 24 hours within seven days and within seven days after the elevator is returned to service;

—require reporting of maintenance requests and deem them part of the record when a landlord applies for an AGI;

—require implementation of a system to access visitor parking for buildings of 100 units or more;

—provide for rent abatement of 20% if a vital service like heat and water is withheld;

—require video surveillance and security guards in complexes with 100 or more units;

—remove authorization for the landlord to give a notice of eviction for late rent if the tenant's rent is paid directly by ODSP or Ontario Works or for late payment of one rental period; and

—cool common areas between May 15 and September 15 to a temperature of 26 degrees Celsius or less.

REMEMBRANCE DAY OBSERVANCE ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR L'OBSERVATION DU JOUR DU SOUVENIR

Mrs. Stevens moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 65, An Act to amend the Remembrance Day and Veterans' Week Act, 2024 with respect to schools and workplaces / Projet de loi 65, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2024 sur la Semaine du jour du Souvenir et des anciens combattants au sujet des écoles et des lieux de travail.

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?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Yes. Thank you for the opportunity, Speaker.

The bill amends the Remembrance Day and Veterans' Week Act, 2024, to provide that every school shall hold a dedicated service for Remembrance Day for students, and that the Ministry of Education shall develop an elementary school curriculum and secondary school curriculum regarding the purpose and the importance of Remembrance Day. The act is also amending to provide that, subject to regulations made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, no workplace shall operate from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Remembrance Day.

KIDS' ONLINE SAFETY AND PRIVACY MONTH ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET DE LA PROTECTION DE LA VIE PRIVÉE DES ENFANTS EN LIGNE

Mr. Blais moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to proclaim the month of October as Kids' Online Safety and Privacy Month / Projet de loi 66,

Loi proclamant le mois d'octobre Mois de la sécurité et de la protection de la vie privée des enfants en ligne.

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 the member like to explain the bill?

Mr. Stephen Blais: This bill is co-sponsored and largely the work of my colleague Madame Collard from Ottawa–Vanier. The bill proclaims the month of October in each year as kids' online safety and privacy month.

By proclaiming October kids' online safety and privacy month, we prioritize the need to raise awareness about online safety and privacy for children. And by acknowledging the significance of online safety and privacy for children, we aim to ensure that children can navigate the digital world confidently and safely.

2163694 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2025

Mr. Blais moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act to revive 2163694 Ontario Ltd.

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

First reading agreed to.

PETITIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Jessica Bell: I have a petition here entitled "Invest in Education." It's signed by many parents in my riding who are very concerned about the nearly \$1,500 per student cut that the school system has seen since 2018, since the government came into power. They are calling for more investment in schools, smaller class sizes and for the government to reimburse the TDSB for the \$61 million spent from reserves to keep students and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I support this petition. I'll be affixing my signature to it and giving it to page Bella.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Chandra Pasma: It's my honour to rise and present a petition entitled "Withdraw Bill 33 and Respect Local Democracy."

The petitioners are deeply concerned about the impacts of the \$6.3 billion in funding cuts to our schools and the fact that it means our children are going without vital supports and they're in school buildings that are crumbling and in desperate need of repairs. But instead of fixing those problems, the petitioners note that Bill 33 is giving the Minister of Education the power to silence parent voices, particularly when they are trying to achieve better supports for their children, and that this legislation undermines democracy and accountability and disrespects the

charter-protected rights of Franco-Ontarians to have a voice in their own education system.

And so these petitioners are calling on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to withdraw the bill, respect local democracy and properly fund education in Ontario.

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Ollie.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am pleased to be able to talk about real rent control in this space with a petition. As we see the government has brought in Bill 60, which is an attack on renters in the province.

The government is heading in a terrible direction that will force so many into homelessness, but there is another way, and this petition calls for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to protect tenants from predatory rent increases. Pass the Ontario NDP's rent control for all units act today. This is the direction that we should be going in to make sure that renters are protected in the province of Ontario.

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

1510

AUTISM TREATMENT

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled "Support for Autistic Children in Ontario." We just had Alina Cameron and the OAC come here earlier this week, but these petitions were signed long before then. It's an ongoing issue with the support that autistic children in Ontario have. As we all know in this room, it's about having access to the evidence-based therapy that the children need.

The funding system has been capped and based on age, and you don't magically age out of being autistic when you turn five. It's a real struggle, especially in northern Ontario and francophone areas, to have access to service. As well, parents want to be parents. They don't want to be bookkeepers and agents scheduling appointments, figuring out how to pay for things and cover all of that.

The new program doesn't have any additional funding for travel costs, which is a disadvantage for people who are in rural areas and northern areas where it's a distance to travel for services. They are petitioning the assembly to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to ensure access to an equitable needs-based autism service for all children who need it.

I support this petition. It's been an issue ever since I was first elected. We could do much better. I'll affix my signature and provide it to page Bella for the table.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'm pleased to rise to table a petition entitled "To Raise Social Assistance Rates." I want to say thank you as always to the tireless Sally Palmer, who is a champion of people in Ontario who are living on Ontario Works and ODSP, which are so far

below the actual cost of living in Ontario that people are living in desperate straits when they are on Ontario Works and ODSP.

That's all the more the case because rent has been skyrocketing in Ontario. It's incredibly challenging to try to pay any price for housing when you are making less than \$1,500 per month and the average cost of a one-bedroom apartment in Ontario is \$2,000. We can only imagine how much worse this government's recent changes with Bill 60 will make this situation. It's truly an attack on renters.

These petitioners are noting that there have been more than 230 organizations that have called for social assistance rates to be doubled in Ontario, and when we look at the research on the Ontario Basic Income Pilot, it shows that providing people with a stable and adequate income actually leads to better health and employment outcomes, which I think is what we all want to see for the people of Ontario.

They are calling on the Legislative Assembly to double the rates for Ontario Works and ODSP. I fully support this petition, will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Lorraine.

HEALTH CARE

MPP Jamie West: This petition uses the Premier's name, and the standing orders prevent that, so the petition is entitled "Stop" the Premier's "Health Care Privatization Plan." What they're doing here is talking about the importance of Ontarians getting health care based on their need and not their ability to pay.

There has been a lot of signalling about privatization of the health care system, which causes concern for the people of Ontario. They're concerned that there are only so many people in the field working, and as you privatize, you begin to bleed out from the public sector side workplaces. That includes doctors, nurses, PSWs and other health care professionals, which makes that health care crisis even worse.

At the end of the day, it doesn't matter if you're paying with your OHIP card: If it's privatized, it's going to cost us all a lot more money. As well, they are upselling services that are coming there.

So they are petitioning for us to address the health care crisis by repealing Bill 124. That allows us to recruit, retain and respect doctors, nurses and PSWs with better pay. They want to license tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and health care professionals; make education and training free or low-cost for nurses, doctors and other health care professionals; incentivize doctors and nurses to choose to live and work in northern Ontario; and provide funding for hospitals so they can actually do their jobs instead of having to make cuts in order to survive under the funding that's provided.

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

REPEAL OF GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I am rising to present a petition entitled, "Bill 5 ... Stop the Power Grab."

The government passed Bill 5 this year, a law which allows them to override environmental protection, particularly for species at risk. It allows them to ignore the constitutional duty to consult First Nations. It allows them to suspend labour and health and safety laws anywhere in the province. It allows them to silence local voices and overrule democracy through the creation of special economic zones, which are basically a get-out-of-jail-free card that allows the government to say that any law in the province, whether it is provincial or municipal, can be set aside and they do not have to respect that law, which I think people understand is a real threat to a democracy where we do have a system if a law is problematic, which is to bring legislation to the House to debate it, to listen to the voices of the public in committee and, if the law is good, to pass it. It is not appropriate in a democracy to just set laws aside because you find them inconvenient, and certainly not to do it while overriding the voices of the community that we are elected to represent.

This petition calls upon the government to respect democratic process and accountability and the rights of First Nations and Indigenous people to transparency and respect, and therefore, petitions the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately repeal Bill 5 and restore full legislative, environmental, labour and treaty protections in all parts of Ontario.

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Ollie.

SOINS DE SANTÉ

MPP Jamie West: Cette pétition, c'est la même chose que ma dernière pétition, mais cette pétition est en français. Moi je ne parle pas vraiment en français, mais—

M^{me} Chandra Pasma: Si, tu parles français.

MPP Jamie West: Merci beaucoup. I will do my best.

Le titre de cette pétition est « Arrêtons le plan de privatisation des soins de santé » du premier ministre. C'est une pétition parce que la privatisation de la santé en Ontario, c'est mal pour les gens. Les personnes qui ont signé cette pétition croient que le « purpose » de la santé ce n'est pas—parce que les personnes ont besoin des soins et pas parce que les personnes ont de l'argent dans leurs poches.

Il y a des demandes d'abroger la loi 124 et de créer un environnement pour les personnes qui désirent travailler comme—en santé avec les autres services, comme la « tuition » gratuite, ou moins, et aussi de donner les fonds pour les hôpitaux pour que les hôpitaux travaillent avec tous les services.

Cette pétition est très importante pour moi. J'y affixe ma signature et la donne au page Aayush pour la table.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'm rising to present a petition entitled, "Health Care: Not For Sale." The petitioners are very concerned about the moves by this government to privatize health care, given that we have a long-standing value as Canadians that health care should be based on your need to access it rather than the size of your wallet. This is something I'm already seeing impact my constituents, particularly elderly constituents who need to have cataract surgery and are being asked to pay, in some cases, \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000 in fees in order to receive this surgery which should be covered in Ontario. Some of them are looking at having to take out loans or even go back to work in order to pay for this surgery, which should be provided to them at no cost.

The petitioners also note that privatization is bleeding workers out of our public health care system. We can also see that in Ottawa, where doctors are being allowed to use the Riverside Hospital to provide private surgeries on weekends. They are taking workers from the Ottawa hospital system and paying them extra to work on Saturdays, and then those workers are not available for shifts during the week. This has a negative impact on those who aren't able to afford private health care because now there aren't nurses available for their surgeries or to provide bedside care in the hospital. In the end, we all lose when we move ahead with privatization of health care.

What the petitioners are calling for is for the Legislative Assembly to put an immediate halt to all plans to privatize health care and instead to fix the health care crisis by:

- recruiting and retaining thousands of doctors, nurses, personal support workers with better pay and better working conditions;

1520

- using internationally trained nurses and other health care professionals already here in Ontario, including those who, oddly, the government is excluding because they did not go to high school in Ontario;

- making education and training free or low-cost for nurses, doctors and other health care professionals; and

- funding hospitals adequately so that they are able to not only keep the doors open and the lights on, which some of them can't every day, but to also have nurses on every shift on every ward.

I fully support this petition. I will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Rafi.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled "Legislation for Heat Limits in the Workplace Now!" I know it's getting cooler; I had a toque in my pocket on the way to work this morning. But this is about addressing heat in the workplace.

Basically, what they talk about is extreme heat, with the temperatures coming up and many people in workplaces being affected by the heat in ways that they weren't in the past. We think about schools and education workers—in

the past, it was people in roofing, buildings. It could also be people in restaurants who prepare the meals, working in the backrooms, where they don't have adequate cooling systems, and the heat from preparing the meals affects them.

We're also hearing from migrant farm workers who are working in the hot, hot sun as it gets hotter and drier every year.

The petitioners are talking about the need for Ontario workers to have legislation in place to help protect them so that the workplace is more successful.

This is something that we struggled with in my workplace, for example, where there was a smelter and we melted rocks.

The petition is for the Ontario government to implement legislation and amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide increased protections for workers against heat stress and ensure that employers are developing policies for this as well.

I've had good conversations with the Minister of Labour about this. He is interested in moving forward with this and learning more. I look forward to having that meeting with the Minister of Labour and Laura Walton from the OFL.

I support this petition. I will attach my signature and provide it to page Lorraine for the table.

PUBLIC SAFETY

MPP Jamie West: The petition is "Protect 2SLGBTQI+ Communities and Drag Artists." This is about harassment that people are facing for being from the 2SLGBTQI+ communities. I know we all support people being able to be who they are without threats of violence.

They are petitioning the assembly to pass the protecting 2SLGBTQI+ communities act so that they would have safety zones to deter bigoted people who are expressing harassment towards them.

I think this is very important. I'll affix my signature and provide it to page Finley for the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

ATTRIBUTION DE TEMPS

Mr. 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 30, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters, Bill 56, An Act to amend various Acts, and Bill 25, An Act to make statutory amendments respecting emergency management and authorizing enforceable directives to specified entities providing publicly-funded community and social services;

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 bells shall be limited to five minutes; and

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

That when the order for third reading of Bill 30 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 30 without further debate or amendment; and

That when the order for third reading of Bill 56 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 56 without further debate or amendment; and

That when the order for third reading of Bill 25 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 25 without further debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): The government House leader has moved government notice of motion number 7.

Back to the member to start debate.

Hon. Steve Clark: It gives me great pleasure to begin the debate this afternoon. I've got a lot to say, but I don't believe I'll be taking all of the 40 minutes today.

Speaker, I've been in this House since 2010. I was elected in a by-election to replace a long-standing member, Bob Runciman, who was called by Prime Minister Harper to the Senate at the time.

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: Very good. Thank you so much.

He'd been interim leader of the party; he'd been House leader in the party as well. And when I became a member, early on, after another long-standing member of the Legislature moved on—it was Elizabeth Witmer at the time—I became the deputy House leader for the official opposition. I was very fascinated with the job because I

got to learn more of the rules. Some of the people that know the rules better than anybody are these men and women who are at the Clerks' table, who help our members ensure that they stay focused and stay on. They work very closely with the Speaker, so knowing the rules and understanding the rules are very important.

The narration around the rules—how I interpret them, how I categorize them, how I describe them—is quite different from the members opposite. I learned this, Speaker, because I became the House leader in the official opposition and then, ultimately, I've now become the government House leader. So now I remember—I remember some very sage advice that I received from someone who has just passed away, the Honourable Jim Bradley, who represented St. Catharines in this Legislature for 41 years and then became, when I was Minister of Municipal Affairs, the regional chair in Niagara.

I remember Mr. Bradley very vividly, because I used to sit right over where Mr. Vanthof is as the opposition House leader. I remember railing against the government; they're probably going to quote me this afternoon, numerous times, on how I railed against the government about using exactly what I'm using, in terms of standing order 50. And just like it was yesterday, I remember Jim Bradley saying to me, when we became government, "I hope you become House leader because then you're going to understand that I have quotes"—and he had quotes. I quoted him many, many times—

Mr. John Vanthof: I've got his quotes too.

Hon. Steve Clark: You've got his quotes too? That's good—where he talked about the government of the day. It included the New Democrat government; it included Bob Rae's government. He used time allocation and closure as well.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'm going to forget those.

Hon. Steve Clark: I know you're going to forget them. I'm not going to forget them.

You had all the different parties that used it, and Jim said, "I can't wait until you're over here," and here I am. That's where we are.

1530

I did some scrums today because the media asked me the same points that the opposition are going to make today. Sometimes our press gallery beats you guys to the punch over there with questions to the government. I talked about the importance of scheduling. In this case, the three bills that we're debating in this time allocation motion, all three ministers are very confident, with the way these bills are structured today, they felt very strongly that, from a scheduling perspective—which is my number one job as a House leader, to schedule these bills—to make sure that they were fine in the manner that they were in, didn't need committee and we could move them right into the third stage. I asked every one of those ministers the why: Why is it so important that we move these bills forward? So Speaker, I'm going to talk about the why.

But I also want to go back to some of the things that I used to say when I was in opposition that they're going to say today. The one word they're going to say is that this is

undemocratic, which is absolutely not true. You can sit down with the Clerks. You can talk to them about the standing orders. The standing orders are anything but undemocratic. They're the rules that we have. They're the rules. I've said it many times that when you're in opposition, sometimes you get too fixated with opposing and sometimes you don't get so fixated with proposing. And what happens when we narrow down to this debate: It's all about the opposition. It's all about using those words, just like I did when I was in opposition. But to say it's undemocratic after now realizing how we operate in the standing orders, it's just not the way it is.

So let's talk about what time allocation is. If you look at the whole point of being able to schedule the House, I know from a government perspective, especially when I'm given a seven-week sitting, I need to make sure that the session is efficient. The best way to be efficient is to be able to tell the members when matters are being scheduled. Now, I could have used other measures. There are other measures in the standing orders that I could have used. I could have decided to use a closure, and I could have completely cut off debate. We wouldn't be having this debate now. We wouldn't be having two hours of debate when we come back. It would have been a different measure. But to be able to use standing order 50, essentially, I'm allocating time for us to be able to have that certainty. The member opposite from the third party is a great House leader, but she wants to know what's happening in the House. She wants to be able to have the schedule. So part of a time allocation motion helps her and helps Mr. Vanthof. I'm helping you out by ensuring that you know exactly when debate is going to take place.

Interjection.

Hon. Steve Clark: I appreciate that.

Even when you look at some of the parliamentary experts out there, they validate what I've been saying. You look at citation 533 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms of the House of Commons of Canada, sixth edition, which reminds everyone in the House that, "Time allocation is a device for planning the use of time during various stages of consideration of a bill rather than bringing the debate to an immediate conclusion"—which is exactly what I just said. We're not using closure; we're providing certainty when these bills—and again, all three bills, the ministers have very much indicated that they're priorities are of the government. Bill 30, which we refer to as Working for Workers: This has been on the order paper since May 28 of this year, so you've had—

Interjection.

Hon. Steve Clark: Listen, you can say all you want, but you've had all summer, just like we have, to talk to people about the importance of this bill. And I'll tell you, everyone that I've spoken to has said the same thing that the minister said: that we need to move this bill forward; we need to provide certainty for the workers.

The same thing with Bill 25, from Minister Dunlop: The Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response tabled this bill on May 26, 2025, in the spring session. Listen, I don't know if you follow her social media. She's

travelled all over the province. She came to my riding and talked to my local fire officials about the emergency preparedness grant they received. They talked about this bill. They talked about the importance of this bill and the fact that her stakeholders, just like Minister Piccini's stakeholders, were all saying the same thing: We need passage of this bill in a quick manner in the Legislature. But we recognize that there has to be debate in the Legislature. All these bills—all three bills—follow the standing orders, follow the rules. There's nothing undemocratic. The rules are right there. They're right here. The standing orders of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario tell you exactly how long we can debate a bill before we move forward.

The third bill, again, a big priority—Minister Khanjin, our Minister of Red Tape Reduction—a big bundle of priorities for the government, some of which the Premier telegraphed in his Empire Club speech. He's been talking about speed cameras all summer. No one should be surprised that the government wants to move this bill forward after we've been talking about it all summer into the fall. There have been meetings with our municipal partners. We want to get moving with this new fund that municipalities can access to provide these calming measures.

There are lots of other things in this bill that are very important. I appreciate that those folks on the other benches just want to talk about one small thing.

This is the importance of why we're here today. When I talked to Minister Dunlop about her bill, she responded very forthrightly: "We need this bill passed." We've taken valuable feedback from partners, from municipalities, from First Nations, from emergency management organizations, and, based on that feedback, we've established best practices for emergency management and lessons learned from past emergencies.

I appreciate that the members opposite want to talk about climate change. That's their right in debate to talk about it. But the minister was very clear that she spent all summer and spent a significant chunk of her AMO meetings talking to people about the need to have the emergency management act modernized: strengthening provincial leadership and coordination, identifying the Ontario Corps as a key function of emergency response, supporting municipal emergency management—everywhere she went, people talked about the importance of that—and as well, enhancing clarity and accountability in emergency management roles and responsibilities, something that is very, very important. So she made the priority—

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you. She made it a priority that she wanted this bill passed.

Minister Khanjin with the red tape bundle—we call it the "protect Ontario" bundle. Everyone knows we were going to put some of these measures in after we became a government. We have to cut red tape. We have to streamline approvals. We have to make our economy in Ontario more resilient and more self-reliant. We have to protect our province against US-imposed tariffs. We have to have

strategies that are going to boost investment in our province and strengthen our supply chain, something that this bill talks about. One of the big things we've mentioned is about credentialing. I'm going to talk about that in the next bill.

But we're at a crossroads. This is something that Minister Khanjin and I had a conversation about today. Time is of the essence. We need to ensure that these measures are put forward so that we can provide certainty in the economy. And while the debate has been spirited, there was really nothing from her perspective that she saw that needed to delay this bill.

Finally, the third bill, Bill 30, again, Working for Workers—normally, the opposition parties would be supportive, because they say almost every day in the House that they're pro-worker. But what I heard during the debate sounded different. It sounded like they were against this bill. It sounded like they were going to vote against this bill.

I think, from the minister's perspective, first of all, we were elected on a mandate to protect Ontario jobs and protect Ontario workers. Secondly, we're fulfilling our mandate by providing that support. We want people to be in the safest workplaces possible. We want to be the most competitive economy in the G7. And we now call on everyone to support us, to support Working for Workers 7.

Slowing down the bill—and this is where you're going to hear a lot of reasons across why we need to slow down the bill, which I disagree with fundamentally. Slowing down the bill isn't going to protect our workers. It's not going to train our workers. Every day, without the protections in Bill 30, workers are going to be a risk, whether they're accessing life-saving AEDs on construction sites or whether it's safeguarding against fraudulent job postings.

1540

Time allocation ensures that measures we're taking in these three bills are done effectively, that they save lives and they prevent abuse. With unjustified tariffs from the US and the global uncertainty we have, we need to act decisively on all three of these bills.

All three of these bills were requested by the ministers for me to schedule, so that we can have them move forward. All three of them talked about the reasons why their particular policy areas were so important. Obviously, Minister Dunlop is very passionate about emergency preparedness. Obviously, Minister Piccini doesn't want any more delays in getting those skilled workers into the pipeline in the province. And Minister Khanjin and all of the other ministers who worked on that bill really want to move forward.

The final thing I want to say is about the credentialing piece with the Ministry of Health. We've talked about this, all three parties, for years and years and years. We've got to get moving on it. So again, whether it's the Ministry of Health's participation or whether it's the Ministry of Labour or emergency preparedness or red tape, the reason you use the democratic standing orders that are in this book is to make sure that you are transparent and open and

show them how you can have debate but also provide certainty for all the members of the House.

I didn't use closure. I could have very easily done so. But I just want to say to all those folks from Niagara—and I know that Yasir Naqvi was up in the gallery earlier, another great House leader who told me that I would change my ways when I was here. But Jim Bradley said it best: The rules are there to serve those that want to oppose, that want to delay, that want to make sure that the Westminster system is slowed down. For those that want to provide Ontarians with certainty and knowledge that they've got a government that wants to get things done, the best tool I have is standing order 50, and I'm pleased to use it today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the House leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to speak in the House, and I have listened very intently to the government House leader. At one point, I commented to my colleague, "I think he's almost got me convinced." But he did lose me in a couple places.

Interjection: Oh, come on.

Mr. John Vanthof: He did.

He has talked about the Westminster system, and we're all very proud of the Westminster system, right? Part of the Westminster system is the committee process, where after a bill passes second reading, both members of the public and experts can come and comment to see if they can make the bill better.

I understand that the government has won an election and has the right to put their agenda forward. I understand that. But they also have the responsibility to put forward good legislation. We can all point to legislation that this government has put forward. One, Bill 124, was completely rescinded. I call it the "Men in Black act"—never happened, never happened.

The government House leader says, "Well, my ministers have assured me that this is perfect. Nothing is going to"—I'm sure that the minister who assured them of Bill 124 said the same thing. So basically what I heard is the government House leader is telling me that those ministers—and I'm not trying to be crude, because I respect them all—that they're know-it-alls, that they know better than the people who are going to come to committee.

Hon. Steve Clark: They're pretty smart.

Mr. John Vanthof: I am not questioning the intelligence of anyone on the other side. I am questioning, though, whether some of the newer members actually understand how the system is supposed to work.

And it's not just me who is saying that the system should work differently than what you're currently doing. The government House leader said, "Well, it's part of scheduling, you know? And we have to solidify scheduling." Well, part of your scheduling problem is that you showed up a month and a half late. So you slept in and now you're rushing stuff through.

Hon. Steve Clark: I worked hard this summer.

Mr. John Vanthof: No one is denying that we all work hard in our ridings. I'm sure you work hard on your

portfolios. But the Legislature has a purpose and you, as government, are losing sight of that purpose, especially committee.

We can all name bills where people have come forward at committee and said, “Wait a second, I get what you’re doing, government, but maybe you could do that a bit better.” There have been cases where the government, after committee, puts more amendments forward than the other parties. They have to amend their own bills—but not in this case, because the ministers have assured the government House leader that these bills are perfect. I am not quite as confident as the government House leader—not at all.

But the government House leader also mentioned that when he was a younger man, more principled than he is now—when he was on this side of the House, he had a different view of time allocation. He also mentioned someone who served here when I first got elected: Mr. Bradley from St. Catharines, someone I also respect. And I respect the government House leader. I often disagree with him, but that is the reason that we have—but I would like to give a couple quotes.

Hon. Steve Clark: From Jim Bradley?

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, and from the current government House leader. These are verbatim. The question you have to ask yourselves as government members: Who do you believe, the government House leader or the former opposition House leader?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Same guy, though, right?

Mr. John Vanthof: Well, he appears to be the same, but appearances can be deceiving.

Dateline November 28, 2017: “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.” He’s speaking now about the Liberal government: “We are looking at a government that is for the insiders and not the people. You know what, Speaker? That’s going to change.” I think he needs a mirror.

Mr. Stephen Blais: He’s Nostradamus.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, and he predicted: “They’re going to stifle public opinion. They’re going to shut down all opposing voices.” This is what the Liberals used to do: “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.”

This was talking about the red movie; now we’re listening to the blue movie, because the ads have gotten bigger; they’ve gotten more expensive; they’ve gone international. You spend more money advertising yourselves than you actually do fixing the issues that need to be fixed in Ontario.

Again, Mr. Steve Clark, on May 16, 2017—and at this point, he is quoting the former member from St. Catharines, Jim Bradley, someone we all respect: “Mr. Bradley goes on to say in his speech on December 11, 2001”—so he’s going back quite a ways—“The best way to deal with legislation is to have the government sitting most of the year so that it can receive careful analysis and debate in

this House and in committees and, in fact, in committees that travel across the province to get meaningful input. We do not have that’.... Again, I agree with Jim Bradley from November 24, 1993.”

“So we’ve taken the entire legislative day to just talk about this government’s desire to get their bills passed and get out of here for the couple of months we have as a break. I just think that’s not the speech that I heard from the throne when we were elected.”

1550

You remember when you guys got elected—the government of the people—and you had all your little brass plaques? Now you don’t even bother with committee. Basically, you’re saying that you no longer care what the people think. You care about your people, but that’s not the same as the people—100%.

Again, the government House leader, when he was in opposition: dateline, October 22, 2015—

Hon. Graham McGregor: Objection.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, we object to this too.

“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.”

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”—

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Steve Clark: Is it possible for me to correct my record?

Mr. John Vanthof: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): That is not a valid point of order.

Please continue.

Mr. John Vanthof: Again, will the real Steve Clark stand up?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I have been tolerant, but I will remind all members not to use current members’ names. Address them as either—

Mr. John Vanthof: I apologize.

I’m going to have to start that quote again because I like it. Obviously, the government House leader didn’t like it.

Dateline, 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.”

Couldn’t have said that—I believe that’s one of the most powerful statements that the government House

leader has made in his career. Unfortunately, he totally forgot it. Actually, no, he said he was a scheduler, so basically, he's just doing what he's told. He's given up on his principles and is just the messenger. He's also saying that his ministers are responsible—if there are any mistakes, it's his ministers. I don't think that's respectful of the Westminster system or respectful of the positions we hold.

My last quote is again from the current government House leader. October 28, 2014: "My colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke quoted one of the sayings that is here in this chamber, *Audi alteram partem*, which means, 'Hear the other side.' All we're asking is that you hear the other side."

Am I close to my time?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, you are.

Mr. John Vanthof: Okay, I'm just going to say one more sentence.

I will let my colleagues talk about the particular bills, but the biggest message is that by shutting out committee—the most important thing is that by shutting out committee, you're risking making unforced errors. You're opening yourself up to errors that don't need to be made. You remember how it felt when you had to rescind Bill 124? Remember how great that felt? Remember how you all cheered when you passed it, and then nobody was cheering when you lost it?

Use the system to its full potential. Use the Legislature to make the best legislation you can, instead of ramming through stuff you're going to regret later.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Before I go to the House leader for the third party, I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the presence of a former member of this House—

Hon. Steve Clark: A former House leader.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): —a former House leader, Mr. Yasir Naqvi from Ottawa Centre.

At this time, I will go to the House leader for the third party.

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Wow, what a surprise. We totally didn't expect a time allocation motion—obviously. We didn't know. After delaying the return to Queen's Park, we actually thought, "Well, we're going to have a really great session. We're really going to debate those bills through. But, hey, there's not going to be enough time given the few weeks that we're going to be here"—so we totally expected that. The only thing we didn't know is exactly what day. So here we are. We've been to this debate before. I could have almost written your debate notes because we did that just a few months ago, again, on a time allocation motion.

We all know that the government will say that those time allocation motions are supposed to speed up debate, but we also all know that the reality is that it's to shut down democracy. It's to prevent elected members from asking those questions you don't want to hear, from raising concerns you know about but you want to silence, and from properly consulting the people we represent.

We all know Parliament exists for a reason. We need to scrutinize debate and hold the government accountable. And when debate is cut short, that fundamental role is lost. Minority voices are silenced and opposition members are sidelined. And committees—the very bodies meant to study bills in detail, and like our colleague said, to try to make those bills the best possible—are in this case just skipped entirely.

Mr. Speaker, let's be honest: This government's actions tell a story. They delayed the return of the Legislature by several weeks, leaving key issues unaddressed and communities waiting for answers. And now that we're finally back, they immediately move to limit debate. The appearances certainly suggest that the government will do anything—just anything—to avoid the scrutiny that comes with our presence in this chamber. And who benefits from all of that? The executive. The government controls the agenda, it limits oversight and pushes through legislation without proper discussion. It's a clear power grab disguised or dressed up as efficiency.

I know that's the point you're making. We absolutely need to see those bills through as fast as possible. But democracy is not about efficiency, it's about accountability. Ontarians expect their representatives to examine laws carefully, to speak on their behalf and to hold the government to account. Rushing bills through under time allocation erodes trust and sends a clear message that the government values convenience over transparency, control over democracy.

We've seen it before, and for this government it's business as usual: major legislation forced through without due process, with communities left behind and unintended consequences that could have been prevented with proper debate, just like Bill 124, like my colleague mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, democracy is not a race. Elected representatives are not spectators. We must insist on proper debate, thorough committee review and a process that respects the voices of all Ontarians, not just the government in power.

Time allocation doesn't fail democracy; it ignores it entirely, and that's why you know that I won't be able to support this motion.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am pleased to be able to rise today to participate in this debate on the time allocation motion. Although I have to say, Speaker, I am very disappointed as well, because I had hoped to participate in third reading debate on Bill 25, Bill 30 and Bill 56 after participating in a committee hearing process where the public and experts would have been able to come and shed some light on the measures that are contained in these bills and make some recommendations and suggestions for improvements and amendments that could be brought forward and considered by this Legislature.

1600

Unfortunately, this time allocation motion prevents all that. It says that these bills are going to go directly from a vote at second reading to a very, very, very limited third

reading debate, and there shall be no public input whatsoever. This is a real concern, Speaker, because it denies the people of this province the opportunity to participate in discussions and decisions about legislation that is going to affect their lives.

In the short time I have today, I wanted to speak specifically about Bill 56 and the schedule in that bill that prohibits speed cameras, because this is an issue that is of great interest to many people in London West—people who probably would have taken the opportunity to come to Queen's Park or to sign up to participate virtually in a committee process in which this bill was considered.

It's a real missed opportunity not to be able to hear from people in London, from people across the province who had some research to share with this government about whether what they are proposing to do—in this case, in Bill 56, they're proposing to ban speed cameras. People might have wanted to come and say what they thought of that idea. And I can tell you, Speaker, from the people who have contacted my office in London West, people think it's a very bad idea, and they're basing that on the research and evidence that exists about the impact of speed cameras in other jurisdictions.

In particular, I want to recognize one of my constituents, Dr. Carrie Mitchell, who is a professor at the University of Waterloo. She has amassed an impressive body of research about the impact of speed cameras on reducing traffic accidents and injuries across the world, actually. There's global evidence from multiple jurisdictions. She might have come to this Legislature and shared with government members what this evidence shows: The decrease in crashes has ranged from 12% to 31%, depending on the jurisdiction, with most studies finding a 20% to 25% reduction in injury-related accidents because of the speed cameras.

Dr. Mitchell has collected over 5,000 signatures on a petition to call on this government not to proceed with banning speed cameras. Many of those signatories to that petition and Dr. Mitchell herself deserved an opportunity to come to this place, the people's House, and have their voices heard.

Another Londoner who would have, I'm sure, been one of the first people to sign up to participate in public input on Bill 56 is Charles Bakker. He is a Londoner, a long-time advocate for road safety, and he is also a neighbour of seven-year-old Dante Caranci, who tragically was killed when getting off the school bus a year ago, in December 2024, when he was hit by a car along Longwoods Road.

Now, Longwoods Road is a road in our community that has had constant issues around road safety and driver behaviour and constant speeding. Charles Bakker says that this government's ban on speed cameras is effectively a ban on the single traffic-calming measure that could have been safely installed on an emergency road like Longwoods Road in London. He would have liked to have come to this place and shared what he knows, both his personal experience, as a neighbour of the Caranci family, having supported that family in their unimaginable grief over the

loss of that beautiful seven-year-old boy because of a speeding motorist on Longwoods Road—and he is gathering evidence from Alberta that he would have loved to share with this government. In that province, speed cameras were banned and traffic fatalities predictably went up.

The county of Brant might have appreciated the opportunity to come and share evidence that showed a 31% drop in the percentage of people who were driving over the speed limit in those school zones after the speed cameras were installed and tickets started being issued.

I can't emphasize more strongly to this government how important it is to provide Ontarians with opportunities to participate in public input on bills that are going to have far-reaching effects throughout our province.

What a missed opportunity it is, and how strongly we feel on this side of the House, that this time allocation motion, this cutting off debate at six and a half hours at second reading, skipping committee, having a very truncated third reading debate—this is no way to participate in the democratic process. It is an affront to democracy. It is an undermining of the Westminster system upon which our Legislature is based.

I would urge the government to rethink what they're doing and ensure that we have a legislative process that actually enables the people to participate in these very important public policy decisions.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to say it's a pleasure to get up to speak to this, but it's not.

I'd also like to just say everything the opposition House leader said, times two.

It was quite enjoyable to see the government House leader feasting on his own words.

Hon. Steve Clark: I love my own words.

Mr. John Fraser: I know. You needed some conditions for that, because they were a bit dry and a bit chewy.

The reality here is, folks, we have government for a reason and we sit here for a reason: so we can talk about things. I know sometimes we don't like to listen to each other. Sometimes we say the same things again and again and again, and sometimes we do that just because the same thing has to be said again and again and again.

The Minister of Housing, who I like, has got another bill—I think we're in double digits on housing bills; I'd have to confirm that with the government House leader, but I think we're either at 10 or 11. We haven't solved the problem yet because we've gone too fast and we haven't listened to committee. Now the government wants to go even faster. They started doing this in the last session.

You're time-allocating everything. You're skipping committee. You're limiting debate.

The good news for the government House leader is, across from him is not an automated speed enforcement camera—because he would be charged with stunt driving, he's going so fast. It's totally true.

It's not funny, though, because the government is going to rip out—actually, not the government, because there's

a bunch of sensible people over there who know it's not the right thing to do. The Premier wants to rip out automated speed enforcement cameras.

Where are these cameras? In my riding, Smyth Road—Vincent Massey Public School, Hillcrest High School, Franco-Cité, all within a one-block radius. There's a camera there. Smyth Road is like a highway. We need to slow people down. It works. They put it there. It slowed down.

1610

We could just go over to Heron Road, a four-laner, another highway. Marie-Curie, an elementary school, 400 kids, beside a highway—cameras are there to protect them, to keep them safe.

Walkley Road: another French elementary school, Marius-Barbeau, a four-lane road, very fast—the camera is there. It works. It keeps kids safe.

Go to Alta Vista Drive: another automated speed enforcement camera, St. Pat's high school, Ridgemont High School, Charles H. Hulse elementary school all right together right across the street. It's there, and it works.

Here's the thing: The government is in such a hurry to do this, they're not keeping kids safe; they're not keeping seniors safe. The cameras work.

I heard the Premier say the other day that the ticket bill that he cancelled—you know, the ticket scalping speculation bill that he cancelled, and now everybody is paying way too much for tickets—was unenforceable. Well, (a) that's not right, and (b) people could say, "Well, we can't have a cop in front of every set of stop lights and stop all the red-light runners. Oh, but you know what? We could have a red-light camera, and you know that would work. We wouldn't have to have a policeman there. Those red-light cameras work, but we're not getting rid of those. We can't get rid of those."

But instead of saying, "Let's think about this. Let's go to committee. Let's listen to some of the people that the member from London West was talking about, with evidence"—how can we make these things work better? They work, folks. I realize not in every municipality because they're not always applied in a way that they should be. Thresholds, limits, where they are, what they do, where the money goes—that's the thoughtful approach. That's the approach that works when you take time to think about the thing you're trying to do. But they're in such a hurry, it's like, "We're not even going to go to committee." I hope the government House leader can pay the stunt driving fine that he's going to get—or he won't get, because there's not a camera. I'm sorry.

The other piece is sometimes you do legislation, like Working for Workers—which is not quite at double digits—but I'm not really sure the Working for Workers Act actually works for workers, because it's a lot of tinkering, and it's a lot of taking regulation and turning it into legislation and doing little things.

The defibrillators: That's good in this bill. It's a great thing, but the thing that's interesting is we needed a defibrillator bill here, and the member from Eglinton—Lawrence—who is no longer a member—the member

from Nickel Belt and myself, we all had the same bill. And we passed the member's bill from Eglinton—Lawrence to create a defibrillator registry—great idea. People are asking for it so we know where defibrillators are when there's an emergency. So, you're out on the street, something happens, somebody has cardiac arrest, and then you can go and find where the closest defibrillator is. It's a great bill, a great idea. I congratulate the former member from Eglinton—Lawrence. It got passed. It took three years—three years—to get that registry going, and it just got going last year, and it's not even fully going yet.

And now this government is in such a hurry to put them in. Why can't they—make your mind up. Just do things at a proper pace and talk about it. Listen to people. Think about it. Automated speed enforcement cameras: If you don't think they're being done right, then do them right. Don't rip them out. You've still got red-light cameras. I'm still trying to figure out the cognitive dissonance in that one, how you can say one is okay and one is not okay. I don't know who got in the Premier's ear; I don't know who got a whack of tickets. Nobody likes a ticket, but I'll tell you, they make you slow down. They work. I know people don't like it, but—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: No, they do. Respectfully, Minister, the evidence shows that they do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Please address the Chair.

Mr. John Fraser: Evidence, evidence—I know that evidence is not something that the other side is really interested in or that they want to hear. They don't want to hear it, because everything—doing this is okay. Getting rid of automated speed enforcement cameras is okay. It will make kids less safe. It's okay. It's okay, because the boss says it's okay, and whatever the boss wants, he's going to do—as long as Kory lets him do it, apparently.

Speaker, I'm going to say one last thing about how fast we're going here, because I don't want to use it up, because I know my colleagues want to have a little bit of time left on the clock.

The Working for Workers Act—I just want you to know there's been a private member's bill that I've had since 2017, and it goes back to a minister that was in our government. I've spoken to every minister about this bill. It provides workplace safety insurance for PSWs, developmental service workers and youth service workers who work in residential settings that aren't owned by the province. It's just basically who owns the thing they're doing. There could be an agency doing something in the province and they're not covered. So these are people that are vulnerable. They're doing the same work as other people who have coverage. They work multiple jobs, and they're not covered for all those jobs.

I've introduced the bill six times. I'll be debating it a third time this spring. I'm trying to make a point, that the government is not taking care of the things that are most important: the people who care for the people we care for most. This government is dragging its feet. Every minister said, "I'm going to do it." But now, we're just ripping

through and having a time allocation motion on stuff because the government doesn't want to talk about it. I've had enough.

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

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, monsieur le Président. C'est un plaisir. Écoute, depuis qu'on est revenus, c'est la première fois que je parle en Chambre. C'est tout le temps un plaisir de parler et de représenter les commettants de Mushkegowuk—Baie James.

Mais on débat la « time allocation » sur trois projets de loi—trois projets de loi que le gouvernement veut juste expédier puis avoir aucune discussion, pas de comité. Ici, ils ont encore l'attitude de dire : « Nous, on comprend plus, on est mieux placé de savoir ce qu'on fait quand ça vient aux projets de loi. »

En particulier, je veux parler du projet de loi 30, qui est le septième sur Working for Workers—le septième projet de loi. C'est la législation qui parle de travailleurs, mais qui a été conçue par des employeurs. Parce que je peux vous dire, si ça avait été conçu par des travailleurs, le projet de loi se lirait beaucoup différemment de ce qu'on voit, comme c'est là.

Puis quand ça arrive, lorsque la sécurité au travail est compromise et que la responsabilité des employeurs est insuffisante, nos travailleurs sont exposés sans avoir d'alternatives. Ce projet de loi répond en partie à ces enjeux. Mais le gouvernement peut et doit faire davantage.

Si ce gouvernement voulait réellement soutenir les travailleurs, il en ferait plus. Je peux vous dire que dans sept projets de loi Working for Workers, mes collègues et moi avons proposé des politiques concrètes pour améliorer la vie des travailleurs. Je vais vous en donner quelques-unes, parce que je peux vous dire, à chaque projet de loi qu'ils ont amené, on a amené ces points-là, parce que ce sont les points que les travailleurs demandent. C'est certain que les employeurs ne les aiment pas, mais on est ici pour représenter les travailleurs. Si on est pour mettre un titre comme Working for Workers, ça devrait refléter les valeurs des travailleurs et non des employeurs. Je pense que c'est la moindre des choses que le gouvernement devrait faire pour protéger les travailleurs.

On a proposé 10 jours de congé payé. On a vu avec la pandémie ce qui est arrivé. On a compris que, si le monde est malade, il devrait rester à la maison. On a des femmes qui sont toutes seules avec leurs enfants qui sont obligées d'aller travailler, puis d'envoyer les enfants malades aussi à—on sait que les employeurs ne veulent pas nous avoir quand on est malade. Pourquoi ? On contamine le lieu de travail. Alors, 10 jours de congé de travail, c'était la moindre des choses que le gouvernement aurait pu faire pour protéger non seulement les travailleurs, mais aussi nos enfants. Souvent, la mère est obligée d'aller travailler, ou le père qui est avec son enfant. Lui, il faut qu'il arrive, à la fin de la journée, à payer le loyer. On envoie les enfants à l'école, puis encore, les maladies se propagent.

La loi anti-briseurs de grève, « anti-scab legislation », je ne sais pas combien de fois—écoute, c'était la loi en Ontario avant. Le gouvernement NPD avait mis la loi

« anti-scab » pour une raison. Ça règle les conflits de travail plus rapidement. Qu'est-ce que les conservateurs ont fait, rendus au pouvoir ? Ils ont retiré la loi anti-briseurs de grève. Pourtant, elle était là. Pourtant, ça démontre que ça règle les conflits de travail.

Tu sais, chez nous, à Reesor Siding, il y a trois personnes qui sont mortes. On ne veut plus jamais que ça se reproduise—jamais.

1620

C'est pourquoi des lois comme ça, c'est important. Ça divise les familles. Ça divise les communautés. Des lois comme ça viennent régler certaines choses. Ça règle des conflits de travail plus rapidement. Ça met les deux parties sur le même plancher d'égalité.

La première affaire qu'ils font ? « On enlève la loi anti-briseurs de grève. » Mais ils sont pour les travailleurs, par exemple. Hé, Working for Workers, c'est le septième projet de loi. Ce n'est pas dedans, puis pourtant on l'a proposé.

L'égalité salariale : encore une autre chose qu'on amène constamment. Encore aujourd'hui, les femmes sont moins payées que les hommes. C'est irresponsable. C'est inconcevable en 2025 qu'une femme est payée moins cher qu'un homme. Ça se passe dans mon comté. Ça se passe dans tous vos comtés.

On propose du langage pour l'égalité des salaires. Ils ne le mettent pas dans le projet de loi. Pourtant, en 2025, on le reconnaît tous. On a tous des femmes dans tous nos caucus ; elles sont payées égales à chaque député. Mais pourquoi ne pas amener un projet de loi, pourquoi ne pas mettre dans le projet de loi que tous les employeurs font la même chose, que c'est illégal qu'une femme soit payée moins cher qu'un homme. En 2025—il faut le vivre, là.

Mettre fin au « deeming » de la compensation à la WSIB. « Deeming », c'est que le monde, très souvent quand ils se blessent—je ne connais pas un travailleur qui s'en va au travail puis dit : « Ce matin, moi, je m'en vais me blesser parce que je veux aller sur la compensation. » Ça, je peux vous dire qu'il n'y en a pas. Je n'en connais pas, parce qu'aujourd'hui la réalité, ce qui arrive, c'est que des personnes qui sont sur la compensation, très souvent, vivent sous le seuil de la pauvreté, et un des gros problèmes c'est le « deeming ».

Le « deeming », ça veut dire que tu vas te faire évaluer. Disons que tu te blesses. Tu as perdu un pourcentage de ton corps. Tu n'es plus capable, comme homme de métier, de faire le travail que tu faisais. Tu te fais réévaluer, puis selon ton pourcentage que tu es capable de faire, bien, tu es capable de faire ce travail-là.

Par exemple, disons que la personne se fait évaluer, puis elle peut aller comme une personne—pomper du gaz ou travailler dans un « stockroom » pour donner des pièces. Mais dans ta communauté par exemple, la job n'existe pas. « Ah, mais ça, monsieur Bourgouin, ce n'est pas de ta faute. Ce n'est pas notre faute, la compensation. Mais il y en a une à Timmins. » Moi, je demeure à Kapuskasing. Ma famille est à Kapuskasing. « Ah, ça, ce n'est pas notre problème. Si tu ne veux pas aller travailler à Timmins, on te coupe. »

Ça veut dire que M. Bourgoin, lui, il vient de perdre—c'est considérable, parce qu'ils sont supposés de te ramener à ton salaire de travail quand tu t'es blessé. Mais si tu ne veux pas aller travailler là, on te coupe. Ce que tu étais supposé avoir pour te ramener à ton salaire quand tu t'es blessé, ça, c'est coupé. Ce n'est pas la faute à Guy—pas de ma faute. La job n'existe pas à Kapuskasing; elle existe à Timmins, deux heures plus loin. « Ce n'est pas notre problème. Il y en a, une job pour toi. Va travailler. »

C'est ça que ça fait, du « deeming ». C'est pour ça qu'on voit tellement de travailleurs qui vivent sous le seuil de la pauvreté. Mais ça, on n'est pas capable de mettre ça dans un projet de loi. Pourtant, je peux vous dire que mon collègue de Sudbury, mon collègue de Niagara et moi-même, on l'a amené à multiples reprises à ce gouvernement—là—multiples reprises. Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait? Vous avez dit non. Ils n'ont pas de misère à dire si on est le parti du « non ». Mais je peux vous le dire, moi, toutes les choses que je vous dis maintenant, ils ont voté constamment contre—pas une fois, pas deux fois; on est rendu au septième projet de loi. Et là, on veut passer ça vite.

On continue : augmenter les avantages ainsi que l'indemnisation pour perte de revenu pour les travailleurs blessés. Encore, juste cette année, ils ont retourné deux milliards de dollars de la compensation aux employeurs. Il y avait un surplus.

Tu sais, il y a de quoi qu'on utilisait—moi j'ai représenté des travailleurs pendant 25 ans. On les appelait les « walking wounded ». Le monde retourne travailler parce qu'ils ne sont plus capables de survivre sur la compensation. Même s'ils ont des conditions permanentes, ils vont voir leur docteur et disent : « Signe ça. Je ne suis plus capable d'y arriver. Il faut que je fasse vivre ma famille. » Ils rentrent travailler avec des conditions permanentes.

On crée une situation où la personne va devenir invalide éventuellement. Il est presque invalide; il a perdu un pourcentage de son corps. Ça peut être 30 % ou 40 %, mais pour survivre, il est obligé de retourner travailler, malgré la perte de son corps à cause d'un accident, pour faire vivre sa famille. Mais pourtant, par exemple, le gouvernement n'a pas de problème de pogner le surplus de la compensation et puis de le retourner à l'employeur à la place d'augmenter les bénéfices de l'employé qui a été blessé. Pourtant, la compensation a été créée pour quoi? Avant ça s'appelait WC, « workers' compensation ». Aujourd'hui c'est « workers' insurance board ». Tu vois, les deux titres, il y a une grosse différence.

Là, on a des travailleurs qui devraient prendre ce deux millions-là qui était—parce qu'avant, la personne qui se blessait, le travailleur qui était blessé pouvait actionner l'employeur. Fait que, on a créé la compensation pour ne pas que le travailleur emmène en cour la compagnie. C'était bien. C'était un bon concept. Mais l'argent aurait dû être capable de revenir au travailleur.

Ça passe vite en baptême.

Fait que, ce n'est rien que pour vous dire: deux millions, et en 2017 on a retourné 20 milliards aux employeurs quand ça aurait dû être donné pour que les travailleurs

puissent survivre avec des conditions—puis faire vivre leur famille avec dignité. Mais pourtant, ils ont voté constamment—et ce ne sont que quelques exemples. Et aujourd'hui on veut passer des projets de loi sans aller en comité. C'est une honte que, le gouvernement, ils ont sur eux. Ils devraient avoir honte de passer des projets de loi comme c'est là.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: I'm rising today in deep concern—deep concern about a process that's being imposed by the government on three pretty big pieces of legislation: Building A More Competitive Economy Act, Bill 56; Working for Workers part 7, Bill 30; and the Emergency Management Modernization Act, Bill 25.

As we've heard, the government now seeks to time-allocate all three bills, to skip committee hearings altogether and to limit debate and discussion at third reading. Mr. Speaker, this is not simply a disagreement about procedure; it is a fundamental question about the health of our parliamentary democracy, the ability of a Legislature to properly scrutinize legislation and the risks that that legislation might pose to public safety and to accountability when we cut corners.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the government House leader quite eloquently tried to explain how this was not an abuse of the democratic process; that he was, in fact, using the rules set out in the democratic process to do this and everything that he's doing is by the book. He even held up the book to show us all. But of course, the greatest trick the devil ever played was convincing us that he didn't exist. Certainly, I would not ever compare my colleague to the devil, but he's certainly trying to convince people that what he's doing is normal and that we shouldn't be worried about it.

Mr. Speaker, refusing to refer these bills to committee for a full clause-by-clause review with expert witnesses, with members of the public—the government is literally shutting the door on voices that will bring lived experience. They will bring technical knowledge. They will bring safety expertise.

This is particularly true of Bill 56, which includes a number of measures that, according to the government, will cut red tape and otherwise benefit the economy. But what it really is, is a cover so that the Premier can eliminate speed cameras in Ontario. Now, I will agree that speed cameras are sometimes unpopular, and in some cases—some limited cases in Ontario—municipalities have stretched the limits of what the government policy on speed cameras was supposed to be.

But while they may be unpopular to some, they have proven to be an important part of the road safety tool kit, a tool kit designed to reduce fatalities. I think it's important to remember that the rules governing photo automated speed enforcement—these cameras—the rules governing where they can go and how they should be used were established by this government. So if this government has a problem with how municipalities are using automated speed enforcement; if they have a problem with how many

tickets their own ministers are getting, driving through speed cameras; if they have a problem with the fact that they've been caught stunt driving a couple dozen times, then they should clarify some of the rules, constrain some of the rules. They shouldn't throw out millions of dollars of hard investments that cities have spent installing these things in sensitive areas.

1630

I think to Orléans. We have speed enforcement on Watters Road in front of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic elementary school. There's one being installed as we speak here on Valin in front of Maple Ridge Elementary School. We have other automated speed enforcement cameras in front of other schools across Ottawa, and they have proven, time and time again, to reduce speeds. In some cases, compliance with speed was improved—compliance with speed quadrupled.

More notably, it led to an enormous reduction in dangerously excessive speeds. We know that if a pedestrian is hit at lower speeds, their chances of survival are higher. The same is true, obviously, if it's a vehicle-on-vehicle accident. If we can reduce the number of people who are speeding excessively—20, 25, 30 kilometres over the speed limit—then that will dramatically improve safety outcomes in our communities. Our communities are not some abstract notion, they're not some far-off place—we're talking about the streets we live on. It's our neighbours. It's the schools our kids go to. It's our nieces and nephews and, in some cases, grandkids—and, obviously, in my case, it's my kid and his friends. This should be real life to all of us.

If we can slow traffic down, we can potentially save a life. Instead, they want police sitting on the corner. They would prefer police officers, who are highly trained and skilled, who are kitted out and outfitted with hundreds of thousands of dollars of equipment, in addition to their well-deserved salary and benefits, sitting in a corner, trying to catch people who are good people, regular people, moms and dads driving their kids to school or trying to get to work, who are otherwise having a lapse of judgment or maybe a bad day. They want the cops worrying about those people instead of out on the streets, finding and catching and stopping bad guys. I would prefer cops catching real bad guys, who are intending to do real harm to our neighbours, to our friends, in our community, instead of spending their time trying to catch people who have a momentary lapse in judgment or are maybe having too rushed of a morning. We should allow technology to do that work for us.

The House leader talked about the procedural tools that he's using and that the Legislature's guide—or the standing orders—allow this to be used, but the Legislature's guide also says that “the committee may invite individuals, groups and ministry officials to comment on or answer questions about the bill in person....” By sidestepping that stage and sidestepping that opportunity, they're really stripping away a true and real opportunity for scrutiny. It demonstrates, I think, to a degree, their lack of curiosity on what people in the community are thinking.

It's a lack of curiosity about what experts might be thinking. It's a lack of curiosity about anything beyond their own small, little circle that talks to each other about whatever it is they talk about.

I want to talk about the lack of curiosity, because I believe all members of the Legislature received a gift from a former Premier. Premier McGuinty has assembled a new book of quotations and I believe has offered it as a gift to all members of the assembly. It's called *Be a Good One*. I picked it up this afternoon and I was reading through it as debate was going on, and something stood out to me: If you listen to Dalton when he's talking about his rationale for writing this book, it's to assemble a group of quotations that he thinks leaders and legislators could be helped by. He has found these quotations personally helpful, and he wanted to offer that advice to all of us as a guide to how we can all be better at doing our jobs.

I mention the government's lack of curiosity because this particular quote stuck out to me. It's by Samuel Johnson, and it's found on page 125: “Curiosity is one of the most permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect.”

Mr. Speaker, if we're going to approach these issues with intellectual honesty, whether it's about speed cameras or cutting red tape, whether it's emergency management issues or whether it's changes to the labour environment of Ontario so we can get more people working, or responding to tariffs, we want to be curious about what the options are. Otherwise, again, we're stuck with, for most of us, what is a very limited basket of information. We all have certain life experiences, career expertise, access to departmental officials, in the case of ministers. But we need to be curious about what other people are thinking, what other expertise is out there, what other options exist, especially when it comes to some of these issues. What other solutions exist across Canada, internationally? What are our friends and neighbours and partners doing that have demonstrated a degree of success?

By removing that committee opportunity from these bills, by removing that option of hearing expert testimony, the government truly is demonstrating a lack of curiosity.

As one procedural expert put it, while the rules allow the government to impose strict limits on debate—and the government House leader is relying on that convention—those rules and using that really serves as a guillotine. It's cutting off the head. It's not simply about planning time, as the House leader would like us to believe. It's deliberately compressing legislative scrutiny so that the ability of the opposition, the ability of stakeholders, the ability of citizens and, really, the ability of their own constituents to engage them meaningfully—that the ability to do that from all these groups is nullified.

We have to ask ourselves, why is this planning exercise that the House leader wants to put us through so necessary? Why is he so constrained for time?

Well, the Legislature adjourned in the first week of June, and that's normal. We normally break in June. We all go back to our ridings for the summer. Basically, when

school is out, the Legislature is not sitting. It helps with family dynamics and family planning. It also helps us talk to constituents. Normally, we would come back the Tuesday after Labour Day, when school goes back. This year, the government chose to take an extended summer adjournment—some have used another word, which starts with a V—and we didn't come back until the 19th of October. When this legislative session is over, that means that for the totality of 2025, we will have, I think, 13 sitting weeks, 14 sitting weeks out of 52.

Of course, your calendar is constrained. Of course, your time to pass legislation to address your agenda is constrained when you don't actually call the Legislature into session to debate it.

The government did do work over the summer, as some have shown us. They were very active on Facebook. I understand that all members of the government caucus needed to report back every Monday to caucus services about how many events in the community they went to and how many people they spoke to. I'm sure that allows the government to keep their members in check and keep them accountable for the work that they're doing.

1640

Of course, they also had committee, travelling Ontario through June and July, talking about pieces of legislation. And after travelling to, I think, five or six different cities and spending what I'm sure approaches \$100,000 in travel expenses and committee expenses and probably some overtime for the dedicated staff of the Legislature, government members chose to believe that the legislation put forward by the government was perfect. They made absolutely no changes after going through that consultative process. Maybe that's why they don't mind getting rid of committee for these bills: because they are perfect, Mr. Speaker. My friends, ladies and gentlemen, perfection amongst us, right here, right in front of us—everything they do is perfect. They don't need to change anything ever—until, of course, it blows up in their face, which has routinely been the case with this government: “We're going to have a housing policy, and then it's going to blow up in our face, and we're going to change it two or three months later. We're going to do this constraint on negotiating contracts with public servants, and then they're going to sue us, and we're going to lose, and it's going to cost taxpayers billions of dollars. We're going to be taken to court over and over and over again.”

I'm a child of the 1980s and 1990s. I grew up on Nintendo and Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!—if they were prize fighters, they'd be that guy, Glass Joe, at the very beginning, who is basically just the training exercise for the tough fighters that come next. They lose all the time, and it's because they don't allow for proper scrutiny. They think they're perfect, and then it blows up in their face. And it wouldn't surprise me, Mr. Speaker, whether it's about speed cameras or some of these other labour reforms that they're proposing or maybe some of those emergency measures—I'm not sure—but certainly, with the speed cameras, I think this is going to blow up in their face in a pretty big way.

Interjection.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Yes, that's exactly right.

These speed cameras, generally speaking, are going in sensitive areas. The law says they go in school zones. School zones, by their very nature, have kids. It's how kids get to school, whether it's their parents dropping them off, whether it's a school bus dropping them off or whether it's kids that are walking to school. And as this government funds education less and less, as they fund school transportation less and less, we all know that more and more kids are walking to school.

You know what? That can be really good. That can be very rewarding. It can teach kids responsibility. It can give them an opportunity to get some exercise, as long as that environment is safe. When you have people that are driving 15, 20, 30 kilometres over the speed limit past a school, that's not a particularly safe place for most kids to be out and about.

The other strange thing about that particular bill too, Mr. Speaker—and I would have really loved the opportunity to go to committee because I think, at committee, we would have heard from police chiefs from across the province that like these speed enforcement tools, like these automated enforcement tools, because it allows them to deploy officers to other more important areas of crime prevention.

But what I find most interesting about that particular piece of this particular bill is that they are putting this elimination of speed cameras into a bill that they claim is designed to make the economy more competitive. They said in second reading debate that this bill was designed to respond to tariffs. I'm not sure how the elimination of speed cameras is responding to Donald Trump's tariffs in any way other than it will allow the Premier to drive to Washington a little bit faster so that he can yet again not get any meetings with anyone who matters in the American administration. They claim that they're using this bill to build a more competitive economy, but really, you have to ask yourself, Mr. Speaker, at what cost? If the bill dilutes safety standards, then the economy isn't any stronger; it's weaker. If the citizens you're trying to protect are less safe, then we're not building a stronger economy; we're building a more dangerous community.

I urge the government to reconsider this dangerous approach, not only the dangerous approach to governance and legislation but the dangerous approach at least as it relates to the speed cameras in their red tape bill. If they are serious about public safety, if they're serious about workers' rights, if they're serious about emergency management, then they should respect the process. They should respect the feedback that they will receive from experts. They should be open to the belief that they are not perfect, that perhaps other people know a thing or two about these subjects. They should be open to making some changes so that their legislation can set us on the right path and be good for Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, they might be content being bobble-heads for the Premier. They might be content being a rubber-

stamping society for the insiders, the lobbyists and the kids in short pants that run the government. But they are not—

Mr. Ted Hsu: Kory.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Kory. I have not met Kory, but I'm told that's his name.

They might be content serving that role, but that's not the role that their constituents elected them to play here at the Legislature. I think I have faith in Ontarians—that their constituents chose them to come here and ask tough questions, to think about what they are doing and the consequences of their actions and their words and their decisions.

I hope and I believe that their constituents elected them to demonstrate a degree of curiosity: "How can we change?" "What could we improve?" "What are experts and members of the public and people who are smarter than me in the subject that we are talking about telling us is the best way forward?" I have faith that their constituents had that in mind when they put a check mark beside their names. Unfortunately, today, I don't believe that they are living up to that faith.

I think, in a couple of years—it's more than a couple of years because the Premier is about to give himself an extended mandate. We thought we were electing him on a four-year mandate, but apparently, we're going to elect him to a five-year mandate. You know who else is thinking about extending his mandate, Mr. Speaker? It just came to me. Donald Trump is thinking about extending his mandate. He's thinking about running for a little bit longer, and now the Premier is extending his own mandate—follow the leader. I guess we have a better understanding of who the Premier thinks is doing a good job or not.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I think accelerating this process—bending the rules to cut off the head, as some have said—is not the best way for us to go. We should be open to hearing from experts. We should be open to believing that we are not perfect. And certainly, the government should be open to believing they're not perfect, because their record demonstrates that they are not. We should allow for vigorous conversation at committee for experts, for members of the public, and have a vigorous third reading debate so that we can make this legislation the best we can make it.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'm rising today to speak on behalf of the residents of Ottawa West-Nepean on a motion that will put a stop to debate on three of the government's bills. It's called a time allocation motion. What this motion does is it sets aside the regular process here. It means that the point of the process where the public is able to come and give their perspective on legislation at committee is completely eliminated. The public is not going to get to come and offer the government their insights, their feedback on the government's bills at all.

It also curtails the ability of members of provincial Parliament, who are elected to represent our constituents,

to bring the voices of our constituents and share that feedback on their behalf. So this is fundamentally about removing the opportunity for the people of Ontario to have their say on this government's agenda.

Sadly, this is not the first time allocation motion that we've debated in this Parliament. In the spring, the government shut down debate on the vast majority of their agenda, including six bills that were not allowed to go to committee. One of those bills was the budget. They did not think that the people of Ontario had the right to provide any feedback or input into their financial plan for the province of Ontario.

Now they're moving it on three more bills. So I think the question "Why?" would be at the top of mind for everyone: Why would the government, who is democratically elected, not want the people of Ontario to have any say or any input into the laws that are being adopted that will apply to all of us moving forward? Why do they think people don't deserve to have a say or have any input?

Now, the government House leader said it's because the government is very confident about these bills. They're very confident that they've got it right, Speaker; that there is nothing that needs to be changed. But that kind of begs the question, then: Why wouldn't you want the victory lap? Why wouldn't you want the public to be able to come and say how amazing these bills are? What are you afraid of, if you think these bills are perfect, that there are no changes needed?

1650

The government House leader also said that it's time sensitive, that we can't delay this any further, that we have to get these passed as quickly as possible; the clock is ticking. But of course what the government House leader didn't say is that the government cancelled the first six weeks of the fall session after also cancelling a number of weeks of the spring session. So by the end of this year, Parliament will have sat for only 13 weeks, Speaker—13 weeks out of 52 weeks. That's the only amount of time that the people's elected representatives are given to come here and debate legislation on their behalf.

That doesn't sound like a time crunch to me. That sounds like an issue where the government doesn't actually want people's voices to be heard, where they don't actually want their agenda to be scrutinized by people, where they don't actually want questions to be asked and changes to be proposed. And why would they want that, Speaker? Maybe it's because they know that the public doesn't support their agenda.

I'm going to talk about one particular example in Bill 56—which is an omnibus bill, so you'd think that there should be a little extra scrutiny there—but one of the issues in this omnibus bill is speed cameras. Experts have been very clear, including experts at SickKids hospital here in Toronto, that speed cameras protect children's lives. In Ottawa, after speed cameras were introduced, compliance with speed limits in front of schools went from 16% of drivers to 81% of drivers. That is the result that we are talking about in school zones where we want our

children to be protected when they walk to school in the morning or when they're getting off the bus.

Now, my office is on Meadowlands Drive in Ottawa, and there's a school along Meadowlands, St. Gregory. So every day that I'm in Ottawa, I drive along Meadowlands and I see first-hand, Speaker, how those speed cameras work, because everybody hits the brakes as they approach that school zone. That camera is accomplishing exactly what we want it to. Drivers are slowing down where our children are crossing the street or playing next to the street. That's exactly the outcome that we want.

Two weeks ago when I was out speaking to parents at the start of the school day about Bill 33—which is another attack on the right of people in Ontario to have a say in the decisions that affect them—I met a crossing guard named Kathy. And Kathy has been at her intersection for seven years, so she's had the opportunity to see the difference between before the speed camera and after the speed camera. Kathy told me there is no doubt about it: That speed camera has made that intersection so much more safe for our children. It has slowed drivers down. It is doing what we need it to do.

It's not just parents who support the idea; it's not just community members who support the idea of having speed cameras to protect kids—it's kids. There is a 10-year-old in Ottawa, Japnam Bharaj, who is a resident of Stittsville—so in the member for Carleton's riding—who is submitting a petition asking for a speed camera in front of her school because a child was hit in her neighbourhood last year. So Japnam understands the urgency of protecting kids and the role that speed cameras can play. She is just one of millions of Ontario residents who understand that, who want to see the speed cameras because communities have spoken loud and clear.

Ottawa city council adopted a motion unanimously supporting speed cameras, and Ottawa is not the only one. A couple of weeks ago, there was a letter sent to the government by more than 20 mayors asking the government to please reconsider, and if they weren't going to continue to allow communities to make their own decisions about what safety measures are required in their community, could they at least work with communities to find a way to continue to protect kids? They suggested at least allow these cameras to operate during school hours. And you know what the government said, Speaker? The government said no—just like they said no to properly funding special education; no to mental health supports for our kids; no to our emergency plan to end school violence; no to school repairs; no to fixing the broken student transportation funding formula—which they broke, which means more kids are walking in unsafe conditions; no to addressing air quality in schools or lead in the drinking water. Because this government fundamentally does not care about the safety of our children, and they demonstrate it day after day after day.

The other thing that they do not care about is the right of people in Ontario, of communities, to have a say in the decisions that affect us, whether those decisions are about what is happening in our local schools—which Bill 33 is

attacking, shutting out community voices—or whether that is their fiscal agenda for the province with the budget, which addresses really every corner of policy for this province. They don't think we deserve a say in that.

Bill 56 deliberately ignores the voices of communities that are saying, "Please allow us to continue to use this safety tool. Trust us to know what we need to do to keep people safe in our community." They are ignoring that voice. And now this time allocation motion is shutting out community voices altogether. It is not allowing people to say, "Here's how this legislation will impact me. Here's why that's a concern. Here are ways that we could do that better. Here are things you might not have thought of. Here are ways that we can work together to adopt the strongest possible rules and policies for Ontario, that we can make sure we have programs that support and benefit everyone." They don't want to hear that, Speaker.

So I just have to ask—I know that the 2025 version of the government House leader is not at all concerned about this—the other members of the government caucus: If this is how the government will react about the right of communities to have a say about the safety of our kids, about the policies and programs and people who support our kids every single day—if they will shut down the rights of parents and communities to have a say in those decisions, then what will they shut down on next?

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: It saddens me. It saddens me today to have to rise in the chamber and say—especially in front of the young pages—that this government wants to make the Ontario Legislature irrelevant.

Now they keep the elected MPPs away. If, by the end of this sitting, the one and a half years since June 2024, we'll only have sat here 20 weeks discussing the people's business—20 weeks in one and a half years. This government wants to keep us away. And when we are here, they want to rush us. And now, today, we're debating a motion which would mean that three government bills whose importance has been discussed by my honourable colleagues here—three government bills are not going to go through committee stage. This is something we teach kids: second reading when we debate the principle, we go to committee, we look at things in detail, we call witnesses from the wider community, we ask them questions, we have a dialogue. Then we go through line by line, make sure all the details are right—and, as my honourable colleague from Orléans pointed out, we do find mistakes. But apparently, the government doesn't want us to find the mistakes, so they want to skip committee stage.

This is the place where we look for unintended consequences. We look for drafting errors. But more importantly, we hear from the people. It reminds me of something that my former colleague and somebody I'm very honoured to call a friend, Irwin Cotler, said in his farewell speech in the House of Commons. He told the story of when he was brought to the House of Commons by his own father, and his father said, "This is vox populi." This is the place where the people have their voice. And they

get to address the people in power with how they feel and what detail they want to add to the laws that are being constructed in this in this place.

We should have some reverence for this institution. I was taught that by a couple of people who I really want to mention because I'm in this mood of wanting to emphasize that we should be reverent about this institution of Parliament. And that's Peter Milliken, the former Speaker—the longest-serving Speaker in the House of Commons—and another scholar, Ned Franks in Kingston, who was a scholar of Parliament, who thought about how Parliament should operate and how it could work better.

I think one of the things that should be pointed out about Parliament is that if you look back through many, many centuries, the Westminster parliamentary system has something that has given our society a lot of stability—not just over one or two generations, but for centuries. We have a lot to thank for this system of accountability to elected representatives, government accountability, accountability to the Crown, to elected representatives, that has given us strong and stable societies for many, many centuries. We shouldn't throw that away lightly. That's what this government is doing, Speaker: It is throwing away, bit by bit, this treasure that we have in our parliamentary system. It wants to make the Ontario Legislature irrelevant by keeping away elected MPPs, by preventing them from bringing the voices of the people and, in particular, looking at the details of government legislation in committee.

1700

That's what we're discussing today. We're discussing whether we should consider this Parliament, this parliamentary system that we have, precious or not. I think that in itself should be enough to make any member who has gone through the time and energy to get elected here and to travel here and to work here—we all work hard, but this is an important institution and we need to be here to do the people's business, to be the voice of the people. And this government doesn't believe that this place is relevant or that this system deserves reverence.

I think I wanted to summarize things in that way, summarize the debate here in that way, because we are debating something important. I first served in Parliament in the House of Commons in 2011. I can see our democratic systems deteriorating over the years, and I don't want it to get worse. That's why I'm taking the time to speak today, Speaker.

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

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thirty seconds. I wondered why: Why would the government go to all this trouble to do this? I finally figured it out. They don't want police chiefs to come to committee and testify in favour of speed cameras. That would be a very difficult thing to explain to the people of Ontario.

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

Mr. Clark has moved government notice of motion number 7, relating to allocation of time on the following

bills: Bill 30, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters; Bill 56, An Act to amend various Acts, and; Bill 25, An Act to make statutory amendments respecting emergency management and authorizing enforceable directives to specified entities providing publicly-funded community and social services.

Is it the pleasure of this 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.

Vote deferred.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS ACT, 2025

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 28, 2025, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Mississauga–Malton.

Interjection.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, House leader. Thank you for that kind compliment. I hope you keep doing it.

In the previous time when I was talking about my remarks, I talked mostly about the colleges and universities. I quickly want to touch base in this session about what we are doing in Bill 33 subject to the Ministry of Education. The number one thing in this bill is about school board accountability. As you know, Speaker, parents deserve confidence that school boards are making decisions in the best interests of their children's education. When we look at the schools, school boards and their education, the key component of the whole thing is our kids, our students, and absolutely, the caregivers who are taking care of those students are important. The educators, the staff, the administrators who are taking care of those students are absolutely important as well. So that's why we are strengthening accountability and transparency across Ontario's education system, to ensure that every dollar invested delivers real results for students.

I'll give you a small example. I do remember, when my son was in grade 7, he went to the University of Toronto Schools, UTS, and had his camp. We actually paid about \$2,000. Parents and teacher conversation—we went there and we had a couple of other parents there. One of the parents asked his kid, "How was it? How was the camp?" Before the student could even answer, the teacher jumped

in and said, “Oh, it’s not about anything, but didn’t you have fun?” The caregiver didn’t say anything at that moment in front of the teacher, but as soon as the teacher left, he looked at me and he goes, “I make \$20 an hour. I paid \$2,000. I didn’t send my kid to have fun, because I worked over 100 hours,” and if you consider the income tax, it probably was 150 hours. Yes, when we send our children, our parents, our caregivers, even our educators, they want a little bit of fun, but at the same time, they want them to be educated.

So Speaker, it is very important to understand that the measures build on previous actions to improve governance, enforce compliance and focus school boards on what matters most: supporting students, parents and the educators. We are making it clear that the school boards must put students first—not politics, not bureaucracy—and that we will act decisively when they fall short of their responsibility. That’s what we’re doing through this bill.

Another thing, Speaker, the wedge issue, especially in the region of Peel—I’m talking about student resource officers. I got calls from both sides. We had some of the advocacy groups saying, “Well, some of our children do not like the police officers coming to the school.” On the other side, there were a lot of parents saying, “We want those police officers coming to the school.” In a greater good, I feel that the issue here is those who wanted the police officers were concerned about the safety and the security and what’s going on with the violence in the school, and they wanted their children to be safe. At the same time, those who didn’t want it, they had no bad intentions, but it’s just that they were more concerned about the impact these children sometimes might have when these police officers come to the school. I think this is where this government comes in and says, “Let’s work together.” Let’s work together with the police services through the student resource officers. That will help build relationships between youth and police, actively promoting positive behaviour and creating a culture of mutual respect that will help keep our students safe. That’s what we’re doing through this bill.

It’s not just the ministry saying it. There was a survey done at Toronto District School Board. I just want to share a few of those outcomes, Speaker:

- 94% of students either felt SROs in their school are trustworthy, or didn’t have an opinion;

- 95% of the students either felt SROs are helpful, or didn’t have an opinion, but they were not against it;

- 90% of the students felt SROs in their school made them safer, or didn’t have an opinion, or in other words, they were not against it; and

- 93% of the students either wanted the SRO program to continue, or didn’t have an opinion, which means they were not against it.

This data actually shows, as well, that this program is something which they’re not against and it will be nice to have it back. Yes, there was some objection, and if we can work together collaboratively, we can solve those issues.

Another thing in this bill we have, which is extremely important—I really like it—is volunteerism and Ontario

Day. When I see a lot of the rewards and awards—think about it. It’s not that the people want those awards. They don’t do things to get the award, but when they do good things, they get awarded. Many times, the benefit of those awards is that other people watching them look at them and get the feeling that it’s a great idea, and they tend to work hard and give back and get awarded as well.

1710

So through this bill, the minister is going to recognize all the children who are going to do more than 50 hours; they will give a certificate of recognition. And that, Speaker, will help them when they are applying for the universities. They can showcase the hard work they’ve done. They’ve given back to society.

To conclude, Speaker, I want to emphasize that this bill—whether it’s research, security, whether it is working in the universities or supporting our education, we are here to make a record-setting investment in our post-secondary research sectors and support our education system.

As our province continues to grow and prosper, our government is doing whatever it takes to protect Ontario, whatever it takes to support our students. This is a bill that is good news for all. I urge all my members on both sides: Let’s come together, support and build a better, stronger Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I heard the member from Mississauga—Malton say that he considers our kids important and our teachers and education workers important, which I fundamentally agree with and I was glad to hear that from the member.

But the member did not acknowledge that our kids are suffering right now from more than \$6 billion taken out of our education system, large class sizes, staff shortages, the lack of mental health professionals, a violence crisis, crumbling schools. And the member also didn’t acknowledge that the supervisors that his government has appointed are already harming our kids and our education workers, increasing class sizes for the most vulnerable kids, eliminating programs, telling workers that they are coming for negotiated benefits instead of actually respecting the fact that that’s how we negotiate compensation in this province.

So how can the member support this legislation and support attacking the rights of communities to have a say if he supports our kids and the best interest of our kids and our education workers?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Speaker, I have two children, and I know children are our future, so that’s why it is very important to invest in our students.

The member opposite talked about education funding. This is something which we actually hear about all the time—as usual, the opposition is completely ignoring the facts. Every year, for example—I’m just going to give the data—our government has been in office, we have increased education funding each year, year by year.

Let’s take an example: We have increased per-pupil funding by more than 23%. We have increased special education funding by 36%. And you don’t have to take my

words, you can take the words from the C.D. Howe Institute, which talks about this.

Speaker, while the opposition is focused on playing games, this side of the government is going to continue to work, to serve and support our students.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Next question?

Mr. Lorne Coe: You'll know that we're currently in the midst of an affordability crisis. While this has had a profound impact on the majority of Ontarians, the burden may fall even greater on our students and their families as they plan for the future in post-secondary education.

Now, under the previous Liberal government, Ontario had the highest university tuition fees in Canada for undergraduate students, which created significant financial barriers to accessing world-class post-secondary institutions. Under the leadership of Premier Ford and the government, we've held that tuition cost. This has resulted in greater accessibility, cost savings and better planning for students and families in the region of Durham. However, when students are planning for post-secondary, they deserve to know where their fees are going.

I'd like to ask the member for Mississauga—Malton, how will greater fee transparency and student choice benefit students in Ontario and their families?

Mr. Deepak Anand: First of all, I want to say thank you to the member from Whitby for the great work he's doing as a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

The member said it so well. That's right: Fee transparency is very important. I meet a lot of parents, and especially with the tough time that we are going through, whether the students are paying themselves or they're using OSAP or their parents are supporting them, hard-working students and families deserve to know where their fees are going. So that is why, if passed, this bill will ensure that the fees students and families pay are clear, transparent and in support of receiving an excellent education.

Last year we took action to make sure that the cost of textbooks and other material was accessible for and transparent for students and their families. Our government was elected because we—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I listened carefully, but I didn't hear the member from Mississauga—Malton talk at all about the fact that this government has cut funding for post-secondary institutions, and they have not provided support for our students who are facing not only the incredibly challenging costs of tuition, but also of housing and the increasing cost of groceries all the time.

We know that there are many students who are struggling just to make ends meet. And instead of actually making investments into post-secondary education that would allow them to reduce tuition and turn loans into grants, or to actually make housing affordable to young people at reasonable rates—and especially decent housing—what this government is doing is actually attacking the

food banks and other services that are provided by students.

Why on earth does the member think it's okay to take away student-provided food banks from students who are suffering because of this government's policies?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Again, a big contrast—I mean, we're so thankful to our students. I talked about them in my previous remarks as well. There are over 500,000 students out there in the colleges and universities, and they're the leaders; they're the future of our province.

And we're actually making more funding than last year. We're making historic investments—\$5 billion. We have recently invested close to \$750 million on research.

Speaker, I have to share with you: I had the opportunity to visit Velocity, I had the opportunity to visit McMaster, and everywhere I went, I noticed and I felt we have such wonderful students doing amazing research and building a better, stronger Ontario.

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

MPP Tyler Watt: Let's talk about this government's record on post-secondary. It's part of the reason why I'm here today, actually. In 2018, I was a part of those hundreds of millions of dollars of cuts that was made to OSAP, the cancelling of the free tuition program for low-income and mature students. When I was going back to nursing school to become a nurse and help out our patient population, this government came in and cut post-secondary education like we've never seen before.

How can we trust this government to actually deal with our post-secondary education system while scapegoating students and continuing to severely underfund our colleges and universities?

Mr. Deepak Anand: I would say again that I love to share the data, and thankfully, on November 6, there's a fall economic statement that's going to come and it's going to give you the current data as well.

But until that time—we don't have the data—let's look at the data which we have. This government has spent over \$5 billion annually to publicly assisted colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes through operating and capital grants, which is the highest so far. In February 2024, the ministry invested \$1.3 billion to stabilize and modernize the post-secondary sector. We've spent \$750 million over five years to fund approximately 20,500 STEM seats annually.

Speaker, our youth are our future, and this government will not take any chance, and will invest and keep investing in our future, our youth, our students. I'm so proud of this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Whitby.

1720

Mr. Lorne Coe: As the government is making strategic investments into the post-secondary education sector to power Ontario's future workforce, we must also continue to ensure that our publicly assisted institutions, whether it's Ontario Tech or Trent Durham in my riding, are getting the most qualified students. Ontario's students and

families sacrifice money, time and emotional stress when applying to post-secondary institutions. When they make that commitment to studying at one of the world-class institutions like Ontario Tech, they should be provided better clarity on the admissions process.

Speaker, through you, how will schools publishing their merit-based admissions policy improve our post-secondary education system—to the great member from Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you to the member from Whitby for the wonderful question, and something which you know as a parent, as a student, all we're concerned is always about—going to the university or college is not just taking an education; it is a tool to be successful and give back to the society in the future.

Speaker, that's why this government believes that merit-based admission is important and every prospective student in Ontario looking to better themselves through education deserves to understand what they are being evaluated against.

This bill will ensure students and their families have a clear understanding for the admittance criteria and we'll be consulting on the best path forward for expectations around transparency as to why and why not they were admitted. We have a government who is working for the people of Ontario to build a stronger Ontario.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Before I start my debate, I would like to express that I'm going to share my time with the member from Oshawa.

Speaker, I rise today to speak on Bill 33, a bill that claims to support children and students, but when you look at it closely, it does neither. For Ontario's post-secondary students, this bill is not about support; it's about control—political control over our universities and colleges, over student voices, and over academic freedoms itself.

We've seen this story before. When things get tough, this government doesn't invest; it interferes. They centralize power, they silence dissent and they try to manage by decree. Now, they are extending the same playbook to our post-secondary system, a system that's already stretched to the breaking point.

Schedule 3 of this bill might be one of the most heavy-handed power grabs we have ever seen in Ontario's post-secondary education. It gives the government the power to dictate how universities admit students, what fees they can collect and how they manage their own research programs.

Speaker, Ontario's university is supposed to be independent, and that isn't trivial. It's a principle. Autonomy protects academic freedom, it protects fairness and it protects students from political interference.

Every stakeholder in the sector has said the same thing: The problem isn't governance; it's funding. And let's state the facts, Speaker. Ontario has the lowest per-student funding in the country. For decades, governments have let our colleges and universities fall further and further behind. Today, Ontario funds only about half of what other provinces spend per student. That chronic underfunding

means institutions are cutting programs, laying off staff and hiking tuition just to keep the lights on. Some smaller campuses are facing closure. And instead of fixing that, what does this government do? It introduces a bill that gives it sweeping powers to regulate fees, admissions, and even research as though micromanagement was somehow going to fill a \$1.2-billion funding gap.

Speaker, you can't fix a crisis of underfunding by tightening the leash. One of the most dangerous parts of Bill 33 is the section giving the minister the power to decide which student fees are allowed and which are not. These aren't random fees. They fund the programs that keep students fed, safe and connected: food banks, mental health supports, legal clinics, club campuses, newspapers, sexual violence prevention programs. At the University of Guelph, those fees support student-run food banks that feed hundreds of students every month. At other campuses, they keep safe walking programs and peer-support networks alive.

These are not luxuries; they are lifelines. But this bill would let governments decide which ones survive. It's not about giving students choice; it's about silencing the organizations that advocate for students. This government tried the same scheme in 2019 with the Students Choice Initiative which the courts struck down for violating university autonomy. Speaker, if something was not constitutional in 2019, it doesn't magically become constitutional in 2025. The Ford government is setting itself up for yet another lawsuit that will cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

Ontario's universities and colleges have always operated on the principle of autonomy—that academic and administrative decision should be made by experts and committees, not politicians. That independence protects research, teaching and student life from political whims. Bill 33 tears a hole in that wall and hands the government the power to define which student fees are permissible, to relegate admissions criteria and to demand compliance with whatever directives the minister sees fit. This isn't just bureaucratic meddling, it's a direct attack on the ability of post-secondary institutions—and the students who run services on those campuses—to govern themselves.

And then there is the new requirement for so-called merit-based admissions. Speaker, Ontario's universities already admit students based on merit. Grades, portfolios, interviews, experience are all used to judge admissions—that's the system we already have and use. So what is the point of this new clause? It is a political signal. It is a signal to roll back the equity-based admissions, the very programs that help open doors for Indigenous, Black, racialized, disabled and first-generation students.

The bill gives the minister power to define "merit" by regulation, without saying what that means. That's dangerous because when you start redefining merit narrowly—when you strip out lived experience, community leadership or other barriers people face—you turn equity into exclusion.

Speaker, fairness doesn't mean pretending everyone begins at the starting line. Fairness means making sure

everyone has a fair chance to reach the finish line. Experts have warned that vague language like this is a backdoor attack on inclusion—and it's unnecessary. Our admissions systems already combine academic standards with fairness and transparency. This isn't reform; it's rhetoric—imported from the United States where merit has become a political weapon. We don't need that in Ontario.

Bill 33 also gives the minister new powers over university and college research security plans. Of course, research security is important—no one disputes that—but this bill goes far beyond ensuring safety. It allows the minister to dictate what those plans must include, when they must be updated and what topics must be addressed.

That means that the government could effectively decide what kinds of research are prioritized or restricted. Giving the minister sweeping powers to decide what kinds of research plans are acceptable could easily spill into deciding what kinds of research are allowed. That's not how academic freedom works. We already have federal systems in place to ensure research integrity and security. The last thing our universities need is political micro-management of what ideas are worth studying.

When governments start controlling research, we lose innovation, we lose credibility and we lose trust. Speaker, academic freedom isn't just a nice idea—it's the foundation of credible scholarship. Once politicians start setting the boundaries of acceptable research, we risk losing the creativity and the independence that make our institutions world-class.

All of this might sound abstract—admissions, criteria, free regulations, research plans—but the human cost is very real. Students are already choosing between rent and groceries. They are lining up at campus food banks that are now at risk. They are trying to learn while working two, sometimes three, jobs because tuition keeps rising and wages don't. Now they are being told that the supports they built for themselves—by students, for students—could disappear at the stroke of the minister's pen. That's what is at stake.

So when this government claims it's supporting students, let's remember what support actually looks like: stable public funding, affordable tuition, mental health resources, safe and inclusive campuses. And none of that is in this bill.

It's not lost on anyone that this bill also expands the minister's power over school boards. It's part of a larger pattern of a government obsessed with control. This is a government that doesn't trust local democracy, academic expertise or community voices. And every time someone pushes back—students, parents, trustees, professors—the answer is the same: "We know best." That's not leadership. That is arrogance.

1730

If this government truly wanted to support students, it would:

- reverse the cuts and invest in stable, predictable post-secondary funding;
- protect, not politicize, student services;

—strengthen equity-based admissions, not undermine them;

—support mental health and housing programs that keep students in school; and

—above all, trust students and educators to run their own institutions.

What students need isn't more control from Queen's Park. They need access, affordability and respect.

Speaker, our schools and universities are not enemies to be managed. They are communities to be nurtured. Bill 33 isn't about transparency or accountability. It's about replacing care with control—control over institutions, over students, and over the spaces where innovation and ideas take root.

The Ontario NDP will always stand with students—the ones who organize, who advocate, who feed each other, and who fight for fairness. We will stand with our professors, our researchers and our campus workers who keep the institutions running under this impossible strain. And we will oppose this bill, because education should be about opportunity, not obedience.

Ontario's students deserve better than this bill. I hope this government will take a second look and decide on what actually needs to be done to allow the school systems to thrive.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am glad to be able to add my voice on the debate on Bill 33, the Supporting Children and Students Act—if only that had anything to do with this piece of legislation. This is an attack on trustees and the rights of parents to access their elected local representatives when it comes to their children and their education. This bill from this Premier remains a dangerous power grab that threatens our schools, campuses and communities. It centralizes control in the Premier's office, it undermines local democracy, and it risks cutting the very student services and classroom supports that keep young people safe and supported.

Speaker, I will say that, drawing from the many years I spent as a classroom teacher, I know that at that time, we were on a downward trend in terms of having the resources that were needed, and it has only gotten worse. All of us in this room, regardless of party, have inboxes that are full and overflowing from communities that are very concerned about this piece of legislation.

This bill gives the minister ultimate authority over school boards, which are democratically elected in their local communities. I would like to know why the minister is seeking to remove those local voices.

This government has cut funding by \$1,500 per student, leading to many school boards reporting deficits or cutting programming. Are there any measures in this bill to provide adequate funding to our schools? No, there are not.

The Minister of Education seems to resent that there are layers of democracy that he can't control. Actually, I don't know what is driving him, but that's how it appears. It's

another weird government vendetta bill, and it's getting tired, but it's also getting worse.

This is not helping students. This is not helping communities. There's nothing in this bill about fixing our crumbling schools or putting more caring adults in classrooms or making sure that our kids have what they need to succeed. Instead, they're focused on locking parents out of being able to have a say about their kids' education.

The government's recommendations ignore the real concerns raised by students, parents and local communities, and destroy the ability of our school boards to listen to their communities and prioritize safety through care.

This bill does nothing to fix the \$6.35-billion funding gap created by this government. The bill tries to mask chronic underfunding with control, interference and political spin, where post-secondary students are paying the price. I'll tell you, what students need is not more control from Queen's Park.

This is not about fairness. This is about distraction. It gives the Minister of Education the power to appoint whoever he wants wherever he wants in our education system. It takes the voice of parents and local communities away and does nothing to address the funding shortfalls in our schools.

I want to say, as an MPP, like all of my colleagues, we have built relationships with local trustees. When we can't solve a problem, chances are it's because of the chronic underfunding and those trustees are not able to solve the problem, because it is bigger than the trustees. So pointing fingers at trustees is nonsense.

Speaker, I would like to share from the Durham Region Labour Council. They've been very active. Lord knows I've been getting a whole bunch of emails. Thank you so much for your activism. But from them, they have said, "Bill 33 isn't limited to K-12 schools. It also extends the government's control over universities and colleges—from student fees to admissions and even research oversight. It threatens campus services, academic freedom, and equity in higher education.

"Across all levels, this bill is part of a broader agenda to silence local voices and centralize power. It's about control, not improvement." Yes. So many folks are concerned about this.

We've already talked about, in post-secondary education—we're at the bottom of the barrel in terms of per-student funding. In this fine country that everybody is excited about talking about how strong we are, we are putting all of our students at a disadvantage. It used to be that health care and education helped to build our country and strengthen our workforce, but this government is so glad to keep the funding so low that we are at the bottom of all of the provinces in the country by a long shot. I think there are two North American jurisdictions that are lower than we are in per-student funding. It's like Alabama and—anybody? Anyway, I'll get back to you. But Alabama, suffice it to say—no offence to Alabama, but we would like to be at the top in North America, at the top of the country—even halfway up the pile. But no, here we are at the bottom. But I digress.

Speaker, so many folks have been writing in, demanding that this government reverse course and stop the attack on trustees. I want to read here from Joel Smith, who wrote in: "I'm writing with concerns about Bill 33 and the Minister of Education's comments about eliminating elected school boards....

"We recognize that school boards are struggling after years of chronic provincial underfunding, and that every dollar should go to supporting students.... Replacing elected trustees with hand-picked, government-appointed supervisors who lack education experience is alarming. Such action also lays the path for further cuts to student supports and services that will negatively impact learning and well-being.... Decisions regarding police involvement in schools should be made in consultation with all local voices, including parents, students, community members, and organizations led by local school boards, not mandated by the provincial government.

"Trustees must be free to do their jobs without interference. School boards need adequate and stable funding to support students and educators. Ontario's local school board governance model must be upheld.

"Trustees are elected to represent our communities. They know our local needs and are best positioned to advocate for students and public education, and they are accountable to the communities they serve."

Thank you, Joel, for your thoughtful letter.

Lisa Bowman writes in—and by the way, we're all getting letters, Speaker. It's not just me.

Lisa says, "Everything we're proud of—as Ontarians and as Canadians—starts in our classrooms. But Bill 33 puts that at risk. Instead of addressing what students really need to succeed, this legislation hands the government sweeping powers to override school boards and seize control under vague 'public interest' claims.

"Stripping locally elected trustees of their role silences parents and communities—the very people who keep our schools strong—making it harder for people like me to voice my opinion and ask for help....

"Our students don't need more centralized control in the backrooms at Queen's Park in downtown Toronto. They need smaller class sizes, more one-on-one time with their teachers, and real and sustained investment in our publicly funded schools."

Hear, hear. Thank you, Lisa.

Durham District School Board and the DCDSB have put out statements in support of their very hard-working trustees. They value the work that they do. Everybody in the community knows that they need more access, not less.

If this government goes through with getting rid of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, or OPSBA, then they're mucking with bargaining: "Bill 33 would ... reshape how Ontario's education workers negotiate and enforce their rights."

As the Durham Region Labour Council pointed out, rightly, "If trustees are eliminated, OPSBA disappears—and with it, the voice of local boards at the bargaining table. Centralized bargaining could replace local negotiations entirely, with Queen's Park imposing one-size-fits-

all decisions.” This is not okay. This is not how we make things better.

Speaker, here from durhamregion.com, an article: “‘A Direct Threat’: Durham Teachers Slam Ontario Government’s Bill 33, Warning It Could Lower Education Quality, End Local Representation.”

1740

I was a proud ETFO member for a very long time before I was elected, or up until I was elected. This is from new President David Mastin of ETFO: “There is widespread concern about the erosion of local representation. Eliminating elected trustees is not just a bureaucratic shift—it’s a direct attack on democratic governance. It centralizes power, undermines equity, silences marginalized voices, harms students and strips communities of their right to shape public education. This is a dismantling of democracy in real time.” Yes, it is.

Mr. Mastin goes on to say, “The elimination of local trustees is a direct threat to Ontario’s public education system. As the impact of the Ford government’s cuts to public education continues to be felt by students across the province, without elected trustees, parents and families will be left with nobody to turn to.”

This doesn’t make things better. This doesn’t even make sense. Ontario schools have been struggling in terms of class sizes, in terms of an increase in classroom violence. The NDP has put forward a thoughtful plan, the emergency safe schools plan, to help keep kids safe, and that is created in coordination with workers in the sector.

Speaker, I remember 10 years ago—I’ve been here 11 years, but it was early on, a decade or so ago—when I was raising in committee about Kevlar in schools and how much the government was spending, and what we were doing to support teachers. The government of the day at that time—I think it was not this government—had no idea what was going on. This government, even less do they realize what is going on in the schools. But this bill? It’s not making things better; it’s making things worse. Shame on you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Lorne Coe: The members opposite called Bill 33 an overreach, yet it simply allows investigations where there’s a matter of public interest. It lets the minister issue directions, or if necessary, assume control when boards won’t fix problems.

We’ve seen what happens without that oversight. Some boards have spent tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars on luxury trips abroad or bought seats to Blue Jays games. Others have burned millions of dollars on lawsuits and internal investigations over trustee misconduct—money that should have gone to classrooms, not courtrooms.

What does the member from Oshawa believe? That school board trustees should be above basic accountability?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It is so interesting to have a government member ask about accountability or talk about expensive tickets or misuse of public funds, when we have been standing here for the past week and a half talking about the Minister of Labour and what this government

feels is appropriate use of funds. But anyway, this is a bill that is trying to mask chronic underfunding with political spin and interference.

The member’s question about trustees—I’ll answer that. Trustees ought to be accountable, which means they have to be accessible. Right now, they are elected by their neighbours. They are findable. If this government gets rid of them, then people will have to track down the illustrious Minister of Education, or whoever replaces him, in order to have their questions answered. That is not accountability. That is a weird vendetta that is not going to make things better.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to both my colleagues for their speech. I have a question for the member for Oshawa, who talked about the chronic underfunding of our schools.

This bill seems to be a distraction from that, pointing out a handful of individuals with expenses, which is ironic because we had the Minister of Labour go to Paris for a wedding; we had one of the members opposite go to Vegas for a massage. We’ve had the Minister of Labour get floor seats to a Leafs game and raise a record number of money by people who were rewarded with skills development funding. So if you want to hold people accountable, you might want to buy yourself a mirror.

But Speaker, I’m trying to understand: What does adequate funding for our school boards mean for the students? To the member for Oshawa, who was a teacher and would understand, first-hand.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Though I don’t know that I can speak to it first-hand anymore—it’s been 11 years—I still listen and know how bad it was at the time. I know that class sizes have not gotten smaller. I know that there are not more caring adults in the classroom. I know that there are a number of students who have been told that they have to stay home because there aren’t supports at the school for them, that this government is allowing that to happen, that it’s gotten so much worse.

This government needs to fund education appropriately and not rely on teachers and education workers to spend their own personal money to offset these cuts. I feel sick to my stomach when they talk about how much they’re investing in education. It isn’t enough, and it’s not keeping up with the cost, whether it’s capital investment that’s needed—the crumbling infrastructure—whether it’s—yes, the cost of providing services like education goes up year over year. So do groceries, right? They’re not investing enough. They need to invest in education, invest in our kids, and invest in this province’s future.

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

MPP Paul Vickers: I find it interesting that the member from Oshawa talks about letting the constituents decide who’s going to be the new trustees, or that is going to be re-elected as trustees, when most of the time I would declare that there are no elections for board trustees. There’s very little interest in the board trustees.

So I think it's important that students and parents and teachers deserve to know that money being invested into the classroom is actually going to support students. Bill 33 adds ministry auditors and strengthens internal audit requirements for boards.

Mr. Speaker, which part of more auditing of public dollars does member opposite oppose?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: The beginning of the member's question about his concerns with letting constituents vote for local trustees makes me feel really nervous. If that is an indicator of how this government sees a layer of democracy: duly elected trustees.

Is it a perfect system? No. Do we in Oshawa have really active and accessible trustees? Yes, we do. And if that's an anomaly, or if that's not what he has in his riding, then we should all be encouraging people to seek out their trustees. We should be funding education so that those trustees actually can reach for tools to improve our schools.

But he's asked about auditing. We all want to make sure that dollars go where they're supposed to, but how about you actually spend the dollars in the first place to meet the needs that everyone interested in education, except for this government, has flagged as being priorities. Spend the money.

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

Mr. Tom Rakocovic: That was a very confusing government question. I just want to remind the government member that there are these things called municipal elections and trustees get elected at that time. And I don't know if it's different in different parts of the province or—anyway, I don't want to even go there. I already did.

Since they've now appointed someone to take over, for instance, the TDSB, we are seeing classrooms with three grades in one class. And then we hear from the government about financial accountability—a government that's put Ontario at \$150 billion in debt and counting; a government that has sold Ontario Place, but actually it's spent \$2 billion to get back \$1 billion over 95 years.

Anyway, why do they have two sets of standards when it comes to this? I don't understand.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I can't be expected to answer for them. I have no idea what they're doing. I feel like this bill is a perfect example of something that is not solving a problem that has been identified by experts in the field.

This whole concept of a supervisor of a board that we're seeing in a few of the boards—let's just think about the workload of that one individual versus the trustees. I've been asked earlier about an audit. The audit committee or parent involvement committee, special education advisory committee, the supervised alternative learning committee, suspension appeal committee, expulsion appeal committee: These are things that are in addition to the meetings that people can go and attend, right? This is in addition to the trustees answering their phones and doing the work in the community.

1750

The government has not solved a problem. They've created new layers of problem in this province for education. I can't speak to why—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further questions, please.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Okay. But I will in the next question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Well, thank you, Speaker. My question is to the member from Oshawa. When it comes to keeping our schools safe, early intervention is key, and we've learned that. That's why youth engagement and any gang initiatives delivered by school resource officers are so critical. These programs aren't about policing students; they're about building trust, preventing violence and ensuring that law enforcement can form positive relationships with young people before problems even arise. Bill 33 strengthens that partnership—it does.

It's not about turning schools into prisons. It's about making sure every student and teacher feels safe, supported and, yes, respected. Does the member opposite support the important, proactive work that police officers like the Durham Regional Police Service do every day to keep our schools safe?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I hope nobody is talking about turning our schools into prisons. That felt weird.

I'm going to read part of that letter that I already read from Mr. Smith: "Decisions regarding police involvement in schools should be made in consultation with all local voices, including parents, students, community members and organizations led by local school boards, not mandated by the provincial government."

That was from a letter that came in, and I think that it's part of that broader conversation around policing in our schools. But if he's going to talk about best outcomes and early interventions, then let's talk about therapies in school and the children with special needs who are not getting anything that they need to support them. Let's invest in them. That's an early intervention.

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

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'm very pleased to be here today to debate Bill 33. This bill is not about students, it's not about parents and it's not about governance. This government offers no lessons on governance, Speaker.

A reminder of what the Auditor General has had to say about the practices of this government: On the \$8-billion secret Greenbelt land giveaway, she said, "The exercise to change the Greenbelt boundaries in Fall 2022 cannot be described as a standard or defensible process." They gave preferential treatment to certain developers with direct access to the chief of staff to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

On the \$2.5 billion spent on Ontario Place, where a 99-year lease was handed to a foreign-owned spa with a murky financial background—this is what the AG said about that: The process and decisions were "not fair, transparent or accountable," and further concluded that

there were many instances where the rules and guidelines outlined in the call for development document were not followed.

And of course, there's the latest, greatest hit that we've been discussing this morning, the Skills Development Fund, where once again the Auditor General cited a process that was neither fair, transparent nor accountable, as her office found over half the funds went to lower-ranked applicants hand-picked by the minister's office, many with connections to the PC government.

So here we are with Bill 33. The idea here is that we're going to give the minister extraordinary powers to override local parents and local decision-making. To me, it feels like putting the fox in charge of the proverbial hen-house.

This is not about education. We know this by looking at the sad education record of this government, Speaker. According to the FAO's report last week, the real per-student provincial funding to school boards, when adjusted for inflation, was \$14,504 in 2025—the lowest level in a decade—and it will drop even further by 2027, to an estimated \$14,111 per student. The backlog of capital repairs at schools is now over \$21 billion. So when you reduce funding by an average of \$1,500 per student and you tell the school board that they cannot consolidate or close schools to raise revenues, deficits are inevitable. We've seen this story before. These are public schools that require public funding.

I know that in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore—which is next to the 2.5 billion sinkholed public dollars of Ontario Place, by the way—they don't understand the priorities of this government. I have heard from so many parents and constituents concerned about Bill 33. Here's an example of a letter that I got from Judy: "As parents, we turn to our trustees on several occasions—for support with transportation issues, special education needs, arts awards programs, bullying and even ensuring child safety. These are real, urgent concerns that families like mine face every day.

"They were democratically elected. This sweeping removal of officials makes us look very much like the new regime to the south of our border. This is not how our Canadian, our Ontarian democracy works." We need to make sure that we preserve the local perspective in these decisions.

"The government's decisions to suspend our trustees, block their access to communication and impose strict oversight has created significant disruption"—I thought maybe some of the members opposite might want to know what those disruptions were. "These actions are not just harming trustees—they are harming the children, families and communities they serve."

They're feeling left in the dark. They can't get answers. There's no leadership, support or a clear way forward. So I respectfully urge the government to reconsider its approach, and I thank Judy for sending her email to me.

Speaker, I received so many more that were similar to Judy's message.

I have to concur with constituents, as a legislator and as a parent. I've seen the impacts of these cuts in my own children's school. My son is in grade 11 right now at a publicly funded high school. Do you know that there's not enough books to go around? They actually have to share novels. Sometimes they don't even make it all the way through a novel, because they can't take them home, because they have to make sure everything stays in the classroom so they don't lose any of them. The classrooms are crowded, and those who are there who might need a little bit of extra attention are really at a very high risk of not getting any of that attention.

The kids are not okay, and as unemployment rises, with 700,000 out of work in this province, I know many high school and post-secondary students are struggling to find summer jobs, with youth unemployment at almost 18% in Ontario.

Financial stress on families is taking its toll, and schools should be a gateway to mental health support. The 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health found some pretty shocking statistics, actually. Over 37% of students report experiencing an elevated level of stress or pressure in their lives. The percentage of those students with stress has increased since 2015 from 29% to 37%; 51% have moderate to serious levels of psychological distress, and that has only been increasing.

We're not doing enough to provide the mental health supports for our kids. I can tell you, we have an amazing person who works in our school who serves well over a thousand kids every day, but his time is split between two schools and he can barely manage. The teachers are looking for more support, as well, to support our kids. The classrooms are overcrowded. Yet this is what we're debating in Bill 33 today. We're not debating all of those important things and what we're actually doing in our schools for kids; we're just talking about centralizing power.

Some schools have nothing. Like many other MPPs, I met with the Ontario Autism Coalition this week, and they cite the irreplaceable role that trustees play in ensuring that their kids are getting the special supports that they might need to realize their full potential.

The Premier likes to say that people can call him directly and he'll get to the bottom of their problem. Is the minister planning to field parents' requests to help in our public schools with this change? Is that how it will work? The minister answers them all and makes sure that we actually address them? I thought—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I hate to interrupt, but the time is now for private members' public business.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

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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	