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Jeudi
30 octobre 2025

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Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 30 October 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 30 octobre 2025

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers / Prières.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECT ONTARIO BY SECURING AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR GENERATIONS ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN GARANTISSANT L'ACCÈS À L'ÉNERGIE ABORDABLE POUR LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES

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

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: It is an honour to be with you all today as we really profile good work that is happening in the province to secure our economic future.

I want to mention, first off, that I will be sharing my time with the hard-working Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries, the member from Mississauga-Lakeshore, and the member from Scarborough Centre—the energy-and-mines dream team. We have a plan to secure energy for the future.

Madam Speaker, I think it is well socialized in this Legislature that we need to generate 75% more power. It is akin to adding four and a half cities of Toronto to the grid. I think the question for public policy leaders in the country is: How do we ensure baseload power? How do we manage the grid to ensure it is sustainable, it is reliable and, perhaps most importantly, that energy remains affordable?

I often commence these debates with a moment of reflection on where we came from. Members in this House will remember, just a decade ago, the perilous, ineffectual, dangerous, ideological energy approach of the former Liberal government. It was dangerous because it was driven based on an obsessive, ideological focus that led to prices increasing on everyday families. There is no virtue in driving middle class-families into energy poverty. That was the consequence of the former Liberal approach. It wasn't just that they made bad decisions that led to a 20-

year-long intergenerational liability that we still pay today; it's that they had the lack of foresight to think about the future. I want to believe that we are in this Legislature because we're here for the next generation—for some of you, for your children; your grandchildren. That is, I think, our collective why.

And yet, when the choices and the cards are on the table, it was the former Liberals who opted to commence the process of decommissioning the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station—2,000 essential megawatts we cannot live without; one of the best continuous Candu nuclear reactors on Earth; over \$11 billion of GDP gain; a massive infusion to the Canadian supply. And yet, in their judgment, it was driven by increasing cost, decreasing reliability. It is literally how not to do responsible energy policy.

I understand how important it is that we think about the future, and I'm proud that we have unveiled a plan to deliver some sense of certainty to the market, affordability to the families we serve, and send a signal to the world when we are trying to compete for investment that we are open for business.

I believe this bill, securing energy for generations, lays the foundation for that success. It accompanies—it, frankly, complements—Ontario's integrated energy plan. This is a 25-year road map. This is unlike what governments and politicians of the past have done—because what the former Liberals did and perhaps what all governments historically do is they focus too much on the short-term electoral gains, two, three, four years out, instead of the long-term interests of families. And that short-sightedness may have led to better electoral outcomes for the Liberals, but every Ontario ratepayer paid the price.

There is a real case study to be made, that if we can think about 25-year horizons, we can deliver more affordable energy, we can provide more integrated planning and we can have a long-term approach that de-risks investments and maximizes the benefit for the ratepayer and for the economy of Canada.

I don't want to focus too, too much on the past; I want us to think about the future. But it is important that we recognize where we're coming from in order to secure a strong, prosperous, united Canada.

And part of our driving force of our economic prosperity is to secure power—a realization that we're up against a common threat. We face a President in the United States who has made it his intended policy to destroy key sectors of Canada and Ontario's economy—particularly auto, amongst others. It is an existential threat to the economy of Canada. We are overleveraged, overdependent on one economy.

It's why I appreciate so much that our Premier, the Minister of Economic Development, and others have been working to diversify trade away from the US. While we face this common threat of indiscriminate, illegal tariffs imposed by the US, it actually makes the case to every member of provincial Parliament today that we can control our own destiny by setting the foundations, putting into place a plan that delivers a strong industrial policy, that creates jobs, that delivers affordable power, and that gives hope to the next generation of young people who are with us today, watching from afar, who want to have that fire in the belly of generations of the past—and if you work hard, you could achieve.

I will tell you, I recognize the darkness in the economy globally. I recognize the difficulty on the horizon. I am aware of the challenges Canadians, manufacturers, businesses, everyday families are facing. But there is light on the horizon for this province and country. It is anchored in a strong, comprehensive energy play that puts people to work.

And this legislation, Bill 40, I believe, helps to codify that vision of energy for growth, but it also provides the guardrails to protect our system, to ensure the national interest prevails when we connect large loads to the grid.

Perhaps one of the most compelling elements of this bill is, how do we deal with the rise of data centres in the province? We're estimating the equivalent of two or three Pickering nuclear generating facilities of demand, just based on data centres that are before the IESO, the Independent Electricity System Operator. We're talking about 6,000 megawatts, potentially—power for six million homes, three nuclear reactors at Pickering.

Right now, the Electricity Act, as it is written, has a non-discrimination clause, meaning anyone, any business, any foreigner—foreign business—has the right to connect. And I think it begs the question as legislators: Do we believe anyone with any cause, and regardless of the national interest benefit, regardless of the jobs, regardless of if the data is sovereign to the country—that they have the right to connect? Megawatts, energy—that is perhaps the most important currency governments have today, not just in soft power leverage of the US; it is the driver of growth, or it is going to constrain growth.

So we believe a sensible, reasonable, common-sense provision is, “No, it is not your God-given right”—to an American company or a Chinese company—to connect to the grid. We may say yes if it is in our interest, but we have to ensure that there are some clear criteria set out, which is why this legislation gives government the capacity to set out criteria that's in the national interest.

0910

Do we store the data in this province? Do we have any controls on the privacy of information? Do we ensure that those companies put skin in the game so that they produce power for their own needs? I do not want a system, and we do not, as a government, where, and I say this colloquially, Grandma—if we could use her as the face of the ratepayer. Grandma shouldn't be subsidizing large multinational businesses.

That's the thesis of the discussion today—that we need business and industry to play a critical role in delivering power for their own purposes. We need government to have some adjudication function to say yes or no when it's in our interest. And we need a mechanism, a criterion, that we can use, going forward, when these many companies and many industries and many data centres want to connect to the grid.

We, of course, welcome the investment in the province. We welcome the confidence in Ontario when it comes to data centres. They see it—we've got the right weather; we've got abundant power; we've got clean power, which many of them insist upon. And we have, obviously, an amazing, skilled workforce, some of the best STEM graduates on earth—70,000 every year graduate from our post-secondary sector. So we've got a lot of the raw materials, the fundamentals. I can see why they want to come here, but we need to protect our interest.

So we put forth a provision, a critical element of this bill that safeguards our interests, our megawatts, our power for the benefit of our economy. We're going to have to make choices, as governments and as Legislatures. There will be a moment where we're going to get an offer: Do we want to dedicate 500 megawatts of power or 600, for the purpose of an illustration? That is two small modular reactors of power for one data centre. That data centre may create 75 jobs—good jobs, no less, but not the quantum, I think, for 600 megawatts of power.

And then Minister Fedeli comes to us and says, “We have a manufacturer. They want to move to Oshawa.” And I'll tell you, Speaker—I think I got your attention here—that investment could represent hundreds of jobs—

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: Thousands.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: We'll go with “hundreds,”—to the associate minister—but it could be a large amount, the same amount of megawatts, but much higher GDP gain, jobs etc.

In a world of choices, we're choosing the maximum investment value for the province—again, common sense. This is the triumph of safeguards for the province. That's simply what this bill does. It protects us from the risks of the unknown, given the massive demand that is rising and the interest from the data centre space.

I also want to talk about the interests of Canada. I want to believe all of us care about this country; I know we do. I know we're proud of our country. And I will tell you, the supply chain that underpins the energy buildout is strong. It is robust when it comes to Canadian business, but I think we can do more. I really believe we all agree with this principle: We can do more. We can increase the buying power, the purchasing power, of Canadian products, Canadian energy components, using the benefits of Canadian workers. I appreciate that may not be applied everywhere. We talk about wind and solar overwhelmingly dominated by and manufactured by China. We speak within the reason of what is possible.

In this plan, for the first time in the history of Ontario, we are giving preference to Canadian businesses, Canadian workers, Canadian ingenuity to win the day. I believe

that is a sensible, patriotic investment in our country, at a time when we're under attack.

We often hear public servants say, "We've got to buy Canadian." We agree. In order to deliver on this vision or this aspiration is to pass this bill—it is the enabler. In the absence of this legislation, no utility could buy Canadian if, through procurement, there is an alternative product from the US or China or elsewhere. Right now, they're using competitive procurement. The lowest cost prevails, assuming quality is comparable.

What we are saying to utilities is—we're seeing this not just as an electricity play or an energy play; this is an industrial policy play of the province and country.

So we have passed a bill giving authority, encouraging utilities to buy more of what's made here at home, and I think that is sensible. We give them the capacity to create what's called a variance account so that they can buy Canadian—even if in this moment of time it is incrementally higher than the Chinese alternative, we're saying, "Stand up for Canada's workers."

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Right on.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I believe that matters, and the member from Essex shares this passion—alone, apparently, but he shares this passion. Where was everyone else on this one, folks?

Interjections.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Okay.

Madam Speaker, we are determined, as a government, to step it up in this respect.

I think we've heard from the supply chain in Canada, saying, "We do a lot of business in the country, but we can do more," and that good-to-great principle is what is at the heart of the bill. We can do better when it comes to buying Canadian.

I want to tell you all, as a case study, Hydro One, a private company—we, of course, own a massive stake in it—a minority stake. But Hydro One as a case study—93% of their investment, their buy, of the \$2.9 billion they expend, stays in this province and country. And 80% to 90% of every nuclear refurbishment we have undertaken at a Candu reactor in this province, of which there are 18 of the 19 in the country right here in Ontario—80% to 90% on average, and no less than that, is using the Ontario supply chain, to be specific—not even the Canadian; the Ontario. So for Darlington or Pickering, as we consider the extension of that asset—or, of course, at Bruce—we're talking about 80% to 90%. That is a fabulous stat. That's amazing. We are using the local Indigenous supply chain of this country to build our country strong. We do not need to depend on anyone else.

The uranium in those mines is coming from Saskatchewan. Of course, the alternative would be Russian uranium. I'm proud of what we mine in this country. I'm proud that we process that uranium in Cameco in Port Hope for the benefit of Canada's clean energy economy—non-emitting nuclear power. It's displacing 80 million tonnes of GHGs every single year. That is literally like removing 15 million cars from the road. If you believe in decarbonization, there is no road to a cleaner future than

through nuclear power. And 80% plus of the supply chain is using the Canadian and Ontarian businesses. I want people to know how proud we are that, from OPG to Bruce Power to the entire supply chain, they are buying Canadian.

For the associate minister, for the parliamentary assistants, for the Premier, for all of us—we want to play a challenge function, because in this moment, even the increment of 2% or 5% or 6%—moving the yardstick up of more procurement in the country is in the interest of Canada.

I want to talk about supply chains because, when some legislators will romanticize procurement of, for example—and I want to be clear, we have no opposition to any resource; we are agnostic, truly. But when some speak about romanticizing, if profiling, for example, wind or solar—no aversion. This government that launched the largest public procurement of renewables will do well because, unlike the former Liberals, who procured energy 10 times above market without storage, we are building the largest solar storage fleet in the country, the third-largest on the continent—3,000 megawatts of storage. So, yes, we could harness renewable power for good, but they didn't do that.

My point, going back to the case study on supply chains: When we talk about, "Why build nuclear when you could build a wind farm or a solar farm?"—we could have that debate. I would welcome that debate. But let's not forget—in a world where geopolitics matters, where supply chains, the origin of products matter, where we are expected as legislators to be a little bit more sophisticated when we articulate positions without understanding the unintended consequences—80% of the windmill manufacturing happens in China; 90% of solar, China. And this is specific to a realization that if you care about the environment and human rights and you care about fundamental Canadian values—how can anyone profile that supply chain, from the greatest geopolitical risk to the country, a nation that is violating fundamental human rights every day? They build a coal plant a week. So I want us to be mindful of, when we profile procurement from autocratic regimes like China or Russia or anyone else, we really are supporting, maybe unintentionally—we've got to wake up, to recognize that the unintended consequence of that public policy declaration is financing those very nations.

0920

It is possible and it is true that we can domesticate more in this province. I'm proud that we're working with the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade to bring manufacturing investment into the province so that we can build more in this province, or even in the continent.

I know of one at-scale battery company—it's one Quebec-based company that does batteries, and we use them; we do procurement. It's competitively procured, but we use that company. We have used that company. There's one—one. It's deeply troubling. But the battery supply chain is overwhelmingly monopolized by the Chinese regime.

Yesterday, just to connect the dots between energy and mines—because of course, minerals is what underpins the clean energy build-out we have in this province—this government announced the use of “one project, one process,” the first designation of this authority, to Frontier Lithium’s PAK project. This is so consequential. It is the first mine with a refinery, with downstream manufacturing conversion. It is the first of its kind at this scale in the country. It is the highest-quality lithium on the continent. That was a historic step forward for the self-reliance of Canada. As you will know, overwhelmingly, processing of lithium is dominant in China. Australia plays a big role too, but China is just the overwhelming hegemon in so much of the critical mineral rare-earth processing. And I believe, we believe, this Premier believes we can do it here at home.

So we announced “one project, one process,” a designation that gave authority to build this mine—50% reduction—in addition to building the processing of the refinery near Thunder Bay. They’re estimating 1,000 permanent jobs, 2,000 construction jobs, \$11 billion of economic value to the country. This is a job strategy for Canada. And it all intersects back to the purpose of Bill 40: Buy Canadian, back Canadian workers, stand up for our country when we’re under attack, set the conditions, send the signals that we’re going to do whatever it takes to back Canadian workers and families. So we brought forth provisions that, I believe, really lay the foundations for success.

Part of this bill, also, is the recognition that, as we buy Canadian, we’ve got to think about long-term needs to meet demand. I’m very confident that the plan we put in place, this 25-year road map, helps us secure the power we need—an integrated, long-term approach to thinking; a challenge function to government to end the silos that exist among us, to break them down and to have a more integrated approach to energy planning.

So this plan—the IEP, the integrated energy plan of Ontario—accompanying this legislation, I believe will be the catalyst for growth. It will supercharge the economy. It will say that we are unambiguously and unapologetically supporting Canadian business, supply chain and workers. That’s the message Canadians need to hear today, on the backdrop of challenges in the economy.

Madam Speaker, one of the big successes I believe we’ve had to date is that when we do these large-scale projects, we have, so far, been able to deliver them on time and on budget. And I want to speak about the rare competitive advantage that we have in Ontario.

I will tell you, when you speak to colleagues in France, in the United Kingdom, in the US, or in many parts of the world, they are not building large-scale energy, particularly nuclear, on time or on budget; in fact, the opposite is true—sometimes we’re talking about a decade overdue.

This is our strength. Ontario’s nuclear advantage is our strength. It is homegrown technology, using homegrown uranium, and using Canadian workers to lead the way.

I am proud that we have taken the position, vigorously, that nuclear power, hydroelectric power, baseload power,

fundamentally reliable power is the way by which we grow our economy and safeguard jobs for the next generation.

I’m here to make the case that Bill 40 is a common-sense piece of legislation. It sets the foundation for protecting the grid, to maximize economic value and to keep energy as affordable as possible, given the offensive energy rates that we inherited under the former Liberal government. It really should send a signal to the market and to the population that we are open for business, we are pro-enterprise, we support investment, but we’re always going to protect the interests of Canada and the ratepayers and taxpayers who foot the bill. That is, at its core, good public policy.

There is a reason why so many stakeholders have come out to endorse this plan.

The Electricity Distributors Association of Ontario have come out saying it is essential to drive electricity demand.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce have said that they welcome embedding economic growth into the mandate. I’ll speak more about this in a moment, as I conclude.

The president of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters said that this bill is important—principal—to protect and grow our grid with domestic materials, technology and labour.

The mayor of Waterloo, the president of the Ontario Centre of Innovation, the CEO of the Kitchener Waterloo chamber of commerce, the CEO of the Ontario Energy Association, the CEO of Communitech, the Economic Developers Council of Ontario, the University of Waterloo’s president, the regional chair of Waterloo, the executive director of Medical Innovation Xchange—the list goes on.

This is so obviously in the interest of Ontario, and it begs the question for legislators: Will you join this government in supporting this bill and help to move it forward so we can get on with buying Canadian in the supply chain at the quantum I think we all expect?

Here’s my final point. This bill, for the first time, imposes or adds to the Ontario Energy Board Act and the Ontario Electricity System Operator Act, the statutes that govern the IESO and OEB—for the first time, they will add economic development as a mandate of those agencies. I think this is very important to conclude with, because I think it should inspire members who may be watching.

The intended objective of our electricity system operators and regulators is not just the safeguarding of energy and pricing; it is to enable, to drive economic growth, because we recognize, fundamentally, that energy policy and security is economic policy and industrial policy. They are one now. They perhaps used to be bifurcated in the past; they could coexist and support each other. Now it is really one. These determinations are made on the basis of supporting growth and jobs.

And I believe the addition of economic growth, explicitly in the mandate of the IESO and the OEB, is a powerful tool to say to investors, to businesses, to manu-

facturers that are looking to connect and invest in this province, that they will be treated with speed and support. They will be given every incentive to invest these capital dollars that, of course, flow to the path of least resistance. We have got to give investors a reason to put their money in this province.

Lower energy rates; certainty in the market; a plan to generate over 15,000 net new megawatts of clean nuclear power; a plan to build transmission, the largest generation investment in my lifetime, with 1,500 kilometres approved just in the IEP—this is how we are setting the foundations for growth and for success. I wanted to conclude with this because it may seem like the least compelling point of this bill; I would submit that it is the most powerful intervention we can put on the table today.

Ensure the energy agencies that oversee and have oversight over our build-out—that they are explicitly mandated with the requirements to approve or analyze through the lens of attracting investment and building this economy. That is sensible. That is prudent. Frankly, that is a responsible way that we can attract investment to the province.

0930

For that reason, I believe this bill deserves the support of all members across the aisle and across the way. Canadians are depending on us. Notwithstanding the difficulty or the debates we will have, the disagreements we will have on certain policies—on this issue of protecting Canada's grid, protecting the sovereignty of our data, standing up for the Canadian supply chain—demanding investment in the communities we represent is a good thing for the province. It is a good thing for Canada. And on that basis, I urge all members to do the right thing: to vote for this bill and to help us work together on a Team Canada approach to standing up for the very workers who are insisting that Canada, that flag, that made-in-Canada symbol is stamped on the products we procure every day.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address the Legislature. I do look forward to the debate and the discussion and the support of all members.

I want to thank the parliamentary assistants and the associate minister, who played a critical role in the development of this legislation and will continue to play a role in the consultations as we build out the regulation. This is a team effort, and it's an honour to serve.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries.

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: I want to begin by acknowledging and thanking the good people of Niagara West for the opportunity to rise in the House this morning. I look forward to participating in debate on this legislation.

I want to acknowledge the leadership of the Minister of Energy and Mines in what he has laid out this morning, as well as the work that has gone into this legislation, Bill 40, the Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act. I also want to recognize the parliamentary assistants, PA Smith and PA Cuzzetto, for their incredible leadership as they participate in debate this

morning as well. It really is a team approach, and one that exemplifies the Premier's leadership, as well, to ensure that folks are going out across the province, hearing ideas from stakeholders, from communities, from workers, from businesses, and bringing those ideas and incorporating them into legislation that is reflective of the needs of the province and responding to those needs. I'm thankful for the opportunity to help participate in that.

Speaker, protecting Ontario by securing affordable power for generations, energy for generations—and that "generations" piece is something I want to spend a couple of moments on as we get into the nitty-gritty of this legislation and why it's such an important bill before the House this morning and why we're debating it.

I want to tell a little story. A couple of weeks ago, Speaker, I had the privilege of going to Sudbury. Sudbury is a remarkable part of our province's legacy. It is a place with rich history. It is a place that has a long legacy of mining excellence. It is a place of critical mineral processing but also of traditional mining processing.

As I went to Sudbury and we drove up through the Canadian Shield and the rocks got bigger and the trees got a little bit shorter, it was a privilege to think about the history of those who have journeyed across this province for opportunity, who journeyed across this province for financial improvement but ultimately also for improvement in their family situation, improvement in their economic situation, building a better province, building a stronger future.

When I arrived in Sudbury, we had the privilege of first sitting down with Chief Larry Roque from the local First Nation, and we spoke about economic opportunity that is going to be enabled in the north as a result of the legislation that has been brought before this House around ensuring access to financing for Indigenous participation and equity ownership in new projects that are coming forward, whether it's transmission lines or participation in the LT2 procurement project. Chief Larry Roque spoke very highly about the opportunities that are coming forward, and about the willingness and the eagerness for participation with Indigenous communities that is exemplified in Minister Lecce's leadership and also our government's approach to participating in conversations with First Nations. And we spoke about the mining claims that come into northern Ontario and what needs to happen as those mining claims are received.

The next day, when I had the privilege of visiting Glencore and Vale, we spoke about the history of that place.

One of the things that is so remarkable about Sudbury is the generational aspect to the industries that exist there. We're talking about a piece of legislation that builds out secure, affordable energy for generations. And you can see the transition in energy usage that has happened, specifically, in a place like Sudbury.

I want to walk a little bit through that with you this morning, just to lay out why it's so important to secure affordable energy for generations.

When we look at the past, it's no predictor of what the future will bring, but it is, of course, a really important lesson to us all, to learn from the mistakes of the past and to improve, going forward.

One of the places I had the privilege of visiting just briefly—I've been to Sudbury before, but I hadn't checked it out before. We had a little bit of time, and I went, of course, to the Sudbury nickel—the Big Nickel. We all know it. We all love it. And I hope that if you haven't had a chance to visit it, you do.

One of the things that struck me when we were looking at some of the photos of the history of nickel processing in Sudbury—because Sudbury has actually been called the largest mining camp in the world. It's essentially a town that was based around this one industry—around mining and nickel, specifically. I know that the member for Sudbury would be able to speak about that more. One of the things that struck me that I hadn't been aware of was that some of the earliest processing, over a century ago, in Sudbury was open-pit mines and open-pit processing. What is that? Well, essentially, they would take the slag that they would get from the nickel pits and they would spread it on the ground, in a big pit. They would cover it up with both large amounts of logs below the slag and then on top of it as well—the ore; my apologies. The slag is the by-product; I was referring to it incorrectly. That ore would then be burnt until they could extract the nickel that would settle, and the rest of it would, in fact, be disseminated into the air. We would see all of that air pollution go across not just Sudbury but the surrounding areas.

That open-pit mine—there were photos there of those open-pit burns that they would do, where all of the by-product, all of the toxins that were being burnt would simply go into the air and would then, of course, end up in the local atmosphere. That impacted the local environment to the extent that in some ways it looked like a moonscape. It was described as the Sudbury moonscape. They actually, I was told, sent folks who were training to go to the moon, back in the 1960s, to practise in the area around Sudbury because the landscape was so impacted by that acidity, so impacted by the toxins and by the burns that had happened there that the trees had pretty much disappeared. It was like you were on another planet—all the exposed, barren Canadian Shield. They've done an incredible job to reclaim that. Sudbury is a beautiful city, and I want to acknowledge that. But it is a part of their history. Over a hundred years ago, energy was, essentially, throwing nickel onto a pile, burning it, smoke going everywhere, inhalation. You can imagine the impact that had on human health as well. So that's what energy looked like in Sudbury 110 years ago.

When I visited Glencore and Vale, some of the largest employers in that area and also some of the largest mining companies in the world, who have a rich legacy in that area—both of them operating for over a century in the Sudbury area—they talked about the evolution of energy use. One of the amazing things that I wasn't aware of, previous to visiting, was that Vale actually has some 16 energy generation stations that they have throughout the

basin, heading towards Sudbury. They actually have water rights that—they've worked in collaboration with folks in the area to ensure that they're building out hydroelectric dams. They have about 16 hydroelectric dams carrying a massive amount of water—that they also then serve as the managers of the flood plain and that whole area. They're able to ensure that the water isn't flooding into different areas. They're able to generate some 200 megawatts of clean electricity.

So now you go from open-pit burning of fuels, where everything is just going out into the air, to processing that's using hydroelectric water dams that they built out over time—and that was especially in the 1920s and 1930s and into the 1940s and 1950s as well, that they built out these hydroelectric dams.

As they continued to grow, they needed more power. So they eventually connected to the provincial grid, and now they also purchase large amounts of power from the provincial grid. They have transmission capacity, obviously, to that part of the province. So they now have a mix of their own generation—behind-the-wire or behind-the-meter generation that they have secured—private hydroelectric facilities, as well as purchasing clean, reliable, affordable power from the provincial grid.

Speaker, one of the amazing things in their legacy is that they are committed to continuous improvement. They're committed to continually improving their environmental records. They've spent hundreds of millions of dollars on cleaning the air and the by-products of their waste.

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I had a chance to go through, of course, the same site that many of you may have seen—the historic Sudbury stack that's now coming down. It was built in the 1970s, and, of course, back then, there was a different approach to air pollution than there is today. Thankfully, today there is a really serious approach to air pollution.

Now, through the use of acid, they're able to collect all of the by-products that would otherwise have been released into the atmosphere. They're able to collect that—very, very low environmental impact.

They're continually improving. More and more, they're electrifying. They're looking at removing some of the inputs that would be more carbon-intensive; they're reducing their carbon impact. But what is necessary to ensure that they're able to do that, to stay competitive with a global industry that—that that is not just unique to North America, but competing with nickel imports from Indonesia? They're competing with nickel imports from countries where their human rights records, their environmental records, their labour records are very, very different than Canada's and Ontario's.

What matters in that kind of a global marketplace is input costs. Well, of course, we want to ensure that we are competitive and that we are able to keep costs low enough so that these companies are able to invest, retain and support, again, the tens of thousands of workers in a town like Sudbury, but also the tens of thousands of people who are involved in the indirect supply chains for those sites—

for the smelters, for the mills, for the mines—and then, ultimately, also the by-products that come out of those sites and are processed here in the south as well. And one of the key components for that is affordable energy—it's having clean energy; it's having reliable energy; it's ensuring that the energy that we produce here in this province is there for a sustainable amount of time, that it's there and that it's, in fact, energy not just for past generations, but for future generations as well.

That's what this legislation is about—securing affordable, reliable energy for future generations. It's a generational approach to energy. And that matters, because for so long we had in this province an approach that was siloed, that was fragmented, that said, “Do you know what? We're going to plan on a four-year cycle. We have an election coming up”—in the case when the Liberals were there, “We have an election coming up, and we are going to make our energy decisions quickly. We're going to make those energy decisions based off of partisan self-interest.” I'm sure we've all heard of the gas plant scandal. There's a reason it was a scandal. They were willing to spend billions of ratepayer dollars, for the sake of potentially saving a seat or two on the Liberal front benches in those days. We have a different approach.

Minister Lecce has laid out a vision of a 25-year integrated energy plan that says this is about energy not just for the next two, three, four years—not just about our electoral cycle. We know that we are simply guardians of these chairs. One day, I will give up the seat for Niagara West and, Lord willing, the next person who comes in will also view this chair with the respect that it deserves, because it's about—not the position, but the people we have the privilege of serving.

In the integrated energy plan, we lay out a vision, a North Star, a guiding principle for 25 years. And over those 25 years, we take an approach that says that we know we're going to need a massive amount of new electricity. We know we're going to have an estimated 75% increase in our electricity usage in the province of Ontario over the next 25 years. If we play the short game, if we plan for a two-, three-, four-year cycle, those are going to be short-sighted decisions that ultimately cost ratepayers, that ultimately cost families. And when we're talking about families and industry and ratepayers, what we're really talking about is the social and moral impacts of those decisions as well, because that impacts the decisions people make.

When people moved to Sudbury to participate in the mining opportunities that existed there, because there wasn't low-carbon, affordable, reliable, secure energy at that time, 100 years ago in Sudbury, they had impacts. They had impacts on their health. There were impacts in the local community as a result of those open-pit burns. And as governments made substantial investments in hydroelectric plants, in nuclear plants, in more and more secure and affordable forms of energy, those social impacts were released, those environmental impacts and health impacts were released, and families were able to thrive and to grow and to be able to do so in a way that

ensured they were going to have a great quality of life. That's, ultimately, what this legislation seeks as well.

Speaker, I can't emphasize enough how important this legislation is for our province's future. With the need for energy increasing exponentially and our economy and population growing, it's important that we act today, as an imperative, to ensure our continued prosperity and growth.

The integrated Energy for Generations plan integrates planning for all the resources available to us—including electricity, natural gas, hydrogen, biofuels and emerging technologies—which provides a comprehensive strategy for meeting the province's projected increase in demand over the next 25 years.

What does this look like? It aligns the electricity sector with our priorities of economic growth and having a secure energy system, while also supporting the development of critical infrastructure, including transmission lines, battery storage and nuclear expansion.

Together, the integrated energy plan and Bill 40 represent a unified, forward-looking approach that supports energy affordability, job creation, investment in our economy and industrial competitiveness. These are not things that we can take for granted. We can't forget how important it is that we take these immediate steps to protect our sovereignty and reduce our reliance on imports, which is integral to both this legislation and to our integrated energy plan.

Last night, I was in Ottawa—I flew in yesterday afternoon and flew back last night—because I was meeting and speaking with the National Electricity Roundtable. It was hundreds of industry leaders in the electricity system, from across Canada. We spoke about a number of the challenges but also the opportunities that exist here in Canada and a couple of key themes that were coming up. They're there for a couple of days. I had to, of course, get back here for the speech this morning and also for question period.

We asked them, “What are the themes? What are people talking about?” These were representatives from everywhere from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland. I spoke with folks from Fortis, from BC Hydro, and everyone in between. They said one of the key themes that has come up is the recognition that the province of Ontario, by bringing forward an integrated energy plan that provides certainty to the private sector about where you're going over the next 25 years, is unlocking capital investment in a way that other provinces are truly envious of, because—let's not kid ourselves—we're not the only ones in this space. Arguably, the demands on our grid are going to be a bit greater because of industrialization that we have here in the province, because of population growth that does outstrip many of the other provinces. But other provinces are having growth, as well. We know electrification is coming to these other provinces. We know that they're also having the impacts of data centres and AI, for example. They said that when they're looking at their provincial plans, they don't see that level of integration. They said that as a result of the failure to integrate in some of those provinces, the investors are coming to places like Ontario and saying, “Where can we allocate capital? Where

can we invest billions of dollars into transmission, billions of dollars into generation, billions of dollars into the local system? Because we know that there's certainty."

When you have certainty, when you have a clear vision for decades to come, the private sector steps forward and says, "We're going to work now that the government of the day has laid out this vision and it's broadly supported."

I think it's fair to say, at least from what I've heard in this place, that although not every single component of the integrated energy plan is completely unanimous in this Legislature, there's overwhelming support from all sides. I say this with pride: I don't think that if there was a change in government tomorrow the New Democrats or the Liberals would drastically overhaul the integrated energy plan. There might be tweaks, there might be changes, there might be some modifications, and fair enough. But overwhelmingly, that 25-year vision is one that has been received with a lot of support, including from members of the opposition.

What that tells those who are looking to invest—whether they're Canadian pension plans, whether they're large utilities, whether they're simply retail investors, whether they are folks who work in this industry from a labour perspective, from a workforce planning perspective or from a systems planning perspective—is that there is some consensus in Ontario around what needs to happen going forward and that there is broad-based support for that 25-year vision. That grants confidence and, ultimately, more competition, which of course helps keep costs down for consumers.

That's incredibly important, because it also demonstrates that this is a province where innovation can happen. Innovation doesn't happen, generally speaking, in the absence of a reliable framework that you're able to operate within. When you know where things are going, you're able to plan accordingly; you're able to innovate and plan for what's coming down the pipe. Of course, there are going to be unexpected things. None of us saw the COVID-19 pandemic—we didn't know that was going to happen. Of course, there's a situation that we currently are in, with the trade conflict with the United States, and I don't think that was something that, a couple of years ago, all of us sitting here in this House were going to say—"Yes. Absolutely, that's going to happen." But broadly speaking, when you have that vision, you can plan accordingly. You can lay out your capital plans. You can also think about how we can adapt to this market as things move towards net zero—for example, through the build-out of our nuclear energy fleet in the province of Ontario. What does that look like in terms of opportunities for things like hydrogen production?

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Speaker, you look at the opportunities that we're bringing forward through the hydrogen interruptible rate pilot and, of course—one of my favourite programs—the Hydrogen Innovation Fund, where we're looking to the private sector to bring forward innovative ideas around hydrogen adaptation, hydrogen end-use scenarios in heavy industry.

Decarbonize—bring us opportunities to decarbonize, where we can use a carrot and not a stick to force industries that are, in many cases, competing on a global basis, that are not just energy-intensive, but also trade-exposed and often carbon-intensive. We're going to them and saying, "Bring forward your ideas. Bring forward a plan for how you can change from a more carbon-intensive thing, like coke or some other really heavy-carbon-emission types of fuels, into, perhaps, hydrogen as an alternative." We're going to help deal with some of those costs. We're going to help offset that because we know that's good not just for our environment, but also to protect the jobs that are in those industries and, ultimately, to protect our competitiveness on the world stage.

That happens when you have a clear vision of what's coming down the pipe. When you know where things are going to be in the next 10, 20, 30 years, you're able to plan accordingly, and you're able to outlay millions of dollars, in cases, for these kinds of programs because you know that when you're investing, you're going to not just see a return on that investment in the short term, but you know that it's falling into a broader integrated approach and that that alignment is there.

Speaker, I do want to mention that in March we announced a new \$30-million round of funding for the Hydrogen Innovation Fund, doubling it from the previous \$15 million that had been in that fund and broadening the eligibility substantially into two streams now—one stream dedicated to electricity- and grid-stabilization efforts, and the other focusing on end-use applications such as transportation and heavy industry.

I want to encourage members who are here: If you have folks who are in the hydrogen space—this is an area where we've seen the government of the United States, frankly, just completely drop the ball. They've given up any attempts to show leadership in this sector. It's providing a real moment for Ontario. On the global stage, people are saying, "Well, Ontario is a place that is still demonstrating leadership here. We're seeing investments. We're seeing startups. We're seeing innovation in this space." I encourage you to share details of that fund with any constituents—the Hydrogen Innovation Fund. Go check it out and make sure you're sharing it with folks in your community. That's a little aside, Speaker.

I do want to say, another piece that has been really, I think, crucial in this legislation—in the last couple of minutes, I want to talk about data centres. It's something we've all, I'm sure, heard about. We've all seen the conversations about, how much water does it use; how much power does it use? I can tell you. In the role the Premier has appointed me to—energy-intensive industries—I have weekly meetings with interested parties from data centres across the world. Folks, it's as small as five megawatts and as large as—we had 3,000-megawatt interest. That is unbelievably large. I mean, 3,000 megawatts is more than our entire SMR fleet combined—and you multiply that by two and a half times. It's an incredible amount of power. So we need to prioritize where that power goes.

One of the fascinating things I've had the experience of now, in this role, is when people come forward with a massive data centre plan. They say, "It's nothing; we just need the power." Well, it's not just the power. The speaker correctly notes that there are water requirements. There are also broadband requirements for latency. There's access to markets. But "just the power" is like saying, "Well, it's just a nuclear power plant—whatever." No, no, you're talking about building out massive amounts of energy generation, transmission and, of course, missed opportunity or lost opportunity.

We are in favour of data centres, but we have to recognize that not all data centres are equal. There's a huge difference between a crypto-mining, bitcoin machine that sits there and chugs along and sucks up all sorts of juice—that's a very, very different scenario than if you have a very responsive and nimble data centre.

Let's take an area like Kitchener-Waterloo, where there's a large amount of small start-ups—now becoming larger start-ups, thankfully, and hiring more people. They need data requirements. They have cloud requirements. Those are two very different beasts, and you have to treat them differently.

We also know that it's very different to connect a small data centre that's needed to support a type of industry in a growing area. Let's take Kanata in Ottawa, for example. That's very different than if you went to St. Thomas, Ontario, and you said, "Oh, sorry, all the power that you need for the Volkswagen plant is now going to go directly into this."

This legislation addresses that, and I'm so thankful for it.

I want to turn it over to the parliamentary assistant, who has shown such leadership on this legislation and others.

I thank you for the opportunity to participate in debate this morning.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. David Smith: I'm honoured to be here today to speak on Bill 40, and I'd like to thank the minister and associate minister for their participation.

As the member for Scarborough Centre, it is my pleasure to serve as parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of Energy and Mines.

I rise today to speak on the importance of Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is absolutely critical for our province and our country. At a time when we are still reeling from the shock of recent tariff actions imposed by the US, we must take steps to protect our workers, our industry and our economy. Our once most-trusted ally and trading partner is now working single-handedly to undermine our industries, our workers and our people. We won't stand by idly while this is taking place, because if our duty as a government is to protect Ontario and its people, then standing by is not an option.

That is why we are taking action, standing up to tariffs and other foreign interference, and strengthening our self-

reliance as a province and a nation. That includes creating a more self-reliant and secure energy framework, which is exactly what our proposed legislation addresses.

The changes in this legislation will build on recent steps taken to strengthen Ontario's energy security by limiting adversarial foreign participation, and enable more buy-Canadian policies that prioritize domestic investment, supply chains and jobs here at home.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is the latest in a number of actions we have taken to increase our self-reliance both as a province and a country.

Earlier this year, we passed the Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, 2025, and the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025. Both of these acts take a Canada-first stance by removing inter-provincial trade barriers, cutting red tape and streamlining approvals for mining, infrastructure and energy projects.

Our government has every intention to build and expand our homegrown energy initiatives. For example, the Darlington small modular reactor, a first among all G7 countries, is poised to be a significant driver of economic growth and employment in Ontario. A study done by the Canadian conference board estimates that the construction and operation of the four small modular reactor plants for the Darlington site will increase Ontario's GDP by \$38.5 billion and sustain, on average, approximately 3,700 jobs per year over 65 years. We know that approximately 80% of the project spending on the first small modular reactor is going to Ontario companies. In fact, more than 80 companies have already signed an agreement with Ontario Power Generation to deliver this first-of-a-kind project. This aligns with our Canada-first approach because it prioritizes local businesses and industries. It comes down to a question of what's best for Ontario.

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What we are going to do is to try hard to do as much as we can with homegrown resources. Bill 40 will help us to do that by building on changes introduced by the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025.

Minister Lecce recently wrote to all Ontario electric utilities, asking for updates on their efforts to avoid purchasing goods and services from United States suppliers and any cost impacts they are facing.

The Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, if passed, would also allow rate-regulated entities to track potentially higher procurement costs as a result of restrictions from purchasing foreign entities through Ontario Energy Board variance accounts. The Ontario Energy Board, which has a mandate to protect the interests of consumers by setting just and reasonable rates, will review these costs and only approve those that are reasonable.

Madam Speaker, Ontario is standing up to President Trump and his unfair, unjustified attacks on our province and our country. We are taking action to ensure that Ontario can stand alone and thrive without US goods and services or any kind of intervention into our economy.

Bill 40, the Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, will work together with our

integrated energy plan, Energy for Generations, and our recently enacted Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, and the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, to protect Ontario's interests, increase our self-reliance and create a sustainable energy future for all Ontarians.

I call on my colleagues in the House to stand up for Ontario and support this important piece of legislation. I would like to thank you, Madam Speaker. And I hope all colleagues in the House support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions? I recognize the member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ, ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ. ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ. ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ. ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ.

I was listening intently regarding Bill 40, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to energy, the electrical sector and public utilities.

I heard the Minister of Energy and Mines talk about the PAK lithium project site and how the work that they're doing is going to improve the energy sector.

Yesterday, Chief Brandon Rae of North Spirit Lake First Nation, located just next door to the mine site—they weren't involved in that process, that engagement that was supposed to happen on the announcement. One of the things that he asked of this Ontario government is to pause the "one project, one process."

I'm asking the government: Will this government pause that process? Meegwetch.

Mr. David Smith: I would like to thank the member from across the aisle who raised the question.

Only yesterday, we met with First Nations at an announcement we had, and I can assure you that our "one project, one process"—we've had a number of supports that are helping us. We are working together with all these individuals to ensure that we are getting the job done. I can tell you that the support that I heard yesterday was overwhelming, and I continue to believe that working together with the Indigenous group is certainly shining a positive light on what we are focusing on.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: Both the parliamentary assistant for energy and mines and I heard the energy and mines minister himself talk about the fact that a large amount of the supply chain is in Ontario. The minister said that 80% to 90% of the supply chain for Ontario Hydro was in Ontario, and the parliamentary assistant talked about the Canada-first strategy and the Darlington SMRs.

Do they plan to do anything about the fact that 100% of the enriched uranium will be coming from foreign countries and 50% of the natural gas that we burn in Ontario comes from Donald Trump land? Does the minister plan to do anything about that?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

The member speaks about natural gas imports from the US. I would expect the member to support the upcoming motion before the Legislature that will call line 5 an essential infrastructure piece, because that infrastructure goes through the state of Michigan and US states, which undermines the security of supply.

Therefore—I mean this honestly—if the concern is natural gas from the US, then that means the provincial Liberals must support domestic refinement and extraction of natural gas. I would welcome your evolution on this part, because you're right; we shouldn't be importing it from America. We should be able to use Canadian natural gas.

You mentioned enriched uranium. Is the member suggesting that Canada should withdraw from the non-proliferation treaty? Because that's the effect of your bizarre question.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A polite reminder to all members to address their remarks through the Chair.

I recognize the Associate Solicitor General.

Hon. Zee Hamid: With the rise of AI and cloud computing, data centres have become increasingly important. The associate minister talked about good data centres and bad data centres.

I'm wondering if the associate minister can talk about changes our government is making to our data centre strategy.

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: I want to thank the Associate Solicitor General for his question. He's absolutely right.

We talked a little bit about that differentiation you have to make between certain kinds of data centres that might suck a lot of energy and not add a lot of value and those that do, in fact, add value, are foundational to our growing digital economy and tech economy, and, of course, supporting jobs in those sectors—in the life sciences sector, as an example.

This legislation finally gives us some authority to prioritize requests. Previous to this legislation, there was no prioritization of requests here in Ontario. Anyone was able to simply come forward. It didn't matter how big or small—they could be thousands of megawatts and say, "We want to connect here." As soon as they signed that—I apologize for snapping, Speaker—they were able, in fact, to get connected instantly. This now gives the authority to the minister to be able to ensure that there's some prioritization, that economic considerations are there as well, and that we're able to prioritize the good ones that we talked about earlier.

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: My question to the minister [*inaudible*] critical to our future, a secure future. However, I don't see anything in this bill that really will alleviate the concerns of young people who are looking for a true commitment to a renewable energy grid.

In fact, what I do see is a government that continues to subsidize the electric system to the tune of \$6 billion a year—over 20 years, it's predicted to be \$118 billion of taxpayer subsidies.

This bill gives the government additional flexibility to determine how much of the costs payable to generators are to be recovered from taxpayers as opposed to ratepayers.

My question to you is, do you feel comfortable ignoring what young people are looking for, which is a truly renewable energy grid, and spending taxpayer dollars that essentially put their futures at peril?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Ontario's integrated energy plan will deliver 99% of the grid net zero by using hydro and nuclear power. Young people are actually concerned, so we achieve net zero without imposing higher tax on people, which is the difference between our approach and the members opposite. But I actually think what young people are seized by—yes, they want a clean future. They want it to be affordable.

When the basis of the question is, “Why not pursue renewables?” it almost suggests that we haven't learned a lesson from the former Liberals—the Green Energy Act—where they obsessively, ideologically sole-sourced one resource 10 times above market. And today, 20 years later, you mention the fact that tax dollars are being used to subsidize the rate base. I accept it's an estimate that's not sustainable nor ideal.

1010

But is the member opposite or the official opposition party wishing to limit the Ontario energy rebate, thus resulting in the highest energy rates on the continent, like they were under the former Liberals? Of course not. So let's be—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Question?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Bill 40 creates a new section in the Electricity Act, 28.1, which allows the government to make regulations about connecting to the grid. But one of the problems with the bill is that it doesn't say anything about what principles should be guiding this regulation-making. So there's nothing being presented to the representatives of the voters of Ontario for us to debate, and the government will be able to set regulations on a whim.

In response to what I think are the overly and highly partisan opening shots of the minister in this debate, I'd like to ask the minister: Do I need to phone Kory Teneycke to make a helpful suggestion to regulations around connecting to the electricity grid?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, the focus of the government is to deliver affordable energy after the energy rates increased by 400%.

You may call it a “partisan shot.” It is a matter of historic record—a shameful record—that Ontario families still continue to pay the price. I'm sorry—to the member opposite—that you are offended by your historic record, where families paid \$1,000 or more. You became the outlier of the most expensive energy on the continent. That is not a metric of success that anyone could defend.

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Our government has taken a different approach, using competitive procurements. The Auditor General actually recommended competition in our procurement. It has driven down prices. The same contracts they signed had been re-contracted 30% below rate. So we're doing something right. We're saving ratepayers money, and we're thinking about the future.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It is now time for members' statements.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

EVENTS IN MISSISSAUGA EAST— COOKSVILLE

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: It's great to be back in the Legislature, reconnecting with colleagues and getting back to work on behalf of the people of Mississauga East—Cooksville.

It was a very productive summer in my riding, with close to 260 meetings and community events, from neighbourhood gatherings and local business visits to safety round tables and cultural celebrations, all focused on putting my constituents' priorities first.

Public safety, in particular, remains top of mind for so many residents. On October 8, my office hosted a community town hall on banking scams and fraud with the Canadian Bankers Association at the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre. We had a fantastic turnout, great questions, strong engagement and a clear message from the community: People want more conversations like this.

A big thank you to the Canadian Bankers Association for coming out, answering every question and preparing residents to guard themselves against these increasingly sophisticated scams. And this work continues.

Our next community safety town hall meeting with Peel Regional Police will be held on November 4 at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic church. This session will feature Peel police sharing insights, practical tips and strategies to help protect families and neighbourhoods. It's a valuable opportunity for residents to hear directly from those who work on the front lines of community safety every day.

Speaker, keeping our communities safe takes teamwork, education and prevention, and I am committed to continuing this work every day.

GREAT CANADIAN TREASURE HUNT

Mr. John Vanthof: I realize everyone is focused on a big contest right now and we're all supporting the Jays—go, Jays, go! But there's another contest going on that you need to know about: the great Canadian gold treasure hunt.

The Northern Miner, both print and online edition, has organized a treasure hunt, and over a million dollars of

gold has been hidden somewhere in Canada. All the clues are available on the Northern Miner in a poem. There's a million-dollar grand prize, if you find it, and 12 monthly prizes. And one of them has just been discovered right next to my house—not "right next to," but in the next town to my house in Cobalt. But don't think it's going to be easy. I'm going to read you one stanza from the poem and you'll see how hard it's going to be.

A giant coin reflects the sun
But circles lead where none begun
Its gleam is but a siren's light
No miner's truth is held in sight

So it's not going to be easy, but there's over a million dollars out there.

I would very much like to thank the sponsors for this contest, particularly Agnico Eagle gold mines. The gold is coming from Detour Lake gold mine, the largest gold mine in Canada. The other sponsors are Alamos Gold, IAMGOLD, Kinross Gold, McEwen mining, and several others.

Check out the Northern Miner, and please participate.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Every week, I receive emails from tenants in my riding who are facing challenges with their rental units. Some are single mothers new to Canada, facing personal hardship; some have good-paying jobs and just can't get the landlord to fix the heat; and some are facing eviction over rent that's a few days late. And why? Because we have a government that can't get more housing built to ease the cost of housing, that removed rent control, and that doesn't seem to care about tenants and their rights.

My office received over 500 emails in just a few days when tenants heard about Bill 60, which makes things even harder for tenants.

This week I re-tabled my bill, Bill 64, the Housing Equity and Rental Transparency Act, 2025. If passed, it would help make sure tenants in high-rise buildings have access to reliable elevators, that their apartment is in good repair, and that they have the right to get rent rebated when they don't get the services they need.

It's time for us to prioritize the rights of tenants and make sure that they have safe, affordable housing. And we need a government who will stand up to make that happen.

JAMIE BRAMBURGER

MPP Billy Denault: This past Saturday, I had the pleasure of attending the Jamie Bramburger Fall Classic at the Pembroke Memorial Centre—an event honouring Jamie's enduring legacy and remarkable contributions to the Ottawa Valley. The game featured the Pembroke Lumber Kings alumni facing off against Algonquin College faculty and staff, with former Ottawa Senator Marc Methot and former Boston Bruin P.J. Stock serving as team captains,

representing two organizations to which Jamie dedicated so much of his time and passion.

Proceeds from the event will support the Grind Pembroke and the Jamie Bramburger Memorial Fund, helping students in need and some of our community's most vulnerable.

Jamie passed suddenly on March 11 of this year. A lifelong hockey enthusiast, he was the familiar voice of the Pembroke Lumber Kings as their play-by-play announcer. As long-time manager of community and student affairs and former interim dean at Algonquin College's Pembroke campus, Jamie guided the college through many periods of growth and challenge.

Beyond his professional roles, Jamie was a genuine community builder, always striving to make life better for others. He leaves behind a legacy of passion, camaraderie and community spirit—one that continues to shine on the ice, in the classroom, and throughout the Ottawa Valley. It is a legacy that we can all look up to and one that we should all strive to emulate.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: In early October, I received an angry email from Lisa, whose mother, Charlotte, lives in Capreol. She asked, "How can it possibly be acceptable that seniors in Capreol are waiting nearly six months for basic health care?"

Her mother had routine blood work done in May, but after the clinic cancelled her appointment, the next date offered was November 6, six months later.

The Minister of Health will remember the multiple funding proposals I brought forward from the Capreol Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic. They needed money for one more nurse practitioner so that they can handle the load, but the government refused. The Capreol Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic did the best they could with the money they had, but they ended up having to let go of a nurse practitioner.

1020

Think about this, Speaker: The nurse practitioner-led clinic is the only health service available to the people of Capreol, a northern rural community. They have to let staff go because the government refused to increase their small budget.

I can't help but feel that Ontario's health care failings are by design. This government wants it to fail so that people say, "It doesn't meet my needs; I want something different," and the "something different" will be private, for-profit health care. The people of Capreol deserve better.

The current government's focus on profit over care is just shameful.

VETERANS

MPP George Darouze: As we approach Remembrance Day, I rise today to recognize a deeply meaningful event recently held in my riding of Carleton: my first annual veterans' brunch hosted to honour the service and

sacrifice of our local veterans. This gathering brought together veterans, their families and members of our community to reflect on the extraordinary contributions of those who have served in uniform. It was a moment to share stories, build connections and, most importantly, express our heartfelt gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy because of their courage and their commitment.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge two remarkable individuals, Michael Ostafichuk from the Stittsville Legion and Janet Coles of the Osgoode Legion, who were both honoured with the Ontario Veterans Award for Community Service Excellence. Their tireless efforts to support veterans in Carleton are truly commendable, and I offer them my sincere congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

As we prepare to mark Remembrance Day, let us remember that honouring our veterans goes beyond ceremonies. It's reflected in how we care for them, how we support them, and how we ensure their stories live on for generations to come.

That's why my colleague MPP Dave Smith's motion requesting that Veterans Affairs Canada assume responsibility for mistakes on the Presence in Absence memorial is so important. I hope that my colleagues will support this motion.

JOANNE GERVAIS

MPP Jamie West: Joanne Gervais, la directrice générale de l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario du grand Sudbury, ACFO, prend sa retraite après 16 ans à ce poste. Depuis mon élection en 2018, j'ai tout de suite connu Joanne, une ardente défenseuse des droits des francophones.

Sous sa direction, l'ACFO du grand Sudbury a connu une période de croissance et de visibilité remarquable, marquée par la célébration du 50^e anniversaire de la première levée du drapeau franco-ontarien, l'étude sur bilinguisme et les services en français dans la ville du Grand Sudbury et son implication dans la création d'une université par, pour et avec les francophones du nord-est de l'Ontario à l'Université de Sudbury.

Je veux remercier Joanne Gervais pour son respect et son éducation et surtout pour son leadership envers la communauté francophone de Sudbury. Ses contributions au développement de la communauté se feront sentir pendant des générations. Elle nous manquera dans ce rôle, mais je lui souhaite une merveilleuse retraite. Elle est très méritée.

Madame, avant 2018, je ne parlais pas français. À cause de la communauté francophone dans ma communauté de Sudbury et de Mme Gervais, je travaille tous les jours pour apprendre le français. Merci et félicitations, Joanne.

EVENTS IN MISSISSAUGA-LAKESHORE

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I had an incredible summer attending over 600 events in Mississauga-Lakeshore and across the province.

A special highlight for me was speaking at the groundbreaking for the new Mississauga hospital. Thanks to the province's investment of \$14 billion, our new hospital will be the largest and most advanced hospital in Canada.

Later, I was honoured to serve as the emcee at the groundbreaking for a new Luso supportive housing facility in Hamilton, which will be home for up to 45 adults living with disabilities. Because of my private member's bill Pr42, which we passed last year, this home will be exempt from most municipal taxes.

My team and I also hosted two events in Lakeview, at the Small Arms Inspection Building: the first, Italian Heritage Night in June, and the second, our Community Leader Awards and Thanksgiving Dinner. Combined, we had an incredible turnout of over 1,200 people. It was a special honour to present the King Charles Coronation Medals to recognize outstanding community leaders from across Mississauga-Lakeshore, including Don Cherry, for his support of our first responders and military.

Finally, as we look forward to tomorrow night, I want to wish everyone a happy and safe Halloween. And go, Jays, go!

FERRERO CANADA

Mr. Will Bouma: Last Thursday, I had the pleasure to attend the first global product launch outside of Europe in Ferrero corporate history. Members of Ferrero's North American senior leadership team, ambassadors from Luxembourg, Italy, as well as local elected dignitaries attended—and, most importantly, Ferrero line workers and skilled tradespeople who actually produce the Ferrero Rocher chocolate squares, the new product that was launched in Ferrero's state-of-the-art plant in Brantford.

In April of this year, Premier Doug Ford and Minister Vic Fedeli helped announce Ferrero's \$455-million expansion and investment in Brantford, which will create 500 new, well-paying jobs for the people of Brantford who will make the quality treats that we have come to expect from Ferrero.

Nutella, Tic Tac, and Ferrero Rocher are some of the most beloved and recognized brands in the world.

This new product launch is a huge vote of confidence in Ontario's farmers, in Ontario's manufacturers and in Ontario suppliers, and it lays the final building blocks that will make Brantford Canada's confectionery capital of the world.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'd like to welcome to the House today some very special people: my wife, Silvana, who I'm really happy to see here today; my daughters, Frances and Mercedes; my son-in-law Rohan; and a very special person, my first grandchild, Luca, born July 11 this year.

There's no better feeling in the world than holding your precious grandchild. Of all the things that my hands have

held, the best so far is little Luca. The first day of his life was the best day of mine, and his first breath took mine away.

Welcome Luca and family to Queen's Park.

Hon. Stephen Crawford: In the members' gallery today, I would like to recognize and welcome to the Legislature members of my constituency. We have Dan Cooper, Roberto Ficzero, Michelle Andreacchi, Gloria Liu, Saghar Darabnia, Justin Moniz, who's a co-op student. Also present today in the gallery are Jeremy Wittet and Lori Miller of Port Dover. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP Wayne Gates: I want to introduce my daughter. It's the first time she has been to Queen's Park in the eleven and a half years I've been elected.

Chantel Marotta, welcome to Queen's Park, dear.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to welcome the students and educators from Richland Academy, and a special shout-out to my amazing niece, Vivienne Lecce. Congratulations, and welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There's a lot of family here today.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je veux souhaiter la bienvenue au maire de Mattice-Val Côté, Marc Dupuis. Bienvenue en Chambre, Marc.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I would like to welcome Ed Arvelin, the chair of the mental health and addictions division of OPSEU; Carol Mundley and the team from CAMH; and all the other health care workers who are here today at Queen's Park. Welcome to your House.

1030

Ms. Marit Stiles: This morning, I'd like to welcome OPSEU members who are joined here by president JP Hornick, as well as, I want to say, a number of health and housing advocates who have been here with us this morning. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'd like to welcome a couple of special guests from the Guelph Community Health Centre: Kate Vsetula, director of community programs and development; and Mark Rodford, vice-chair. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Today in the House we have Rev. Archpriest Father Zareh Zargarian alongside Mr. Sargis Stepanyan and his wife, Armenouhi. Major Sargis is a triple amputee, Artsakh war hero, arm-wrestling champion, and a real inspiration.

In 2014, Major Sargis acted quickly to save wounded soldiers. A mine exploded, leaving him severely injured and costing him both legs and his right arm.

Through sports, he rebuilt his life, discovering the talent for arm wrestling—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Introduction of visitors.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: It is my pleasure to introduce members from the leadership team at SickKids hospital who are here in the gallery today: Dr. Ronni Cohn, president and CEO, and Mr. Jeff Mainland, executive vice-president.

Thank you for joining us at Queen's Park today.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I would like to welcome members of the Flemingdon Health Centre who do great

work in connecting community members from Don Valley West to the health services they need: CEO Jen Quinlan, Peggy Gerritsen, Hamna Mughal, and Samyuktha Pandalangat. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: This morning, we have a great visitor from the riding of Durham. From my Bowmanville constituency office, my excellent executive assistant Mr. Doug Ellis is here.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Today, I'd like to welcome the group from Canada Powered by Women to Queen's Park. Thank you for being here.

Mme France Gélinas: I'd like to welcome the members of the Alliance for Healthier Communities who are with us this morning and invite everybody to join them for lunch in room 230.

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

I just want to remind members, according to our standing order 34, up to five minutes shall be allotted during both the morning and afternoon routine for members to recognize guests. Members may introduce visitors by stating only their name, title, organization and/or riding. No member shall seek to introduce a visitor at any time by way of a point of order.

We have a few minutes left on the clock. I recognize the member for Hamilton Centre.

MPP Robin Lennox: I'd just like to welcome the members of OPSEU/SEFPO mental health and addictions. Thank you for all that you do.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: I'd like to welcome Kimberley Floyd, CEO of WellFort Community Health Services, from Brampton Centre, in the House today.

Mr. Will Bouma: Welcome to the gallery today the family of page Oliver Prang: David and Melissa Prang; Linda, Cole and Tyler McIntosh; Brian Waggoner; Frank Resendes and Sara Marcella; and Daniel Novakovic.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The members will be aware that appearing on today's Orders and Notices paper are two notices of opposition days for debate next week. Under standing order 45(d), I'm required to select one of these notices for consideration.

When this issue has come up in the past, previous Speakers have often chosen the notice which was submitted first. However, given that the notices from the official opposition and the third party were submitted so close to each other that they were received at essentially the same time, this approach will not work in the present situation. I must instead consider the relative opportunities for each party to submit notice.

As I explained to the House in my statement on Monday, October 20, three opposition days are allotted to the official opposition and one to the third party during this fall meeting period. At this time, neither party has yet moved an opposition day motion. Since the official opposition has the greater entitlement and given that opportunities still remain for both parties to give notice, I have decided that the motion standing in the name of the leader

of the official opposition will be the one to be debated next week.

The notice of motion from the third party will therefore be removed from the order paper and is eligible to be tabled again.

I thank the members for their attention.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yesterday, I went to committee to get some answers from the Minister of Labour about the pay-to-play scheme that he has been running with the Skills Development Fund. I've got to tell you, I was very disappointed, Speaker. It was more of the same.

The minister just keeps claiming that his hand-picked winners were the only ones that met the government's priorities. The problem is that we know, based on the Auditor General's report, that some high-ranking applications were rejected while lower-ranking ones were bumped up to the top. The minister will not say what additional criteria he and his staff considered that the professional ministry staff did not.

So my question is to the Premier; I'm going to ask him again: Can the Premier explain, how did these low-ranked applications suddenly get bumped up to the top of the pile?

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

Hon. David Piccini: As I said yesterday, and as I say now, this Premier, this government is fighting for workers in this province. We're standing up to President Trump. We're working with our automotive sector, with our steel sector to make sure we're responsive to those needs.

This Minister of Energy rose today to speak about our integrated plan—a plan that's going to build new nuclear facilities; a plan that's going to build small modular reactors; and a plan that's going to require a talent pipeline. We're investing in programs like the Introduction to Millwrighting program at Darlington that's training a next generation.

This is our time to seize a moment in Ontario to be energy-sufficient, to build the infrastructure we need for future generations. We have a fund that's powering that talent pipeline, and we're proud of every investment we've made.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Well, there we go again. No answers. This is why I'm directing my questions to the Premier. Let's get some answers. It should be pretty clear.

It seems like the only criteria that these high-ranking applications failed on was not making enough donations to the Conservative Party.

Last week, we saw photos of the minister enjoying rinkside seats with SDF recipients. The minister said, "Oh, there's nothing to see here"—that he paid for his own tickets, like everybody else. But yesterday, CTV reported

that those seats belong to executives. That box belongs to those executives who received funding from this government.

So the minister really needs to come clean and show us the proof. Who paid for those tickets?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I'm glad she's talking about things that happened a year before I even became minister.

But while I'm Minister of Labour now, I'm focused on supporting workers, making the investments we need to stand up for industries that they ignored and/or that they vote against every time it's here.

When we bring mining to the floor to unlock the incredible potential of the Ring of Fire—the historic announcement we made this week—that member had an opportunity to ask about those investments. But she doesn't care about it, because they don't care about miners in the north. They don't care about unlocking that incredible potential.

When it comes to building the infrastructure to get our families out of gridlock, when I've stood beside our incredible labour partners, they fight against those very investments. Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass—at every chance they've had to stand up for the projects that are going to put men and women to work, they vote against it every time.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I would have remembered if I paid for those tickets. No answer, once again; it should have been an easy one.

This week, Trillium reported that Base31 received millions from this fund. Base31 is a company that's working with Fieldgate and Deco Homes. You'll remember those developers because they were the ones that were going to make a windfall in profit from the greenbelt scheme. It's remarkable. They don't even bother changing the cast of characters in these schemes.

At least now, after dozens of embarrassing headlines, will the Premier finally fire his minister?

Hon. David Piccini: Maybe the member would care to actually pick up the phone and call Mark Kirkpatrick, the president of Loyalist College, who's leading the incredible training at Base31 in a region, in a county, that's driving tourism, investment and growth; a region that wants to build residential construction. They want to know that we have a talent pipeline to support the underemployed or the unemployed. That's what we're doing—training talent pipelines into the construction sector. And that's what the incredible team at Loyalist are doing.

1040

They said that we don't support colleges. When that's proven that it's false, she's now talking about a college project. Speaker, you can't make this stuff up.

We're making the investments to support a talent pipeline, and I wish you'd take the opportunity to actually come out to see the investments that are changing lives.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I'm going to go back to the Premier. I hope I get some answers.

Yesterday, in the committee, I asked about how many people got training from these bumped-up applications that suddenly got approved. I want you to hear the minister's response on this. I was asking about how many people got training from these bumped-up applications, and the minister's response was, "People are free to support who they want."

The minister's message was pretty clear: This is a pay-to-play scheme, and the minister isn't even apologizing for it. In fact, he is admitting that he remains open for business.

Does the Premier still think that this minister should be the one administering this fund?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I was very clear: 700,00 Ontarians have received training.

That member could choose to support—she could choose to stand with LIUNA and support Oaks Revitalization, helping folks get a second chance at life, changing lives.

She could stand with Carpenters' Local 27, supporting incredible programs like Building Up. Mark was here last week.

She could stand with millwrights in regions like Darlington, but that would actually require them to have a plan on energy and support nuclear. We know they're against nuclear. We know they're against SMRs.

She could stand with operating engineers, but she's against the very towers and things that they want to build.

At every opportunity, we're standing with organized labour; we're standing with non-profits; we're standing with remarkable women like Natasha Ferguson who are here. And at every chance, we're supporting meaningful training that's changing lives.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, let me tell the Minister of Labour something: Workers want fairness. Workers stand together. And pitting workers against each other based on how deep their pockets are is not how unions do business.

The issue here is not about who is getting the money; it's about why. This is not about the fund, and it's not about the recipients; it's about the politicians.

Evidence shows very clearly that donations to the Conservatives or hiring their friends as lobbyists is the only way to get this government's attention. It makes you wonder how this government is making decisions about anything that's involving the people's tax dollars.

Does the Premier think that this is how we should be administering public dollars, or is he finally going to fire his minister?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, the only one pitting organized labour against organized labour is that leader.

We've done the work to show up, to sit down with unions, as I've said, that previously protested members on this side. We've done the work to sit down with them, to

find common understanding, to advance progressive pieces of legislation in this place that are advancing healthy and safe workplaces; putting training first, that's breaking down barriers; supporting new training centres for organized labour. And she doesn't support any of that.

We're going to work hard with those very groups that once supported them—but then they lost their way—and are now supporting Premier Doug Ford because we have a plan to build and a plan that's going to support their workers, earning a better job with a bigger paycheck.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I've got to tell you, this is indefensible; this is embarrassing—it's embarrassing for every single MPP on the government side.

Every fund that you administer is going to now have a cloud over it.

I am heading to Brampton today, again, where 3,000 workers are losing their jobs because Stellantis is packing up and shipping down to Illinois. While this Premier is so busy defending his minister's shameful administration of this pay-to-play scheme, 3,000 workers are losing their jobs, 3,000 families are thrown into uncertainty.

I want to know when this Premier is going to stop defending his minister and start defending Ontario workers.

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, I look forward to seeing the member in Brampton, where her party has no seats. They have no seats because they stood against Highway 413. They have no seats in Brampton because they stood against the Bradford Bypass. They have no seats in Brampton because they don't support the mayor and council with record investments we've made in hospitals, record investments we've made in public transit. They voted against every issue that mattered to the people of Brampton.

Colleagues, are we embarrassed about what we've done for Brampton, about the training? Absolutely not.

We're going to support the people of Brampton. That's why every seat in Brampton in this place is occupied by a Progressive Conservative member.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

I had the opportunity to spend some real quality time with the Minister of Labour yesterday afternoon in estimates. I had the opportunity to ask him about what happened with Keel Digital Solutions and his friend Michael Rudderham, which we all know was clearly a conflict of interest and which is very clearly covered in the Members' Integrity Act. I just simply asked the minister—I said, could he guarantee that what happened with Keel Digital Solutions and Michael Rudderham, his close friend, would not happen with the other \$700 million that's left in the fund? He couldn't or wouldn't or didn't answer.

So maybe the Premier—Speaker, through you—could ask the minister to give us that guarantee.

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

Hon. David Piccini: The guarantee we make to the people of this province is that we will put their interests first. We will invest in hospitals. We will invest in the men and women who build those hospitals. We'll invest in the men and women who build our steel sector, ensuring we have their back. We're going to make sure we have projects that actually put steel first. We're procuring our own steel here in Ontario.

When the health science sector was beleaguered pre-pandemic by the previous government, we had no PPE made in Ontario. This Premier, this government stood up to actually make things in this province again.

We recognized the need for rapid training in Ontario, in tariff-affected sectors, to support men and women in our economy accessing better training for better jobs. I've brought them here to this place. The members have had opportunities to sit down—they chose not to. They chose not to sit down and actually learn about the incredible projects—when I've invited them to those in their own ridings, they've said no.

We're going to keep making those investments. That's why these workers are supporting our party—

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

Mr. John Fraser: The only guarantee that's happening here is that if you hire the right lobbyist, you'll get a grant. That's the guarantee.

Let's look at the facts. We know that Keel Digital Solutions received \$7.5 million from the Skills Development Fund. We know they were represented by Michael Rudderham, the minister's close friend. And we know that the minister openly admitted to intervening on behalf of this low-scoring proposal; he said so on the radio. It's clear; he's on the record there. The minister didn't declare a conflict; he should have. That's wrong. It applies to all of us here.

So I'll ask again: Can the Premier guarantee that, with the remaining \$700 million in the fund, this will not happen again?

1050

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, that's incorrect. What I said is that this government will stand up for priority projects that advance the interests we were elected to fulfill.

We support first responders; we invest in them. When we are given the opportunity to make sure we get tough on bad actors, to lock up violent criminals, to support the first responders who are on the front lines, we step up to do that.

They support a revolving door of justice that keeps criminals on the street.

When we bring forward priorities to actually build an energy sector that's going to ensure we are an energy superpower and support the projects to get it done, they vote against them. They don't support them.

When it comes to ensuring we unlock the incredible potential that is northern Ontario, again, they vote against

these very measures that are putting men and women to work.

That's why organized labour has abandoned those parties—because we have their best interests at heart, and we're putting the projects that are ensuring their members get to work.

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

Mr. John Fraser: The minister is not standing up for anybody; he's hiding behind them. He's hiding behind firefighters. He's hiding behind tradespeople. He's hiding behind women. He's hiding behind people with disabilities. Every day, he stands up here and he does this. He's dragging them down into the mud with him. He uses them as a shield. So they should take offence at him saying what he's saying here every single day.

We know the story of FGF Brands. They had a video with the Premier; you can go and watch it on YouTube. It's really entertaining. After that video, the company went out and they hired the man behind the curtain, Kory Teneycke, and Rubicon.

Interjection: The shadow Premier.

Mr. John Fraser: Right. And then the million-dollar grant came, and then \$32,000 ended up in the PC Party's bank account. It's all kind of fishy.

Back to the Premier: Can he guarantee, if he can't guarantee for the ministers, a faux pas—or a conflict of interest, I should say; it's not a faux pas—can he guarantee that the thing that just happened with FGF foods is not going to happen again?

Hon. David Piccini: We're celebrating and standing with those workers.

If that member took half his energy to actually show up, as members on this side of the House do, to shop steward meetings, actually show up on the grounds of manufacturing plants to talk to workers about how we can support them on their training journey; if he took half the energy to support the manufacturing sector that they decimated, in making the critical investments to support increased automation, but to actually have the training programs to go with it, to support those workers so that we can drive forward a better manufacturing sector—they're not interested in that.

We're going to keep working with and alongside those workers every step of the way.

I'm proud to be part of a caucus where we show up, we roll up our sleeves and we earn the supports of those labour unions.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. I know where the Premier got his idea for the 1-800-Doug line. I'm hearing that there's a 1-800-Kory line; I haven't confirmed it yet. I think it's actually on the bottom of the Skills Development Fund application, but because we can't see it, I cannot confirm.

So I just want to know: Who is out there saying, "Better call Kory, and here's his number"?

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

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, we've got very serious issues facing our economy. And as I look out here, I see a colleague and a team here who are working hard to make new energy investments, who are working hard to make sure we have purpose-built rental units, and working hard to keep our streets safe, and making record transit investments.

We stood together—the Minister of Transportation and I—proposing “slow down, move over” legislation that puts and protects organized labour. We earned the support of those workers whose job sites we visited, who recognize that when you make investments in infrastructure, when you make investments in highways, roads and bridges, they actually get to work to collect a bigger paycheck, with that better job.

We want to make sure, in Ontario, we're a country that's building again, a country that's able, and a province that's able to stand on its own two feet.

That's what we're fighting for. And we're never going to give up on those workers and never give up on those—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: FGF Brands knew they'd better call Kory; so did Heddle Shipyards. They knew they'd better call Kory. And now what we know of is that Kory Teneycke and Rubicon have 16 clients—all of them got money from the Skills Development Fund. So that's a lot of “better call Korys.” It has also been a lot of money into the PC Party's bank account.

The thing is, there are 700,000 people out of work in this province, struggling to pay the bills.

So my question to the Premier is, how is it that this government is more interested in making already rich people even richer when hundreds of thousands of children's families have to visit food banks every week in this province?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, the member doesn't finish his research. As I've said in this House before, if he had finished it, he'd realize that his former candidates who ran for that party have been supported by the SDF—his vice-president of fundraising; people who donate to his party. They're the only ones talking about that because, as I said, none of that matters.

What matters is the outcomes and what you're doing to train, whether you're supporting the automation in the manufacturing sector that they decimated, helping those workers better train so that we can keep that industry here; whether it's working with the steel sector, ensuring buy-Ontario provisions, that we're actually using that on our record infrastructure projects that we've invested in that they haven't supported; whether it's building the new energy plants, again, that they don't support—the bizarre questions I heard earlier this morning about natural gas.

This Premier is standing up for industry. This Premier is standing up to support men and women—

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

Mr. John Fraser: Well, we could heat this building for a year with what's coming out of this minister.

The government is not the Premier or the minister's personal piggy bank, and it's not the PC Party's piggy bank either. Lobbyists like Kory Teneycke, Amin Massoudi—all the usual suspects—shouldn't be allowed to set up a toll booth in front of the Skills Development Fund.

Again, 700,000 people are out of work in this province. Hundreds of thousands of children's families are visiting food banks every week. People can't get the health care they need. Their kids can't get the help in school they need. Things are tough out there. And all the while, the Premier is making insiders, his friends, lobbyists, rich people even richer than they already are.

When is the Premier going to wake up and smell the coffee and realize that people are hurting out there?

Hon. David Piccini: He can make all the quips and jokes he wants, but the serious matter is that when I stood before farmers desperate for natural gas support, they got nothing from the previous government. In fact, they railroaded over farmers' fields to put their expensive hydro schemes that benefited no one, when people were choosing between heating or eating. That's their record.

Then, this Premier came in. We're actually refurbishing new nuclear plants that they wanted to shut down. We're building new nuclear plants that they wanted to shut down. We're supporting the farmers. We're making these investments. That's the serious business. We take the time to look them in the eye, to understand what they need—to look our workers in the eye, who know that when we make investments in infrastructure, when we make investments in hospitals, in bridges, in the things to build a stronger Ontario, they are better off and we live in a more prosperous province. Now we have a fund that supports their training. And we're never going to stop.

NURSES

MPP Robin Lennox: Nurses are the backbone of our health system, and community nurses, in particular, have been critically underpaid for years. The Ontario Nurses' Association is currently representing 44 primary care workers from the North York Family Health Team who are on strike because they are not getting the compensation they deserve. These 44 workers provide comprehensive care to 95,000 people, and they want to be back at work, but they need fair pay.

Will the minister finally commit to closing the wage gap and ensuring that our community nurses and our dedicated health workers are fairly compensated?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm sure the member opposite appreciates and understands that it's actually not the Ministry of Health that negotiates with these individual clinics or agencies like community health clinics.

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What I can tell you is, our government is 100% committed and supporting our nurses by expanding the number of nurse education positions that are available across Ontario. Since 2018, 100,000 new nurses have been registered and licensed to work in the province of Ontario. That is a government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, that

is committed to ensuring that as our population grows, as our population ages, we are absolutely there to not only train and support existing nurses but to do the work necessary to make sure that we have a sufficient workload to protect the people of Ontario.

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

MPP Robin Lennox: The minister well knows that they have underfunded community care for years. Now they have directed hospitals to cut their budgets to the lowest they've been in years, which we know will lead to further layoffs and service cuts. The FAO has predicted that we may lose up to 7,200 hospital nurses by 2027 as a result—and if the minister hasn't been, anyone who has been to a hospital recently can tell you that we don't have a surplus of nurses as it is. Each and every nurse is desperately trying to fill the gaps that this government has left, caring for more patients than is considered safe and burning out because of it.

Will the Minister of Health do the right thing: fund our hospitals adequately so that nurses across Ontario not only keep their jobs but finally get the mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios proven to save lives?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Will the member opposite—as we continue to invest, as we give, for the last three years running, an additional almost \$1 billion to hospitals on their base budgets, will they stop voting against it in the budgets? As we expand nurse positions across our post-secondary institutions, making sure that there are more opportunities for young people to train in nursing and other critical health care workforces, will the member opposite and her party stop voting against those investments?

We are acting with our investments and showing very clearly that we are committed to ensure that across the province of Ontario—a \$2.1-billion investment in primary care expansion. And yet—respectfully—the member and the NDP continue to vote against those investments.

What is the problem? Do you not support our health care workforce—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order. Order.

I recognize the member for Kanata–Carleton.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I believe—I really do—that every member of this place knows what's involved when we get involved in politics. We all work hard for our constituents. We do the very best we can to represent their interests and try to respect each other as we discuss various topics and issues.

For the past several days, we've asked the Premier and the Minister of Labour about money that was handed out to donors, insiders and friends through the Skills Development Fund. When we questioned the minister about whether he would accept that his actions were, at the very least, a conflict of interest, he accused us of not caring about paramedics, firefighters and construction workers.

Yesterday, when the Leader of the Opposition asked the Minister of Labour about whether he thought it was appropriate to give millions—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Response?

Hon. Steve Clark: I appreciate the member's preamble. I know she didn't get the question out.

On our government's behalf, the Skills Development Fund is literally changing lives. In every corner of the province, workers are being trained.

I have to tell you, in my own riding of Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, we've had some tremendous projects, some non-profits. Really, it has been life-changing for many of these young men and women.

Obviously, we respect—Speaker, through you to the member—the Auditor General's recommendations.

I want you to know—to the member for Kanata–Carleton—that every round that SDF has come forward, we've made those types of improvements to the process that the Auditor General is speaking about. We'll continue to respect her recommendations, to implement her recommendations.

But make no mistake, we'll continue to ensure that skills training is top of mind—

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

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I thank the honourable member for his response.

The truth of the matter is, the Minister of Labour admitted that he manipulated the scoring system for the Skills Development Fund, which rewarded friends and donors. In fact, after awarding a friend millions of dollars from the fund, he then jet-setted to Paris to attend his wedding. Does that sound normal? He attended hockey games on season's tickets owned by a family of donors. Does that sound right? He has not shown the regard for ethics and transparency and fairness that we need here.

Speaker, my mother always said that whatever behaviour you reward is the behaviour you are going to get.

When is the Premier going to stop rewarding and defending bad behaviour?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the honourable member: The people who have benefited most are those 700,000 Ontarians who now have a skilled trade, and now many of them are employed—many of them employed in the first 60 days after the SDF fund.

Again, the minister respects the Auditor General. But at the same time, the member needs to note that 72% of the approved projects under SDF were ranked either medium to high. I know the member knows her percentages. Speaker, 72% is pretty high. It's a lot higher than the 57% that her leader got—and ultimately had to resign. But there's always room for improvement.

As I said, it's very important that we respect the Auditor General. On this side of the House, we're going to be implementing her recommendations. But at the same time—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: My question is for the Minister of Health.

Families across Ontario know how important SickKids hospital is. It's a place where world-class doctors, nurses and staff care for some of the sickest children in our province. Every day, they give hope to parents and help kids get back to being kids.

But as demand for health care continues to grow, we know our hospitals need ongoing support to help expand services and reduce wait times. Every child deserves to get the care they need, close to home and when they need it most.

Speaker, can the minister please share how we are supporting SickKids hospital and other pediatric centres to give children across Ontario a stronger, healthier future?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: It's an absolute pleasure, always, to talk about Ontario's world-class pediatric hospitals.

Our \$330-million annual investment in pediatric care is investing in 100 initiatives across Ontario, and we are already seeing those results.

We've implemented an immunization catch-up program through the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

We are hiring more pediatric surgical staff to increase the number of surgeries at McMaster Children's Hospital.

SickKids has also reduced its surgical wait-list below December 2022 levels and treated an extra 1,300 children in the emergency department in 2024.

We aren't stopping there. We are pleased to approve the build of a new patient care tower on the SickKids campus, part of Project Horizon.

We are getting it done for the people of Ontario, and particularly for our pediatric patients.

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

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: Thank you to the minister for her answer.

For generations, families across Ontario have turned to SickKids hospital in their moments of greatest need. I hear from many of my constituents in my riding on the excellence in care they offer children and their families. From life-saving surgeries to world-leading research, SickKids has been there for children and parents when they need it most. Their doctors, nurses and staff go above and beyond every single day, giving children a chance to heal, to grow and to dream again. They care not only for the patient, but also for the entire family, offering comfort, compassion and hope.

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It's not surprising that SickKids has earned international recognition for its excellence and leadership in pediatric care, reflecting the dedication of everyone who works there.

Speaker, can the minister please share how our government is continuing to support SickKids and its staff as they continue their extraordinary work for Ontario families?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: There's no doubt that the member from Eglinton–Lawrence is a fierce advocate for SickKids—but of course across all of Ontario.

Every Ontarian can take pride in having world-class pediatric hospitals in Ontario. This includes renowned facilities like McMaster Children's Hospital, CHEO in Ottawa, and, of course, the children's hospital at London Health Sciences Centre.

But I am truly honoured to offer particular recognition and congratulations to Toronto's SickKids hospital today. SickKids was recently named the number one children's hospital in the world by Newsweek's global rankings. This is an incredible achievement, beating out more than 250 children's hospitals worldwide.

Joining us today from SickKids are members of the outstanding leadership team: Dr. Ronald Cohn and—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

FORESTRY INDUSTRY INDUSTRIE FORESTIÈRE

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Last Saturday, I rallied with community members who recently lost their jobs at the Ear Falls sawmill. I promised the people of Ear Falls that I would continue standing up for them, whether it's to call for tariff relief, to get these tariffs removed, and to bring back the 160 jobs that were lost.

Speaker, what tangible actions has this government taken to reopen the mill and bring the jobs back to Ear Falls?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products.

Hon. Kevin Holland: We were disappointed to receive the news of Interfor's decision to curtail operations at the Ear Falls sawmill. The Premier's team and I reached out immediately to local officials, including Mayor Kahoot, to offer support to the workers and the community.

Ontario's forest sector continues to face challenges from weak lumber markets and unfair US softwood lumber duties, now exceeding 45%. These tariffs are creating serious pressures on mills and communities all across the north.

Ontario has invested over \$150 million through programs such as the forest sector innovation program, forest biomass program, and the Northern Energy Advantage Program to modernize mills, lower costs and strengthen competitiveness.

The federal government promised \$9.2 billion to support Canada's forestry. We will work with them to ensure Ontario gets their share.

Our government will keep fighting unfair trade practices, supporting northern jobs and defending the long-term future of Ontario—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ce qu'on vient d'entendre, ce n'est pas un plan; c'est un mode de réaction. On a besoin d'un mode innovation.

Ce gouvernement attend toujours que l'usine soit en crise avant d'agir. L'Ontario a besoin d'une stratégie forestière à long terme qui modernise les opérations,

assure des ententes d'électricité stables et des investissements dans l'innovation.

Le gouvernement écouterait-il ceux qui connaissent mieux cette industrie et présenterait-il un vrai plan pour protéger les emplois et prévenir les fermetures dans l'industrie forestière?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Mike Harris: I do appreciate the question, because we do want to have a focus on the forestry industry. I think it's extremely important that we understand that this industry is facing duties and tariffs over a 45% rate right now. I'm going to say it's incumbent on the federal government to land a deal with the United States so that we're able to see this money be reinvested into this sector. We have billions of dollars across Canada that are tied up in these duties with court cases, and we need to get it settled. So let's get the federal government to the table, and let's get them spending that \$1.2 billion that they promised. We want to see it spent here in Ontario.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Stephanie Smyth: It's just about two weeks now. We just want an answer to a simple question. Last week, I asked the Minister of Labour to release the ranking criteria used to decide which Skills Development Fund applications were ranked low, medium or high. We're not asking for the criteria to apply; we're asking for the criteria used to rank. That's the part that the minister keeps avoiding. It's starting to look like this government has created its own kind of circular economy, where the money goes around and around between donors and government grants. Give a few thousand to the PC Party, get a few million back.

Speaker, they just cancelled the big PC fundraiser, but don't worry. Black Friday is just about a month out, and these donors are already getting a donor discount. If only ordinary Ontarians could get that kind of a deal.

My question was to the Minister of Labour, now not here, so I'll ask the Premier—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'll remind the members, we do not mention when a member is in the Legislature or not.

You can continue your five seconds.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Will the minister please release the ranking criteria so Ontarians can see who's really cashing out on this circular economy?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the government House Leader.

Hon. Steve Clark: The minister clearly responded to you last week. The SDF program, the scoring criteria—it has been publicly available since the program's inception. The program's evaluation guide, including the full scoring rubric and weighting, is all published on the Ontario government website.

In my previous answer to your colleague, I indicated that 72% of all of the projects were either in the medium or high category. Again, we've been very clear since the

Auditor General's report as a government that there's always room for improvement.

We respect the Auditor General's recommendations. We will continue to implement them.

But again, this is a fundamental difference between the government and the third party—we believe in the power of the Skills Development Fund. We know it changes people's lives. The party opposite has lost its way; it doesn't support skilled trades.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Nobody, again, is disputing the power of the Skills Development Fund, but it has turned into a rewards program—give thousands, get a million back. This program is not only about training workers; it's about training insiders.

The minister has had every chance to come forward and restore transparency, but he has chosen secrecy instead.

So I'll ask again: If the minister cannot provide transparency—or, rather, if it needs to be forced out of him—on how these decisions are made, how can this minister believe that he is the right person to oversee this fund, and will he resign?

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

MPP Mohamed Firin: Speaker, as the member is aware, all the criteria are available online. And if the member wants to talk about scores and donations—their vice-president of their fund is also supporting our program.

Speaker, what this program is actually about is impact—679,000 people across this province have been trained, and over 101,000 people have retained a job within 60 days.

I've travelled this province—I was in Thunder Bay. I've been to St. Thomas. In Ottawa, I met a young man by the name of Kevin. Kevin was working a dead-end job. Today, he's earning three times the salary that he was getting; he's put a down payment on a home. This is about impact, and this is what this program does.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION

HOUSING

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

Speaker, Ontario's heritage tells a story of who we are—from our historic buildings and landmarks to the communities that we call home.

But as our province continues to grow, we need to move faster to meet the increasing demands of housing. Families are coming to us, and we have to cut tape and reduce delays. They want progress, but they also want us to protect the character, history and heritage that make our towns and cities unique. We can do both—build for the future and protect the past.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is improving the permitting process to get homes

built faster, while also protecting Ontario's rich history and heritage for the future?

Hon. Graham McGregor: Thank you to the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore for that question and his advocacy for the residents he serves.

As the member said, Ontario's heritage is what defines us. It's the way to remember our past while leaving behind a legacy for future generations.

However, as Ontario continues to grow and our government embarks on the most ambitious infrastructure build in the history of this province, we must balance conservation with the need to build.

That's why, through our reforms to the Ontario Heritage Act, we are streamlining processes through our Heritage Framework Transformation, to ensure that Ontario becomes the fastest permitting jurisdiction in the G7. We're modernizing how heritage is managed through our Heritage Framework Transformation, designed to streamline approvals for priority infrastructure like transit, housing and health care.

Speaker, we are designing a system that is tough, fast and fair. By cutting red tape and protecting what we need to protect, we will protect this province for generations to come.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Mississauga–Lakeshore.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Thank you again to the minister for his leadership on this important issue.

Speaker, Ontario's builders and communities have been clear: Delays in the permitting and review process can slow down progress and drive up costs.

That includes delays caused by a growing backlog in archaeological assessments. These reviews must be completed before shovels can hit the ground.

Our government has made a commitment to cut red tape and speed up approvals. We're focused on getting homes built faster while still protecting our history.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is reducing Ontario's archaeological backlog and cutting red tape to help get more homes and infrastructure built in this province?

Hon. Graham McGregor: I want to thank the member again for that question.

We are working to preserve Ontario's archaeological resources while undertaking an ambitious plan to build a stronger Ontario. We're taking decisive action to keep pace with the increasing demands, and it shows. My ministry has worked tirelessly to reduce the backlog by 77%, from more than 3,000 reports in May 2024 to just 698 as of September 2025. And we're on track to eliminate the backlog entirely by the spring.

We're enhancing the quality of incoming reports, hiring more archaeological review officers, streamlining processes and improving data and analytics, while making sure the system is transparent, efficient and responsive to today's needs.

Madam Speaker, through these reforms, we are reducing red tape, lowering costs, protecting jobs and build-

ing a stronger economy for today and for future generations of this province.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

MPP Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier.

For four years, Niagara has been asking this government to build a south Niagara waste water treatment plant—four years of meetings, four years of promises, four years of the Premier saying he would fund it. But not one dollar, not one dime has flowed to this project.

Speaker, will Niagara finally see the funding for our waste water treatment plant in next week's budget so that Niagara can finally move forward with housing, jobs and the clean water infrastructure that the Niagara region desperately needs?

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

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: There's no government in the history of this province that has done more for the people of Niagara region than this government.

And no thank you to the member opposite, who has done nothing since he has been elected—but a big thank you to my friend the member for Niagara West. It's due to his advocacy, dedication and hard work on behalf of the residents of Niagara region that the region is getting two state-of-the-art hospitals, funding for the twinning of the Skyway bridge, funding for the expansion of the Peach King community centre, and an 86% increase in Homelessness Prevention Program funding; not only that, millions of dollars in the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program.

We'll not take any lessons from the member opposite.

We'll continue to make historic investments and continue to get things done for the people of Niagara region.

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

MPP Wayne Gates: Back to the Premier: You did mention the waste water treatment plant. We can't build one house in Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Thorold or St. Catharines without a new waste water treatment plant. So maybe you should answer the question.

It's Niagara Week at Queen's Park. The number one ask: Fund the Niagara waste water treatment plant. Families, seniors and workers in Niagara are facing massive property tax increases caused by this government downloading costs to municipalities.

People in Niagara, in my riding, are really struggling with the cost of living, while this government sits on their hands.

Premier, will you assure Niagara municipalities today that they will not be left with raising taxes to cover the shortfall while this government delays the Niagara waste water treatment plant?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries.

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: I'm pleased to be able to rise today and respond to the member for Niagara Falls, because we do have an amazing legacy of provincial investments

in the Niagara region—specifically, for water and waste water services.

Tens of millions of dollars, through the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund, have been provided to both the region and to local municipalities. I spoke with the mayor of Pelham over the weekend. The \$17-million investment that they're receiving through the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund is more money than their entire capital budget for an entire year. That's substantial investments in the Niagara region.

Look at the millions of dollars—some \$35 million—going into irrigation and \$41 million that was additionally announced, going into water-enabling services.

Minister Surma of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing have come in every single time, joining with the Premier. They have invested tens of millions of dollars in support for municipal partners across Niagara. And when they were here this week, they were very pleased to see those investments, and they were grateful for them.

SPORTS AND RECREATION FUNDING

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Millions of dollars are being handed out by this government like candy at Halloween with no accountability—watch out for cavities, folks. Meanwhile, kids in Ontario whose families can't afford to put them in community sports are being left behind.

Right now, the provincial government provides just \$200,000 to KidSport Ontario to help kids play community sports. In Alberta, the number is \$3.5 million, and that's a province one third the size of Ontario.

In Durham region, we have seen instances of children as young as 12 being arrested for serious robberies and gun crimes. Youth sports and addressing the root causes of crime and poverty is an important way to help combat this.

Speaker, through you to the Premier: Will you commit to increasing provincial funding to KidSport Ontario to help give every kid in Ontario the opportunity to play community sports?

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: A couple of weeks ago, I'm proud to announce, the Ontario government invested more than \$43 million in after-school programs in the province of Ontario. The after-school program helps 110 organizations across the province deliver fun, safe and supervised activities in after-school time frames to approximately 400 sites in over 80 priority neighbourhoods—so \$43.9 million over three years to continue the program.

Our government is proud to invest in programs that give hard-working parents access to fun, safe and supervised activities for their children.

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

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: When I look at press releases that are coming out by Durham Regional Police, the problem is continuing to get worse and worse. It's impacting com-

munities. It's impacting families. And kids aren't getting that opportunity to succeed.

Speaker, when I was growing up, we had enough, but we didn't have the money for me to be able to play organized sports. I was disappointed, but it's okay, because I understood our situation. But it's not okay, still, for the hundreds of thousands of children in our province who are missing out on opportunities to stay active, who are missing out on opportunities to strengthen their mental health and well-being, and to stay out of trouble.

Meanwhile, this government is shovelling Skills Development Fund money out the door without measuring its impact or properly looking at applications. Again, watch out for cavities.

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Again to the Premier: Why doesn't your government care about giving Ontario's kids a fair chance to play?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: As I said, on October 23—I think that was just last week—there's more than \$43 million across the province of Ontario in after-school programming, in addition to the \$54 million last year, in 2024-25, to support the sport and recreation sector across the province.

Our government is proud to champion participation in sport and recreation activities across the province. We continue to work hard to foster a culture of athletic excellence here in the province. We know that sport and recreation contribute to better health outcomes in the long and short term, community pride, and a strong and resilient economy. So we're allocating more than \$54 million to support the sport and recreation sector, collaborating with the sector. We're promoting, supporting and increasing opportunities for everyone across the province to participate in sport and recreation, from playground to podium.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Gridlock is costing our economy billions and billions of dollars every year. Drivers stuck in traffic lose time, productivity and peace of mind.

Under the Liberal government, things got worse. They talked about building but never delivered. Projects stalled, costs soared, and congestion grew year after year after year.

Our government is changing that. We're getting shovels in the ground and results on the road. From the QEW to the 401, we're widening lanes, fixing bottlenecks, and keeping people moving. Right here in Toronto, work is well under way on the Gardiner Expressway to help combat gridlock and restore traffic flow.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government's action plan is helping to fight gridlock and keep Ontario moving forward?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Thank you to the member for Burlington.

I would love to highlight the success of the Gardiner Expressway, a project, with the investment of Premier

Ford of \$73 million to the city of Toronto, that helped expedite it by over 18 months—18 months ahead of schedule to get one of the busiest highways in our province back to being fully operational. I want to thank all the contractors who were on the job, the workers who were there 24/7. Despite the opposition of both the NDP and Liberals on this project, we made sure that we reduced gridlock for the thousands of drivers who come into the city every single day.

It's important to keep our economy moving. That is why we're continuing to invest over \$30 billion across our province into projects like the Gardiner Expressway, the DVP and others, like the Bradford Bypass and the—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the minister for his response.

Speaker, the still-Liberal leader and former mayor of Mississauga once questioned if Ontario even needs new roads. That attitude perfectly sums up the 15 years of failure by the previous Liberal government. They talked about building but never delivered. Projects stalled, congestion grew, and commuters paid the price, including commuters in my community of Burlington.

In the last election, Ontario chose a government that builds, not one that blocks progress.

The early completion of the Gardiner Expressway shows that our plan is working and delivering results.

Can the minister please highlight how our government's highway investments are helping commuters in Burlington and across the province of Ontario?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Whether it's the former leader of the Liberal Party or whether it was a former federal Liberal environment minister, they don't believe in building roads across this province.

We took our agenda to the people of this province, and for three consecutive majority terms, they have agreed with Premier Ford and this government in our commitment to build Ontario. Whether it's \$30 billion of investments into highways, bridges and roads across all of Ontario or whether it's our \$70-billion investment into public transit, we are getting it done and building for the next generation.

When the Ontario Line is fully completed, it will move 400,000 people every single day.

During the construction of the 413, we will support more than 3,500 jobs each and every single year.

We are going to continue to ensure that we are building for the province and getting it done.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I want to correct my record: Yesterday, when the member from Don Valley East was asking a question about our government's investment in health care, I stated that 70% of Ontario residents are connected to a primary care provider. In fact, almost 90%

of Ontario residents are connected to a primary care provider.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

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

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order on standing order 59: I would like to inform the members of the schedule for next week.

As you ruled before question period, Speaker, on Monday, November 3, in the afternoon, we'll have debate on the opposition day motion, followed by second reading debate on Bill 40.

On Tuesday, November 4, in the morning, we'll have second reading debate on Bill 45. In the afternoon, we'll have second reading debate on Bill 40, and we'll follow that with second reading debate on Bill 27.

On Wednesday, November 5, in the morning, we'll have second reading debate on Bill 45. In the afternoon, it's our intention to debate a government motion.

On Thursday, November 6, in the morning, we'll have second reading debate on Bill 45. As the finance minister has previously announced, we'll have the fall economic statement in the afternoon. The balance of that Thursday afternoon will be to be determined.

DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING A MORE COMPETITIVE ECONOMY ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 VISANT À BÂTIR UNE ÉCONOMIE PLUS CONCURRENTIELLE

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

Bill 56, An Act to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 56, Loi modifiant diverses lois.

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

The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.

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

On October 29, 2025, Ms. Khanjin moved third reading of Bill 56, An Act to amend various Acts. All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Ford, Doug	Pirie, George
Anand, Deepak	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Quinn, Nolan
Babikian, Aris	Gualtieri, Silvia	Racinsky, Joseph
Bailey, Robert	Hamid, Zee	Rickford, Greg
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Bouma, Will	Harris, Mike	Rosenberg, Bill
Bresee, Ric	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Jones, Sylvia	Sandhu, Amarjot

Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jones, Trevor	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh	Bouma, Will	Hamid, Zee	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Jordan, John	Sarrazin, Stéphane	Bourgouin, Guy	Hardeman, Ernie	Sattler, Peggy
Ciriello, Monica	Kanapathi, Logan	Saunderson, Brian	Bowman, Stephanie	Harris, Mike	Saunderson, Brian
Clark, Steve	Kerzner, Michael S.	Scott, Laurie	Brady, Bobbi Ann	Holland, Kevin	Schreiner, Mike
Coe, Lorne	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, Dave	Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Laurie
Cooper, Michelle	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, David	Burch, Jeff	Jones, Trevor	Shamji, Adil
Crawford, Stephen	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Graydon	Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Shaw, Sandy
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura	Cerjanec, Rob	Kanapathi, Logan	Smith, Dave
Darouze, George	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina	Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kernaghan, Terence	Smith, David
Denault, Billy	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.	Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, Graydon
Dixon, Jess	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tibollo, Michael A.	Ciriello, Monica	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, Laura
Dowie, Andrew	Pang, Billy	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.	Clancy, Aislinn	Leardi, Anthony	Smyth, Stephanie
Fedeli, Victor	Parsa, Michael	Vickers, Paul	Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Firin, Mohamed	Pierre, Natalie	Wai, Daisy	Coe, Lorne	Lennox, Robin	Stiles, Marit
Flack, Rob	Pinsonneault, Steve	Williams, Charmaine A.	Cooper, Michelle	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Gélinas, France	Shamji, Adil
Bell, Jessica	Gilmour, Alexa	Shaw, Sandy
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Smyth, Stephanie
Bowman, Stephanie	Gretzky, Lisa	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Hsu, Ted	Stiles, Marit
Burch, Jeff	Kernaghan, Terence	Tabuns, Peter
Cerjanec, Rob	Lennox, Robin	Tsao, Jonathan
Clancy, Aislinn	Mamakwa, Sol	Vanthof, John
Collard, Lucille	McKenney, Catherine	Vaugeois, Lise
Fairclough, Lee	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Watt, Tyler
Fife, Catherine	Pasma, Chandra	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Rakocevic, Tom	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
French, Jennifer K.	Sattler, Peggy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 69; the nays are 41.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

VETERANS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on private member's notice of motion number 15.

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

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1147.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Mr. Dave Smith has moved private member's notice of motion number 15. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	French, Jennifer K.	Racinsky, Joseph
Anand, Deepak	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Gélinas, France	Riddell, Brian
Bailey, Robert	Gilmour, Alexa	Rosenberg, Bill
Begum, Doly	Glover, Chris	Sabawy, Sheref
Bell, Jessica	Gretzky, Lisa	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Gualtieri, Silvia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 108; the nays are 0.

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

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

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

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order, Speaker: I did make an omission with standing order 59. On Thursday, November 6, prior to question period, we will have a tribute in honour of Remembrance Day, with five minutes for each recognized party and two minutes for the independents as a group.

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

The House recessed from 1152 to 1300.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that today, the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated October 30, 2025, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FIVE SENSES PRODUCTIONS INC. ACT, 2025

Ms. Bell moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr10, An Act to revive Five Senses Productions Inc.

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. It's called "Hands Off Our Schools!" It is a petition that is calling on the government to reverse its moves with Bill 33 to threaten the services students rely on every day, as well as increase the Ontario Student Assistance Program and properly fund Ontario's colleges and universities.

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

UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Mr. Ted Hsu: This is a petition from my constituents in Kingston, who are asking the government of Ontario to invest in Ontario's future by boosting Ontario's universities' base operating funds by 11.75% annually for a five-year period to bring Ontario close to the Canadian average. One of the things they point out is that universities train the talent needed for Ontario's growth industries.

I had the privilege of talking about the Queen's University mining engineering department yesterday at the Meet the Miners event, where they know all about the value of mining engineering training at Queen's University.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I have a petition here from constituents who have a grave concern with President Trump's tariffs and the chaos that they're causing in the North American auto sector. Basically, the request is to have the province protect Ontario businesses and the workers who are being affected right now by these unjustified tariffs.

I will give this petition to Elizabeth.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's an honour to rise today to present a petition to stop the privatization of health care

under this government. Privatization is something that we should learn from. We've seen jurisdictions that have moved from a public health care model into a private model, and it's always ended up that there's less care when profit becomes the motive.

This petition calls upon this government to recruit, retain and return doctors, nurses and PSWs with better pay and better working conditions. This government knows that there's a problem with the merciless way in which people in different domains of health care are paid less than people doing the same job in a different domain.

We also need to make sure that we are expediting the licensing of tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and health care professionals, and make sure that the people have employer-paid sick days. Make education and retraining free or low-cost for nurses and doctors and other health care professionals.

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

STUDENT NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Mr. Ted Hsu: This is another petition from the residents of Kingston and the Islands. They're petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to join other provinces and territories in making school food a priority by increasing Ontario's annual investment in school food programs. What they want to say is that school food programs will help build a strong Ontario, respond to tariffs, increase affordability and support students to be well nourished, ready to learn, set up for success and help Ontario's economy.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. Andrew Dowie: The petition I have in hand is from a local resident indicating that, down our way, given the trade dispute with the United States, we are lacking customers. So the petition calls on the Ontario government to lead the charge to tear down these barriers that exist between provinces for trade. We know that the trade barriers cost the economy up to \$200 billion every single year and it lowers our GDP by 8%. They increase our costs of goods and services that we procure.

The petition also calls for enabling mutual recognition with reciprocating provinces and territories that goods, services and registered workers that are good enough for other provinces in Canada—the great provinces in Canada—have that mobility. They're doing a great job. We can respect that they've done a great job and accept their use for sale or work in Ontario.

I'm happy to affix my signature to this petition, and I'll send it down with page Lorraine.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: The petition that I'd like to read today is entitled "Protect Children and Youth in Care: Cuts Hurt Kids."

Since this government has taken power, we've seen some very damaging things happen to children in the youth welfare, child welfare, mental health and youth justice sectors, and it's directly from cuts from this government. We saw the removal of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

We know that children who are in care deserve far more funding and far more support. At the same time, we've seen legislation from this government to take control of children's aid societies rather than investing in them and investing in the kids who need care the most. Instead of being cared for by professionals, sometimes these children are being placed in hotels, they're being placed in office spaces and, furthermore, they're also sometimes being paired with unlicensed supervisors. This government needs to know that an investment in youth is an investment in our future, especially kids in care.

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

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: It's been about a couple of weeks since it was announced that production at the Ear Falls sawmill was shutting down indefinitely. We know that it has caused 160 people to lose their good union jobs, but also it impacted the livelihoods of other people living in Ear Falls and surrounding communities.

Last week, the people of Ear Falls joined together in a rally. Over 70 people signed this petition urging the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reopen the Ear Falls sawmill immediately, to establish a forestry job protection task force and to coordinate a provincial strategy to use Canadian lumber to build Canadian homes.

I fully support this petition. I'm signing it now, and I ask Alyssa to bring it to the Clerks' table. Meegwetch.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Ted Hsu: This petition is from people in my community and across Ontario. It asks the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to repeal Bill 5 that was passed back in June, and it asks the government to freeze the implementation of Bill 5. The reasons for that are that Bill 5 attempts to strip away environmental safeguards, override Indigenous rights and dismantle democratic oversight.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have a petition here from Ronald Bell of Cottam, Ontario. Mr. Bell talks about interprovincial free trade, and Mr. Bell is calling upon the Legislature of Ontario to allow for interprovincial free trade. He wants us to recognize those provinces that are willing to do free trade with us. We should do free trade with them.

1310

Mr. Bell says this is good for Ontario and good for Canada. I support this petition, and I will sign it and hand

it over to this excellent page, Lyla, to bring it over to the Clerk's table.

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It's been two weeks since Interfor announced that production at Ear Falls sawmill was shutting down indefinitely. This has caused 160 people to lose their good union job and has also impacted the livelihood of other people living in Ear Falls and the surrounding community.

Last week, the people of Ear Falls joined together for a rally. Over 70 people signed the petition urging the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act to reopen the Ear Falls sawmill immediately, to establish a forestry job protection task force and to coordinate provincial strategy to use Canadian lumber to build Canadian homes.

I fully support this petition. I'm signing it now and ask page Bella to bring to the Clerk's table.

FERRY SERVICE

Mr. Ted Hsu: This is a petition from my constituents on Wolfe Island asking the Ministry of Transportation to operate the Wolfe Island ferry at the previous hourly schedule or better. And the reason for this is that the unreliable ferry service has impacted almost everything on the island, from agriculture to the tourism industry, the construction industry—a lot of contractors won't go to Wolfe Island because of the unreliable ferry services—primary care, medical services. A clinic closed down because of unreliable ferry service. The school enrolment is going down because of unreliable ferry service. The median age is going up because of unreliable ferry service.

So, all of these things depend on the ferry service, and that's why my constituents are petitioning the Ministry of Transportation to do something.

PHARMACARE

MPP Robin Lennox: Madam Speaker, I'm very proud to present a petition to expand access to pharmacare. As you know, one in five Ontarians does not currently have access to public or private drug coverage, leading to a lot of untreated medical conditions, unnecessary emergency department visits and hospitalizations.

So, I'm very happy to add my name and sign and present it to Orion. Thank you.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Ted Hsu: This is a petition from my constituents in Kingston and the Islands. It calls on the Premier and the health minister to demonstrate their commitment to Ontario's health-care workers by ordering OHIP to set aside a decision from the HSARB, which went against Dr. Elaine Ma, who organized mass vaccination clinics during the pandemic, and to order OHIP to cease demanding repayment of earned billings.

CHILD CARE

MPP Robin Lennox: I'm proud to present a petition from residents in my riding asking for the province to act quickly to finalize the \$10-a-day funding extension with the federal government.

Many of my constituents are desperate to find child care spaces, particularly in Hamilton, where the need outweighs the available supply.

So I'm very happy to add my name and will send it down with Finley.

CAREGIVERS

Mr. Ted Hsu: This petition from my constituents in Kingston calls on the Ontario government to support 24/7 family caregivers.

The work that they do for free is so valuable to society and substitutes for resources that would otherwise be taken from the public sector.

So, they're asking for support, including financial compensation, and I think that would be money well spent, because they're really devoted and they do spend a lot of their time caring for loved ones and replacing the care that we would otherwise have to provide from the public sector.

HOUSING

MPP Robin Lennox: I'm very proud to present this petition from constituents in my riding, asking for Bill 6 to be withdrawn.

We see very high rates of unsheltered homelessness in our riding. We know that the true solution is permanent, dignified, safe housing. We don't want to further criminalize those who are unhoused.

So I'm very happy to add my name to this and send it down with the page.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr. Ted Hsu: A petition from my very active and aware constituents in Kingston and the Islands that calls upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to defeat Bill 5, to repeal it and to maintain the Endangered Species Act, 2007, and to ensure that economic growth does not come at the expense of biodiversity and ecological integrity.

EDUCATION FUNDING

MPP Robin Lennox: I'm very proud to present this petition from constituents in my riding, advocating for more funding for our public school system. We know there have been tremendous cuts across the board to our public education system, and our kids and our schools deserve attention with increased funding.

I'm very proud to add my name and send this down with Ollie.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Ted Hsu: This petition is entitled "No Farms, No Food." It petitions the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately take steps to stop the expropriation of prime agricultural land. It also calls on the government of Ontario to have a transparent and collaborative conversation with Waterloo region officials and farmers to promote sustainable development in the region. This was spurred on by what's going on in Wilmot.

EDUCATION FUNDING

MPP Robin Lennox: I've heard from a number of constituents in my riding about significant concern about Bill 33. We have many, many signatures in support of withdrawing this bill. Our constituents have been very clear that they want a strong, local democratic voice in their elected trustees. They want to see increased funding for the public school system, and they want local parents to have a say in their students' education.

I'm very pleased to add my name and will be sending it down with Mansahaj.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIGHTING DELAYS, BUILDING FASTER
ACT, 2025LOI DE 2025 VISANT À LUTTER CONTRE
LES RETARDS ET À CONSTRUIRE
PLUS RAPIDEMENT

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

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

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We are resuming debate but have moved into questions and responses on Bill 60.

I recognize the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: I didn't have the opportunity to listen to the member's remarks, but if he could just take a moment and—what were his main concerns with the bill?

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank my friend from Timiskaming–Cochrane for the question. In my comments, I spoke specifically about the problem with schedule 12 within Bill 60 and how it's removing the already meagre protections that tenants have. I added the voices of a lot of people from my riding, and I'd like to add Gaby's right now, who wrote expressing strong opposition about removing rent control and security of tenure, calling it "the most radical and harmful changes to tenant protections we've ever seen.... These changes would

be the biggest and most consequential loss of tenant protections in our lifetime, impacting millions of Ontarians. This could result in a significant increase in homelessness, particularly for the most vulnerable including seniors.”

It's important that this government looks in their email inbox, see how it's blowing up with people who are deeply concerned, whether it's seniors, people living with disabilities, new Canadians, those on social assistance and those on fixed incomes. This change of schedule 12 in Bill 60 will hurt millions.

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

Hon. Mike Harris: Unfortunately, I, too, was not part of debate yesterday when this came up, so I'm sorry if you've already covered it. But I would like to say that there are hundreds of rental units that are sitting vacant in the province right now because small landlords are afraid to rent them out because they are afraid of getting stuck with a bad tenant. I know this bill seeks to change and remedy some of that, to make sure that mom-and-pop landlords are going to be looked after and taken care of and that they're able to make sure that they are having qualified renters come in and use that space.

I would like to hear some of the comments from the member from London North Centre about how he thinks it's important to protect small mom-and-pop landlords.

1320

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's really, truly important that we understand the distinction between large corporate landlords and small landlords. Small landlords treat their tenants like family. They look after them. They look after their properties.

But unfortunately, this Premier has been standing with big corporate landlords, including large ones who are going to make a huge amount of money. That's why they removed rent control on new buildings first occupied after November 2018. This benefits them by far the most.

But we also have to consider that this government has ruined the Landlord and Tenant Board, so much so that when landlords bring a case to the Landlord and Tenant Board, their case will be heard within three months. If a tenant does the same thing, it takes them a year or up to a year and a half. It was something that was declared as moribund by the Law Society of Ontario.

This is a problem that the government has chosen not to fix. It's something the official opposition has called upon, because we need to make sure there's justice for everyone.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

MPP Wayne Gates: On Bill 60, I was wondering—in Niagara, we have the highest number of seniors in the entire province. And what's happening in Niagara is they're being renovicted. Their rents are going up; they can't afford the rents. We're seeing more and more seniors actually living in their cars. It's disgraceful. They're using food banks. Is there anything in Bill 60 that will help seniors stay in their homes?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Niagara Falls for the question. There's absolutely nothing within Bill 60 that will help seniors. In fact, there are things within Bill 60 that will harm seniors. And you have to wonder why they're there in the first place.

Seniors have often lived in their places for decades. They've in fact paid for the building in which they live. And yet this government has seen fit to bring forward AGIs. We've also seen the past Liberal government open up vacancy decontrol. It's that unwritten incentive for bad corporate landlords to kick a good person out because they know they can jack up the rent to whatever the market can withstand. That, unfortunately, harms seniors the most. I have seniors in my riding who are deeply concerned about living paycheck to paycheck. We know that their fixed income is not going up nearly enough with inflation. If they had to find a new apartment today, they would be living in their car.

I want to thank the member for that question. It's important that the government listen to seniors. It's important that the government listen to renters. It's important that we make sure, during a homelessness crisis and a housing crisis, that we keep people housed.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from London North Centre for his remarks yesterday. I did listen intently, and I guess it's been about 20-plus years that I've been around government, both as an elected official and inside, working on permits. I'd say every level of government has said it's time to deal with duplication and inefficiency. It takes too long. But nothing ever came from the complaints.

Bill 60 actually does do something about clearing out some of the clutter that exists of duplicate processes and truly unnecessary duplicate approvals. They do exist. I've filled out the paperwork myself. So I'm hoping the member could actually just respond to this: Is the red tape about protecting Ontarians, or is it about pricing them out of their future homes?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for the question. I'm glad that the member was listening carefully to my presentation because during my presentation, I spoke about how this government promised 60 addiction and recovery beds to my community of London, and they were slated to open on April 1. The beds were created, staff had been hired, ready to start their jobs. And then this government wouldn't get off their wallet. They wouldn't send the money to actually fund this program.

So we waited months, and then months. And every time that people reached out to the government to ask, “Why is this happening?” they were handed a pat response talking about all the other things that the government was doing across the province, not addressing the question that was presented to them, and it was only just opened in late October. You know, I was really glad that this funding has finally come through, but if you want to speak about delays, you need to look at your own self and ask yourself why the government sat on this funding for so long and

why they left these beds empty when people's lives could have been helped and saved, getting them on the path to recovery. That's on you.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for London—Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I have a question for my colleague here. As many of us, we've been receiving emails, and this is a specific individual email that was received from Sam. They write, "Please vote no on Bill 60. I have lived in my apartment for 30 years and if this bill goes through, I will not be able to afford to stay here because I am on disability and can barely afford what I am paying now. I will not be able to find another apartment that I can afford because rents are sky high and affordable housing is still unaffordable if you are on disability. I will end up living on the streets."

The question in this email to the government is, "How is this bill supposed to solve the housing crisis?" I ask the member to address that.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank my friend from London—Fanshawe for an excellent question and for bringing the voices of real people here into this Legislature. I wish we heard the government do it more, or I wish that they would consult more and actually listen to how their disastrous legislation will impact regular people. Unfortunately, we don't hear that from this government.

But this legislation, as it stands now, is something that is going to harm so many people. I want to also turn to what Gaby had to write to me. She said, "The government is now proposing to give even the biggest corporate landlords the power to evict tenants and increase rents at any time, which will result in more Ontarians being unable to afford to remain in their homes.

"Tenants could be forced to move every 12 months, face unpredictable and exorbitant rent increases, and would put thousands of Ontarians into highly precarious situations where they would be afraid to speak up about repairs out of fear of reprisal from corporate landlords."

Speaker, this government has really drilled holes in the boats of tenant rights and tenant protections, and it's time that we plug those holes. It's time that we fix them. It's time that we make sure people continue to be housed.

We saw during COVID that evictions went up and people lost their homes. Unfortunately, we have the homelessness crisis that we see now, and it's up to this government to accept their responsibility and fix homelessness with housing.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

MPP Wayne Gates: Thank you very much. I appreciate getting a chance to ask again. Is there anything in this bill that will go back to 2019, where they took rent controls off new builds, which has caused the crisis in rents? As we saw, in Toronto now, it's \$3,500 to \$4,000 to rent a place. In Niagara, it's \$2,500 to \$2,700.

Is there anything in this bill that will say finally to these corporations that are making millions of dollars on the backs of people that can't afford to pay their rent—anything at all in this bill?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Thank you again to the member from Niagara Falls. There's absolutely nothing in this bill to protect renters. In fact, when they removed those renter protections from those buildings first occupied after November 2018, there was no duty to inform people, so they found out only after 12 months of being in their home.

This government has made it like the Wild West where the rich get richer and people are struggling more and more. Wages have not gone up, benefits have not gone up, and yet this government is expecting regular folks to somehow find more money to pay wealthy people. That's a huge problem.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): It's now time for further debate.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's always great to get up in this House and speak on behalf of residents from beautiful Beaches—East York and all over Ontario, because we represent all Ontarians.

When talking about Bill 60 today, Fighting Delay, Building Faster, 2025—the way that this government flippantly tables legislation, justifies it using unfounded stories and pushing it through, ignoring community voices or outright silencing them is so disheartening. Regardless of political stripe, who you voted for in the last election, people are mad, and they're confused.

Why is the Premier killing whole industries when he says he is here to protect Ontario? Why is he costing Ontarians billions in flood, heat, wildfire damage? Why is he risking the lives of Ontarians everywhere by not insisting on extreme weather awareness and infrastructure that can protect us against it? Why does he not care about the lives of all road users? Why is he forfeiting jobs in agriculture, manufacturing and maintenance sectors and more? And why is he gambling with the security of tenants?

Why? Because this government is doing what they always do: Create a crisis. Give everyone a coronary. Give them undue emotional and physical stress. Retract it. Walk it back. Distract with something else more egregious.

Repeat, repeat, repeat, instead of just doing our job as provincial representatives.

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First off, I'll talk about the rent control controversy. Let's start by addressing this ginormous elephant in the room. This government proposed consultations on policies that could permit landlords to control who occupies units and for how long, essentially the end of rent control and indefinite leases.

My office received almost 1,000 emails just over the weekend—1,000.

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'm sure that your offices did too, even though the member over there thinks it's funny to hear from your residents.

You made tenants fear for their livelihood, for that of their families, and people thought they were going to be forced to experience homelessness. Why would you even do that?

Renter households grew at over twice the pace of owner households from 2011 to 2021 in Canada, with 5.5 million renter households, or a rental rate of 33.1%. In 2024, 80,000 individuals were experiencing homelessness, and this legislation would have further obstructed their ability to obtain secure housing by removing much-needed stability for renters.

This also comes at a time when the government has just shot down the member of Kitchener Centre and the member of Etobicoke–Lakeshore’s private members’ bill calling on the government to implement a strategy to end homelessness by focusing on stable, affordable, long-term and intentional housing initiatives. Why would you do that?

I ask, who is benefiting? It cannot be the thousands of people in the green roof industry whose jobs you’re playing with—we’ll get to that next, so stay tuned. It can’t be the people who won’t have means to pay their rent when you are finished with them. Certainly not the hundreds of thousands of unemployed Ontarians struggling to find a job—700,000, I think we’re looking at as the number. Certainly not the people part of the organizations who were passed over by the Skills Development Fund and who were robbed of their fruitful workforce opportunity. Sounds like it’s just your donors who have been benefiting, and your friends.

Now to the green roofs portion of this bill, which is actually pretty much hidden. This government is continuing their crusade of scapegoating green policies for their unaffordable housing and housing delays. It’s not true. All these things you think are holding up housing are not.

What’s holding up housing is—you could just look in the mirror yourselves. You could totally upzone all the avenues in the city of Toronto, arterial roads—upzone them as of right tomorrow, European-style like Paris, eight to 10 storeys. Just do it. Instead, you were looking at building McMansions in the greenbelt, which is not a sustainable solution.

As with every time before, in Bill 17 and in Bill 5, this is short-sighted and an illogical policy. Green development facilitates major long-term savings. It’s smart economically. You claim to be fiscally responsible people, a fiscally conservative government. I’m not seeing it.

Green development, we said, facilitates major long-term savings, not to mention that we are in a climate crisis—I know you’re petrified of those words, but we are—where we can use all the greenery we can get to ensure clean air and cool relief from extreme heat. The cooling effect reduces energy costs to everyone and reduces stress on the electricity grid during extreme heat. As you know, this past summer and every year in the last few years, it’s becoming increasingly hotter and hotter.

Additionally, the climate crisis brings disastrous weather events. Last week, I spoke to you at length and took you on a walk down historical lane with all the natural disasters that have occurred as of late. We’re thinking about our friends in Jamaica and Cuba right now with Hurricane Melissa—and the 2024 flooding. Who knows what this summer will bring for extreme heat? The

derecho in eastern Ontario; Lytton, BC, and their flooding: We need to build climate-resilient infrastructure. It’s not that hard. It’s cost-effective. It’s logical. It makes a difference. It makes a difference especially in the long run. In 2024, severe weather events cost Canada \$8 billion, with the floods over a couple of days alone amounting to \$1 billion.

Importantly, green roofs provide essential stormwater water management and flood reduction. Green roofs capture significant volumes of rainwater, protecting overwhelmed and often dual-purpose sewer systems. If you haven’t had a tour of a building with a green roof, let’s get you that tour. If you’re not aware of what actually a green roof is or does, come and see me afterward. We’ll go on a field trip.

Remember the only partially treated storm and sewer water that had to be dumped into our lake, making it unswimmable due to *E. coli* in the 2024 floods? The 12.5 million square feet of green roofs installed on more than 1,000 buildings in Toronto capture over half a billion litres of stormwater water from buildings and the sewer system annually. Did you hear that? This is equivalent to the entire treatment capacity of Toronto’s Ashbridges Bay treatment plant in one day. That plant—it used to be in my riding; it’s next door; I call it the perfume factory—does monumental, vital work. This collection frees up much-needed treatment capacity for developers wanting to connect to the system.

There is a high cost to inaction. We know that. A recent report by the Financial Accountability Officer of Ontario—FAO—found that climate change under the high-emissions scenario is projected to add an additional \$47 billion in operating and maintenance costs to Ontario’s municipal building and facilities budgets by the end of the century—\$47 billion, guys, if we sit here and do nothing.

The green roof bylaw only applies to new commercial, institutional and multi-residential buildings over six storeys with a minimum gross floor area of 21,520 square feet. The bylaw does not apply to single-family-home construction—unless you want to put a green roof on, which would be fantastic. So, claims that green roofs hinder housing starts are patently false.

I’m wondering, has anyone here spoken to the industry? You claim you’re about Ontarians and you’re about keeping jobs, creating new jobs. You brag about that on a daily basis. Has anyone here spoken to the green roof industry? I think not. I think you might want to, especially if you have any employees or any plants in your ridings, which we’ll get to in a minute.

Moreover, the Premier and this government are adamant that they will protect Ontario, especially Ontario jobs. Killing green roofs devastates the green roof industry in Ontario, resulting in short- and long-term negative impacts in Ontario. An estimated 1,600 jobs lost—1,600 jobs lost—if you do this, in both rural and urban ridings. This isn’t just about Toronto, guys. I know you’re not big fans of Toronto, even though you should be, but you’re not. This affects your riding as well. A \$75-million economic

boon for Ontario would be removed—\$75 million. That could cover that ad that was played in the United States recently.

Jobs in this sector span trades, agriculture, aluminum manufacturing, plastic injection moulders, engineers, landscape contractors, soil blenders and maintenance crews. The list goes on. This isn't just some architect in an ivory tower, guys; this is on the ground, boots on the ground, workers.

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In 2020 a study concluded by the Delphi group found that in 2018 the green roof industry had a gross output of more than \$90 million and contributed more than \$51 million to the GDP.

Do you know that the cost of a green roof is actually 0.05% of the cost of building a skyscraper in Toronto? So you're vilifying that industry. You're vilifying them. It's absolutely mind-boggling. I can only think you just don't understand green roofs.

As we said, 500 million litres of combined sewer overflow—aka raw sewage—are removed by these green roofs in Toronto. Green roofs are the most cost-effective way to manage stormwater management—most cost-effective. What else are you going to do? You've had floods in your area. You've had people with basement floods. This is the most cost-effective way, easiest way. Support the industry, keep the jobs, keep the green roofs.

We've heard from several people in the green roof industry who fear for their own livelihood, their employees and the health and safety of our province. In the case of the members opposite, in case you think that this does not concern you, there are some ridings here that have jobs in their ridings that are integral to the green roof industry, and they'll be lost if you move forward with this legislation: Burlington, the riding of Burlington—I hope the member across is listening to that—major job loss; Flamborough—Glanbrook; Lampton—Kent—Middlesex; Mississauga—Erin Mills; Mississauga—Malton; Milton; and Oxford.

But we all benefit from green roofs. But those ridings—if I were the MPP in those ridings, I would be paying attention. I would be talking to the Premier. I would be talking to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I would be talking to my colleagues because you don't want to lose those jobs.

And how is it that we're going to lose them? It's very interesting to me. I almost need to hire a private detective, because where is it in the bill? Is it in the bill? Or is it an order in council? Is it messing with the City of Toronto Act? What's going on here, guys? Does anyone know? Can anyone explain that? Well, I'm on the case so I'll be figuring out how you're doing it. But it's not a good thing. There's a high cost to inaction, and it's completely illogical.

So if you can look at yourself in the mirror, if you can sleep at night knowing that you are ripping out jobs in your community, that you are actually promoting flooding in Ontario and you got money to burn—

Hon. Steve Clark: That's not true.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: You are promoting flooding, sir, because you're removing one of the most cost-effective stormwater management systems in Ontario—in the world, I would say.

We'll figure out green roofs more later but I can't not talk about bike lanes, of course, because, actually, that's my mode of transportation. If I choose to cycle, that's my prerogative. As you choose to drive or you choose to walk or take transit, everyone has the prerogative to go to and from work, to and from their outings and get home safely to their families.

Schedule 5, section 5, sets out:

"Except as permitted by the regulations, a municipality shall not, by bylaw or otherwise, reduce or permit a reduction in the number of marked lanes available for travel by motor vehicles on a highway or a portion of a highway under the municipality's jurisdiction and control for any of the following purposes:

"1. A bicycle lane.

"2 Any other prescribed purpose."

My gosh. Would it be Neanderthals? I used to call you dinosaurs, but now I'm going to call you Neanderthals, I think, because that style of thinking is so backwards. You're going back to cavemen. Are you kidding me?

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: World-class cities and states and provinces all around the world are actually making their streets pedestrian-first, because streets are about people. But at least keep everyone safe. Talk to CAA; they've done studies. They have some survey where pretty much 70% of drivers in Ontario also bike at some point. Why wouldn't you protect them? Why are you making this two-tiered system? It is so antiquated. I don't know if you want to go back to Black Creek Pioneer Village or what you're trying to do, but it's very antiquated thinking.

And it's a massive overreach, a massive municipal overreach. Here we go again with the Premier and this government's focus. Why are you so focused on destroying things that work and not fixing things that don't work, like health care and education and housing? Why don't you fix those instead of destroying what's already working? Are you bored?

Also, stop meddling in municipal affairs. If you want to, then go back. Some of you were elected officials municipally; so was I, with the Premier. The Premier and I worked together at Toronto city hall when he voted for green roofs. Did you know that?

Hon. Steve Clark: I did know that.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: How do you explain this now?

This bill is complete garbage, and that's a polite word. I expect you to do better and think about Ontarians, think about jobs and think about keeping people safe.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I wonder if the member could talk about why it's important that we have clean water. Maybe

if you could elaborate on why new legislation came in, a.k.a. red tape, to protect us from contaminating water and the cost of polluting water when we don't have enough oversight to make sure that water systems are not contaminated.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Well, I didn't even get to that part in the bill because I'm too hot and bothered about the green roofs.

I've talked about water in this chamber before, and I recommended the Walkerton book, *Well of Lies*. Because you guys—maybe you were asleep or not paying attention when Walkerton happened in Ontario and I thought we learned from that. So, yes, there are concerns. What do we have? We have schedule 8. We have schedule 16. We're not sure what you're doing. Even if you're trying to help municipalities to build housing by working on their water plants, we don't know. We don't trust you guys.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Beaches–East York for her remarks. Actually, I'm glad that Walkerton was brought up because the Walkerton Clean Water Centre was established to help train water officials and elected officials with the importance of safe drinking water, and the Ontario Clean Water Agency exists now that allows for small municipalities to procure professional licensed operators. So, the environment has changed quite a bit and it continues to this day—I've received the training myself—but rural municipalities still are a challenge for water and waste water systems.

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And so, we need to think differently. We have a lot of underused land, sterilized land, because the massive projects aren't doable. My question to the member opposite is about what she thinks about the streamlining of the communal water systems to allow rural municipalities to experience growth in their communities.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to my favourite member across the aisle—

Interjections.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: In spite of this bill, he's still my favourite.

When I was on the regional governance review when we went all around Ontario, talking to municipalities—remember that regional governance review? Remember that exercise in futility, that bogus exercise? We did hear from different areas who wanted something similar to what you're proposing, so I'm open, but the problem is whether we trust you or not.

If you care so much about water, why would you still not keep green roofs? Because that is, as we said, the best stormwater management system out there: the most cost-effective in preventing raw sewage from going into our waterways.

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank my friend from Beaches–East York for her presentation and for speaking about tenant rights.

I think it's important that we discuss a problem that was created by the previous Liberal government, which was bringing in vacancy decontrol. If I recall correctly, when the official opposition and I tabled and brought forward Bill 23, the Rent Stabilization Act, it's my recollection that the independent Liberals at that time did not vote either for or against that legislation.

My question is: What is your position on vacancy control? Would you stand for tenants and advocate for fixing this gap in tenant rights?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'm always happy to stand up for tenant rights, to the member for London North—

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Centre.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: London Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: London North Centre.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Okay.

Thank you for the question. Thank you for reminding me of the history here, because I only came here in 2022. But I do absolutely want to stand up for tenant rights.

Did you know that I have, in beautiful Beaches–East York—it may come as a surprise to you, but I have a building called—the address is 500 Dawes Road. It has the worst landlord in Ontario running that. There have been so many complaints, so many fines and so much media. The mayor has been out. We've been out. We're trying to help all tenants have a good quality of life and have security in their homes.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: My question is about green roofs. You know, this government just hates to talk about climate change and greenhouse gases. At the recent consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the minister almost said greenhouse gases, but he corrected himself: He really just meant to talk about greenhouses. That was the closest he got.

But it is a fact that humans are causing the temperature to go up around the world. It is a fact, physical law, that hotter air holds more water vapour. It is a fact that that will cause more rain to fall. In fact, we're experiencing right now here the remnants of the hurricane. There's going to be a lot of rain over the next day or two.

So my question to the member is: Does this make green roofs more valuable or less valuable?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to my fellow big environmentalist over here, who has crusaded for sustainability his whole life.

I just don't understand this government. If you don't believe in the climate emergency and you have your eyes closed to all this wonky weather, you might call it, these storms and all these disasters—surely you get the numbers, the financial sense and the logic for putting in green roofs, or surely you get the jobs; you don't want to lose 1,600 jobs in Ontario because of killing the green roof industry, which is what you're planning to do through some little loophole thing, an order in council, and meddling with the City of Toronto Act. Why would you do that—and in areas such as Burlington, Flamborough—

Glanbrook, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Mississauga–Erin Mills, Mississauga–Malton, Milton and Oxford?

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

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Thank you to the member from Beaches–East York for her comments today.

I would like to go back to the communal waste water systems. I know the member was talking about Walkerton. I also know that the member was with me when we saw first-hand technology at its best, when we witnessed a new waste water system which was full of technology being used in South Bend, Indiana, and the reactions coming out of that is what can be done—obviously to build homes and ensure water is clean for people to drink.

So, saying all of that and thinking about Walkerton, as she's brought up a few times—technology has changed immensely in the past 25 years. What this is about: It's about protecting Ontario. It's about ensuring we have stable communities.

Why can't the opposition see the action and not the obstruction, because this is what Ontario needs right now?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to the member from Newmarket–Aurora. Yes, I am on the Great Lakes legislative caucus, and I'm very proud to be on that. I grew up on Georgian Bay, in Collingwood, as you know, and I represent a riding, beautiful Beaches–East York, on the shores of Lake Ontario, and I jump in the lake all the time to wash away my worries from you guys.

But yes, absolutely, we want proper waste water facilities. You talk out of both sides of your mouth. So you're doing that, but then you're killing the green roofs industry, which is a \$75-million economic benefit to this province, and contributing more than \$51 million in GDP and the most cost-effective stormwater—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Before we continue, the member from Beaches–East York will withdraw her unparliamentary remark.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Which one? I withdraw.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I want to thank everybody for the opportunity to speak about this important bill. When I started my campaigning to be a city councillor, I met with a group of tenants who lived in a townhome complex that was recently bought up.

Now, my dad was a landlord, growing up, and he had student residences. He said you took good care of your tenants, and you didn't overcharge rent and you could make about 5%. That was good business in those days.

I think we're at a moment in time where we've forgotten that we're dealing with housing. These aren't widgets; they're not toques; they're not Blue Jays paraphernalia. These are roofs over people's heads that we're talking about every day, and so there is a difference. I know there are bad-acting tenants and I know there are bad-acting landlords, but we have to remember the power imbalances

between landlords and tenants. Tenants rely on having that roof over their head, whereas landlords are making an investment and have responsibilities as landlords.

In the past few years, things have gotten terribly bad at the Landlord and Tenant Board. We've seen wait times skyrocket. When this government took office, you could wait weeks, maybe a month, to get your hearing date, and that alleviated stress for both tenants and landlords. But now you can wait almost a year just to have your day in court.

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We've also seen rampant abuse of these LTB rules. For example, AGIs have increased a rampant amount: 404 of them in 2020 and 2021, 605—AGIs, above-guideline increases. So not only have those big corporations had their mortgages paid by those tenants, but now they want the tenants to go back and pay for the upgrades. I don't know about you, but if my roof leaks, I have to fix that because it is my capital asset, right? We can't expect tenants to have to pay all the bills.

I've had tenants in my Regency apartments, Homestead, that can't get a hold of their landlord; the property conditions have gone down, but if they miss their rent by seven days, they face eviction. These are, widely, seniors. In my area, the fastest-growing population of people facing homelessness is seniors.

That is deplorable, that people are spending their golden years worrying about being homeless and being turfed onto the street. And now we've made it harder for them to defend themselves at the Landlord and Tenant Board. Not only did this government slash legal aid funding, but now they're making it harder for those people to defend themselves in court.

You can't add more evidence on the day of. You have to pay 50% of your rent before you get back. Maybe they've withheld their rent because they are not meeting their qualifications as a landlord and their duty to keep property standards. I've had people come to me and their heating has been cut off, their water has been cut off, and that's why they stopped paying their rent.

We've seen N13s being used up. People print off a piece of paper and say you have to move out. What are the stats? The rampant rate of N13s—I think it was about a 75% increase. And only four people have paid penalties of \$5,000 for the misuse. But I know thousands of people have moved out of their homes, downsized, and are now paying extremely high rents and can't afford food because they received this piece of paper and they moved because they were afraid. All you have to do is print off something from your computer, and there's no accountability for those landlords who made their tenants homeless.

N12s: I know members in this government who got an N12, were moved out of their apartments—had to move—now pay way more rent, moved out of town to where they could afford something because the landlord said they're going to move in. Yes, landlords can move in, but what if they don't?

Tell me how many people pay a fine if they lied and they move somebody else in there and now they're paying

double the rent with zero consequences. I am tired of this government only listening to a small proportion of landlords. I have small-to-medium landlords in my heart, but those investors—they call themselves investors. They make YouTube videos on how they can get 19% interest by having tenant turnover. Tenant turnover means that tenants are homeless.

We see a hemorrhaging of people onto the streets as we speak—80,000 today, projected to be 300,000. That's because there are gaping holes in the protections for tenants right now, and at this moment we are punching down and blaming tenants for the backlogs in the LTB. Meanwhile, we're not listening to ACTO. ACTO is the expert in this place, legal aid that specializes in tenant protections, and we aren't even listening to them on how we can fix the LTB. They have a list of things that would make it better today that would not involve punching down on people who are trying to pay their rent, trying to put a roof over their head, and trying to have enough money at the end of the month to eat.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank my friend from Kitchener Centre for the presentation focusing on Bill 60, in particular schedule 12 and tenant rights. Unfortunately, since I have not yet received an answer from any folks from the Liberal Party, I would like to know the member's stance on vacancy control. Would the member be interested in making sure that that gaping loophole in tenant rights is restored?

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: Yes, 100%. Not only do we need to get rid of these tools that are being misused like renovictions, N12s and AGIs that put the burden—it's an extraction. We talk about productivity in this place. I know all the fancy bankers like to talk about how unproductive we are. Well, that's because we make money this way.

This is not a productive way to make any money, to force seniors out of their housing. It's despicable and it's no way to create productivity in our province.

So yes, I don't support vacancy decontrol because it is enabling, empowering and rewarding bad-acting landlords who are getting people out onto the street with nowhere else to go.

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: Bill 60 is a wide-ranging bill, and you focused on a few narrow parts of it during debate, but I appreciate the member's comments.

I wanted to ask her about some of the other parts of the bill and one of them that I particularly like—and maybe I'll speak on it a little bit later—around communal water systems and streamlining of the regulation around the use of communal water systems, specifically in rural areas where it can create a lot more opportunity for housing to be built and for development to occur and maximizing the opportunity within municipalities. I wonder if she could give me 60 good seconds on how she views that issue.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I guess I hope to ensure that we get evidence, because all I see from this government are constant attacks on protection of water. We know that from Grassy Narrows, for example. What is the lesson learned here? We have a community that has 90% mercury poisoning. They're faced with declining health, neurological issues, and it costs \$120 million to clean up the water systems in Grassy Narrows.

Has that problem been fixed? I don't think so. This government hasn't held themselves accountable for what's happened in Grassy Narrows. If anything, they've grandfathered in pollution from industry that isn't supported by the First Nations people.

So if you have the evidence to say this is going to better protect our water systems—because it costs so much and it does so much harm to people's health and well-being if we get it wrong.

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

MPP Wayne Gates: In 2019, the Conservatives took off rent controls off new builds. It was done not to make affordable rental units, but for corporations to make lots and lots of money.

In Toronto, the rents are between \$3,500 to \$4,000—that's a month. In Niagara, it's going from \$2,500 to \$3,000 a month.

In Niagara, we have the highest number of seniors in Ontario. And do you know what's happened since 2019? More and more seniors are being renovicted because they can't afford their homes; can't afford the rent. They're living in their cars. They're homeless. They're living on the streets of Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie.

Do you see anything—anything—in Bill 60 that will help our senior population that built this great province?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I don't see it. I see a very one-sided conversation. To me, it sounds like a conversation that happens with very wealthy investors of a lot of real estate out on a golf course saying, "This is what is going to fix the LTB." They're not listening to tenants.

I have tenants in my office all the time who are facing homelessness, who are scared. I had a gentleman—he gets an N13 every time he leaves the LTB. He's a senior. Every time he finishes his thing, and they say, "No, you don't have to move out," the landlord grabs his N13 that he printed off his beautiful printer and hands it to my guy. He had a heart attack because he was facing homelessness because of a bad-acting landlord who turned off his heat and threatens him. I think he's had like 23 N13s. What a great way to spend your golden years. He wins at the LTB because he's a smart guy—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Further debate?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: It's a pleasure to rise in the chamber today as a former municipal politician and upper-tier government representative to speak in favour of Bill 60, the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025. This legislation is a bold and necessary step in our govern-

ment's continued work to make life more affordable, strengthen our communities and ensure that every Ontarian has a place to call home.

This legislation builds directly on the foundation set through Bill 17, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act. That earlier legislation signalled that this government is serious about cutting unnecessary barriers, reducing costs and speeding up construction of homes and communities across Ontario. And now, with Bill 60, we are building on that foundation, accelerating what works, fixing what doesn't and taking direct aim at the costs and delays that keep Ontario families waiting.

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We all know the story: Housing prices are too high, approvals take too long and too much of the cost of those new homes is eaten up by government fees and red tape before a single brick is placed in the ground. We hear it every day from our constituents—young families trying to get into their first home, seniors looking to downsize, workers moving to new communities for jobs but unable to find a place to live. And I know in my community of Collingwood—it has a regional hospital—we have interns and resident physicians who can't find a home because there's nothing they can afford.

The message is clear: The system is under stress, and we need to make changes. It takes too long, it costs too much and it needs to change. That is exactly what this bill intends to do.

Speaker, one of the central pillars of this bill is cost reduction. For too long, government fees, outdated requirements and inflated development charges have added tens of thousands of dollars to the price of a single home. That money is coming straight out of the pockets of Ontario families and the end purchasers. Across this province, municipal development charges have continued to rise at an alarming rate. Again, I know in my own community, Collingwood, recently, development charges almost doubled, going from \$48,000 to \$88,000 per single-family detached home. While we understand the need to fund local infrastructure, these charges must reflect the real cost of servicing new homes; the real cost of roads; the real cost of sewers, waterlines and parks—not unrelated legacy costs or administrative add-ons or future plans that have nothing to do with getting the homes built.

Through Bill 60, we are restoring fairness and transparency to development charges. Homebuyers will pay only for the infrastructure that directly serves their new community. Hidden fees and inflated costs that make homes unaffordable will be brought under control. When you consider that roughly one third of the total cost of a new home can be tied to government fees and red tape, it becomes clear why so many people feel locked out of the market. Speaker, these costs are passed on to families, young couples, first-time buyers, newcomers, and seniors, and they make the dream of home ownership harder and harder to reach. Our government is saying that this is clearly unacceptable.

This legislation will put money back in the pockets of Ontario families, bring down the cost of homes, but also

ensure that municipalities continue to have the resources they need to deliver safe, strong communities. This legislation, Speaker, is about balance, it is about efficiency and it is about common sense.

As they say in the building industry, time is money, and in housing, timing is everything, as we know now with the increasing housing shortage across this province. Every month that a project is delayed is another month that a family is kept waiting. Every extra provincial approval, every redundant study, every unnecessary layer of bureaucracy adds cost, uncertainty and frustration to the process. And that's why this bill focuses directly on cutting red tape and speeding up approvals at every stage of the process.

We're introducing new tools to help municipalities fast-track priority housing projects. We're simplifying the approval process for minor variances, allowing small, reasonable adjustments to proceed as of right, without the necessity of lengthy council debates or costly studies. For example, Speaker, small changes to building height, lot coverage or setbacks—the kind of flexibility that makes a home better suited for a family's needs—can now be approved faster. And this reform will have a direct impact on families, not just builders. Parents can add a small extension for a growing family, create a backyard space for children to play safely, or adjust the home layout to meet accessibility needs, all without waiting months for approvals.

By reducing the bureaucracy around a minor variance, Bill 60 saves families money and time, and avoids lengthy approval processes, which means lower costs passed on from developers and less expense for homeowners making essential modifications. This approach ensures that minor sensible adjustments are handled efficiently, giving families the flexibility to customize their homes while keeping costs reasonable and timelines short. It is a reform that transforms policy into a real tangible benefit for Ontarians, helping them create homes that fit their lives.

And, Speaker, we're taking direct action to unlock housing potential in rural and underserved areas as well. We're doing that in two ways. First off, too often projects in small towns or rural communities stall because of outdated rules around water and waste water systems, and I see that in my riding of Simcoe-Grey and in smaller communities like Everett, Lisle and Nottawa. Even when land is available and the demand is clear, the red tape makes it impossible to move the development forward. Bill 60 intends to handle this head-on. We are simplifying the consent-and-approval process for communal water and waste water systems, giving municipalities the flexibility to unlock housing and development in areas where large-scale systems are not practical. This change has a direct impact on community growth and opportunity. For smaller towns and communities, this offers a way forward, because if your tax base is not growing, your ability to sustain your community is under threat.

We are not only looking at expanding residential capacity but also to attract new business and industrial development that will provide jobs for the new residents. Modern, cost-effective water and waste water solutions

means that families can now move into new homes, local businesses can expand and new companies can set up operations without being held back by outdated processes.

By making it easy and more affordable to grow, Bill 60 allows these communities to flourish and provides a viable business plan moving forward. In short, it gives those communities a sustainable path forward. Families gain access to the housing they need, municipalities can expand, and local economies can benefit from both residential and commercial development.

Growth is not just a big city issue. In fact, we need all communities—all 444 municipalities across this province—to have a plan forward and to thrive. This reform is practical, efficient and grounded in the realities of smaller and rural Ontario communities, ensuring that where there is demand and potential, development can move forward without unnecessary delay or cost.

If we turn our lens to the more developed urban areas, I'd like to highlight one of the most innovative parts of this legislation, which is a new approach to water and waste water management in developed areas in Peel region.

Under Bill 60, the Peel system will be managed by a publicly owned corporation, bringing together Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon under one efficient, accountable model. This reform will make infrastructure delivery faster, more coordinated, more cost-effective and more sustainable.

When you look at the development charge load and the business model for most municipalities handling water and waste water, it's completely defined by their own local area. If you look at the cost, in the millions of dollars, of the infrastructure bubble that we're facing here in Ontario, we've heard estimates as high as \$200 billion to modernize and put in place the infrastructure that can sustain and handle the growth we're anticipating.

By taking it off the municipal table, where they have debt limitations to own-source revenue under the Municipal Act of 25%, where they have certain financing restrictions under the Municipal Act, and putting it into the hands of a regional development corporation that can get in, doesn't have the debt load restrictions and has access to different financing models, longer-term financing models, and can spread out not only the cost of the development over a larger base, but also the planning to make sure that we have those significant critical infrastructure pieces in place to handle the growth that's coming: This is a very transformative change, Madam Speaker. It is not privatization; it is innovation. It is about using public ownership to deliver better results, and it's exactly just the type of forward-thinking, results-driven reform that this province needs if we're going to meet our housing goals.

For those that are familiar on this side of the floor with the HEWSF, the water infrastructure program, the health and safety water infrastructure program and the infrastructure program generally, which total up to \$3.5 billion, this type of change will eliminate the need for that type of emergency funding for local projects by raising up the planning processes, raising up the cost and changing the

financing model, yet keeping it in the public's hands, run by a board that has the expertise to deliver on these important projects.

Another key part of Bill 60 is the modernization of Ontario's building code. Our government will conduct a comprehensive review, section by section, to identify outdated, redundant or unnecessary requirements that slow down construction or add costs without improving safety. Let me be very clear: Ontario will always maintain world-class standards for health, safety and accessibility. That is not negotiable. What is negotiable is making sure that we get to a point where the building code reflects the absolute best practices so we know that, going forward, that is the minimum standard that should be applied to all construction in Ontario. But we will not tolerate inefficiencies and rules that have outlived their purpose, processes that duplicate oversight or approvals that exist simply because that's how it's always been done.

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This work builds directly on the foundation laid by Bill 17, which cut the first layer of unnecessary delays and signalled our commitment to smarter, faster building, and Bill 60 takes it to the next step, standardizing the building code across every municipality in Ontario so builders know exactly what is required before they start a project. This eliminates surprises, reduces disputes and ensures a level playing field across the province.

This isn't just modernization; this is about eliminating paperwork, and it has real and tangible benefits for our families. Families planning their first home, growing households or downsizing no longer have to face uncertainty or inflated costs caused by inefficiencies in our system. For example, in the past, builders often faced redundant inspections or approvals that did not enhance safety but delayed projects and added costs, and through careful section-by-section review, Bill 60 will remove these inefficiencies, allowing builders to focus on constructing high-quality homes and communities rather than navigating unnecessary bureaucracy.

Every day saved in approvals means construction crews can stay on schedule, tradespeople remain employed and communities see progress rather than stalled sites. Bill 60 strengthens Ontario's economy, supports the workforce and, most importantly, it helps families move into their homes faster and less expensively. We are building a smarter, more efficient code that serves a purpose, not a process, and builders will spend more time building and less time tolerating inspections.

Speaker, we all want viable, livable, sustainable communities, but for too long, some municipalities have used site planning controls and design mandates to impose costly boutique-style requirements that can add up to tens of thousands of dollars to each new home. These premium Cadillac demands might be looked on as nice to have, but they're not necessary to have. What is necessary to have is the housing stock being built to house our residents and making sure that that housing stock meets their needs in a safe and sustainable way, because when home prices are too high, with already high interest rates, it's challenging,

if not limiting, families in what they can buy or even if they can buy.

We need to reduce those barriers to make sure that all families can maintain the dream of family home ownership. They need homes that are affordable, functional and ready to meet the day-to-day needs, not homes that are priced out of their reach because of boutique features. Bill 60 will put an end to these inconsistent and costly design matters, and by introducing clear province-wide standards, we are focusing on what truly matters: safety, affordability and speed. Builders will know the rules, municipalities will have clarity and families will benefit from homes that are practical, complete and available without unnecessary costs or delays. That is what common sense looks like in action.

While for generations Ontario was seen as a place of opportunity for those that work hard and are determined, today that dream has slipped away. When parents and grandparents who bought their first homes do the math, they know they too could not afford to buy a home in this current environment. Even middle-class families struggle to imagine home ownership, and that has to change. By cutting unnecessary costs, streamlining approvals and modernizing the system from the ground up, we are creating the conditions for homebuilders to build, for families to buy and for communities to grow.

Madam Speaker, we're not just doing this in urban areas; we're doing this across the province: in the north, in the east, in small towns and in big cities. We believe that we need an Ontario that thrives for everyone, that all 444 municipalities have a sustainable viable future and that homeownership and their populations grow so their communities can thrive.

And we need to work with many different stakeholders to make this happen. Municipalities and builders each play a critical role in ensuring housing projects move forward efficiently and meet local needs. That is why our government has been working in lockstep with municipalities to cut development charges, reducing costs that slow down construction and make homes less affordable. Bill 60 empowers municipalities with the tools and flexibility they need to accelerate approvals, streamline processes and unlock housing supply while giving builders the predictability they need. We remain committed to working with all our partners—municipal partners, builders and community stakeholders—to make sure we get the homes built in an efficient and safe way.

Speaker, we need to make sure that we do this together in a consistent way where municipalities must comply to make sure that our standardized processes are in place. It says yes to building, yes to affordability and yes to families who are counting on us to deliver. We know there is a movement to preserve the status quo, but we can't do that. We will not stand still. It's about changing the way Ontario plans, approves and builds, and it's about creating a system that is efficient, predictable, and transparent, one that gets results.

The end result, Madam Speaker, is more than just bricks and mortar; it's about an opportunity and it's about

stability. It's about the foundation of a strong and prosperous Ontario where we build jobs, we build homes, we build communities and we build a thriving economy across the province that serves all of our residents. Under the leadership of Premier Ford and Minister Flack, our government is delivering a comprehensive plan to protect Ontario's future, a plan rooted in action, and not talk.

Madam Speaker, from my experience over eight years as a municipal council member, a mayor and a member of the upper-tier council in Simcoe county, and since my time as an MPP touring my riding of Simcoe–Grey, which has seven municipalities and 155,000 people, I've seen the serious limitations that are imposed by the financial bandwidth of those communities to put in place the essential framework of infrastructure to support the development that we need to accommodate. Five of my seven municipalities have received grants for infrastructure; the other two have applied. Those infrastructure projects will be a very onerous burden on the municipalities and will take time to develop.

I think, when we talk about the communal water systems and waste water systems, that's a very important step forward for the communities that are the size of some in my riding. And then the transition to a municipal service delivery corporation is also a critical piece of that puzzle, because what we're seeing overlaid across the entire province is the shortage of the critical infrastructure to support the building that has to happen.

That cost trickles down to the DCs, the development charges, that are being imposed by each municipality to help offset those costs and make way for the development. Through these processes—when I was at AMO, I heard from municipalities I was meeting with that 35% to 55% of their DCs all relate to water and waste water. If we take those costs off the municipal table—if we put it into a different service delivery mechanism, one that has no debt restrictions, one that is answerable to the public; one that is rate-based, as the existing system is; and one that has the ability to enter into financial arrangements—that will be more viable and sustainable moving forward. This, to me, is a critical piece to unlock the future of housing and growth and builds in Ontario across our province moving forward.

This type of change has to happen to unlock the financial bubble and speed bump that this type of infrastructure presents to communities like those in my riding of Simcoe–Grey. They all have populations of 55,000 or less. This type of infrastructure is essential to making sure they grow.

And my area is seeing growth-demand like never before. We're a release valve for the GTA. Our economy is thriving. We have a Honda plant. We have boutique manufacturing like Agnora Glass; MacLean Engineering, which is pioneering electric mining equipment across the world; and MEDATech, which is looking at electric transmissions for trucks. All of these things have to be able to thrive to move forward if we're—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Questions?

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you to my friend from Simcoe-Grey. You reference schedule 16 and the creation of—I believe the intention is municipal services corporations for water and waste water. My understanding of those is that they're public. I'd just like you to verify there's no intention to privatize water, because I think the municipality is sole shareholder in that kind of corporation, and also that most of them that exist—I think there's two—have elected officials sitting on the boards, so that there is some public accountability.

Can you confirm that the intention is that it will be public and that there will be municipal officials sitting on the boards?

1430

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I want to thank the member opposite for his question. It's a great question and I know that he has served in the municipal sector as well.

In short answer, it is not about privatization; it is a public corporation. It is about innovation. It is about trying to unlock the necessary bandwidth to get these critical infrastructure pieces built. It will be accountable, and it will be rate-based, similar to the system that exists now.

But in lifting it up, as I said in my comments, and doing it on a regional basis, it makes sure that we're stretching tax dollars or user fees. We're making sure that we're servicing in a comprehensive and pre-planned way, not just within a single municipality's boundaries, and that we're doing it in ways that will be able to leverage different business options to get the type of funding in place and operate that in a long-standing way.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I was listening to the member from Simcoe-Grey about housing costs. I've been speaking with a lot of community builders that build here in Ontario and build around the world, and they always talk about DC charges, HST and permits done a lot quicker in other jurisdictions—in 48 hours instead of waiting longer times. But not only that, they're saying a 500-square-foot condo here in Ontario would be the same as a 3,500-square-foot home in another jurisdiction in the world at the same cost.

How will Bill 60 help us stimulate the economy and have homes built quicker for our families?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I want to thank my colleague for that question. That's a very big question, but I think the short answer is we're going to make some important changes to zoning applications—minor variances that will help to get the end result that a family or a developer needs. It can be done faster, without the need for hearings.

We're looking at restricting what costs can be included in DCs so that the DC that somebody is paying for their house will be related only to the infrastructure necessary that's serving their house and the planning principles moving forward on that. So we're going to limit what is eligible in a DC fee.

Again, with the communal waste water systems and the municipal service delivery corporations, that's taking

those expenses off a municipality's desk and changing them to a different entity. That, again, should help to reduce the DCs because they won't be passed on through the municipality.

So it's looking at ways to make planning efficiencies, standardize the building code, make certain zoning applications easier, reduce DCs, limit DCs—there's so much in here that I look forward to being implemented.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I wanted to ask the member—because schedule 16, which is about water, says: "Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act." I went through the bill, and each schedule doesn't have this particular piece in the act. But when you look at schedule 16, this is the only one that has it. It's the immunity from liability.

I just wondered, why only in this schedule is the government worried about immunity from liability, and what is it protecting itself from? What kind of lawsuits is it trying to protect itself from when it comes to waste water and water in this section?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Thank you for the question.

The purpose of that is that when you have a municipal service delivery corporation, directors are often covered by directors' liability. It's standard. It will not reduce or eliminate any liability as a provider under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Those protections for our residents would stay in place just as they are now through the municipal context, and it would change some of the operation of how that operates.

But those liabilities, those standards—we are not touching those. What we are touching is the service delivery model so that we can get the infrastructure in the ground and serve more people.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a question about schedule 6, which is regarding the Local Roads Boards Act. My question is just to make sure that I understand something, because there are regularly expected charitable or not-for-profit or Indigenous or crown lands. But in addition to those, forestry and mining lands are not taxed. And schedule 6 is about owners of tax-exempt lands. I'm just wondering if this also applies to forestry and mining lands.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I'm going to be short on this one: I don't have an answer for that. I'm happy to look into it, but it's not part of the research I've been doing on the legislation. I am PA to Minister Flack, so I'm happy to look into that and get an answer.

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

Mr. Steve Pinsonneault: My question for the member: I come from a farming community. There are a lot of migrant workers that live on these farms. My question is, Ontario farmers face challenges in providing timely housing for seasonal workers—and we run into this all the time—with the complexity of installing sewage systems on farm properties. How does the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, 2025 address the issue with ensuring

the health and safety of the workers and surrounding environment?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I thank my colleague for the question. It's an important question, because, certainly in my riding of Simcoe—Grey, I have many active farms. I also have orchards, where they rely very heavily on seasonal workers. And so, making sure that the farms have safe housing for their workers is important. So, what this act does is streamline the approval process for on-farm septic systems, making it easier and faster to construct housing for seasonal farm workers. The key changes include clarifying requirements, providing more timely inspections and ensuring compliance with Ontario's building code. For example, minimum separation distances from wells and property lines are strictly maintained to protect human health, the environment and neighbouring properties. By reducing delays and upholding strict safety standards, this legislation aims to support our farmers and the workers that they employ.

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

MPP Wayne Gates: Some 800,000 people in the province of Ontario are unemployed today; 18% youth unemployment in the province of Ontario today; rents are \$2,500 to \$3,500 or even more if you live in Toronto. Seniors are living in their cars. Seniors are living on the streets, whether it's in Niagara Falls or other communities in Ontario. Youth and seniors are going to food banks—highest total in food banks use today of any time in our history in the province of Ontario.

So maybe that member, who's very quiet over there—how does Bill 60 help those people that are unemployed, our young people, our seniors, find affordable housing? What's in this bill that helps them?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I think the member opposite's question really goes to a whole-of-government approach. We've been talking about the Skills Development Fund, the protect Ontario fund, and this legislation is about building homes faster and smarter. So how does it protect? By providing additional supply to the market, we'll bring down the cost. By getting purpose-built rentals in the ground, we'll bring down affordability. To make sure that our youth are employed in long-term, sustainable jobs and making sure that they have access to the housing they need—it's a pretty simple formula, and it's pretty consistent across this entire side of the House and all the legislation that we've been bringing forward.

I'll make no apologies for being quiet. I'm quiet and determined, and we will get the job done.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Before we continue, a reminder to all members to refer to others by their ministerial title or their riding. That's it, that's all.

Further debate?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West to talk to Bill 60. I will tell you that my office was flooded with emails and phone calls over the weekend over this bill and the number

of people across this province who have serious concerns about the direction the government is going with Bill 60.

But, Speaker, I'm going to ask you to indulge me because this will be off topic. But I do have something special that I wanted to mention during my time because it's probably happening as I'm speaking. I want to mention that my granddaughter—or my grand-nugget, as I call her—who is five and in senior kindergarten, is currently, at this moment, receiving the student of the month award for kindness.

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I am very proud of you, Luna. I am excited to get home later tonight to be able to celebrate that accomplishment with her. Hopefully, her mom will remember to take pictures and send them to me.

To Bill 60, Speaker: There's really nothing in this bill that's going to help people out of legislated poverty. I'm going to talk about people with disabilities, people who are trying to survive, because it's not living. It's trying to survive on ODSP and OW. They're living in very deep, deep poverty. This government has done next to nothing to try to fix that. Now, they'll talk about some minor adjustments they've made, but the reality is these folks are still living in deep poverty. You know that because your constituents tell you that.

There is nothing in this bill to try to handle the cost of housing, to make truly affordable housing. The government rolled back rent control.

I want to just provide perspective here: When we're talking about ODSP, you're talking about someone who's getting about \$1,400 a month—\$1,400 a month when the average rent is at least that or over \$2,000 a month. Then they still have bills to pay; they still have groceries to try to buy. Most of these folks are going to food banks.

There is a record number of people on ODSP who actually have—not just considering but have—chosen to end their life through MAID because they can't afford to live. People on OW receive about \$733 a month. Where are you going to get a place to rent for that?

Meanwhile, in Bill 60, this government has further eroded protections for tenants in favour of corporate landlords who are buying up affordable units as an investment to make, in some cases, obscene amounts of money. Many in my riding don't even live in the city where they now own what used to be affordable rental properties. It is purely for them to make money.

We have people who are seniors; we have low-income people; we have an increase in workers—in some cases unionized workers—who can't afford to purchase a home or to rent. In many cases, I've heard stories in this House of people whose adult children—like mine—are still living at home because they can't afford to move. There's nothing in this bill to address that.

Before I move on to the next piece that I want to talk about, Speaker, I need to mention that I am going to be sharing my time with the member for London—Fanshawe.

As my colleagues have pointed out, there are 800,000 people in this province that are out of work and approximately 80,000 people who are unhoused. We have a record

number of people going to food banks. There is nothing in this bill that's truly addressing that affordability crisis.

In fact, in the bill—I love this because the government, after the pressure from the public over the weekend, say that they're backtracking. They say that they're going to pause consultation on that particular piece of the bill. Speaker, I have been here 11 years. I can tell you that when the government says they're going to pause consultation—it's a miracle if they're doing consultation in the first place. But you need to be really cognizant of the language they're using because they're talking about pausing consultation. That piece of the bill has not been removed. It's still in this bill. If the government thinks that people in this province are not smart enough to catch that, they are wrong—very, very wrong. They may say the right thing now, but on this side of the House, we know it's still in the legislation. We know that they're still siding with corporate landlords and putting seniors and families at risk of being out on the street.

I also want to take some time to talk about schedule 16, which is around waste water. Speaker, the Conservatives—their record on water is atrocious. To say it's not good would be an understatement. It is atrocious. And I'm going to have everyone think back to 2000 with Walkerton, where the then-Conservative government privatized water, and the fact that hundreds of people—actually, it was over 2,000 people—were poisoned by the drinking water in Walkerton. Several people died, and there's still ramifications for that. We're 25 years past that, and people are still living with long-standing illnesses because of that. And that's what we're seeing in this bill.

The government side—I heard one of the government members say, “No, no, no, it's going to be a public corporation. It's not private. It's a public corporation. Don't worry about that. We're not going to repeat Walkerton.” I believe my one of my colleagues on the other side said, “We use it as a training ground now. We're using it as a training ground now for future experts and for politicians to learn from.” My Lord, the people in Walkerton are more than an experiment. It's important to learn from mistakes, but what I'm seeing in this bill is the government going down the same path to repeating that mistake, because there is actually nothing in this legislation that solidifies the fact that it will not be privatized, that the water will not be privatized.

They're like, “We can leave it up to regulation.” Regulation can be changed by any government at any time very, very easily, with very little oversight from the Legislature—the folks elected—or from the public. They post potential regulatory changes all the time on a website. It's not like they're out there—it's not like they're in here, even—advertising to the public that they've posted a potential regulatory change and encouraging a bunch of feedback. Regulations are not the same as legislation, and yet we see nothing in this bill that actually solidifies the fact that the water and the waste management will remain in public hands.

Again, because I want to make sure everyone understands the seriousness of this, I'm going to refer everyone

back to Walkerton. I ask the government members: If and when—because the likelihood is high when you privatize services and it's now based on how much money you can make as opposed to what's actually good for the people—we see a repeat of Walkerton in another community, how are you going to feel when people start dying? How are you going to feel when people become ill and live with that for the rest of their lives because you brought in legislation to privatize it?

We see it with hydro. This happened with hydro. The Conservative government opened the door for the privatization of hydro, and the Liberals ran through it. And now we are seeing astronomical hydro rates in this province, and as much as the government members will say, “Hey, we brought prices down”, there is not a single constituent in my community that has seen electricity relief. They've only seen their bills continue to climb.

With that, I would ask that the government really think about the people of this province; really bring forward legislation that is truly going to help make life more affordable; to make housing more affordable; to raise, double—at least double—social assistance rates, so people have a chance of surviving on that income.

With that, I'll put the time over to my colleague from London—Fanshawe.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from London—Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to talk about schedule 16 specifically, because it's deeply concerning that this is another attempt by this Conservative government to hand over essential public services to corporate interests.

Buried deep within the omnibus Bill 60 is schedule 16, a schedule that should set off alarm bells for anyone who cares about safe, affordable, publicly owned water in Ontario.

1450

Schedule 16 creates something called the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025. It sounds nice, doesn't it? Public corporations. But once you actually read it, the intent becomes crystal clear: This is the first step towards privatization of Ontario's water systems.

Let's unpack what this schedule does. It allows the minister—not municipal councils, not local residents, not the people who actually own the infrastructure, but the minister—to designate a corporation to take over a municipality's water and waste water services. And once that designation happens, those municipalities must hand over everything—their assets, their infrastructure, their employees, their liabilities, all of it—to this new corporation.

The minister gets to decide how the corporation is governed. The minister gets to set the rules for who sits on the board. The minister even gets to decide how shares might be issued and to whom.

And here's the kicker: The legislation never actually requires the corporation to be publicly owned. The word “public” is in the name, but nowhere in the law does it say it must remain in public hands.

Once you corporatize something, once you create shares, boards and a profit-oriented structure, you've

opened the door to privatization. You've turned a public utility into something that can be sold bit by bit to the highest bidder. And now, with schedule 16, this government is trying to do exactly that with our water.

Water is not a commodity; it is a public good. It is a human right. When people turn on the tap, they expect clean, safe, affordable water, not a profit margin. But this legislation moves us in the wrong direction.

Under schedule 16, these so-called "public corporations" will not be local boards and not crown agencies. That means they won't be directly accountable to municipal councils or to people who pay the bills. It's not even clear if their annual reports will have to be made public. The minister can demand a report, but there's no requirement that Ontarians will ever see it. That's not transparency; that's secrecy.

And here's another dangerous provision: If a resident can't afford their water bill, that debt will be added to their property tax bill, with interest, at the request of the corporation. So the corporation entity could put pressure on the municipalities to collect debts on its behalf, even using powers meant to be for public taxation. That's not how public services are supposed to work.

There's a Hamilton example that privatization fails. If you want to know where this road leads, look at what happened in the city of Hamilton. In the 1990s, Hamilton's water and waste water services were privatized. A private company promised efficiency, cost savings and modernization—all the same buzzwords we're hearing from this government today. And what did Hamilton get? Raw sewage dumped into the harbour—hundreds of millions of litres—deferred maintenance, job losses and environmental devastation that cost the public millions to clean up. Eventually, Hamilton had to buy the system back just to regain control and fix the mess.

Speaker, Hamilton learned the hard way that privatizing water doesn't save money; it costs more. It doesn't improve services. It puts communities and environments at risk. So why is this government trying to drag Ontario back down the same road?

And let's not forget another tragedy that happened under a Conservative government. We talked about this earlier: Walkerton. In 2000, seven people died and over 2,000 fell ill because the water system in Walkerton was contaminated with E. coli. The Harris Conservative government at the time privatized water testing, which weakened safety regulations, cut inspections and gutted accountability.

The Walkerton tragedy is a clear lesson: Water safety depends on strong public oversight; transparency; and trained, accountable public operators. This government is now undermining those exact same safeguards, centralizing control in the hands of the minister, stripping away local accountability and paving the way for corporate involvement. If this government keeps marching down this path, they are asking for another Walkerton—another preventable tragedy.

Another example of privatization of public services—and we've already seen how this story ends when the

government turns essential utilities into corporations. Let's take Hydro One. First, it was turned into a business model, and then it was sold off. We were told that privatization would make things more efficient and affordable. Instead, electricity prices went through the roof, executive pay skyrocketed and public control vanished. That's what happens when essential public utilities are turned into profit engines. Corporations look after their shareholders, not the people of Ontario.

Water and waste water are even more essential than electricity. You can even live without lights for a few hours, but you can't live without clean water. Keep corporate profits away from our most basic necessity, water.

It's not just schedule 16. Bill 60 is packed with measures that concentrates power in the Premier's office, weakens municipal autonomy and makes it easier for government's developer friends to get what they want. Experts and critics across Ontario are warning that this legislation paves the way for privatization. They've pointed out that this model does not make sense in large, complex regions like Peel, which is the government's first target. And they've warned that without guaranteed public ownership written in law, Ontario is opening the door to private control of water. And they're right, Speaker, because there's a big difference between a public commission serving the public good and a for-profit corporation. One protects the people's interest and the other protects the balance sheet.

I wanted to raise that very clearly that this government is going down the wrong road when it comes to water ownership. It should remain in public hands, where there is transparency and accountability. I also want to talk about schedule 12, where I've received many, many emails, just like our colleagues here. I want to read some into the record because people who email our office or call our office want their voices heard in the legislature, so hopefully everyone will listen. I'm not going to say their last name, but they only had their first initial:

"Dear Ms. Armstrong

"I'm a widow, a low-income senior, barely scraping by on my pension. I have no savings and live month to month. And I had to sell personal belongings just to make ends meet. I mainly live on tuna and pasta. With so much negativity and fear in the world right now and the cost of everything skyrocketing, the last thing we need in Ontario is the Premier lifting rent control.

"I am so anxious and physically ill about this announcement that I cannot sleep, and my nerves are shot. Lifting rent control will put thousands of people, mainly seniors like me, out on the street and add to the escalating homeless situation. If the Premier lifts rent control, my only option will be to live on the street or in the park, and it will end my life if that happens. Please stop him from doing this."

There have been pleas from people, because you are including this schedule in Bill 60, the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act. I don't think those items in schedule 12 are going to expedite home ownership. You really have to remove that schedule from this bill. And if you want to

deal with tenant issues, create bills that will actually deal with them under the Landlord and Tenant Board in a fair way for both sides.

When you do this, you raise the anxiety of people who have really low incomes, and they are scraping by. Not everybody has big pensions or big salaries to continually meet the inflating costs of the cost of living and the cost of groceries and gas and utilities and rent and mortgage rates.

I ask the government to—really, if you're looking at building housing faster, removing delays, the tenant portion of schedule 12 shouldn't be in this bill. That's an area that needs delicacy, and it needs to have the Landlord and Tenant Board fixed before this government took over. There's been too many delays and not enough expertise on those boards.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank both members for their remarks, however disappointing they were. I think of AMO that is advocating for the water/waste water model, as well as collaborated on the development charge piece. It wasn't long ago that AMO was held in high regard across the aisle. But also, one week ago, it was water operators appreciation day. And what I heard was the perpetuation of a myth that our water operators are not licensed and professional, that the Koebel brothers continue to be employed. That's not the case.

1500

So my question to members opposite is, why is AMO wrong in their assessment? It's right on their website on this bill. And why is it that AMO can't be trusted to represent municipalities and what they would like to see?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: The member opposite must be dizzy from spinning that one so much. What we very clearly said is we don't trust the government because a previous Conservative government was directly responsible for thousands of people getting sick in Walkerton, people dying in Walkerton and people continuing to have health—

Interjection.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: Hey, you can listen to my response, or you can continue to shout across the floor. It's up to you.

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

MPP Lisa Gretzky: But the reality is, we do not trust the government when it comes to privatization of water based on what we saw in Walkerton. It is really just that simple.

If we look back not too far ago, we see a prime example of what happens when a Conservative government moves to privatize the water system. It is just that simple, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The Minister of Natural Resources will come to order and remain parliamentary, please.

Questions?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I want to thank my two colleagues for your presentation and what you've been saying with the Landlord and Tenant Board, and the corporate, again—more tools so they make it simpler to, again, throw people on the street.

Every morning, I walk to Queen's Park. I walk by a lady that sleeps in cardboard, who can't afford rent. We're getting emails—you mentioned that you read one of the emails that you've been getting. I'm sure this government is getting the same emails, and I'm sure this government walks by these people; they're all on the street. She's an elderly woman. She's an elderly woman that can't afford her rent, that now lives on the street and sleeps in a cardboard box.

Surely, we can do better than this in government. Surely, we can do a lot more. I'd like to hear it from either of you: Why are we dealing with this constantly, and we're not protecting these elderly women that are living now on the street?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I think governments have neglected and dismissed the real issue when it comes to housing for everyone. Housing for people who are working and can afford to buy homes—great. We need to build those. There's no dispute. But we're leaving a sector of our society behind, and there are people who have different means that can't buy homes and can't afford rents that are sky high.

I will refer to a bill that we presented, which is called Homes Ontario. Whether you like it or not, if we're going to build houses for everyone, there are populations in our ridings that need rent-geared-to-income, that need co-operative housing, that need semi-detached or town-houses—truly affordable homes—to get started. I think that's what's missing.

We allow ourselves to think that we're doing a great thing for everybody to afford homes, but we forget a certain segment of the population, and it's people like these old, elderly ladies that are suffering when we don't do those policy changes.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Question? I recognize the member for Peterborough—Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thanks, Speaker, I appreciate that. The opposition has talked about the privatization of water on this, but what we're talking about is a municipal service company that by law has to be owned by the municipality 100%. Is something owned by the municipality public or private? Because municipalities are public.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It is not clear in this bill whether local municipalities will have any say over the board appointments or the objects of the corporation. There's nothing in this bill that says that. It's unknown how or if shares will be allocated between the lower-tier municipalities. But I appreciate the question because it also gives me an opportunity to point out that it is also not clear whether this transfer would preserve existing collective agreements or whether seniority rights would be preserved. So because it's not clear in this, we know that there could be a lot of jobs—good, unionized jobs—at risk and those people out of work because of this bill, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the members from Windsor West and London—Fanshawe for their presentation today.

I'd like to ask my question of the member from London—Fanshawe, and hopefully in answering this question, the consciences of the government will be awakened. Would you like to add the voice of somebody who is really deeply concerned about Bill 60 and its impacts on them?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I do, because I didn't get just stock emails; I got individual emails about people's real problems with housing. This is from Samantha:

"Dear Mrs. Armstrong,

"I'm writing this letter today as a very concerned citizen of London. Bill 60 poses a direct threat to anybody who rents their home, which, let's be honest, is a lot of people.

"Housing is not a privilege. It's a basic human right. We're not asking for anything crazy. We just want to be able to have security in our home. We have a two-year-old little girl. We started renting our apartment during COVID and we can't afford the current market rent without financial difficulty. There are many who are worse off than even ourselves.

"Putting so many people at the mercy of often vindictive and unscrupulous landlords is unethical. I get that there is a housing crisis"—

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Her question is—so many of my constituents are concerned. Will they not pass this bill's schedule 12?

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the member from Windsor West.

Part of the legislation in Bill 60 talks about modernizing the building code. I know I didn't hear any comments from either of the opposition members about that, so I'm wondering if you might take a moment to talk about the building code: what's working, what's not working and what reforms that you would recommend that might save time and keep construction and building standards to high standards of safety levels. And talk about the rules—the outdated rules—in place that you would like to have replaced.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

What I can tell you from experience in my riding is that the number of corporate landlords—so these are strictly looking to invest. They have no interest in living in our community, they have little-to-no interest in the tenants that are going to live in these buildings and they're coming in and they're purchasing these buildings.

There is one on Ouellette Avenue, not far from my house, where tenants had to be moved out and housed by the city in a community centre, because there was no heat for a very, very long time. We have continued to have

problems in that building with that landlord. So what I would like to see is the province bringing in legislation that actually protects tenants from these corporate landlords that are only looking to make money off a building, pushing people out of affordable rental units and tripling—quadrupling—rents to push these people out of the market from being able to live. I want standards that are enforced where during the winter, they have to have heat; that they can't go for months and months without ensuring that the tenants have heat or water or electricity. But we don't see those protections in this bill.

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

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Good afternoon, everyone. I just wanted to note that I'm sharing my time with the member from Nepean this afternoon.

When I first read the title of this bill, the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act, I thought, "That sounds good. That sounds reasonable." Who doesn't want less red tape and more homes, especially now? But then you dig a little deeper and you realize something: You realize that this government has gotten very good at naming bills sort of the opposite of what they actually are, because what this bill really does is not about building faster; it's about centralizing power, limiting oversight and weakening transparency, and I might also add imposing some great distress on some vulnerable populations.

1510

Bill 60, as we've been hearing, is not primarily a housing bill. It's an omnibus piece of legislation that makes changes to 16 different acts, many of which have serious implications for accountability and good governance. One of the most troubling elements of this legislation is what it does to tenants.

The government says these changes will reduce the backlog at the Landlord and Tenant Board. Technically, that's true if your goal is to evict tenants faster. This bill cuts the notice period for non-payment of rent from 14 days to seven. That might not sound like much—but imagine a single parent working two jobs whose child gets sick. They miss a few shifts and fall behind on rent. Under the current law, they have two weeks to figure it out, to pick up extra hours or maybe borrow from family. But, under Bill 60, they have one week—seven days—to come up with hundreds or thousands of dollars before facing eviction.

The bill also removes the Landlord and Tenant Board's ability to consider fairness. Right now, an eviction would cause undue hardship, for example, if a tenant has a disability or is caring for an elderly parent—or has been a reliable tenant for many years. A board can take that into account, but under Bill 60, that discretion disappears. Fairness is no longer a factor.

The bill changes the compensation rules for personal use evictions. Right now, landlords who evict a tenant for personal use must give 60 days' notice and one month's rent in compensation. Bill 60 allows them to avoid paying that compensation simply by providing 120 days' notice. The government will say tenants get more time, but

moving costs money, and for many tenants that compensation isn't a bonus, it's what makes the move possible at all.

We've been hearing about seniors an awful lot, and this will hit seniors: people with disabilities, low-income families, people who can least afford to absorb the cost of an unwanted move. The bill also requires tenants who want to raise a new issue at a hearing to pay half of the claimed rent arrears in advance, either to the landlord or to the board. Now, imagine being at a hearing because you can't pay rent. To raise your side of the story, you first have to pay half the amount in dispute. If you had that money, you wouldn't be there.

Speaker, these are not measures that make the system fairer or more efficient. They're measures that just strip away rights and protections. And while the minister—we commend—walked back from the plan to end rent control through fixed-term leases, that only happened because Ontarians caught them. It was in the official briefing materials; it wasn't an accident. It was a plan until the public pushed back, and that tells us pretty much everything about how this government operates. They bury controversial measures in omnibus bills with friendly names, hope no one notices and, when caught, they retreat just enough to take that pressure off.

In Toronto—St. Paul's, where about 60% of the residents are tenants, I have received hundreds of emails, countless phone calls from people deeply worried about what this bill could mean for them: people who are already struggling with affordability, who are afraid of losing their homes—and this all as winter approaches. That's what I'm talking about, this unnecessary anxiety all these people had to feel with the spectre of what was going to happen.

I understand that landlords are a really important part of the housing system and their challenges matter as well. They do. But tenants deserve an equal place in that conversation. We should be fixing the system for everyone, not by reducing one side's rights and protections. This bill makes it easier to evict people, but it doesn't make housing more affordable or secure, and that is not the balance that Ontarians are asking for.

Speaker, schedule 5 would prevent municipalities from removing traffic lanes to install bike lanes. The government says this will reduce gridlock, but bike lanes don't cause gridlock; all the cars do. I drive along Mount Pleasant every day—or Avenue Road—and, look, sections of Mount Pleasant don't have bike lanes, but I'll tell you, it's lit up with all the cars backed up for blocks and blocks.

In a city like Toronto, which is growing by over 150,000 people a year, we cannot pave our way out of congestion, Speaker. The only way to move people efficiently is to give them alternatives, and lots of them: reliable public transit, walkable communities, safe cycling infrastructure. Taking that away isn't about efficiency; that's about politics.

Schedule 10 is another concern. It exempts ministerial zoning orders from the Legislation Act, removing requirements for public notice, comment and filing. This means the minister could issue an MZO that conflicts with

existing provincial policy statements, even those protecting the greenbelt, without the public even ever being informed or consulted. We have seen this approach before, Speaker. It mirrors what happened during the greenbelt scandal when major land use decisions were made without proper oversight or accountability. This is not red tape reduction; this is a reduction in transparency and in trust.

Speaker, there are also significant ethical concerns in schedule 6, which allows mining and forestry landowners to make voluntary contributions to local road boards and receive double the amount in provincial funds. Without clear criteria, caps or reporting requirements, this opens the door to perceived or actual favouritism. Public money should never be distributed in a way that benefits select groups or donors.

Across other schedules, Madam Speaker, the pattern continues. Metrolinx and the minister are given expanded powers to override municipalities on transit-oriented developments. Development charges are changed in ways that shift costs onto local governments. Environmental assessments are weakened.

Speaker, if this government truly wanted to build faster, there are better ways. Invest in affordable housing construction. Match the federal government's housing commitments. Crack down on speculation and flipping. Modernize zoning in collaboration with municipalities, and not by dictating to them. Fix the Landlord and Tenant Board by hiring more adjudicators and streamline that process. Those are real solutions that Bill 60 could do, but it has none of them. Instead, it takes power away from municipalities, reduces tenant protections, undermines accountability and consolidates authority here at Queen's Park while weakening oversight elsewhere.

Ontarians want housing built. We all do. We want infrastructure improved, but we also expect those things to be done openly, fairly and in the best public interest. Integrity and efficiency should never be at odds, and we can build faster while maintaining accountability and public trust. Unfortunately, this bill moves us further away from those principles.

We can reduce unnecessary delays, but we must never do it at the expense of democracy or ethics in public decision-making. Speaker, Bill 60 is presented as a plan to make Ontario work more efficiently. It consolidates power; that's what it does. It reduces public input and it undermines transparency. For those reasons, the Ontario Liberal caucus cannot support it. Ontarians deserve a government that acts with integrity, transparency and respect for democratic principles in every decision that it makes.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from Nepean.

MPP Tyler Watt: I rise today to speak on Bill 60, the so-called Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act. Right from the start, let's be honest: This bill is not about fighting delays and it's certainly not about building faster. It's about giving more power to the minister, less voices to the communities and fewer rights to tenants who are already struggling to stay in their homes.

This is yet another omnibus bill from this government—I just debated one yesterday, and here’s another one—a grab bag full of changes tucked into 16 different schedules that touch everything from roads to water to tenant protections. But when you peel back the title, what you find isn’t efficiency or transparency; it’s a pattern of centralized control, secrecy and misplaced priorities.

Speaker, in Nepean, residents are calling for smarter growth, not reckless development. Our community associations, from Half Moon Bay to Trend Arlington to Bells Corners, are worried about infrastructure that’s already at its limits. They’re worried about schools that are overcrowded, transit that hasn’t kept up and roads that are falling apart, let alone the LRT that hasn’t made its way to Barrhaven yet.

1520

This bill doesn’t solve those problems. It gives more control to Queen’s Park and less control to local councils that actually understand our neighbourhoods. This government loves to download financial costs onto municipalities but is not here to help when it comes to actually improving the areas in our ridings and neighbourhoods.

If this government really cared about building faster, they would invest in the infrastructure that makes housing possible: transit, water, schools, health care. They’d give municipalities the resources and autonomy to plan responsibly. Instead, they’re forcing through legislation that weakens environmental safeguards, undermines transparency and hurts the very people they claim to help.

I want to talk about schedule 12 of Bill 60, which proposes significant amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006. While the government frames these changes as a solution to the backlog at the Landlord and Tenant Board, which is something that we seriously have to address, we must examine the broader implications for tenants, landlords and the integrity of Ontario’s housing system.

There is no question that delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board are unacceptable and have been really bad since COVID. Tenants deserve timely hearings, and landlords, particularly small-scale ones, deserve an efficient and fair process for dispute resolution. In some instances, such as squatting, a problem that continues to affect constituents in my own riding, the current system has failed to provide timely recourse. These are real concerns that should be addressed to ensure the rights of tenants and landlords are protected.

Schedule 12, however, tilts that balance. It reduces notice periods for eviction, limits the board’s ability to consider fairness and restricts tenants from raising new issues during hearings. These changes may expedite proceedings, but they do so by weakening tenant protections and limiting the LTB’s discretion, which impacts landlords seeking fair adjudication as well.

We are also concerned by the increased regulatory powers granted to the minister, a theme that we are seeing in every bill—just more and more power being given to ministers in this cabinet. These include the ability to override the decision-making powers of the Landlord and

Tenant Board to postpone evictions and the power to overrule the LTB and their decision to provide notice-of-termination forms to tenants. These powers concentrate decision-making in the minister, reducing the Landlord and Tenant Board’s oversight and its ability to maintain transparency and accountability among tenants and landlords.

Let us be clear: Addressing squatting and abuse of tenancy laws is important, but we must not allow isolated cases to justify sweeping reforms that infringe on the rights of thousands of Ontarians who rely on stable, affordable housing. The solution to the backlog is not to make it easier to evict; it is to invest in the capacity of the Landlord and Tenant Board, ensure fair hearings and tackle the root cause of housing insecurity.

I want to move on to the housing provisions. Ontario is facing the most severe housing crisis in a generation, and we are one of the worst-performing provinces in Canada when it comes to building new houses. In my community of Nepean, we see it every single day. Families can’t afford to buy a home. Renters are being priced out. Young people are giving up on the dream of staying in the neighbourhoods they grew up in, myself included in that.

Instead of addressing those root causes, this bill makes things worse. Schedule 10 exempts ministerial zoning orders, MZO, from the Legislation Act, 2006. That means no public comment, no notice, no transparency. The minister could approve developments that run completely contrary to provincial policy, even to the greenbelt, and the public would have no right to review or appeal. We all remember what happened with the greenbelt scandal: backroom deals that benefited a few insiders at the expense of public trust. Now this government wants to make it easier to do the same thing again, with even less oversight.

Ontarians don’t want more secrecy or more power overreach from this government; they want more housing that’s actually affordable. They want infrastructure that keeps up with growth, not a planning process designed to reward friends of the government.

This isn’t an isolated bill; it’s part of a larger pattern that we keep seeing from this government, a government that promised to cut red tape but has instead cut public trust. They say they’re helping to build homes faster, but the only people they’re building for are well-connected developers. We’ve seen it with the greenbelt; we’ve seen it with the Skills Development Fund, where millions went to PC donors and insiders instead of training Ontario workers. And now we’re seeing it again, in a bill that hands even more power to ministers while taking it away from municipalities, tenants and everyday Ontarians.

We need real housing leadership, not omnibus bills written to please lobbyists and just shooting whatever we want in this bill. We need affordable homes near transit, not speculative developments on farmland. We need strong tenant protections, not laws that make it easier to evict people. We need open, transparent planning, not ministerial orders made in secret. We need to build communities, not just condos. We need homes people can

afford, not handouts for the well-connected. And, above all, we need a government that sees housing as a human right and not a political opportunity.

I urge this government to reconsider these provisions and work collaboratively with stakeholders to build a housing system that is fast, fair and transparent. Ontarians deserve better than another “Fighting Delays” slogan. They deserve a government that fights for them with real, impactful, meaningful legislation.

So let's get back to basics: building homes that people can actually afford, protecting renters from displacement, empowering municipalities to plan responsibly and ensuring growth that strengthens—not weakens—our communities.

That's what real progress looks like, and that's what the people of Nepean—and all Ontarians—deserve.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I just want to ask—we see that employers who steal wages from their workers never have to pay it back. So, you could be a worker, and you don't receive your paycheque and nothing happens to your employer, but if you miss your rent by seven days, you face eviction.

Two things: Do you find that that's a fair way of treating tenants, especially—and treating our workers? And what are the consequences of these actions—especially, in the face of people losing their jobs at a rapid rate?

I'll ask the member for Toronto—St. Paul's because she has more tenants in her riding.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Thank you very much for the question.

There's absolutely no fairness in what's happening with the Landlord and Tenant Board. As someone who's learning more about people appointed to these boards, we see that they are absolutely stacked with government appointees and government interests. The hope is that these kinds of things would be rectified with new appointees as we try to look more closely at who is being appointed and help scrutinize that.

But the impact is profound on the renters and, as the member noted, in my riding—and I said earlier—over 60% are tenants and they are worried. It is so distressing and since even the spectre of what was happening with this bill became apparent to people in the riding, as I said, I have been flooded with emails and phone calls, and they have not stopped.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm trying to read real examples of people who are concerned about this bill into the record. I want to read an email from Jonathan.

“Hello Teresa Armstrong, I've kept up with the news on Doug Ford's Anti Renter bill and this is terrible to those that are on a fixed income (pensioners, ODSP, OW etc.) and those making a low income. At a time where people can't find work and housing being more unaffordable in history, this bill goes against what Canada is an affordable place to live and raise a family.”

These are from everyday people who are paying attention, because a lot of people don't pay attention to legislation in this House. Now this has really raised awareness.

Can you speak to some people who have emailed your office or called about the concerns that this government's passing this legislation under Bill 60?

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you for that important question. I have many examples already. This is something that I am really touched by, that my constituency office is actually able to be a resource for these people.

But one particular story that comes to my mind is a senior, who was recently diagnosed with cancer, missed her rent payment and was threatened with eviction. She has been diagnosed with a life-altering cancer, has to now find her way to seek treatment at the hospital or wherever it may be and is already dealing with financial hardship and was served with an eviction notice. Thankfully we were able to help her with that, but imagine that this bill went even further, seven days notice and you're evicted. This senior woman with cancer would be evicted from her home. That is just one example of what this bill could lead to.

1530

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: This is to either of my colleagues over there—again, they can arm-wrestle for it.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Through the Chair: You may or may not realize that green roofs, that whole industry is going to be affected by this bill. You might not know that because it's tricky to find it, especially if it's indeed in fact going to be an order in council. The green roof industry is 1,600 jobs in Ontario, many in rural as well as urban ridings, thousands of rooftops in the city of Toronto which basically manage our stormwater and actually prevent flooding in the city, and they are vital to keeping residents safe.

What do you think of killing the green roofs bylaw and killing the green roofs industry in Ontario? Do you think that's a good thing to do?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Thank you for the question, member from beautiful Beaches—East York.

Killing the green roof technology, or the whole initiative, to me is despicable. I see that as something absolutely critical as we see more and more construction, especially in my riding which is being contested day after day. I look at Yonge and St. Clair where they're putting up 38- and 42-storey buildings, four levels of parking underground but zero infrastructure to go along with it. If there is no green roof on that roof—we're talking about cement city. We know it's cement city and we know that's going to be problematic and there's more and more homes being demolished, residential areas, making way for massive skyrisers, apartment buildings that are, I might add, not affordable. So I think it's despicable, I think it's

frightening and I think that it has to be something that we take deep notice of and deal with.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: This is a question to the member for Nepean. Thank you for your presentation about this bill. I am most concerned about the changes to the Landlord and Tenant Board. The move by this government to potentially create a do-not-rent list that's searchable, as well as the move to make it easier for landlords to evict and make it harder for tenants to appeal an eviction. Do you think this is going to improve the Landlord and Tenant Board and how it functions?

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you to my colleague for that question.

No, it's not going to improve the Landlord and Tenant Board. We all agree that we need more resources at the Landlord and Tenant Board. We need to get rid of the backlog that's there, so it can actually be a useful tool for both landlords and tenants. There are always going to be bad actors on both sides and we want to make sure that everyone has a fair fight and attempt to have their stories heard and heard from a trustworthy source that can decide what that is. If we're just completely tilting it to the side of the landlords and making it that much more difficult for tenants to actually put forward their complaints and concerns, that's deeply troubling and concerning.

So, no, I don't think it is going to improve the Landlord and Tenant Board but they are pretending that it is. But that's what we usually see as just, this is what we're doing but the devil is in the details.

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: To the member from Nepean, you've recognized the desire to create balance at the Landlord and Tenant Board, and you want fairness for tenants, fairness for landlords, fairness for everybody. That's great. That's what we're doing in this bill. But you seem to be pooh-poohing what we're doing.

So what are your ideas? What would you like to do? What's fairness to you? If this isn't fair, what's fairness to you?

MPP Tyler Watt: Fairness to me isn't making it harder already for tenants to maintain their home. Fairness to me is getting rid of the backlog for the Landlord and Tenant Board and ensuring that there are enough resources to hear from tenants, to hear from landlords on whatever their case may be. That's what fairness is.

But the changes that this government is making are clearly not in favour of tenants. I am a tenant. I will probably be renting for the rest of my life, for my generation's last hope with getting housing at some point. I would like to know that if ever something were to happen with my house that I'm renting or landlord, there is a body that is going to be there to treat my case independently and fairly.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Point of order. I recognize the member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you very much, Speaker. I believe if you seek it, there is unanimous consent for me to wear this Blue Jays shirt for the final two hours of the House sitting.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Toronto Centre is seeking unanimous consent to wear a Toronto Blue Jays shirt that they are already wearing. Do we have unanimous consent? Agreed.

Go, Jays, go!

Further debate? I recognize the minister for infrastructure but also many other things: the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks—and Infrastructure.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I've also been called the minister of maternity leaves as well. I'm very happy to be filling in as Acting Minister of Infrastructure for Minister Surma, as I did for Minister Khanjin last year at environment.

I want to say that I am so pleased to join the debate, sharing my time with the Associate Minister of Housing on this debate with respect to Bill 60. I'm very happy to speak with respect to the proposed amendments contained in Bill 60, the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act. In fact, I have a rare honour to speak in those two capacities, both as Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and as Acting Minister of Infrastructure.

If passed, Madam Speaker, these amendments would build a resilient, self-sustaining economy, ready to withstand disruption and thrive in a rapidly changing world. These amendments would empower local businesses, cut red tape, update outdated rules and build critical infrastructure. These amendments would, if approved by this House, drive economic growth today while strengthening Ontario's economy for the challenges of tomorrow and balancing that with protecting our shared environment.

Let me first address those aspects of Bill 60 related to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. One of the proposals under that ministry would streamline approvals to support farmers and our agricultural workers in Ontario. Each year, Ontario farms employ over 30,000 agricultural workers to plant, grow and harvest vegetables, fruits and crops. Many are seasonal farm workers who are essential for the agricultural sector, filling labour shortages and helping Ontario farmers to get their products to market. These migrant farm workers typically require on-farm housing. We have consulted with the agricultural sector, and they have shared their concerns with the current permissions process that does not allow for timely construction of septic systems to accommodate the growing number of farm workers, and that obtaining permission to build a sewage system is a lengthy and burdensome process.

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Our government wants to speed up this process. That is why we are proposing practical but important and impactful measures to change the province's sewage regulatory framework to support the construction of on-farm housing for agricultural workers. We are proposing legislative changes to the Ontario Water Resources Act, and in

conjunction with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing proposal which my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has spoken about, and I anticipate my colleague the Associate Minister of Housing will touch upon, this would allow farm owners to begin construction of certain small sewage systems under Ontario's building code without unnecessary delay, rather than wait up to a year for an environmental compliance approval. I remind everyone that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing policy proposal outlines the criteria and rules for those systems to be regulated under the building code and proposes protections for human health, the environment and neighbouring properties.

I would like also to share further details about some of the proposed legislation that relates to my role as Acting Minister of Infrastructure. The first set of measures would speed up the delivery of transit-oriented communities, also known as TOCs. There are a number of identified sites for transit-oriented communities around the greater Golden Horseshoe. As our government delivers the largest expansion of public transit in North America, these vibrant mixed-use communities will be built along the subway and GO and LRT networks of the province, bringing more homes, more jobs, more commercial opportunities and public amenities closer to public transit.

We are currently working to deliver transit-oriented communities at 12 future subway stations and at GO and LRT stations across the greater Golden Horseshoe. Combined, these transit-oriented communities have the potential to create approximately 340,000 homes, as well as office and commercial space to support up to 75,000 new jobs near stations. I know that this would be exciting news for many Ontarians, including some of my residents in the gallery from Durham: the Harman family, Randy and Rachael Harman and their young son Rhen. It's about the future, especially for the next generation.

Now, the important aspect of the vision of TOCs is that they bring more housing and jobs closer to transit. They will increase transit ridership and reduce traffic congestion. They bring together retail and community amenities like community centres, daycares, parks and libraries within a short distance of transit. And they offset the cost of station construction, saving taxpayers money by working with building partners. A key element of this program is that transit-oriented communities are shaped for the community by the community. The benefits offered by each transit-oriented community are tailored based on input from the local municipality, Indigenous partners, stakeholder groups and the general public.

Now, these are multi-stakeholder and complex projects that require coordination among the province, municipalities and our building partners. Given this complexity, transit-oriented communities can encounter a wide range of issues, from technical and planning issues to design implementation and intergovernmental coordination. If not addressed effectively, these challenges can delay progress, increase costs and erode stakeholder confidence. There currently is no structured process to resolve disputes among municipalities, building partners and other

stakeholders through the life cycle of a TOC project. Now, while the Ontario Land Tribunal does provide a formal dispute resolution path for certain matters, TOCs that advance using a minister's zoning order, or an MZO, with enhanced authorities may be excluded from the oversight of the OLT on site-planning matters and that creates a gap in how disputes are handled.

To reduce potential delays and ensure that transit-oriented communities are delivered on time, we are proposing amendments to the Transit-Oriented Communities Act. These proposals would enable the Minister of Infrastructure to establish a transit-oriented committee advisory panel. This panel would offer expert advice and facilitation services to help resolve a broad spectrum of transit-oriented, community-related disputes at TOCs, including planning, design, coordination and implementation challenges.

As a former litigator, a trial lawyer engaged in traditional litigation over three decades before I was elected to public office, I well recognize that alternative dispute resolution, including this vision of facilitation, bringing people together, identifying issues in a less formal way and getting to yes faster, is what we need in order to build TOCs, to guide parties toward resolution, reducing the burden on the Ontario Land Tribunal and only leveraging that tribunal when necessary.

To further support dispute resolution, then, we are also proposing legislative amendments to authorize the Minister of Infrastructure to issue binding directions for resolving TOC-related disputes based on the advice of that proposed transit-oriented community advisory panel. These measures will help create a faster and more efficient dispute resolution process while providing more clarity and certainty for our municipal and building partners.

This past May, an order in council was approved to allow the Minister of Infrastructure to issue, amend and revoke MZOs for transit-oriented community proposals. This provides a seamless one-window approach and offers more certainty for building partners when planning these multi-year projects.

Through an enhanced MZO, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Infrastructure have the authority to require a municipality and a building partner to execute agreements dealing with site plan matters and define their scope and terms in lieu of the typical site plan control process, but there is an absence of a clearly defined process for executing agreements when this alternative process is provided. To address this gap, we are proposing legislative amendments that would, first, clarify and strengthen ministerial direction over site plan matters to ensure timely co-operation between municipalities and building partners for the execution of agreements dealing with site plan matters where an enhanced MZO has been issued and also, secondly, allow municipal councils to delegate authority to enter agreements dealing with site plan matters to municipal staff or agents to streamline local decision-making. Our proposed changes could reduce site planning by—wait for it—50%. Together these targeted measures would help accelerate the

delivery of transit-oriented communities and provide more certainty for building partners.

The regulation to enable the transit station charge came into effect on September 2, 2025. Since then, several municipalities have already expressed their interest to the ministry in implementing a transit station charge bylaw.

Finally, a further item, if I may, Madam Speaker, before I conclude: I would submit that this would offer municipalities the flexibility to determine whether these charges are to be paid at the time of building occupancy or the time of building permit issuance, helping to reduce upfront financial pressure on builders. This is a practical but important adjustment to streamline.

I was going to say, lastly, Waterfront Toronto is undertaking one of the largest waterfront revitalization initiatives in the world to transfer a vast amount of former industrial underused lands into mixed-use communities with new homes, parks and attractions. This past January, together with the government of Canada and the city of Toronto, we announced almost a billion dollars—\$975 million—in joint funding to support the next phase of Waterfront Toronto's revitalization plan. These investments will help enable approximately 14,000 new homes, and Waterfront Toronto estimates it will support 100,000 skilled trades jobs and add \$13 billion to the economy. Once complete, Waterfront Toronto estimates, we can attract as many as 1.7 million visitors a year.

To conclude, before I turn it over to the Associate Minister of Housing, we are using every tool available and exploring every avenue possible to not only push back but to build a more resilient, competitive and self-reliant Ontario. Over the next decade, we have more than \$200 billion targeted toward building the critical infrastructure people rely on each and every day, such as transit, hospitals and schools. With this historic investment, we are stepping up to protect and grow communities, keep workers on the job and stimulate our economy.

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The measures in our proposed Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act would speed up approvals and construction on critical infrastructure projects, while safeguarding our shared environment and public health. We will do whatever it takes to bolster our economy and protect Ontario in every way, today and in the years to come.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you to the minister for his comments. I'm pleased to share time with him and would note that I've got a mild case of Blue Jays fever, which seems to present a lot like a cold. So if I'm a little squawky today, sorry about that, everybody.

But I really am pleased to speak to Bill 60. Of course, I think it's a very, very important bill. I always look at bills like this in the context of my previous roles as that of a mayor for over 12 years, a councillor for over 16, deputy district chair of Muskoka, and the president of AMO and of Ontario Small Urban Municipalities. As we worked with the province during my time in those roles, we were

always asking for more tools to do things and streamline and look at things differently.

That's exactly what Bill 60 does. When you look at it in the context of smaller communities—and I think it's important that we have that conversation about smaller communities, rural communities, northern communities and what they need—there are many components within this bill that really hit the mark.

When we look at streamlining communal water systems, that's something that's very important to allow the development of areas that are outside traditional urban areas, which we know are expensive to service, but it still provides an opportunity to put that land to work for housing and give people what they want, which is a place to live.

I know I had examples when I was mayor of areas in our town that were unserved, and we had opportunities to do something there. But it always came back to, "No, you've got to wrap it into the urban service area." You would have to go through many different stages and just extreme expense to even consider using this property to its highest and best use.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I'm sorry to interrupt the member.

Pursuant to standing order 50(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader directs the debate to continue.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Adjourn the debate, please.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

PROTECT ONTARIO BY SECURING AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR GENERATIONS ACT, 2025

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

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

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

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak on behalf of the residents of Timiskaming-Cochrane and on behalf of my NDP colleagues to start off our response to the government bill, Bill 40.

Before I get going, I'd like to just say I'm going to be sharing my time with the member from London North Centre and the member from Toronto-Danforth.

I had the opportunity this morning to listen to the Minister of Energy and Mines and his leadoff, or his

portion of the leadoff. And I'd like to say, I actually enjoy listening to the minister. He's a very good communicator. I don't always agree with what he's trying to communicate, but I really appreciate the way he lays things out.

As I was listening to it, he actually brought some memories back to me. He actually brought some memories back of some of the things the Premier has said, and sometimes the Premier isn't quite as eloquent. When the minister was talking about how it's important to have a stable electrical system—100% agree. I don't think anyone here would disagree. And that brought back to me—and I'm going to date myself here, when I was on the dairy farm. Does anyone here remember Y2K, how the electrical system was going to fall apart, everything was going to fall apart on Y2K?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yep.

Mr. John Vanthof: Everything was going to fall apart, right, because the clocks didn't know—anyway. I guess that was the first official conspiracy theory hoax.

Anyway, at that point, I had a dairy farm, my family had a dairy farm, and there's one thing about dairy farming: You need power all the time. Up until that point, I didn't have a backup generator because we didn't lose power that often, for some reason, before that, but because of Y2K—the Premier has said often that people on this side have never had to look at a payroll, never had to have a balance sheet, and I humbly, completely disagree with that statement. I had to look at my balance sheet very closely to see if I could buy a generator, and I did. Y2K—nothing happened. I was a bit disappointed in my purchase.

But then, on August 14, 2003—do you remember that day? That was the big blackout. Nobody was warning us about the big blackout. There were no Y2K warnings. On my farm, we had three days with no power, and was I happy for that generator. Because the one thing with all businesses, but I'll just go from mine because I know mine the best: On a dairy farm, you not only have to milk two or three times a day—now on many dairy farms they milk 24 hours a day—you need water, you need ventilation. Cows have very poor lung capacity. If you don't have good ventilation, they get sick very quickly. There's a lot of things you need right away, so you need a very stable hydro source, which my generator provided and which the grid system also provides.

I fully agree with the minister that stability is important, because we all questioned after that event whether or not we had a stable hydro system. I think, across eastern North America, we questioned that. So the fact that the government is talking about a stable hydro system, I fully, fully agree.

One other thing I remember about the big blackout is that my generator ran on a diesel tractor. Farms have tractors, and I had a 150-horsepower diesel tractor on it. At that point, after those three days, I thought that hydro from the grid was pretty economical, because I put a lot more diesel fuel through that tractor than I would have spent equivalent on hydro. That showed me that hydro also has a cost.

Later on, hydro became a huge cost factor. Here, we discuss it all the time, that the previous—well, no, the previous government—let's make this clear, Speaker. The previous government was a Conservative government. The previous government before that was a Conservative government. The previous government before that was a majority Liberal government, not propped up by the NDP; it was all by itself, just like we're propping up the Conservatives now. The previous government before that was also a majority Liberal government—not propped up. But way back, there was a minority government. That was the first time I was elected, and that was a minority government. Yes, they were supported by the NDP for a couple years.

But I'm going to go back. When hydro started to become an issue, when hydro prices were going up, I can remember the first time I was exposed to the Liberals' Green Energy Act.

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Now, how I was exposed to it is that I was at an agricultural conference, and there was someone from the ministry explaining how farmers could participate in the Green Energy Act with solar grids. I was listening, and I remember distinctly that I was paying eight cents a kilowatt on my farm, and if I got a contract to put a solar array on my farm I was going to get paid 80 cents a kilowatt.

I have never told this story before here, but I actually applied for a solar array. I got the contract, and I didn't put it in because I thought it was a scam, honestly, because the difference in price was just unsustainable.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: You were right.

Mr. John Vanthof: Well, I don't think it was a scam. What it was, was an attempt by the government of the day to try to bolster the renewable energy system so that the solar arrays and the wind turbines would be built in Ontario. So if you created a huge market by overpaying for power and you had to buy the equipment made in Ontario, you would create a whole, big market for solar arrays. And then they got in trouble with the World Trade Organization, the solar arrays came from China and the whole thing blew apart.

What was interesting at that time—and I remember this distinctly as well—is that in many places, a lot of wind turbines were built and there was a lot of public opposition. That public opposition was actually inflamed a lot by the Conservative Party of the day, and that's partly why the Liberals collapsed across rural Ontario—the opposition.

The government House leader must be complaining about something I'm doing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I'm just barely in here.

Mr. John Vanthof: Anyway, so the Conservative Party of the day was very anti-wind. That inflamed much of the change, the switch of rural Ontario from Liberal to Conservative. It was the anti-wind sentiment. And—

Interjections.

Mr. John Vanthof: No, I meant wind, like “whoosh.”

Hon. Steve Clark: Just checking.

Mr. John Vanthof: I was trying to make this so technical and factual like the minister, but the government House leader is not allowing that.

To the point, when the government was elected—and there was the Fair Hydro Plan, remember that? That was closer to a scam, actually. Not that the money was disappearing, but they were playing with who was—it was basically going onto the debt of OPG, the subsidy that the government was paying to keep hydro prices down, as opposed to the current government; they're just basically taking it right out of the budget. That subsidy is still being paid. It's still being paid. But I will give credit where credit is due: It's a bit clearer where that money is coming from. Basically, the taxpayers are paying to keep hydro rates lower.

Mr. Chris Glover: Some \$6.9 billion.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, okay, so we've got an economist back here—\$6.9 billion.

Hon. Steve Clark: He's not an economist.

Mr. John Vanthof: He's my favourite economist, but anyway.

What was interesting about stability—I listened closely when the minister talked about keeping stable, but there are some examples where this government doesn't care about stability one bit—not one bit. Because one of the first bills—and I don't remember the number of the bill, but I do remember that they passed a bill to tear wind turbines out of the ground that the previous government had given contracts for. And I don't mind: The government has the right to do that. But there was a clause in that bill that the companies couldn't sue to keep themselves whole. Now, that—if anybody is going to talk about things that destabilize—is a prime example.

Whether or not you agree with the philosophy of the government of the day—but if you get an open bid contract with the government of the day, and then the subsequent government says, “We don't think it was a good idea, so we are going to terminate the contract,” you still have to allow the company to keep itself whole, because if you can't—that's just how business works.

Now, the Premier often says that the people on this side know nothing about business. Well, I do know enough about business that that was not businesslike in any way, shape or form. And I do believe—if I'm wrong, I hope somebody corrects me—that those companies were kept whole in the end because it just makes sense. You can't change the rules in the middle of the game. You can, but there's going to be a penalty. It's like if you get a mortgage and you get the fixed-rate mortgage and then you break that, you're going to pay a penalty. There are all kinds of things where if you sign a contract, you break it—and this government did that.

Another classic one—maybe not as big, but one of the first things the government did was they ripped out EV chargers. And now they're the biggest EV-supporting government, supposedly, on the planet—bar none. They have a bit of a problem themselves with stability.

Now, I don't think it's a surprise to anybody, I'm from the country, and we have a bit of a different view some-

times as people from the city—a bit of a different view. So a bill was passed here, and it was about natural gas—because this is an energy bill. It's not just about hydro; it's about natural gas as well. It was a bill passed here and I remember that they changed the formula to put in new gas infrastructure and that was to put gas lines up and down the roads of rural Ontario, in northern Ontario, because we didn't get access to gas. Do you know what happened? I don't see a whole bunch of gas lines up and down rural Ontario. That bill did what we said it was going to do and it helped put gas into suburbs and stuff, but it didn't do—there were a few cases; I'm not going to say there weren't—what it was sold to do.

And that is one of the biggest problems with some of the parts of this bill. It might not do what the minister is saying it's going to do, regardless of how good the minister is at portraying it. And, like I said at the start, he is a great communicator—a great communicator, no doubt about it—but there's no guarantee that what he says, what he believes, is actually going to happen.

So, he talked a bit about how data centres take so much power and how the government or regulators need the ability to decide who gets the power, because right now—and I'm paraphrasing, so people might say I'm out to lunch, and people say that anyway; that's fine—in Ontario if you want power, you get it. You sometimes have to pay to connect, but you have access to the system. The problem that causes, in the case of a data centre—a data centre sometimes uses so much power that basically you'd need another nuclear reactor to feed it, right?

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So I get that the government wants to have the ability. I get that. What I'm concerned about, considering how the government picks winners and losers in other programs, is: What's the process to get access to that power? I think that's a legitimate question. It's a legitimate question. The one thing that I've always thought the Conservatives believed in was smaller government: You create the conditions for the economy to work, and you let the economy work itself out. But that's not the way the current government—the current government is picking winners and losers, and it seems that this bill could be on that track too. We don't see evidence that it's not. I think that's one of my concerns with this bill.

Now, I've only got a couple of minutes left, so I just want to talk about a few other things. My colleague and I this morning looked—there's an app; I'm sure there's more than one. But we looked up where the power was coming from this morning and 40% of it was nuclear, I believe 29% was gas, 10% was wind. There was very little solar. There was no biofuel, no biomass at all.

So the government is talking a big game on biomass, and believe me, in northern Ontario, we need biomass, because if we can't use all our wood products—we're seeing it now: Sawmills are closing. So do you know what? The government talks a good game about biomass; we need more than to talk about it.

Regarding nuclear, one of the opportunities I've had since I've been elected is I have toured a nuclear facility,

Bruce. The one thing that struck me about Bruce nuclear—other than the fact that it's huge, and it's very clean—is that the system is much the same as the generator on the farm, except the steam is created by the nuclear system, and the pipes go to the generators and they turn big generators. I understood the system.

I think, at this point, we all know nuclear is an important part of our system. It provides good jobs. We need to figure out, once and for all, especially if we're going to go more nuclear, where the waste goes. It's a legitimate question. I often hear it. Nuclear creates so many jobs, but the waste seems to go where the jobs aren't, and I'm not sure that's a long-term solution. I'm just not.

I've only got a few seconds left, and it's because the government House leader was heckling me.

But one other facility I've toured in my riding is the Lower Notch power dam. The Montreal River goes into Lake Timiskaming, and the Lower Notch power dam has two turbines. If memory serves me correctly, they are the two biggest turbines in Ontario, bigger than Niagara—

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: Wow!

Mr. John Vanthof: Not more power than Niagara Falls, but the two turbines are bigger. And one thing about them—and I'm not an engineer either, but why I toured the plant is because they were changing the bearings in the turbines. So we went right in under the dam. It was incredible.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: “Dam” good tour.

Mr. John Vanthof: It was a great tour. It's one of the incredible honours of being an MPP: You get to see some stuff.

Those turbines turned on air, and you could just turn them on and off. I believe the numbers were that it can produce for 100,000 homes for two hours. But the one thing that it could also do—and it hasn't been done yet, but the government needs to think about it—is when we've got too much hydro, if you pump the water back up into the Montreal River system, they could double the capacity of that facility. Those things, we have to think about, because it doesn't matter—we all know we're going to need a lot more power. Let's all agree on that. Let's all agree that there is no source of power that doesn't have some kind of ramification, regardless. So, let's look for power sources that are reliable, that are where we know the supply chain so we can control it and that are as renewable as possible. And let's have a mix so that we're depending not on one. And my last—I'm sorry; I'm eating your time. I've got one more issue.

So now that the current government has gone back to wind. They've put out contracts for wind. I don't disagree. They've also, for storage, that's one thing that was missing in the Green Energy Act—well, there were a few things missing—but storage is really important. Because when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine, you either need to be able to find a place to put that into the system or you need to be able to store that electricity. Right? Batteries or water storage, you can do it—water storage.

So now the wind turbines are becoming an issue in our area. When it was first announced, there were no wind turbines allowed on class 1, 2 and 3 agricultural land. Anyone who's been to Timiskaming–Cochrane, you cross that hill, and it sure looks like class 1, 2 or 3, but it's not, because of temperature.

So, one thing that the government and I agree on—I often don't agree with the government. I very rarely agree with the government. I even more rarely agree with the Premier, but I do agree the one thing that they did do is allow municipalities to have a decision. And it hasn't been easy. Some municipalities have agreed, some haven't. One thing that the government hasn't really thought through, I don't think, is in unorganized areas that have population but don't have a municipal government.

And they're wondering because there are companies looking to go there. There is opposition, there is some pro too, but there's no real way to gauge public opinion and that's an issue. That is an issue. I have stayed out of the debate. When people asked me, I said the one thing that the Green Energy Act really got wrong is they did not give any power to local municipalities to say yes or no. They really got that wrong. This time, local municipalities do have the ability because, without a local letter of support, the contract proposal doesn't go forward. So, I agree with that.

It's not a perfect system. There will be people who will never talk to each other again, I think, because of that process. But, at least, local people can make the decision. But in unorganized townships, that doesn't really exist, and we need to look at that.

Anyway, I think I've covered what I want to cover. I will give it to my colleague from London North Centre. Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from London North Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Thank you, Speaker. With your indulgence, I would like to start my comments today about the horrific, destructive Hurricane Melissa. It is jarring to learn that its category 5 status is the most powerful to ever make landfall in Jamaica. Sustained winds of 260 kilometres per hour have brought devastation and hardship to as many as 1.5 million people, according to the Red Cross.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness has stated that they had done everything possible but pointed out the difficulty of reinforcing anything against a hurricane of that magnitude.

Many Jamaicans living in Canada, including those in my riding of London North Centre, have been watching the situation with deep concern as they follow updates from family and friends back home.

Ella from my riding in London North Centre told me, “I haven't been able to reach my family, who rely on a landline that's been affected by the power outage. Even before this catastrophic hurricane, they had little to survive on—and now they're being forced to endure and suffer even more.”

Shaniya, a Jamaican living in Canada, said, “That’s what I’ve really been thinking about, not just my family, but people in general—people giving birth, people dying, people in hospitals, life situations like that. Especially now, given the current state of affairs in Jamaica. The conditions aren’t like in Canada.”

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Meteorologists say Melissa’s extraordinary intensification from a tropical storm to a category 5 hurricane in less than 36 hours is highly unusual.

Nia, another Jamaican living in Canada, said, “I do worry about some family members, yeah, but they have others there looking out for them. So overall, I’m not too stressed.”

The people of Jamaica are showing incredible resilience in the face of this unprecedented disaster, and Canadians of Jamaican heritage are closely following the recovery efforts. It’s important that we continue to support relief initiatives and ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most. Let us stand in solidarity with the communities affected by Hurricane Melissa as they rebuild their lives and restore essential services.

On Bill 40, the Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025, I am proud to rise and add the voices of the great people of London North Centre. This is not just a piece of legislation about energy; it’s about how we ensure that one of our most fundamental public resources, electricity, serves the people who rely on it every day.

Energy is a public good, a foundational resource that powers our homes, industries and daily lives, yet many governments have forgotten this. For far too often, energy has been politicized, privatized and profitized, while the public, the very people it’s meant to serve, have not fully enjoyed the benefits that were originally intended.

To understand how we arrived here, it’s worth recalling the vision of a legislator this House should never forget, Sir Adam Beck. Beck believed that electricity should be for the people, not for private profit.

Beck’s life is a story of vision, public service and determination. In 1900, he founded the London Health Association, which later became part of the University and Victoria hospitals. He served as mayor of London while also representing the city as a member of provincial Parliament.

His greatest legacy, though, was energy. He believed that energy should benefit people and it should not be for profit. At a time when private companies failed to provide reliable power, he championed publicly owned electricity with the slogan “Power at Cost” and the principle “*Dona Naturae pro Populo Sunt*”—“The Gifts of Nature Are for the Public.”

In 1906, he became the first chairman of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission and was knighted in 1914 for his work. Thanks to Beck, Ontario Hydro reduced electricity prices by 87%, making power affordable for families and industry, a true defence of the public good.

As the MPP from London, I take special pride in reminding this House that our city gave Ontario one of its

greatest champions for the public good. Sir Adam Beck fought for affordable electricity, public accountability and the principle that energy is a right, not a commodity. His legacy challenges us to ask every time we debate energy policy, who benefits, and who is left behind? How do we ensure that public interest comes first? As we fast-forward to today, the challenges may look different, but the principle remains the same: Energy must serve the people, not merely profit.

Bill 40 proposes significant changes to how Ontario governs its energy system. While some of these changes are aimed to support economic growth, the bill does nonetheless raise some serious concerns. The government has broad discretion to designate specified load facilities without clear criteria. This means that high energy users could be prioritized or limited arbitrarily. Productive industries like greenhouse growers in southwestern Ontario could see their energy access restricted if capacity is allocated to other energy-intensive users such as cryptocurrency miners. If the government wants to give itself this level of discretionary power without transparency, it is a huge risk. It risks unfairness, and it undermines public confidence. The minister himself said that the government needs the power to decide who gets the power, but given the scandals that we’ve seen with the Skills Development Fund and with the greenbelt, where there’s been a cash-for-access culture that’s been created by this government, it does beg the question: Is this yet another opportunity for the government to find a way to privatize and profitize who is going to benefit from power in Ontario?

Critics have warned that this level of discretion could open the door to political interference, weaken public oversight and erode investor confidence. Without transparent rules, Ontarians cannot be assured that energy policy will be applied fairly or consistently. A stable, predictable energy system is essential not only for economic growth, but also for maintaining public trust and confidence in Ontario’s institutions.

Again, Ontarians deserve clear rules, protections for productive industries and a system that serves the public, not just select interests. Sir Adam Beck taught us that electricity belongs to the people. While Bill 40 might have the potential to encourage growth and innovation, it only does so if it supports and preserves fairness, accountability and the principles of public service. Anything less betrays the vision that Ontario has relied upon for over a century.

Speaker, I also wanted to look towards some of the words of some of the experts in the field. This is from the Sarnia Journal, and it says: “Canada ranks in the global top 10 data centre markets, and spending on servers here is expected to grow 66% by 2029. Worldwide, the industry is booming, with construction expected to reach \$49 billion by 2030.”

Keith Brooks, a program director from Environmental Defence, states, “It creates a dynamic where companies go directly to elected officials or their staff to negotiate deals, rather than going through an independent and transparent process.”

This is, again, the government looking towards manipulating processes, changing the structures so that it can benefit them and their insiders. It's a consolidation of control.

Brooks goes on to state, "There's always a risk when corporate interests are negotiating agreements with governments in back rooms.... They [the Ford government] often point to external pressures—energy demand, housing need, trade tariffs—as reasons to act quickly. But it's really about removing democratic guardrails and making it easier to cut backroom deals with powerful corporations."

It's also important, as we look at Bill 40, that we think about legislation that was passed just last year: the Keeping Energy Costs Down Act. It gave the government the authority to override decisions by the independent Ontario Energy Board; the ability to override a decision, including one that blocked Enbridge from passing expansion costs onto consumers. That was not something that supported people, and yet the government did so anyway.

I also wanted to quote another person from my riding of London North Centre: Adam Fremeth, from the Ivey Business School. He has mentioned how, of course, jurisdictions across Canada are actively trying to gain these data centres, to court these data centres. He mentions that, of Bill 40, this could be an attempt for the government to bring discipline into a competitive space. But really, the proof will be in the pudding because the real test will be to see how these rules actually are applied.

"Fremeth also cautioned that centralized decision-making must be paired with robust independent oversight—especially by the Ontario Energy Board...."

Fremeth states, "This sector is highly politicized—and it's difficult to remove politics from energy decisions in Canada.... But the system we have is the one we must work with, and that makes strong, independent oversight even more important going forward."

Speaker, as we look at Bill 40, the difficulty with this is that we see this government, yet again, providing themselves with some interesting powers.

I think, as we enter into this debate about energy and power, that we discuss the privatization that we have seen started by the Liberals and continued by the Conservatives. Because Liberals and Conservatives have repeatedly failed to treat electricity as a public good. Instead of protecting and expanding publicly owned power, they've prioritized private profit, political expediency and short-term gains over the long-term interests of Ontarians. For decades, both Liberal and Conservative governments have failed Ontario, allowing hydro bills to skyrocket, jobs to be lost and communities to suffer.

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People right now are struggling to make ends meet. We've seen it during the hot summer days when seniors had to choose between cooling their homes, buying food or paying for medications. Now, as we approach the colder season, families are going to face heating bills they simply cannot afford. The government has ignored the need for a sustainable, publicly accountable electricity system and

have instead slowly handed control of this vital resource to private interests. The result is a system that no longer serves the people but serves corporations, leaving ordinary Ontarians to bear the cost. When will this government understand that we cannot abandon people? We were elected to help and to support them, not add a burden on them.

As the former leader Howard Hampton said in 2015, "What we've witnessed in Ontario in the last 20 years has been piece-by-piece privatization of the hydro system without anybody considering where we're going to end up and how much this is going to cost in terms of hydro bills, lost jobs and lost economic opportunity."

Speaker, I also wanted to mention to this House, this October marks a remarkable milestone. It's 10 years of the Forest City Film Festival, a celebration of creativity, storytelling and the extraordinary talent that continues to grow across southwestern Ontario. London has been a hub of artistic energy and innovation, and over the past decade, Forest City Film Festival has become one of our community's brightest cultural achievements. It provides a vibrant platform for local filmmakers to share their stories, connect with audiences and showcase the depth of creativity that defines our region. From its grassroots beginnings to the thriving festival we see today, FCFF has built a legacy of inspiration and collaboration. It reminds us that when we invest in the arts, we invest in our people, our economy and the heart of our community.

I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to the entire FCFF team for 10 years of vision, dedication and passion. A sincere thank you as well to XRM Media, Film London and the many sponsors, volunteers and partners whose hard work and generosity make this film festival possible.

As we celebrate this exciting milestone, let's honour the stories, the people and the creative spirit that bring the Forest City Film Festival to life each year. Congratulations on 10 years of excellence, and here's to many more stories yet to be told.

Speaker, as we look at Bill 40, it's important that we remember that any change that this government is making has to be looked at in a very strong way. They've worked to centralize power, they've worked to change processes, they've moved goal posts many times in the way to benefit themselves.

I have to ask the question about Bill 40: Is this something where the government is going to find yet a new avenue to create a circular economy with their insiders and with their donors, making sure that those people who donate money to the Conservative Party are the ones who get access to electricity?

Because I can tell you that is as far away from the vision of Sir Adam Beck as anyone could possibly imagine. Energy is meant to benefit all of Ontario. It's meant to drive industry, it's meant to protect people, it's meant to help people in their homes and it's supposed to be at a cost that is not exorbitant, that is not profitized and that is not privatized.

I want to thank you very much for allowing me this time, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from Toronto—Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate this opportunity. I want to thank my two colleagues who spoke before me, who spoke quite well. I was very pleased with their comments.

I want to start out by saying that the bill that we're going to be considering today is meant to implement the government's energy plan. It's not just a random bill that fell from the heavens—well, maybe it did—but it's part of the expression of the government's interest or designs on the electricity system. And if we're going to talk about this bill, I think first we have to understand the context within which it's developed and what the energy plan that's come before us is supposed to actually do.

The first thing that was really striking when I read the government's integrated energy plan was that there was no costing whatsoever. We have a plan that runs till 2050. There is no capital cost indicated in this plan, and, frankly, there is no target for the cost of electricity in this plan, which is pretty extraordinary.

If you are going to be talking about this critical sector in Ontario and what's to be done over the next 25 years and you don't actually have a cost, can you call that a plan? I mean, you can call it a "discussion paper." You could call it a "thought paper." But frankly, people need to know what your plan is going to cost in global terms, in capital terms, but also what it's going to mean in terms of electricity prices because those electricity prices have a huge impact on economic viability and on people's ability to keep a roof over their head and put food on the table.

Now, we shouldn't be surprised, frankly, because there are other examples: Highway 413, which the government is barrelling forward on—no price has yet been released to the public. The tunnel under the 401, which the government is apparently going to be paying someone to do a study on: There is no budget given for it. These are two very large capital projects—no dollars attached.

It is perhaps a strange thought to the government, but when they're going ahead with a plan, when they are introducing bills to implement that plan and they haven't actually told the people of Ontario what it's going to cost and how it's going to affect them, then you have to really question the validity of that plan, the thoughtfulness or the lack of thoughtfulness that went into it. Beyond that, if you present a plan with these costs, given the history of this province, it makes sense to have public hearings where people get to cross-examine those who are making claims about what things will cost and what the impact will be on the standard of living.

The only numbers that I've heard so far is that the plan before us is going to cost somewhere in the \$400-billion to \$500-billion range. That's a fair amount of money. That is a very, very rough estimate. Again, to have the government going forward with something where they have not costed—where what's available in terms of cost are rough estimates—makes no sense, and to start to implement a plan that has not been costed, has not had public hearings, has not actually been required to detail how things will work, does not make sense to me.

No one in this building, I hope, would sign a purchase agreement for a new house without knowing what that house cost. They would not sign a purchase agreement without knowing their monthly payments. They would not sign a contract with a landscaper for a property that they were contemplating buying and they didn't yet know the price for. No one would do that, but that's what we're being asked to do. We're being asked to implement a plan for which there's been no costing and for which there have been no public hearings to actually determine what's valid and what's not valid.

One of the other things that really struck me about this this plan, this integrated plan: It is set up to make sure that the company Enbridge, the natural gas supplier, becomes richer than it is today. Make no mistake: This energy plan before us contemplates an expansion of natural gas service in Ontario, which is directly contrary to public policy, but also to the logic of what's going on in the energy marketplace around the world.

The reality around the world is that investment in renewable energy and energy technologies that go with it are growing faster than investment in gas and gas technology. The world has seen the price advantage of moving away from natural gas, from oil and coal, and they're taking advantage of that. But the plan that is before us, part of which we are supposed to be moving forward with this bill today, seems to ignore that economic reality.

The International Energy Agency, an organization that every year assesses where things stand with energy consumption, investment and dynamics around the world, has their 2024 report out, and they point out where the money is going these days, who's investing in what. Renewables led the growth: 38% of the investment globally for new energy was renewable power. The next was natural gas: 28%. Now, renewables were not 38% five years ago. They've grown dramatically as the economics have changed: 28% for natural gas; 15% for coal—it's fading away—oil, 11%; nuclear power, 8%.

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It's very clear that, if you're talking about a plan for economic development and recognizing the global trends in investment, Ontario is out of sync with where things are going. And that's happening—that big shift to renewable power and the related technology of electric vehicles and space heating through heat pumps is all because of cost. New renewable energy, even when made into battery storage, is cheaper than all the other technologies. That is why it is growing so rapidly in Asia. It's growing rapidly in Africa and Latin America; increasingly growing faster in Europe; and even, shockingly enough, in Texas, where the whole system is predicated on, "If it's cheap, you'll buy it. If it's not cheap, you won't." Renewable energy is growing rapidly in Texas because people are going to the lowest-cost solution, period.

So, that's one reality. There's an economic framework that the world is responding to that this Ontario plan seems to be ignoring.

The other reality is that we are seeing a world in the process of dramatic change. We are seeing a world that's

getting hotter faster, and as I said in response to another bill—I think it was even earlier this week; time goes so quickly—the rate at which the world is heating up is getting faster. There was a general expectation that we wouldn't hit that guardrail, that height of a two-degree increase in world temperatures by sometime in the 2040s. Most recently, it's become increasingly apparent that we will probably hit that in the 2030s. That means much more extreme weather. It means a lower standard of living. It means disruption of food supplies around the world. And it means that many areas that are now inhabited will be uninhabitable because they will be too wet or too hot or too dry.

The words “climate change” do not show up in the government's plan. They are not there. The idea that the market for energy is going to change because the world is changing does not show up in the government's plan. They don't talk about the difficulties in maintaining reliability in a hotter, more extreme world, a world of more extreme weather events.

Just take a look at what's happened in Jamaica with Hurricane Melissa going through. The destruction is Biblical, and that extraordinarily powerful storm is going to become more and more the norm for those kinds of storms.

This government is ignoring the fact that as those extreme weather events cause more and more economic destruction, there will be more and more of a push to move away from fossil fuels like gas. That's not recognized in their integrated energy plan.

Around the world, investment banks are recognizing the destruction of climate change, and they are making decisions to limit their risk and exposure. Ontario is not doing that; it is not thinking about it. The bill before us is one that is based on a plan that's not costed, that ignores a huge reality in the change of the environment we're operating in, and ignores the reality that as that environment changes, the kind of energy systems that we're going to be operating and needing need to change as well.

Another element in this bill that needs to be addressed is that the government of Ontario says it's protecting Ontario's energy sovereignty. But frankly, between Bill 5 and Bill 40, there are a number of approaches to, I'll call it, future foreign participation regulations that would give the Minister of Energy and cabinet power to ban energy projects containing parts and components from certain countries of origin or from having them bid on provincial contracts. This has been framed as critical infrastructure protection. These practices will make it harder, if not impossible, for wind, solar and storage to participate in Ontario's energy procurement process and easier for gas to expand.

For instance, in 2025, China produced 98% of all the solar wafers globally and 80% of the entire solar manufacturing supply chain. They're supplying the least-cost energy electricity generation in the world, and this government is setting things up so that they can ban the utilization of those products in our system—the ones that we need if we're going to have power that we can afford in the future,

the ones that we need if we're going to have power that allows us to be competitive for attracting investment. That is what we are being set up for.

Bill 5, already passed, the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act—I don't know who writes these. Seriously, I have no idea who writes these, but I think they should drink less coffee and eat fewer gummies. That's all. That bill allows origin-based procurement restrictions and shields those decisions from legal challenge. It creates the legal foundation for new regulation. And in Bill 40, we have a section on adding economic growth to IESO and OEB objectives without greenhouse gas emissions or costs being prioritized. So how you actually set things up for economic development without recognizing that the world is changing dramatically and without paying attention to cost is beyond me. Nonetheless, that is the economic growth focus. It lets the minister control who can connect or participate on the grid while authorizing limits on foreign ownership or control.

My colleague from London North Centre and my colleague from Timiskaming both talked about what the criteria are for determining who can come on board. Is this going to be a Skills Development Fund kind of criteria? Does it depend on who buys you Jays tickets or not? Is it actually related to a business case, which would be a bizarre and a new thing for this government? One has to ask very seriously about the kind of favouritism that will shape those decisions. We aren't seeing the criteria for those decisions. That's going to be left to the minister later.

Again, Jays tickets are very pricey. The provision of Jays tickets can make someone very happy. That should not be the basis on which a decision is made to allow someone to sell products to Ontario.

I have to say that once this bill is passed, details of foreign participation regulations are expected to be released, and then those regulations, it's projected, would allow definition of foreign actors and impose country-of-origin limits on panels, turbines and batteries. The suspicion is that the real target here is China and renewable power. I have to say, I don't have any enthusiasm or liking for the Chinese regime. It's a one-man rule, starting to look like the United States. I don't like situations where democracy is set aside, but I have to say that we are in a situation where, right now, that technology is one they're providing. In the future, India and Vietnam are actually becoming manufacturers. We, here in Ontario, could be manufacturers if the government was willing to commit. The money they're willing to put into battery manufacture says they don't have a problem with doing that, so do it. The direction that we're going here is one that undermines our ability to actually provide ourselves with affordable power in the years to come.

It's interesting that Minister Lecce has suggested limiting US companies from participating in future energy procurement. Give me a break. Seventy per cent of our natural gas comes from the United States, and there is no indication in the government's energy plan that we're going to shift away from that. If you wanted to send a

rocket over the White House and say to Donald Trump, “Don’t mess with us,” dramatically cut the amount of gas we buy from Pennsylvania, a swing state, and that, with the investment in renewable energy, with efficiency, with heat pumps would make a huge difference to our economy and send a strong message to the United States that we are not going to let them drive our energy policy in the years to come.

1650

At a time when solar and wind are booming globally, driving record investment, innovation and job growth, Ontario is positioning itself to sit on the sidelines, and this bill before us is part of that sidelining of Ontario’s economy. The reliance on imported gas from the United States is going to be entrenched in this whole process.

I have to say, I’m very, very worried about the fact that in the focus on hydrogen—and I looked at the government’s hydrogen strategy—there seems to be great interest in using natural gas to provide hydrogen to the market. And I have to say to all of you that, even with the claim that the carbon dioxide will be captured when they go through that process, we know that the leakage rates are really high. We know that the expense is going to be very high. So the plan, the government’s hydrogen plan, reflects a real interest in making sure that natural gas suppliers and natural gas pipeline operators and distribution system operators like Enbridge continue to get fabulously wealthy. At the same time, we get to invest in technologies that are not taking off in the rest of the world and frankly don’t offer us the price benefit that we desperately need.

We are in a situation where we could, in fact, substantially grow the amount of renewable energy that’s produced in this province. And if we actually looked at some of the potential, we would be looking at tens of billions of dollars in investment and tens of thousands of years of employment. We would have an opportunity to cut our emissions to near zero by 2050. Instead, currently—and I see no change in this—we’re spending public money to lock in decades of new gas pollution. The IESO projects that power sector emissions could rise by as much as 400% by 2043 if new gas plants go ahead.

With the bills before us and with the plan before us, we’re in a situation where we risk loss of billions of dollars in renewable investment and the loss of tens of thousands of jobs. We’re in a situation where Ontario becomes more dependent on American gas and where electricity prices rise as cheaper renewables are blocked, and that’s bad both in terms of the ability for people to cover their household expenses but bad in terms of us being a jurisdiction that’s attractive for investment.

What we have before us is not a bill that will increase energy sovereignty. What we have before us is a bill that will implement an uncostered plan that ignores the fundamental reality of climate change and does not actually mean that we are on the side of where the world is going with energy investment. It is a mistake.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I’ll address my question to the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane. You were talking about a dam and the turbines in that dam. I just looked it up, and it generates 274 megawatts of electricity. You were saying there’s actually an opportunity to expand it and make it an even bigger and more reliable source of electricity in the province.

Can you talk a little bit about what you saw when you toured the dam?

Mr. John Vanthof: The generating station at the Lower Notch power dam, it doesn’t run continuously. The river builds up and then when they need the power, like in the evening, for air conditioning or for cooking, they open the gates and it produces full power for two hours.

But there are times when there is excess power, and what they could do is to pump it back up and double the capacity, because the Montreal River system goes up and down a lot. I believe, at the time, I was told it would change the water level in Lake Temiskaming by one and a half centimetres. So that’s a huge opportunity, and yet that opportunity has not been taken. We have capacity in that area.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I would like to ask a question to my neighbouring MPP from Toronto–Danforth—big green guy.

I’m just wondering if you could explain or give your thought on this government’s track record on renewable energy sources.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: First of all, it’s very hard for me to explain this government’s record on renewable energy, because I don’t have godlike powers. I’d give it a shot, but it is very hard, actually, to come up with something that’s worthwhile.

I think you’re well aware of their track record. When they came into power in 2018, one of the first things they did was shut down renewable energy projects that were almost completely built, throwing away money, throwing away an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Frankly, I understand from the residents in Todd Smith’s riding that those people who had set things up to have windmills on their property were suddenly out of pocket in a very big way. This had a big negative impact on the local economy.

You may be aware that Wolfe Island, near Kingston—roughly a third of their municipal budget is from payments from the wind energy. This is a government that reduced the opportunity for income for people, increased greenhouse gas emissions and threw away a whole bunch of cash. That’s their record.

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

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the members for their statements.

We’re seeing a massive increase in energy need and energy projects—data centres, as well. My question to the opposition is specifically around data centres, which is a big part of this bill.

Do they believe that foreign-state-owned enterprises should be allowed to control Ontario energy infrastructure?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Well, I'm very glad you asked that question. I think we need public power. I think power generation in Ontario should be owned by the people of Ontario. And it was your government that undermined Ontario Hydro back in the 1990s, who sold it off.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Sorry, Chair. Can I wave to you too?

Your government is one that's always supported privatization. I think ownership by Canadians here in Ontario of power generation makes tons of sense. Purchase of technologies from other countries? We should do that. But frankly, if you were to develop in Ontario our own indigenous renewable energy system, you would create a lot of jobs.

In Quebec, in the Gaspé, they have factories that make wind turbines. It is incredibly popular there, because it puts people to work. Do it here. You guys shut down the renewable energy technologies in this province; the projects that could have provided jobs for Ontarians. So I see you very much—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Questions?

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Thank you to my colleagues here, who have led us off so well.

I did hear a few members from the other side asking questions about how we might do it differently or better, and to be honest, the members that I serve in Parkdale–High Park are already facing tremendous pressure from the rising household costs of utilities. They're very concerned about climate change. They felt the effects of the droughts on farms. They have relatives in Jamaica that they're very worried about who experienced Hurricane Melissa.

1700

I would like to hear more about the alternative vision that would advance and ensure Ontario's energy future, making sure it was sustainable, equitable and not driven by corporate or political interests—to the member, maybe, for Toronto–Danforth.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Response, through the Chair: I recognize the member from Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. I take your admonition to heart. Some of your previous professional experience comes through in the way you approach these matters.

Let's go through a few elements. The first is public power. It was a huge mistake for us to go away from public power. We need to have government-owned, publicly owned generation, transmission and distribution so that we get the best possible price and so that we retain control here; we're not beholden to head offices anywhere else.

The second part is, we should be looking at the least-cost generation technologies out there in the world, and

they are renewable, without a doubt. We should be investing heavily in those least-cost technologies and investing very heavily in energy efficiency and conservation so that people and businesses can reduce their energy use and reduce their expenses on energy.

Those are the core things: conservation, renewable energy, public ownership. If you have those, the rest will follow.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: From my understanding, we buy a lot of natural gas—a.k.a. fossil gas, methane gas—from the United States. Given the fact that we have a very temperamental President in the States, do you think it's wise to continue to expand our dependence on this natural a.k.a. fossil, methane gas in expanding our grid? And can you talk about the expansion of the use of this natural gas a.k.a. fossil gas, methane gas power plant usage 24/7?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I have to thank the member for her question. I have to say she is being overly generous when she refers to the American administration as unpredictable. There are other terms one could use.

That being said, clearly, increasing our reliance on American fuels for anything does not make sense at this time, not only because we don't want to put ourselves in a situation where Europe was put with regard to natural gas and the Russian government. We do not want to be in a situation where a foreign power can squeeze the oxygen line, but we also do not want to be using a fuel that is going to make life more and more difficult for all of us because of climate change.

If you actually look at what's happening with world food production, the increasing temperatures are having impacts on coffee production. Anyone who knows this building knows the building would grind to a halt if there was not a steady supply of coffee. That is of consequence to us and of consequence to everyone else out there who tries to cover the bills for groceries. We are going to see other impacts, on fruits, on grains—a wide variety of productions. That is going to be bad news for us.

In Jamaica, one of their richest agricultural areas was hit badly by Hurricane Melissa this week. We are going to see more and more of that disruption. Actually continuing to feed that crisis that's going to make it difficult for us to afford the necessities of life makes no sense to me at all.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: Bill 40 is supposed to implement this government's integrated energy plan, and it's the first long-term energy plan since 2017 from the last government. I want to do a summary of what I'm going to say.

First of all, overall, this bill, Bill 40, is too vague in key spots. It leaves the important definition of "economic growth" to be decided by the whim of the government. So, practically, any energy policy based on economic growth won't be accountable to the Legislature, to the people's representatives. This includes the all important but as yet unspecified regulations regarding who gets to connect to the electricity grid and who does not. The bill contains no

high-level guidelines for these regulations. It's just a plain, unmarked, empty vessel, this bill. And instead, it gives a lot of discretionary executive power to the Premier and his ministers.

Secondly, Bill 40 authorizes the continued expansion of massive public subsidies for electricity generation, transmission and distribution, including risky price distortions and sacrificing economic efficiency. How much subsidy makes sense, and how much is too much? There's a balance somewhere, but Bill 40 proposes no guidelines as to where the balance could lie.

Neither Bill 40 nor the integrated energy plan mentions productivity growth. It focuses on economic growth, but productivity growth is a key challenge for Ontario's economy—in fact, for Canada's economy. It's even more important of a challenge than overall economic growth.

Given this PC government's record on policy decisions influenced by cozy relationships with friends and donors, Bill 40 increases the risk of crony capitalism in our energy sector.

Le projet de loi 40 est censé mettre en oeuvre le plan énergétique intégré du gouvernement. C'est le tout premier plan à long terme depuis 2017. Mais dans l'ensemble, ce projet de loi reste trop vague sur des points essentiels et laisse au gouvernement toute latitude pour définir ce qu'il considère comme la croissance économique.

En pratique, cela signifie qu'une politique énergétique fondée sur cette notion pourra être appliquée sans rendre des comptes à l'Assemblée législative ni aux représentants du peuple. Cela inclut notamment des règlements cruciaux, mais encore non précisés, concernant le droit de se connecter au réseau électrique. Le projet de loi ne contient aucune directive d'ensemble pour encadrer ces décisions, confiant plutôt de vastes pouvoirs discrétionnaires au premier ministre et ses ministres.

Par ailleurs, le projet de loi 40 autorise la poursuite de subventions publiques massives dans la production, le transport et la distribution d'électricité. Il ouvre la porte à des distorsions tarifaires risquées et à des choix inefficaces sur ce plan économique. Quelle part de subventions est raisonnable et quand devient-elle excessive? Le projet de loi n'offre aucun repère pour guider l'arbitrage.

Ni le projet de loi 40 ni le plan énergétique intégré ne mentionne la croissance de la productivité, un défi pourtant plus pressant pour l'économie ontarienne et canadienne, plus important que la croissance globale.

Étant donné les antécédents de gouvernements progressistes-conservateurs en matière de politique influencée par des relations avec des donateurs ou des amis politiques, le projet de loi 40 accroît le risque d'un capitalisme de copinage dans le secteur énergétique.

Let's start by talking about the subsidies. The strategy enabled by this bill continues to hide electricity costs from people by putting them on the tax bill instead of on the energy bill, not focusing on how to reduce the cost of energy while keeping a reliable and sustainable system. Bill 40 authorizes payments to generators, transmitters and distributors authorized by the Legislature instead of having electricity users cover the cost. In other words, the public

purse may be used to pay for building our electricity system instead of covering the cost through the price users have to pay for electricity.

1710

Ordinarily, this might be okay. Maybe you have a social program to subsidize the cost of energy for low-income families or maybe you have an environmental or industrial policy objective which costs money to implement and benefits the public. But it's not exactly electricity and shouldn't be paid directly by electricity consumers.

The problem is that these subsidies are getting very, very big and prices are getting distorted. They are more and more disconnected from the actual cost of generating, transmitting and distributing electricity. Politicians must understand that distorted prices undermine economic goals like efficient allocation of resources and productivity growth and rising living standards.

When these subsidies are also politically directed, influenced by private interests, you risk crony capitalism. Over \$7 billion of the energy ministry's budget is electricity price mitigation subsidies. Over three cents of every dollar you pay in taxes goes to subsidized electricity bills. Everybody from the C.D. Howe Institute to Steve Paikin has criticized it. Mr. Paikin has famously asked why he, as a well-off person, gets a subsidy when he doesn't need one. Economists have criticized it as masking the true cost of electricity, fiscally unsustainable, distorting the market and undermining energy conservation, which is one of the cheapest ways to generate more supply of energy.

There is an elephant in the room of Ontario energy policy, but people are prevented from seeing the elephant. If the cost of electricity is just going into Ontario's public debt, which is accumulating under this government, it's our kids and grandkids who will end up paying for it.

A truly integrated energy plan would be integrated with a fiscal plan. Ontario's integrated long-term energy plan should be focused on procuring electricity to meet demand in the next 10 years and the next 50 years in a way that minimizes costs while maintaining a reliable and sustainable system.

Now, the energy minister says that competitive procurements ensure that we procure energy resources at the lowest cost, but that's not the whole story. The government has been favouring natural gas, so we're building out more storage, solar and wind. The relative weight of different energy sources in the mix is just not set competitively. It's set by politics. Different jurisdictions around the world have made starkly different choices than Ontario.

The government also favours some geographic regions over others when it comes to spending on transmission infrastructure and energy subsidies, so politics is involved in choosing which sectors and which locations get subsidies and investments. Now, sometimes that's a good thing, but it's not purely competitive as the minister would like to claim.

Sometimes the government does do non-competitive procurement. For example, in 2023, the Minister of Energy directed the IESO to enter into a contract for a 500-

megawatt, natural-gas-fired, combined-cycle generator in Windsor. And there's a special kind of project procurement stream for energy that is not competitive. Now, you have to have something like that because sometimes you get a unique project where you can't find other ones to compete against it.

An example of that is the Meaford pumped hydro storage project. It's a little bit too special to be competitive, but it's important because storage is very, very important. Now, the cost of this project, which is not competing against anybody else because there isn't a similar project, is expected to go into the rate base. But just as an illustration, the government is now paying \$280 million to do studies to see if it's feasible, and so it's the government who is paying—well, the people of Ontario are paying—\$280 million to reduce the risk on the project, on deciding whether or not to go ahead with this project.

Maybe you don't procure everything in a pure competition because there's a strategy and there are priorities. There may be good reasons for non-competitive procurement. But I would challenge the government to lay them out, lay out their strategy, lay out their priorities before companies come to lobby them.

You know, lobbying is certainly part of government, and people want to make sure that the government gets information to make decisions. But there is a danger of conflicts of interest and connecting money to government decisions too much. I think the good way to combat that is to lay out your plan in detail for all to see—be transparent, be clear. Do that before the lobbyists come, before friends and donors come and ask for something. Avoid conflicts of interest and be accountable.

I want to give another example of the dangers of crony capitalism. Even innocent things like hydrogen—and I know this bill enables a hydrogen strategy as part of our energy strategy. Even innocent things—apparently innocent things—like hydrogen energy have raised concerns in other countries about cronyism. This bill, Bill 40, changes the Electricity Act so that our system is set up to facilitate development of a hydrogen market and economy. So we have to be careful.

Last year, I found out from the Guardian, which reported on a cozy relationship between a United Kingdom Conservative Minister of Energy and a wealthy Conservative industrialist family. The minister got a donation to her local election campaign from them and the family business got millions in hydrogen industry grants from her ministry. It's not illegal, but you have to wonder about cronyism and conflicts of interest and what's best for the public good or a private interest. So in the rush to economic growth, citizens must be especially careful about cronyism.

In schedule 1, section 7, of the bill, there's a new section added to the Electricity Act, section 28.1. What that does is, it allows regulations to be written covering the connection or reconnections of loads to the grid. This would be industrial lights, not a single house. This is important because demand is expected to outstrip supply in the coming years and decades as we move away from burning fossil fuels and electrify our economy. As well, data

processing and artificial intelligence are expected to be a very large, near-term source of increased demand, not only here in Ontario but around the world.

The problem with section 28.1, as it's created in Bill 40, is that it's an empty container; it's an empty, unmarked container. All the rules will be in the regulations, and there are no principles for the representatives of the people, for us right here in this debate right now, for us to consider, to understand what kind of values will be guiding these rules. So what kinds of principles are missing which we are considering here? These principles could help safeguard the public interest from undue influence or regulatory capture of the cabinet.

Here are some principles, just so I can explain this to the government, in case some of the government side MPPs would like to know. You might have some principles answering this question: Will loads that connect have a large impact on the rest of the system? Will the threshold for what is defined as a large load include some leeway for large loads agreeing to shift their demand, curtail demand when there's too much demand on the rest of the system or maybe shift their usage to a different part of the day when the electricity system is constrained?

Will it care about whether there's some behind-the-meter generation to complement the consumption by a new load? Is the large load going to pay for connection costs or required network upgrades? Are there any other externalities imposed on the rest of the system?

Does the load project have any speculative aspects? You've got to plan a lot of things all at the same time, so one of the things you might do before you're finally going to know that the project is going ahead is to reserve some load.

Will the load have any speculative aspects? What's the probability that they will actually use the capacity they are reserving by applying for a connection to the grid? Because you want to make sure you don't connect a whole bunch of speculative things and then they don't use the electricity, and then you end up preventing a company that's more likely to use electricity to create jobs and export things to other countries. You hurt the companies that are actually more likely to set up shop and use the electricity.

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Another consideration: I wonder if, in any of these regulations set by the Conservative government here, will climate change have any weight at all in setting regulations? And how does the load, the rules for who gets to connect—how does that fit into the overall industrial strategy for Ontario? How does it contribute to a strategy for productivity growth in Ontario?

These are all sorts of questions that we don't have to answer completely in the bill, but we should at least have some guidelines so we know how the government will be approaching the setting of detailed regulations for who gets to connect to the electricity grid.

The reason why this motion is so important is that this government gives us reasons to fear crony capitalism, regulatory capture, conflict of interest or worse. And it's a

reason why Bill 40 is a questionable bill. If there are no principles in the bill, we don't know what the government is going to follow. But we do know the government has been revealed—for example, in recent days in the Skills Development Fund—that this government can be influenced by donations and relationships and Conservative lobbyists.

Here's an example from the United States of how money from a high-energy-consuming sector influenced an election. This is the thing that we want to avoid here in Ontario, and there are no safeguards in Bill 40, as far as I can see, for preventing something like this: In 2024, in the United States Senate race in that year's election, there was a Senate race in Ohio that was strongly influenced by cryptocurrency investors and pro-crypto spending. That was the race in Ohio between Sherrod Brown, the Democrat, and Bernie Moreno, the Republican. The crypto industry, they had these super PACs that spent over \$40 million—\$40 million—on that Senate election, backing the Republican Moreno and opposing the Democrat Brown. Brown had been the chairman of the Senate banking committee, and he had taken a strong regulatory posture towards the cryptocurrency industry. He kind of became an enemy of the crypto industry and so he was a target in that election. They spent \$40 million defeating him.

Do you think that the new computationally and energy-intensive industries, who have deep, deep pockets—do you think they won't be tempted to influence this government, which is assuming regulatory power over who gets to connect to the electricity grid, when this bill has no guiding principles? You've got to ask that question.

I want to switch now to the Ontario Energy Board, which is another part of this bill. A curious change in Bill 40 allows the CEO of the Ontario Energy Board to issue internal policies about timelines for hearings and decisions, and what information is considered when arriving at a decision in a ruling.

I want to remind observers about what happened in the lead-up to this government presenting Bill 165 in the last Parliament. Bill 165 overruled the Ontario Energy Board on behalf of Enbridge. Bill 165 was introduced after the OEB ruled to end subsidies of natural gas infrastructure on gas bills. The OEB commissioners decided that the natural gas infrastructure would become stranded assets in the coming decades, unused because of the climate crisis, but still being paid for on gas bills. So instead, the OEB said, "You've got to pay for this infrastructure upfront. It's more fair to consumers," which is the mandate of the Ontario Energy Board.

Enbridge, which is the gas utility for most of Ontario, asked the government to change the ruling, and they said to reporters from The Trillium, in the press gallery here at Queen's Park, "We believe that the OEB has failed to uphold its role as an economic regulator that supports provincial energy policy." And then, then-Minister Todd Smith said that the OEB didn't listen to developers, who would have said that they didn't want to pay for the upfront cost of new natural gas infrastructure.

Apparently, if you give the executive—it seems to me if you're thinking of a reason why the chair or the CEO of the Ontario Energy Board might get more powers over perceived internal procedures when it comes to making decisions or making rulings, it seems like this new power is intended to make it easier to ensure that the OEB's commissioners and employees avoid straying from implementing this government's energy policy.

So it's another tool, in my view, of having more government control over the OEB. The OEB is supposed to be—it is a little independent from the government, and the reason for that is it has a mandate to protect consumers. It's supposed to be pushing back a bit against government policy so that it can protect consumers.

That brings us to an important aspect of Bill 40 and this Progressive Conservative government's approach to energy, and that is that this bill—I mean, the government wants to put economic growth as an objective—allows the government to define whatever it wants as "economic growth." The Premier and his ministers are going to define what "economic growth" means, and the consequences of that is it's going to affect public policy and how the electricity grid and our whole electricity system develop.

Both the purposes of the Electricity Act and the objectives of the Ontario Energy Board are amended in Bill 40, and what happens is that they're amended by adding, "supports" for "economic growth, consistent with the policies of the government of Ontario." It's giving more power to the current Premier and ministers.

Moreover, when granting permission to construct electricity infrastructure, the OEB may consider not just the interest of consumers—which is what it does now—but they would also consider economic growth, again, using this phrase, "consistent with the policies of the government of Ontario".

The policies of the government—the whim, because the policies are not really specified clearly; the whim of the government is going to decide what economic growth means and that's going to allow the OEB to consider something other than the interests of consumers. PC ministers will get to decide what economic growth is prioritized, and that's potentially over the interests of consumers.

Right now, if you read the OEB Act, it must only have the consumer's interest under consideration, and under Bill 40, the PC government's economic policies can take over.

So it's not just economic growth that this government wants to promote, but economic growth as they get to define it, and this is a government that doesn't care about things like climate change; a government that can't get housing built; a government that suffers from susceptibility to regulatory capture, conflict of interest and crony capitalism. I don't really trust them to define economic growth in a way that's in the public interest.

You may ask me, "Wouldn't every government have a plan, so every government has priorities? Isn't it inevitable that the government would want to define its economic growth priorities?" Well, what I would say, again, and I

can repeat what I said before: To avoid crony capitalism, put out your plan first, define exactly what you mean by “economic growth,” make it clear, do all of that, and that will help inoculate you against people coming in and lobbying, and before you go out for donations, inviting people to your fundraising events and asking people for votes. It’s a way to avoid conflict of interest and corruption.

I want to talk last now about productivity growth as compared to economic growth. As I said earlier, Bill 40 and the integrated energy plan only talk about economic growth. It doesn’t talk about productivity growth. And an emphasis only on economic growth over productivity growth pretty much by any government tends to lead to lower living standards.

There is a difference, I think, between the PC government and the position that I want to take on behalf of the Ontario Liberal caucus. I want to emphasize productivity growth as being more important because productivity growth is—I’ll talk more about it later—what we really need to attack the cost-of-living crisis we’re in now.

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But let me just give another example of what the government does in Bill 40. Even the mandate of the Independent Electricity System Operator is amended by this government. Right now, it’s supposed to manage Ontario’s electricity system, but now it’s also supposed to support economic growth.

Neither Bill 40 nor the integrated energy plan mention productivity growth, and as I said earlier, it’s a key challenge for Ontario’s economy and for Canada’s economy. What’s productivity growth? Productivity is how we make progress without working harder. In the long term, it’s the only thing that will make life more affordable.

I want to give a really simple example, and that’s the Robertson screwdriver. It’s the square screwdriver, amended in Canada. What happens is, the screwdriver more easily stays in the screw head; it doesn’t slip out. Slot screws are really bad for that. So what happened? When it was introduced, workers wasted less time. They got more done per hour of work because the screwdriver didn’t slip out when they were tightening—this was long ago when everything was more manual—and because they got more done per hour of work, they had more bargaining power to charge more per hour of work and the things they made cost less.

So there you go: higher wages and lower prices. That’s what productivity buys you and that’s why it’s so important. Now that’s just one example. Since the invention of the Robertson screwdriver, we’ve had a lot of things that improve productivity. With productivity growth, living standards rise sustainably, the economy gets stronger and people get relief from the cost-of-living squeeze.

Now, Canada, unfortunately, famously—lots of people have discussed this—lags many developed countries on productivity growth, and that’s why productivity should be emphasized in this bill. Our energy strategy is really a key part of our economic strategy, and it’s a missed oppor-

tunity to not emphasize productivity growth. I don’t know why this government missed that opportunity.

I just want to reiterate that important policy difference I want to draw between the government and the Ontario Liberal caucus: a focus just on economic growth, and a focus on productivity growth as well as economic growth.

Here’s what can happen when you emphasize simply economic growth over productivity growth. A funny example that I had personal experience in is in Japan in the 1990s and 2000s—they were called lost decades because the economy was stagnant during that period after the 1980s bubble in Japan, and the government tried all sorts of things to stimulate the economy. One thing they did was they tried massive infrastructure spending during those years and they supported a lot of these hopelessly bankrupt zombie companies left over from the 1980s that owed a lot of money—too much money—to banks, but unfortunately, to banks that were too big to fail. So a lot of these zombie companies were supported with public money.

In terms of infrastructure spending, I actually saw once in Japan—I was driving through the countryside for a company outing and one of my fellow employees pointed out to me a half a bridge; these famous bridges to nowhere. It was half a bridge in the middle of a field. And what happens in that system is that the rural parts of Japan had a lot of power in the Japanese system, so of course they were able to get a lot of this stimulus spending, but a lot of money was spent on infrastructure for political reasons, not according to some careful economic plan or market forces. So money was wasted and the economy was stagnant for a generation. That’s crony capitalism and the damage that it can do.

Now, crony capitalism can be very good at economic growth. Crony capitalist governments where private interests keep getting ahead of the public good, they do very poorly on productivity growth and they fail the people. One thing that can happen is that crony capitalist governments can build up a lot of debt without achieving results that people can feel.

So when you hear people criticizing this government, saying, “Never has a government spent so much and achieved so little,” they are talking about crony capitalism to some extent. They’re talking about time wasted on a housing development in the greenbelt, driven by private interests who are friends and donors, only to backtrack and find Ontario behind every other province in home building.

They’re talking about large subsidies to a private developer for a luxury spa at Ontario Place. We’re talking about a lot of money, \$1 billion. Surely a private spa on Ontario Place is not a crucial part of economic growth, and certainly not productivity growth. I think this government knows that.

They’re talking about crucial skills development funds—really important for improving the productivity of workers through skills acquisition. But they managed to give crucial funds to lower-rated but more politically connected projects.

Instead, we should be building an economy where resources are efficiently allocated, where workers are well educated and trained, creativity and competitive markets are unleashed, rule of law holds and the public interest matters. These are all needed for productivity growth and, not surprisingly, a healthy, strong society.

If we insist on productivity growth as an objective, as I would like to do here in the language of Bill 40, and not just what this PC government will define someday as economic growth—maybe, depending on who they have meetings with—what we’re really doing when we insist on productivity growth is insisting on all those good things that I’ve listed.

This is my final exhortation and warning to this government on Bill 40: Don’t just focus on economic growth, whose definition could be set by politics if Bill 40 is passed in its current form. When we’re planning one of the most important sectors of Ontario’s economy, energy, take this opportunity to tackle one of the most important challenges for our society: productivity growth.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Aris Babikian): Questions?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I was listening to the member very intently this afternoon, and he talked about affordability. I’m not sure if he remembers, in 2017, before the change of government, the Liberals had the worst record in this province, the highest electricity rates in the province. And not only that, they wanted to close down Pickering, which would have cost us 3,000 jobs, and today we would not have the energy that we need.

Does he still believe in that ideology that his party believed in back then?

Mr. Ted Hsu: I remember looking at a graph of unemployment in Ontario leading up to 2018, and it just went down, down, down, down, down. I think this government is looking at a different history, maybe, on a different Earth than I live on, but that was the record of unemployment in the latter years of the Liberal government.

Let me add that members of this government back then were saying, “Oh, we’ve got too much energy. We don’t need to procure all this energy.” They used that as an excuse when they got rid of all that renewable energy, those projects that were almost built. They thought we didn’t need more energy back then.

I would say, go return to the normal Earth that we all live on instead of this fake Earth.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: To the member from Kingston and the Islands: I know you are a big believer in renewable energy, as am I. I think you have a large wind farm on Wolfe Island, and I’m wondering if you can talk to us a bit about that, how it came about and how successful it is to have renewable energy projects.

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Mr. Ted Hsu: When it comes to the energy plan for Ontario, one of the components is to what’s called repower—repower the existing resources that we have.

The wind farm on Wolfe Island has provided, I believe the number is, \$600,000 every year to the small community of Frontenac Islands, the township of Frontenac Islands. It’s important to repower—in other words, extend the contract.

I believe the 20-year contract for the wind farm on Wolfe Island was supposed to expire in 2028 or 2029. So, the owner of that wind farm—the wind farm is all built; it’s ready to go. You can bid a real low price, because it’s already been built. That was one of the good things that came out of the energy policies 20 years ago. They competed in the procurement process, and they got a contract for another five years, and they’re actually expected to compete for another five-year contract after that, because that equipment is still going to be good for another 10 years. They contributed because that equipment is—all the wind turbines are there; the connection to the grid is all there. They repowered the Wolfe Island wind farm, and the community of Frontenac Islands is going to receive \$600,000 a year for—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Question?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I just wanted to ask the member—right now, our nuclear expansion is an American project that relies on American enriched uranium instead of Ontario Candu nuclear that relies on unenriched uranium that we get from Ontario. Can you explain why the government would be doubling down on American dependence?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Well, to be fair, I don’t think the government on purpose tried to buy American when we’re talking about small modular reactors. They have agreed to start a small modular reactor project. So they probably talked to a lot of people and were convinced to do that. The thing about small modular reactors is you just have to have enriched uranium, and in the 1970s, Canada decided not to enrich uranium. And so, all of the enriched uranium for those small reactors—you need enriched uranium, because if you have a small reactor, one neutron from a fission has to hit another nucleus before it leaves the reactor. That’s why you have to have enriched uranium, so it’s more likely to interact with another nucleus.

But if you want to try small modular reactors, you just have to do it with enriched uranium. It remains to be seen if this can be done. These can be built in a very cost-efficient way so that we can crank them out and sell them.

But the member is right that there’s a serious question here about where is everybody going to get their enriched uranium from.

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

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to the member for sharing. You seem to have a lot of comments and criticisms on what we are offering. I hope you agree with us that there exists a growing energy demand and it is really rapid.

Do you have one single credible solution for us to meet this demand?

Mr. Ted Hsu: There will be increased demand. There are lots of ways of producing energy. We've got hydro. We've got nuclear. We've got renewable energy. We've got geothermal energy; there's a couple of buildings in downtown Kingston that are powered by geothermal energy. So there are lots and lots of ways of generating energy. We should be looking at all of them. The guide is that we want to have affordable, reliable, sustainable energy.

But let me take this opportunity, because of the way my colleague started her question—I want to tell the Ontario government—this is a serious, non-partisan thing. Please pay attention to the fact that there are enormous investments in the United States in new nuclear energy generation. That's going to upset—because we have a common electricity market. There are going to be big disruptions to the electricity market when all these generators come online.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member for Kingston and the Islands for your presentation. When I think about the energy grid and our electricity system, I think about Hydro One and the decision by the Wynne government to partially sell off Hydro One. Do you think selling off our public utility is a good idea?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, now I know I can rely on my own MPP here when I'm living in Toronto to try to stab me with a tough question.

I don't think there's a general answer to that. The member, the former energy critic from Toronto—Danforth, was talking about having publicly owned energy. It's not always the best thing to have the government owning all of the energy generation. If I have a house with solar panels on it, I own it, and so I'm a generator. If I'm a company and I have reserve power or reserve storage, I own that, and when I sell it to the grid, I'm a private person selling back to the grid.

The important thing is to have good rules to make sure that everybody gets along—the different consumers, the different generators—and that we're all working together and using electricity and having a system, and we don't disrupt each other. Then we can go about our business, generating GDP, without getting in each other's way.

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

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I listened with great interest to my colleague from Kingston and the Islands talking about productivity, and how if we are able to increase and enhance productivity here in Ontario and Canada, it's going to create a better quality of life.

I'm just curious for him to expand a little bit on productivity in the energy sector and what we can use there in order to drive our economy forward into the future.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Let me give you a good example of productivity in the energy sector itself. When the first few

refurbishments were done on the Candu reactors at Bruce and Darlington, they were delayed and they had cost overruns. But the thing about it—and this gets to the idea of modularity: If you keep doing the same thing with the same people and the same supply chains, and you do it over and over and over again, you get better and better and better.

That is why—because there are multiple reactors at Darlington and Bruce, which are very similar to each other, the Candu reactors—now we've come to a point where we're very good at doing that. In fact, the same people who are finishing up at Darlington are moving over to Pickering. Now that we can do that, now that we've done a lot of them, the cost is coming down, they're being done faster and I'm pretty sure the quality is better too.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines and Energy, it is a real pleasure to rise this afternoon to support Bill 40, Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act.

It's been my privilege to work alongside the minister and our entire team on Ontario's first-ever integrated energy plan, which was launched earlier this year with the associate minister and the parliamentary assistant from Scarborough Centre. This plan is a blueprint to ensure that Ontario has the affordable, clean and reliable energy we need to build and power the strongest economy in the G7. The changes that we're proposing in Bill 40 are a critical part of this plan to protect the reliability of Ontario's energy system, support grid expansion and drive long-term economic growth.

As the minister and the associate minister said, and I want to reiterate, the past few years have been a transformation time for Ontario. Industries across the province are turning to Ontario's clean electricity grid to power their operations, from electric vehicles to game-changing green steel production in Hamilton and Sault Ste. Marie. We secured historic investments in manufacturing to bring jobs back to Ontario. Families are switching to electric vehicles or electric heating. And, of course, global demand is exploding for artificial intelligence, cloud computing and data centres.

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The IESO expects Ontario's demand for electricity to grow by 75% by 2050, which is about the same as adding almost four and a half cities the size of Toronto to our grid. This is an incredible public policy challenge. But thankfully, Ontario begins from a position of strength and a position of leadership.

As I've said before, the world is watching Ontario. Countries and states around the world are looking to us as they're thinking about powering a growing economy, decarbonization, and energy security and energy independence.

Over the past year, at the Ministry of Energy and Mines, we've welcomed delegations to Ontario from around the

world: from Britain, France, Estonia, Finland, Hungary and Romania, and US states from New York to Oklahoma. Speaker, they're coming to Ontario to learn more about the largest expansion of nuclear energy in North America and the largest competitive energy procurement in the history of Ontario.

I was proud to speak about this earlier this month at Canada 2020, a nuclear industry conference in Ottawa, and at the McMaster University conference in Burlington.

With Bruce C, we're building the largest nuclear station in the world: 12,000 megawatts at Bruce C. We're also exploring options at Port Hope for up to another 10,000 megawatts. These are the first large-scale nuclear builds in Ontario in over 30 years. We're also refurbishing almost our entire nuclear fleet, which will provide another 12,000 megawatts.

Last year, we finished the refurbishment of unit 1 at Darlington on budget and on time, five months ahead of schedule. At the same time, we're building the first small modular reactor in the G7 at Darlington. When they come online between 2030 and 2035, they will produce 1,200 megawatts of affordable, clean and reliable energy—enough to power 1.2 million homes.

But SMRs aren't just about adding capacity. They're a new model for how we can build scaled nuclear faster, smaller and more flexible than traditional large reactors, and more exportable.

I also want to note that OPG is exploring a potential partnership at Darlington with the local Williams Treaties First Nations, which would be the first of its kind in Canada, ensuring that First Nation communities benefit from nuclear projects on their land. And I'm proud that our 2025 Ontario budget included over \$3 billion to support Indigenous participation, partnership and ownership in Ontario's critical mineral supply chain.

Earlier this summer, I was also proud to join the announcement that our government has secured a \$70-million investment from GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy to build the world's first small modular reactor engineering and service centre near Darlington. It will bring over 300 well-paying jobs to Durham region and create new opportunities for workers in engineering, science, construction and other skilled trades. Its training facility will also help prepare over 2,000 people each year for successful careers as experts in nuclear energy, helping to expand our homegrown energy workforce.

We're also working closely with the universities, including Ontario Tech University, to prepare our students for careers in science, technology and engineering. We're making special efforts to attract women, immigrants and Indigenous people and other under-represented groups in partnership with the First Nations Power Authority, and we're starting early. We're targeting elementary and high school students to encourage interest in the skilled trades and STEM degrees.

Earlier this month at the Toronto Harbourfront Centre, I helped to launch WattNext, a new initiative to make

energy education exciting and more accessible to everyone. Through partnerships with OPG and Bruce Power, we're also providing students with the real-world experience and training in nuclear facilities.

A massive expansion of our transmission network is also under way, from a historic third line in Toronto to a new line in Sarnia to new lines in the east and northeast. To support this work, as part of Bill 40, we are proposing amendments to expand the Future Clean Electricity Fund to include nuclear generation and transmission infrastructure. If passed, these changes would help to strengthen the grid to meet the demand of a growing population and economy while maintaining Ontario's clean energy advantage.

Just last month, at our energy summit in Toronto and Darlington, we welcomed provincial Ministers of Energy and Mines from across Canada, and we left with a historic partnership agreement to work together on SMRs and other nation-building energy projects that will deliver clean, reliable and affordable energy across Canada and strengthen Ontario's position as a global energy superpower.

One of the most important changes that we're bringing forward today in schedules 1 and 3 of Bill 40 are updates to the Electricity Act and the Ontario Energy Board Act to promote economic growth in planning across the energy sector. Particularly, the IESO and the OEB would be required to prioritize economic development and growth in their planning process.

As the minister said, this approach would better prepare Ontario's energy system to unlock the investments, create well-paying jobs and take advantage of our new economic opportunities to build a stronger province for everyone. For example, planning for this expansion of our transmission lines should take into account economic growth opportunities in communities that would be connected to the grid and opportunities to support electrification across Ontario.

As the associate minister said, schedule 1 of Bill 40 will also expand the IESO's mandate to support Ontario's growing hydro economy. If passed, they will be able to fund creative new projects that will help build a more diverse energy system, including through the Hydrogen Innovation Fund.

I can give another example: SMRs have an incredible potential to support clean growth and decarbonization in smaller and remote communities and across sectors like transportation, mining and heavy manufacturing. They can help us unlock new markets, diversify our trade relations and build new partnerships across Canada and around the world.

Last year, I joined Minister Lecce on a trade mission to Europe as we signed an agreement to help deploy SMRs in Poland to support energy independence for our European allies and to reduce global emissions by replacing up to 40 coal plants in Poland and to create revenue and well-paying jobs back here in Ontario.

Last month, I had the opportunity to speak at the second annual SMR forum in Edmonton about how government, together with OPG, is working with power companies in Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia towards deploying SMRs across Canada. In Alberta, SMRs could be used to supply heat and power to the oil and gas industry, replacing natural gas with clean nuclear power. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are looking to SMRs to help phase out coal. For the first time, Saskatchewan, a major producer of uranium, will be able to take advantage of nuclear power itself, and here in Ontario,

SMRs could be used to bring clean, reliable power to northern communities and mines, including the Ring of Fire, which is so rich in critical minerals like nickel, chromium—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Sorry to interrupt the member.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Seeing the time on the clock, it is time for private members' public business.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt

Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Donna Skelly

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,

Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Allsopp, Tyler (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Cerjanec, Rob (LIB)	Ajax	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux
Ciriello, Monica (PC)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Clancy, Aislinn (GRN)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Cooper, Michelle (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	Oakville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Darouze, George (PC)	Carleton	
Denault, Billy (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence
Fairclough, Lee (LIB)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Firin, Mohamed (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Leader, Third Party / Chef du troisième parti
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)	Milton	Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform / Solliciteur général associé responsable de la Lutte contre le vol d'automobiles et de la Réforme relative aux mises en liberté sous caution
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
McKenney, Catherine (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
Racinsky, Joseph (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (IND)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	