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Mercredi
9 mars 2022

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 9 March 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 9 mars 2022

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Good morning. We'll begin this morning with a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Let us pray.

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Orders of the day? I recognize the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill.

Mr. Michael Parsa: No further business.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business at this time, this House will stand in recess until 10:15 a.m.

The House recessed from 0901 to 1015.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Oakville North–Burlington has a point of order that she wishes to raise.

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: Good morning, Speaker. If you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to wear pins in recognition of March being Hellenic Heritage Month.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Triantafilopoulos is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear pins in recognition of March being Hellenic Heritage Month. Agreed? Agreed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

INSURANCE RATES

M^{me} France Gélinas: This Friday night, I will be joining the members of the Capreol Curling Club for the ladies' bonspiel. The event culminates with a banquet dinner on Saturday night, with entertainment provided by Sudbury's own Johnny Rock.

The Capreol Curling Club has been in operation for almost 100 years and is a pillar of this small community. It is a place where people go to throw a few rocks, see a few friends and socialize. It is a well-loved club.

However, this event could be the last. The club's insurance provider increased their fees by 35% last year and 150% this year. The small volunteer board is at an impasse. COVID-19 has shut them down for most of the last two years, revenues are way down—and then this huge insurance bill.

Unfortunately, Capreol is not alone. The Cartier Community Centre has also been hit with a massive increase in insurance costs, forcing them to put their community centre up for sale just to cover their debts to insurance companies. This will leave another small community with nowhere to host dinners, bingos, fall fairs, Halloween parties and other community-building events.

The Minister of Finance has tools at his disposal to rein in those astronomical increases in insurance premiums for community halls. He needs to step in before those not-for-profit organizations that bring our communities together close their doors permanently.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Lorne Coe: January 6 was an exciting day for residents from across the entire region of Durham. That's when Lakeridge Health staff announced that the town of Whitby had been selected as the preferred site for the new region of Durham hospital.

I want to thank the site selection independent expert panel and Lakeridge Health for their due diligence, transparency and efforts through this process. The integrity of this process was overseen by a fairness adviser—and the site recommendation made to the Lakeridge Health board of trustees by the independent expert panel, with no prior connection to the region of Durham.

Speaker, the town of Whitby's hospital task force has been working diligently over the past two years to ensure that the best site was selected to serve residents from across the region of Durham. Thank you to the members of the task force for their commitment and outstanding work.

I applaud Lakeridge Health's selection of this central location in Whitby, which offers unparalleled connectivity from any direction, so that, when seconds and minutes count, those residents who need critical care across the region of Durham can get it fast.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I rise today, the day after International Women's Day, to recognize the barriers women continue to face in my community and across this province.

Over the last two years, our front lines have been staffed with essential workers in our hospitals, long-term-care homes, group homes, schools, grocery stores and retail shops. Nurses who have had their wages suppressed by Bill 124 are burnt out, leaving the profession after years

of caring for our loved ones. Personal support workers and developmental service workers have yet to see a permanent pay increase throughout this pandemic. I'm grateful for our education workers, who have had a difficult two years of uncertainty. These are all positions predominantly held by women.

Women continue to disproportionately bear the brunt of child care as Ontario remains the only province that has not signed on to the \$10-a-day child care deal.

Ontario deserves a government that will combat gender-based violence and inequality, and take action to improve the lives of women across the province.

I want to recognize organizations in my community that continue to support and provide resources to women during the pandemic and beyond: Nisa Homes, House of Sophrosyne, the Welcome Centre Shelter for Women, Black Women of Forward Action, Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor, Hiatus House, Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women, Trans Wellness Ontario—and the numerous women who work within the labour movement. These are just a few of the many incredible organizations in Windsor-Essex that deserve our gratitude for their dedication to breaking barriers and improving the lives of women in my community.

We must commit to ensuring a brighter future for women in Ontario.

HELLENIC HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: The month of March is Hellenic Heritage Month in Ontario, and this is the third year of official recognition by the Ontario Legislature. I was honoured to introduce the bill to proclaim this month in Ontario, and I want to thank all of my colleagues in this House for providing unanimous support.

1020

People of Hellenic origin have lived in Canada since before Confederation, with the community gaining its start in Ontario early in the 20th century, building schools and churches. Today, there are more than 270,000 Hellenic Canadians, more than half in Ontario.

Ontarians of Hellenic origin have excelled in many fields: business, education, sports, entertainment—even a few of us in politics.

The history of Greece extends back thousands of years. Athens gave us the first democracy. Philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle explained the world to us. Greek civilization is part of the foundation of the world, both in the west and in the Islamic world.

During Hellenic Heritage Month this year, the Acropolis Museum in Athens, with the permission of the ministry of culture of the Hellenic Republic, has loaned to the Royal Ontario Museum an exquisite statue, more than 2,500 years old, called Kore 670. This loan officially marks the 80 years of diplomatic relations between Greece and Canada. I encourage members to visit the ROM to see the Kore and other examples of the heritage of Greece from March 12 to September 22.

Hellenes are proud of our heritage and proud to share it with the world.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Speaker, \$5.5 billion—that is the amount, according to the latest report from Ontario's Financial Accountability Office, that the Ford government failed to distribute in already budgeted funding so far this fiscal year. That includes \$670 million in public health, \$554 million in education, \$226 million in autism programs.

The Ford government failed to distribute \$160 million in housing and homelessness programs, while more and more Ontarians find themselves homeless, living on the streets, and shelters have to turn people away because they are overcrowded.

The Ford government also failed to distribute \$1.1 billion in social services, while Ontarians on ODSP are expected to live on \$1,200 a month and those on OW are expected to live on \$730 a month.

Speaker, I want to stress, this is not new spending. This is allocated funding—funding that the government planned to distribute.

The Ford government is failing to do its primary job of distributing funding to programs and services that have already been committed to.

The people of this province deserve basic competency from their government, but the Ford Conservatives have, once again, failed spectacularly.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Mr. Stephen Blais: Yesterday, we celebrated International Women's Day. The theme for this year's campaign was “#BreaktheBias.” There are many actions we can take to help break the bias, but one place we can start is by empowering girls and women at a very early age.

We need to empower girls by telling them that they can and should pursue the sciences, that they can and should pursue technology and engineering, that they can and should pursue math, and that they can and should participate in any sport that they enjoy playing.

We know just how important role models are, especially at an early age, and this is why we need more female representation in sports, in politics and, frankly, everywhere to help empower our youth.

Over the last few years, the Cumberland Panthers Football Club have been recruiting girls and encouraging more to challenge the gridiron. My son has had several girls on his tackle football team and they have played key roles in the team's success, and those successes keep on coming. I want to congratulate the Cumberland Panthers for winning a grant from NFL Canada to create a fully independent girls' tackle football program, the first youth girls' tackle football program in all of Ontario.

It's exciting to see more and more women and girls get involved in tackle football, especially because it traditionally has been seen as a sport for men and boys.

Mr. Speaker, we aren't too far from seeing a woman break into the professional ranks of football, and frankly, I'm very excited to see it.

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Ms. Christine Hogarth: This past weekend, I had the honour of attending the Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore to celebrate Losar, the Year of the Water Tiger.

This government and all of us here recognize and celebrate the many contributions of the Tibetan people to our province's cultural tapestry, acknowledging that the first Tibetan immigrants to take shelter on our shores were among the first non-European refugees in the early 1970s.

Today some 5,000 Tibetan Canadians call Ontario home, many in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore. That's why our government committed \$50,000 in 2021-22 to support some of the efforts of the centre in staffing costs and online programs, to allow Ontarians to learn more about the fabled history and the culture of Tibet.

I want to thank the board of directors for all the hard work they did throughout COVID-19 in making sure that meals were fed to the community. They did outstanding work.

That's why this House unanimously declared July as Tibetan Heritage Month, which coincides with the birth month of His Holiness.

This morning, in these difficult days, I'd like us to pause and reflect on the meaning of Losar, the Year of the Water Tiger, 2149. Let's say goodbye to all the things that have troubled us during the year gone by. Let's cleanse our surroundings. Let's look forward to a hearty bowl of guthuk. And let's offer praise to the three jewels: Buddha, dharma, and sangha.

Above all, let's reflect on the words of Lama Thubten Yeshe, who, in his greetings for this auspicious year, said the following: "We should train ourselves not to become engrossed in any of the thoughts continuously arising in our minds. Our consciousness is like a vast ocean with plenty of space for thoughts and emotions to swim about. And we should not allow our attention to be distracted by any of them."

Losar Tashi Delek.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Speaker, I became involved in politics because Liberals cut and underfunded education while children with special needs and mental health needs were shuffled into classrooms without supports. Liberals called this "inclusion," but to anyone with a conscience, denying students supports is abandonment.

Health care, home care and long-term care are also grossly underfunded. The pandemic has added incredible strains, and this government is using the backlog as an excuse to kick open the door to privatization.

My constituent Rhonda wrote to me: "Although privatization is against the law, the provincial government has

figured out how to get around it. And the provincial government continues to underfund our social safety net. Our current lack of medical care, hospital beds, surgery care, home care and long-term-care staff are all the result of years of cut-back policies. The neo-liberal approach to care is unacceptable." Rhonda is spot-on.

Ontario is the richest province, yet we spend \$2,000 less per resident per year than other provinces. We have the lowest hospital funding, fewest hospital beds and fewest nurses.

We could start by scrapping Bill 124.

Liberals opened the door to privatization in health care, and the Conservatives are bulldozing ahead and have a long track record of an uncomfortably close relationship with long-term-care profiteers. No one should make money off someone's ill health or old age, full stop.

Ontarians deserve a government that will invest in supports that matter, ensuring seniors stay in their homes longer, with high-quality public-funded home care. When people do enter long-term care, an NDP government would ensure the high-quality, publicly funded homes are as much like their home as possible.

An NDP government would invest in the things that matter most.

I look forward to the brighter future for Ontario when we form government in June.

MOIS DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Mars est le Mois de la Francophonie, un moment pour reconnaître et réfléchir sur la place des communautés francophones dans notre province et tout autour du monde. Avec plus de 300 millions de locuteurs dans le monde, le français, la belle langue de Molière, est une langue véritablement mondiale, englobant de nombreuses nations et de nombreuses cultures. Au Canada, le français n'est pas simplement un moyen de communication, mais aussi un mode de vie.

1030

C'est pourquoi notre gouvernement a travaillé fort pour s'assurer que les francophones de notre province soient soutenus. Je suis fière de notre gouvernement, qui a été le premier à moderniser la Loi sur les services en français depuis 35 ans.

Puisqu'hier était la Journée internationale de la femme, j'aimerais rendre hommage à la ministre des Affaires francophones, qui travaille fort pour appuyer la Stratégie de développement économique francophone qui a été élaborée en 2020 avec nos partenaires la fédération des gens d'affaires. En outre, elle a travaillé fort pour investir 12,5 millions de dollars afin de mieux faire connaître les possibilités d'enseignement du français en Ontario et d'éliminer les obstacles entourant ces programmes.

Monsieur le Président, les francophones occupent une place importante dans le tissu social canadien en tant que peuple fondateur, avec leurs propres traditions et leur propre histoire, dont nous sommes tous très fiers. Alors, profitons, en tant que législateurs, de ce mois pour réfléchir à tout ce que nos amis et voisins francophones

ont apporté à cette grande province que nous appelons notre chez-nous.

Longue vie à la francophonie de l'Ontario.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: Communities across Algoma–Manitoulin are facing a shortage of doctors, leaving people without access to care when they need it.

The North Shore Health Network has been looking for permanent coverage of the Thessalon Hospital for months. This has left the community in a constant state of worry that they will not be able to get the services when they need them. In December, there were serious concerns that the emergency department at Thessalon would have no coverage at all.

No one in Ontario should have to worry about whether they will be able to see a doctor when they are experiencing a medical emergency.

Speaker, we are in crisis. Every community in northern Ontario is being affected by the lack of family and community physicians. In towns like Gore Bay and Bruce Mines, physicians cannot keep up with the workload they are expected to take on. Doctors are burnt out. Their rosters are overloaded, and in many cases they are the only immediate point of care for a community.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has called for the government to allow more students to be admitted to its school of medicine and residency programs to address the northern shortages.

I'm going to be walking this proposal, Expansion of Huron Shores Family Health Team: Modernizing the Delivery of Primary Care: An Integrated and Collaborative Model, over to the minister after question period. This will not solve all of the issues, but it would sure as heck bring us to a path where we will be able to start addressing the doctor shortages and coverage across Algoma–Manitoulin.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our members' statements for this morning.

The member for London West has informed me that she has a point of order she wishes to raise.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding private member's motion 40, in the name of Mr. Hassan, calling on the Ford government to bring Bill 86, Our London Family Act, back from committee and pass it before the end of the 42nd Parliament, making it clear that Islamophobia and hate have no place in Ontario, and that the question be put without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government House leader, on the same point of order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, as you know, we made the move last week to move the bill directly to committee before second reading. We have since consulted with the NCCM and they are in favour of that move. We want to ensure the bill gets an appropriate hearing at second reading before it comes back.

As you will know, Mr. Speaker, the member also had another private member's bill, which we sought to have

available for debate this Thursday. It was the only other bill that he had available for private members' business. Unanimous consent was denied by the opposition to allow us to debate Black Mental Health Day, which was sponsored by the member.

So, in support of what the ministers have been doing, we will not be supporting this unanimous consent motion today. We have worked closely with the community, and we will do the proper job of study at committee.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for London West is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion without notice regarding private member's motion number 40, in the name of Mr. Hassan, calling on the Ford government to bring Bill 86, Our London Family Act, back from committee and pass it before the end of the 42nd Parliament, making it clear that Islamophobia and hate have no place in Ontario, and that the question be put without debate and amendment. Agreed? I heard a no.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Point of order, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for London West on another point of order.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I rise under standing order 101(a), which deals with private members' public business. I want to point out that, procedurally, all of the steps that are outlined in this standing order were followed by the member for York South–Weston.

In particular, standing order 101(b) talks about the process of a ballot draw to determine the order for consideration of the items of business, and that all members' names who are eligible for private members' public business are entered into that draw. This member went through that process, and his name was drawn for tomorrow, March 10.

Under standing order 101(e), there is a notice requirement. That member met the notice requirement. This government took away that notice requirement by removing the ballot item from the order paper.

So, Speaker, I would encourage the government to think about what this means for the ability of that private member to bring forward important business for consideration by this House.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On the same point of order?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Yes.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I think it's very important that I comment on that.

The member brought forward a very important bill that was supported by members of the community and supported by many members of this government.

The decision was made to take the private member's bill and send it directly to committee for study. We did that with the knowledge that the member also had another bill on the order paper for private members' business. It was, if I'm not mistaken—the member can correct me—a bill with respect to Black mental health. That was available for

the member to debate in his private member's spot this Thursday.

The member opposite could have had two private member's bills which could have been brought to this House—the family act, which will be brought back to the House at the conclusion of committee study, and he could have had this other bill. It was the opposition that chose not to give him consent to debate his private member's bill this Thursday.

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: What? What? Say that again.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is going to come to order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Get up and say that.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is warned.

I listened to the point of order that was raised by the member for London West. I don't believe that there is anything procedurally out of order in terms of what has happened here, but I would say that the member for York South–Weston, as far as we know, conformed with the standing orders in terms of his approach. I think that there's a possibility that this could be resolved through discussion, and hopefully that can take place. Further discussion amongst the House leaders and a resolution might be found in the time we have available. But I don't find there is anything procedurally out of order in what has happened.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On a happier note, I'm very pleased to inform the House that page Benjamin Selmi from the riding of Essex is today's page captain. We have with us today at Queen's Park his mother, Barbara Link.

We're also joined by the family of page captain Pania Ghaneian, from the riding of Barrie–Innisfil: her mother, Mojgan Ahmadi Nadooshan; her father, Hamid Ghaneian; as well as her sister Pardis Ghaneian.

Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. We're delighted to have you here.

QUESTION PERIOD

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my first question is to the Premier.

We have, of course, been hearing reports that the mask mandates are ending soon. Many experts are saying that's happening prematurely. What is concerning is that the head of the science table says that we don't have the data to make that call. In fact, when asked directly if this was the time to do this, Dr. Jüni said, "No.... It's too early."

1040

Of course, other experts have subsequently weighed in. Dr. Isaac Bogoch said, "I think it is reasonable to keep

masks on for now and re-evaluate weekly." Dr. Kali Barrett, also on the science table, said, "This is a very bad decision." Ronald Cohn, head of SickKids hospital, said, "Let's not rush this right now."

If the province isn't listening to the head of its own science table, who are they listening to for evidence that now is the time to stop wearing masks?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply on behalf of the government, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, we've been listening to our health care officials throughout the pandemic. That is why Ontario has been leading North America in terms of its response to the pandemic.

I will note that if the Leader of the Opposition is so busy flip-flopping every single week—one week, they want more restrictions; the next week, they want less restrictions. Whatever they think is the most popular thing to do at that time, this Leader of the Opposition will run to it. But if you're going to be a responsible government, what you have to do is do what's in the best interests of the people of the province of Ontario, and that is what we have done every step of the way—every step of the way.

As I said, that is why Ontario is leading North America in its response. That is why we are coming out of the pandemic stronger than ever before, creating thousands of jobs while making important investments in health, in long-term care, in all of the other things needed to make this the most vibrant economy in North America—with no help from the opposition.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, unfortunately, I think the government House leader has it wrong. A responsible government's action during a global pandemic is to listen to the experts, to the scientists, to those folks who have the data and information about how to guide our safety going through such a situation.

The Premier doesn't have the support of the leading experts—of his own leading expert from the science table. Dr. Jüni said that it is too soon. He said that he was surprised by this announcement. He said that he was not consulted about this announcement, and he said it's "not based on science." That's troubling. That's troubling for a lot of folks who are worried about what might be coming next, especially the most vulnerable in our community.

The question is, if the decision to end the mask mandate wasn't based on science—clearly, it wasn't—what was it based on?

Hon. Paul Calandra: As we've done right through the pandemic, we've listened to the Chief Medical Officer of Health, we've listened to public health officers across the province of Ontario.

I need not remind this House that it was the opposition that voted to actually fire the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and we said no. We value the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. We value the advice of the health care professionals. That is why Ontario has come through this pandemic stronger than ever before. That is why millions of Ontarians—leading the world, in fact—

have been vaccinated in this province. They said it couldn't be done. We did it. They said we couldn't respond quickly to the pandemic. We did. They said we wouldn't come out of the pandemic stronger than when we went into it. We are. Jobs are being created. Our health care is being rebuilt, after 15 years of Liberal mismanagement. We're building roads, transit, transportation. We're looking for thousands of people to work in the province—no thanks to them, but thanks to the people of the Ontario who have made this the best province to live, work, invest and raise a family.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Once again, the government House leader is not telling the whole story; let's put it that way. We certainly did support getting rid of the former Chief Medical Officer of Health; not the current one. So this government needs to stop—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Stop the clock.

We're not even five minutes in.

Please restart the clock.

Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, yes, we were happy to accept his resignation.

The people in this province are tired of masks. I'm tired of masks. I'm sure we're all tired of masks across the province of Ontario. But you don't give up the bout in the last round. We have to be very, very careful. People deserve, in fact, to know exactly what this decision was based upon. That's the question that we are asking this government to provide information about. They should be accountable for the decision-making process that they're making.

Dr. Jüni said this morning that the decision was based on "political pressure."

So my question is, why is the Premier prioritizing his political interests over the advice of his own science experts and removing the mandate sooner than science indicates is prudent?

Hon. Paul Calandra: One thing we've seen over the pandemic is that a lot of people have become experts in a lot of different things—usually, the Twitter warriors. Now, of course, the Leader of the Opposition is the Chief Medical Officer of Health of the province of Ontario.

Let's look at what the Leader of the Opposition just admitted. She and her party did not support what the Chief Medical Officer of Health—and the previous Chief Medical Officer of Health—was advising the government. His advice has led Ontario to being the best jurisdiction in North America when it comes to the pandemic response. His advice led us to safer schools. His advice led us to getting more than 90% of the people of the province of Ontario vaccinated, something that they said could not be done. And what do the NDP want to do? They didn't agree with him, so—well, let's fire him, because Dr. Horwath

knows better than the Chief Medical Officer of Health. We're—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

I'll remind the members again that we refer to each other according to our riding name or our ministerial title, as applicable, so as to maintain a civil debate in the Ontario Legislature, which is what I think the people of Ontario would expect from us and what our constituents would expect to see from time to time, too.

We can start the clock again.

The Leader of the Opposition, next question.

FRONT-LINE WORKERS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. But I have to say, the huffing and puffing and name-calling is pretty disgraceful in the midst of—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

The government side will come to order so that I can hear the member who has the floor. It is the same courtesy that I think all of you would expect to be extended to you if you had the floor.

Let's try again. Restart the clock.

The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Once again, I'm going to try to be serious here in this Legislature, Speaker, and I'd ask the government to do that as well.

My question is to the Premier, and this is about PSWs, who are the heroes of the pandemic response, as I think we've all identified many times. They've worked long hours, working off their feet. They've ended up, in some cases, being ill, absolutely stressed out, traumatized. It's long past time for those PSWs to get their pandemic bump in pay made permanent, so my question is in regard to that. When talking about the most recent temporary pay bump that the PSWs were provided, the Minister of Health said the government would ensure that "we attract and retain these essential health care workers" with that kind of a pay bump. It shouldn't be news to the government that we still need to retain and attract new PSWs to the field. So when is the government going to make the pay bump permanent for PSWs?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the government House leader.

1050

Hon. Paul Calandra: I've only been here since 2018, and in the short time that I have been here, I knew right from the beginning that we had to make investments in long-term care, that we had to make investments to support PSWs and health human resources. The Leader of the Opposition has been here a lot longer than me, held the balance of power, and never once made that a priority.

When it comes to PSWs, we of course recognized how important they were to getting us through the global pandemic. They wanted to fire the Chief Medical Officer of Health who helped give us the advice to ensure that our PSWs were recognized.

Let's go a little step further. When it comes to supporting our PSWs and when it comes to supporting staff, in the Leader of the Opposition's own riding, we have authorized over \$15,119,000 worth of additional funding for long-term-care homes in her riding. Do you know how the Leader of the Opposition voted? Against it, Mr. Speaker.

We're on our way to four hours of long-term care.

We're on the way to rebuilding health care.

We're on the way to hiring thousands more nurses, thousands more PSWs. They are the backbone, and finally they have a government that respects them for what they are: front-line heroes.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, sadly, quite the opposite.

The Premier promised permanent pandemic pay increases for PSWs. He made workers wait and wait and wait, obviously. He kept promising that it was going to be permanent. To this day, we don't have it. He promised 523 days ago that the pay bump would be permanent for PSWs. Let me quote what he said. He said, "It's a guarantee. We are going to do it." There goes the Premier again with his guarantees.

Why hasn't the Premier fulfilled his so-called guarantee and made sure that the pay bump for PSWs is made permanent in our province?

Hon. Paul Calandra: There is the difference between the NDP, the Liberals, and the Progressive Conservative government. We started, right from the beginning, honouring those very same people who made such a difference to the pandemic. We gave them—it was acknowledged in the question, as a matter of fact, that it was this government that immediately took steps to ensure that our PSWs were given additional compensation for the great work that they're doing. This government did it. Was it the NDP who supported the Liberals over 15 years, colleagues? No, it wasn't. Was it a goal of the NDP, when they held the balance of power and could have ended the misery that was the Liberal government? No. They settled for a stretch goal in auto insurance, but ultimately it was up to a Conservative government to fix that as well—because we're seeing insurance rates come down. Ultimately, we're solving the problem. We're giving more money to our PSWs. We're hiring thousands of them, and we're giving them new hospitals, long-term-care homes and health care facilities that they can be proud to work in and give the best quality of care for the people of the province of Ontario—a game-changer, and not something they ever considered once.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: After all of that, the promise still remains. The Premier promised 523 days ago that he would make PSW pandemic pay permanent, and it hasn't happened.

In fact, on Monday the Premier threw another gimmick out the door, when he said that health care workers would get \$5,000 retention bonuses, with strings attached. It was panned by nurses. It also demoralized all the PSWs and

other front-line health care workers who were excluded from that announcement. They all want the same thing, though. What they all want is for this government to scrap Bill 124 and bring a permanent, decent pay rate to their work. The government can fix the problem. They can fix the problem once and for all and do the right thing by nurses and all front-line health care workers. Instead of more election gimmicks from the Premier, when is he going to get this done? When is he going to get serious and rip up Bill 124 and make sure that PSW pandemic pay is permanent?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, we have six weeks, I guess, till an election, and all of a sudden the Leader of the Opposition has come to the realization that investing in health care is important, that dealing with the health and human resources deficiency that was inherited by this government is important. All of a sudden, it's important to pay our front-line heroes the amount that they deserve—something that this government has already done. Yet she voted against \$15 million in additional funding for long-term-care homes in her own riding.

What we're doing is not listening to the opposition. We're moving right away. The minute we got elected, we knew that we had to do something about health care in this province. That's why we started building long-term-care homes. That's why we moved to Ontario health teams. That's why we're building a hospital in Brampton. That's why we're building a new hospital in Niagara. We're making an important announcement today on health care.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to rebuilding health care, we're doing it because we understand it's important not only for the people of the province of Ontario, but it is an economic driver that makes the difference. When this minister of job creation goes out there and says, "Invest in Ontario"—they ask about it; we get it done.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Doly Begum: My question is to the Premier.

Betty, a constituent in my riding, recently wrote to me about her experience as a patient being transferred from a Scarborough hospital to palliative care after having a major life-saving brain surgery. As she was being transferred, she requested support and care to ensure that she can remain safe after the surgery. Yet she received inadequate support and was transferred with no assistance.

This is what Betty wrote:

"What is wrong with this picture? A senior undergoing life-saving brain surgery and being manhandled during transfer due to lack of support...."

"It's time our government started giving the seniors that built this country, province and city the total respect they deserve."

Scarborough Health Network has been struggling with lack of funding for decades, first under the Liberals, and now under this Conservative government. And they're still waiting. Scarborough Health Network's recent Love, Scarborough campaign highlights many instances like what Betty described and calls on our government to finally give Scarborough the investment that they need.

Speaker, my question is, when will the seniors and the people of Scarborough get their fair share of funding for our health care system?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: The member is absolutely correct that under 15 years of the previous Liberal government, Scarborough was ignored. Not to be outdone by the NDP in election day conversions, the Liberals have now said that they'll support the Scarborough Health Network. They had 15 years to do it, and they did nothing.

Interjections.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I'm glad that the member for Scarborough—Guildwood is clapping—because she's clapping for 15 years of failure, under her government, to actually do something about it. So congratulations to you.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we're getting the job done. We're building thousands of beds.

Just this morning I announced 1,920 new long-term-care beds across Toronto, including in Scarborough, at the Seven Oaks centre, where we will have a brand new bed. You're welcome. Of course, we're getting that done for the people of Scarborough.

I know the member for Scarborough—Agincourt works so hard to ensure that his hospital went down the road for a brand new emergency room. The Liberals could have done it. They didn't. That member got it done for his community. Congratulations to him.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock.

The supplementary question.

Ms. Doly Begum: Beds don't take care of people; people do, physicians do.

Ontario's health care system is in a crisis due to the shortage of physicians, nurses and health care staffing across the board. Yet thousands of internationally trained health care workers in Canada across various professions are still waiting for our province to let them practise and contribute and allow them to take the pressure off our health care system. We have highly skilled immigrants who have come to Ontario in hopes of a better life for themselves and for the community, but they continue to face barriers when trying to work in their fields.

This afternoon, I'll be introducing my bill, the fairness for foreign-trained workers act, 2022, that addresses these challenges and finally gives hope to thousands of physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, dentists, and more, to care for Ontarians. We take pride in our health care system, but it is stretched thin, and we need to build capacity, not just beds. If we can do it now by integrating these internationally trained workers, why isn't this government listening?

Will the government vote yes to my bill to give fairness for internationally trained workers?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour has been doing incredible work to ensure that internationally trained professionals can get recognized in the province of Ontario. Here is a little nugget for you: If

I could look into the future, I'm going to bet that they're going to vote against all of the measures that he's bringing in to do that.

Look at the member's own riding, Mr. Speaker. She talks about how you can build as many hospitals and beds as you want, but unless you have the people to actually work in them, unless you have the funding, what's the point of doing it? So I was proud when this government, these members, fought really hard to ensure that that member's riding of Scarborough Southwest—for her long-term-care homes—got an additional \$30 million in funding for staffing and support, so that we could get to the four hours of care, which wasn't done under the Liberals. It was not prioritized under the NDP when they held the balance of power—something they like to forget about—but was done by this government and this caucus.

1100

We respect our health care workers. We respect our PSWs. That's why we're supporting them. That's why we're giving them more funding—to build the best possible health and long-term-care system in the world.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is for the Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

It's no secret that the previous government hurt economic development and job creation in northern Ontario with their policies. The Liberal government hobbled mining, forestry and other industries, resulting in more than a decade of lost jobs, prosperity and opportunities for communities in northern Ontario.

Speaker, can the minister tell us what our government is doing to support our mining industry and grow prosperity in northern Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka for the important work that he has done over the past couple of decades. His friendship and the work that he has done for northern Ontario are appreciated.

Harte Gold Sugar Zone, 150 jobs; Newmont Goldcorp's Borden mine, 800 jobs; Evolution Mining's Cochenour mine, 750 jobs; Pure Gold Mining's Red Lake operation, 750 jobs; Iamgold's Côté Gold project, 450 jobs; Argonaut Gold's Magino project, 350 jobs; the Greenstone mining project and the Springpole gold project on the horizon—they have a couple of important features. First, they've put positive pressure on this government to put additional resources into enhancing those municipalities and those Indigenous communities, so they're well positioned to experience growth and economic prosperity.

Some bad news: Every time we ask for additional economic resources and/or regulatory changes, the NDP vote against them. They said no to growth and prosperity in the north. The "no" democratic party has no standing up north.

We're ready—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary question.

Mr. Norman Miller: Clearly, the achievements mentioned by the minister mark a dramatic turnaround for the mining sector and demonstrate this government's commitment to policies that have helped this sector succeed. We also know that these resource development projects create incredible opportunities for Indigenous communities and other communities across the north.

While the previous government spoke about a commitment to northern Ontario, they refused to address the need for meaningful economic development.

Speaker, can the minister tell us how this government is getting projects done for Indigenous communities so they can benefit from job creation in the north?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Yesterday was International Women's Day, and I didn't get a chance to mention some important Indigenous women leaders. Judy Desmoulin, Sheri Taylor, Dorothy Towedo and Theresa Nelson—one of my favourites—are all women of extraordinary capabilities, leaders, chiefs of their communities.

Over late fall and winter, we had an opportunity to bring forward two important projects: Equinox Gold's Greenstone gold project, under their leadership, with important business, employment and environmental opportunities for their communities; and the Kenogami sustainable forest licence, set down so that those communities and those women can continue to lead in central northern Ontario.

There are so many good things going on in northern Ontario, and Indigenous communities are becoming an essential part of those environmental, business and economic opportunities. We're proud to support them and those Indigenous women leaders.

VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: *Remarks in Oji-Cree.*

This week, we learned that the Thunder Bay Police Service failed to properly investigate the deaths of 15 Indigenous people.

The Globe and Mail reports that a provincially appointed panel is recommending an external review of an additional 25 unsolved cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

If these were your family members dying without proper investigation, this situation would be intolerable.

Will the Premier please explain why this government is failing to act when the Thunder Bay Police Service is treating Indigenous peoples as "less than" and unworthy of proper police investigations?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I couldn't agree more with the member opposite. I am deeply concerned, as are all of us, I'm sure, to hear about the reports.

We have been following and will respect the chief coroner and the chief of pathology. They have, of course, sent a report to the Attorney General, who is reviewing that right now.

It is absolutely imperative that any investigations that were not done completely and thoroughly need to happen immediately so that those families understand exactly what happened and loved ones can have an appreciation that the system is working for them, not against them.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I know this much: Racism kills. As Indigenous people, we live it and we die from it.

Speaker, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director found systemic racism in the Thunder Bay Police Service and made 44 recommendations for change. Former Senator Murray Sinclair's investigation found systemic racism in the Thunder Bay Police Services Board and ordered it dissolved. Senator Sinclair laid out a path forward for change, and that path has been ignored.

Today I am asking: Will this government order a commission of inquiry and direct OPP oversight of the Thunder Bay police department until the inquiry is complete?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: In the province of Ontario, of course, we have the independent police commission. I have sent a letter to that public commission asking them to thoroughly investigate the Thunder Bay police and the police services board. We have made changes with the police services board members, including to ensure that there is representation from a large swath of the Thunder Bay population. We will continue that work. The independent OCPC will continue that work. You have my assurance, as a government, that we want to get this right in Thunder Bay, and we will make sure that what needs to happen continues to happen independently.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: To the Premier: I've sent letters to this government and stood in this House on many occasions urging action to end gun violence and to support Bill 129 initially, and now Bill 60, my private member's bill, the Safe and Healthy Communities Act (Addressing Gun Violence).

Two days ago, the Toronto Star endorsed my bill, stating that gun violence isn't just a legal issue; it is also a matter of public health. The article goes on to quote Toronto Medical Officer of Health Dr. Eileen de Villa, on how the community effects of gun violence have not only physical effects but also mental. These effects can be long-lasting—including multi-generational and cyclical.

Speaker, Scarborough is facing the pain of gun violence today, from February's shooting of an 18-year-old grade 12 student, inside a school. They need our help now.

Will this government help Scarborough and pass Bill 60?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Through the Roadmap to Wellness, we've allocated an increase of more than a half a billion dollars in annualized funding for mental health and addictions support since 2019. This includes funding

specifically to expand culturally sensitive services in communities across the province.

I was proud, as I've once said before, to visit Taibu Community Health Centre in Scarborough to announce a \$2.9-million new investment in annual funding to immediately expand and enhance the substance abuse program for African and Caribbean Canadian youth. These programs, which are also now open in new locations in Hamilton, Ottawa, Windsor, Etobicoke, Peel and North York, are all there to help improve health outcomes for Black youth, and also serve francophone, LGBTQ2S, disconnected youth and youth impacted by significant trauma, including community violence.

1110

Our government is interested in and committed to supporting all Ontarians on their journey to wellness and providing the supports they need to do so.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: This government must understand that its road map is bypassing these individuals impacted by gun violence.

Last December, I reintroduced Bill 60, and when I asked the government if they would support my bill, the government House leader stated very clearly that they would support it if it had merit. Well, the Toronto Star, Toronto Public Health and the people of Scarborough have stated that the bill has merit. More importantly, individuals and families who are living with the pain of violence at the hands of guns believe that it has merit.

Last week, this government fast-tracked a private member's bill, Bill 86, an important bill to fight Islamophobia, straight to committee, which I support. I am urging this government to treat Bill 60 with the same urgency and fast-track it today. We need to pass this bill before we have an election. That should be our priority.

Speaker, does the government leader believe that Bill 60, recognizing gun violence as a public health issue, has merit?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: If the member opposite is asking that we bypass second reading and send it directly to committee, I'd be delighted to do that.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure.

For far too long, Ontario's long-term-care homes have been overlooked, neglected and victims of chronic underfunding. Throughout COVID-19, my office was flooded with calls from families concerned that their loved ones were not getting the care they deserve.

The previous government had 15 years to invest in and build long-term-care infrastructure across the province, but instead, they were too focused on closing schools and selling Hydro One. In fact, from 2011 to 2018, they only managed to build 611 net new long-term-care beds.

That is why our government has moved quickly on our promise to build 30,000 new beds and redevelop thousands more.

Mr. Speaker, through you: Would the Minister of Infrastructure please tell us what our government is doing to support the construction of long-term-care beds in the province?

Hon. Kinga Surma: I want to start off by wishing the member a very happy birthday. It was his birthday yesterday.

I also want to recognize that the Minister of Long-Term Care will be adding new beds at nine facilities in the city of Toronto, one of which is Seven Oaks, in the member's riding.

As the member mentioned, the pandemic has had a devastating impact on LTC homes, which further emphasized the need to bring more care facilities for our seniors. Unlike our predecessors, our government is taking action by bringing more LTC homes to communities throughout the province.

As part of our ongoing commitment to build Ontario, we have utilized the accelerated build pilot program when focusing on the construction of LTC homes. This program leverages hospital-owned land and accelerated construction techniques to build urgently needed homes more quickly in our province's urban areas, where land, as you know, is in short supply.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: Thank you to the minister for her response.

I'm proud to be part of a government that is leading the way when it comes to building long-term-care homes in our province.

We cannot repeat the mistakes of the previous government, who watched as these gaps got so bad. Even the member from Don Valley West wishes she had solved the problems that long-term-care homes were facing. Ontarians don't need wishes. They need a government that will bring comfort by working to address the capacity issues in long-term-care homes and take additional measures to equip homes with state-of-the-art technologies that will prepare residents for the threats of a future pandemic.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure please tell us what projects she and her ministry are working on to help the communities that need them the most?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Through the accelerated build program, our government is cutting red tape and working with our industry partners to bring four new long-term-care homes across the GTA.

Last month, I joined Premier Ford and Minister Calandra to announce the completion of the Lakeridge Health long-term-care home in Ajax. In just 13 months, residents in Ajax saw construction come to an end. And just last week, Lakeridge Health was handed the keys to begin its operations. Mr. Speaker, to put that into perspective, the processes established by the previous government would require, on average, eight years to build a long-term-care home in the province of Ontario. That is not acceptable.

In addition to the Lakeridge Health LTC home, we have another three long-term-care homes under construction—one at Humber River Hospital, and two with Trillium Health Partners—which will bring 1,200 new beds to communities in the GTA, which is more than double the beds the Liberals built in 15 years.

ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESSES

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier.

As many members in this House know, the Ambassador Bridge in my riding was under a blockade, completely shutting down North America's largest international crossing for six days. Billions of dollars of goods were unable to cross into Canada or to the United States. Cross-border workers were unable to access their jobs. Many small businesses in the area were forced to close their doors and lost significant business due to the disruption.

Speaker, last week this government announced \$11.5 million for local businesses in Ottawa impacted by the convoy protests. I want to thank my colleague from Ottawa Centre, who stood up, spoke out, and hit the streets to help those local businesses and the people there, while the Conservative members from the Ottawa area went into hiding.

My question is this: When will this government step up for the people of Windsor-Essex and provide dedicated funding to help businesses recover the financial loss that was caused by the blockade?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I want to thank the member opposite for her question.

I really resent the notion, after spending four weeks under occupation, when even members of my own family had to deal with that occupation—friends who own businesses had to deal with that occupation. And the fact that myself and my colleague the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services spent every single day on the phone, working with our city officials, our tourism partners, and all of those businesses—which is why, after four long weeks when our city was shut down, this government invested \$10 million into Invest Ottawa to give to small businesses and an additional \$1.5 million to Ottawa Tourism to restore the reputational damage that had occurred during that occupation, in order for us to make sure that not only Ottawa but all of Ontario was on the map again for the visitor economy that is starting to grow back. I've got to tell you, what an insulting question—to suggest that my colleagues and I were not present.

I can tell you something: Each and every day, we work with Mayor Watson, we work with the Premier's office—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The member will take her seat, please.

Supplementary—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Please restart the clock.

Supplementary question.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: The member from Nepean may have been on the phone the entire time, but my colleague from Ottawa Centre was actually sleeping in a lobby of a hotel where the convoy protesters set a fire, in order to provide security to the people in that building.

Speaker, I spoke with many small business owners in Windsor West who were severely impacted and continue to suffer financially from the remaining long-term effects of the blockade. Many are unsure how they will pay their bills and employees this month, as they assess the financial loss.

Manufacturing plants in my community were forced to close and send their workers home without pay. Now workers have no ability to recover those lost wages.

Speaker, I've made several requests on behalf of my community members for dedicated funding for those impacted by the blockade—funding just like Ottawa got. Members of my community deserve a government that will support them during difficult times.

So my question is, why won't this government commit to providing dedicated funding for small businesses and workers in my community, in Windsor-Essex, to help them recover from the blockade? I would like an answer—rather than the minister standing there patting herself on the back.

1120

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I want to correct the member's belief of what she thinks she's talking about.

The reality is, there was a four-week occupation that shut down the city centre of our nation's capital. We followed the lead of the federal government, investing an additional \$10 million to Invest Ottawa and an additional \$1.5 million.

I'll say this as well: I attended meetings, with the member from Ottawa-Vanier, with businesses in her community. We showed up, but do you know who didn't? The Ottawa Centre MPP. He wasn't there to talk to the businesses; he was, rather, consumed by trying to get in headlines himself.

If the member opposite wants to talk—let me assure her of this. Last week, I spoke to the Windsor Essex Pelee Island tourism entity. And I have flowed \$400,000 in order to deal with the reputational damage that the city of Windsor had as a result of the two-week blockade, not the entire shutdown of a city—the nation's capital—which you should be standing up for and saying they should have their reputational damage restored so we can bring business back to the city of Ottawa and protect democracy—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Order. Order.

Once again, I'll remind the members to make their comments through the Chair and not directly across the floor of the House.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'd like to continue question period, if that might be possible, if it's not too inconvenient for people.

Please start the clock.

The member for Guelph.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier.

Ontario is facing a housing affordability and a mental health care crisis. The two are linked. Estimates are that up to 50% of people who are unhoused live with a mental health condition. Mental health professionals are clear that the lowest-cost way to improve these people's lives and mental well-being is to provide them with safe, affordable housing; stable housing with access to mental health, addiction and other supports.

Our Green housing and mental health strategies commit to building 60,000 permanent supportive housing spaces.

Will the Premier support our plan by committing the necessary funds in the spring budget to build 60,000 permanent supportive housing spaces over the next decade?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you, I want to thank the member for Guelph for a real opposition question here in the Legislature today.

I want to build upon the success—and Minister Tibollo can provide some commentary on the mental health piece, because they do go hand in hand. The member is absolutely right. That's why early on in the pandemic our government worked very diligently on the social services relief fund, which provided a significant amount of dollars to our municipal partners so they could deal with the most vulnerable population.

Earlier this week I was with the member for Whitby, our chief government whip, when we announced the consolidation of our three community homelessness programs into one, to make the programs more easily accessible for our municipal partners. We also built upon the existing success by providing even more dollars to our municipal partners.

But again, we're looking for this member's party to support our "fair share" call to the federal government. We're being shortchanged \$490 million. It could go a long way, with your support, for us to get those—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Supplementary?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Let's be clear: The housing crisis is getting worse, not better. Over 16,000 people on any given night in Ontario are unhoused. If we want the federal government to put money into housing, the province has to step up as well. That's exactly why I'm asking this government to put money on the table in the spring budget.

Let's be clear: An investment in housing is the most fiscally responsible approach to addressing this crisis. For every \$10 spent on housing, it saves government \$21.72 in social justice, health care and other costs. But more importantly, the improvements it makes to people's quality of life and their mental well-being is priceless.

We know that the solution is permanent supportive housing.

I will ask the Premier, the finance minister and the Treasury Board president: Will you commit to funding 60,000 permanent supportive housing spaces in the spring budget?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question.

As has been pointed out, housing is an important part of the continuum of care—but there has to be a continuum of care.

One of the things our government has done from day one is build the Roadmap to Wellness to address the very issues of everything from withdrawal management to treatment to supportive housing and all other forms of housing necessary in order to help an individual, because the underlying issues, the social determinants of health must be addressed.

Since 2019, we've invested over a half a billion dollars in new mental health and addictions supports. Mr. Speaker, this is truly a historic investment on behalf of this government and on behalf of the province of Ontario. The investments that we've made are part of that \$3.8-billion commitment that was made from the very beginning. And we'll continue to make investments to ensure that that continuum of care is dealt with.

But rest assured, until we have that continuum of care, we need to invest and ensure that people everywhere in the province are getting the help they need and deserve and—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. The next question.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Speaker, it is no secret that the Highway 6 corridor is one of the busiest two-lane highways in the entire province. It has an average daily traffic volume of 23,000 to 26,000 vehicles per day, and this number keeps climbing.

For 15 years, constituents in my riding of Perth–Wellington and surrounding communities called on the Liberals to build the Morriston bypass. This is a project that would cut through gridlock, reduce travel times for drivers and improve safety, but the Liberals said no.

This is addressed to the Minister of Transportation. Can the minister please tell us what this government is doing to advance this important project?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Thank you to the member from Perth–Wellington for the great question.

Speaker, we all know that the Morriston bypass will be a game-changer for residents. While the Liberals had 15 years to advance this important project, they did not. They just let it sit on the back burner—like they do with so many critical infrastructure projects, if they don't just cancel them altogether.

Mr. Speaker, our government is doing things differently. We are saying yes to critical infrastructure projects. The residents of Halton region and beyond will be very happy to hear that our government is driving this project

forward. We are making important steps to turn this project into a reality. Phase 1 of the Highway 6 and Morriston bypass project was completed in 2020. Last month, we took another step forward with the contract award for the design and the construction of the next phase of this work.

We have made more progress on the Morriston bypass in the last four years than the Liberals did in 15. We are committed to seeing this project through many more project milestones until we get the job done.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Minister, for that answer.

Traffic volumes along the Highway 6 corridor through Morriston have been at capacity for over a decade. Instead of taking action, the Liberals ignored the problem and said no to investing in critical infrastructure.

Speaker, if we took the advice of members on that side of the House, drivers across the province would be stuck in gridlock forever.

Can the Minister of Transportation please share with us how the Morriston bypass would help address our gridlock problem?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Thank you again to the member for the question.

With the population of the greater Golden Horseshoe poised to grow rapidly, the number of people who rely on vehicles to get from point A to point B will also inevitably grow. The increasing demand for highway infrastructure means that we need to get building.

The Morriston bypass will make it easier for drivers to travel between Hamilton and Guelph. It will also reduce gridlock on local roads, especially in the communities of Morriston and Aberfoyle. Without strong action now, gridlock on Highway 6 will only get worse. It could also worsen traffic on the neighbouring Highway 401, which is already, as we know, the most congested highway in North America.

1130

Speaker, under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is saying yes to building the Morriston bypass and other key highway projects to reduce gridlock in every corner of our province, and I could not be more proud.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Premier.

Today we learned that a month after the Premier's promise that a deal on child care was coming very, very soon, the Conservatives have finally gotten around to sending in some of the detailed numbers to the federal government that they have been asking for. That's three months after the last province signed their deal.

Every extra day and month this government waits to sign the deal hurts our economy, hurts families, and puts our recovery and jobs at risk.

My question is simple: When the stakes are this high, what's taking you so long?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: What the Premier and our government are doing is standing up for Ontario taxpayers to ensure that we get to \$10 a day. If that is our collective aspiration, then we need to make sure that the federal government has the funding in place to deliver \$10 a day. This government is not going to sign a deal that allows child care costs to be higher in Ontario than in provinces east and west. We want equity. We want investment. We want a longer duration of a deal so that families in your riding and in all of our ridings can benefit from affordability and acceptability. That is what responsible leadership is about—not doing what's politically expedient in the moment, but standing up for taxpayers and standing up for families in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Ontario families can't pay their bills with pinky promises from the Ford government. They need a deal, and they needed it months ago.

Thanks to the Ford government, families are already paying more for everything, from gas to rent, and every extra day the government drags their feet it costs families hundreds of extra dollars. That's on top of thousands they've already had to pay, waiting, while every other province and families across the country got a deal.

Why does this government expect families to have to pay more just because the Premier and the minister can't get their homework and their jobs done?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: If the members of the Liberal Party and New Democrats wanted to allow for savings for families, then they wouldn't have stood in this House to oppose measures that incrementally put literally thousands of dollars back into the pocket of moms and dads in Ontario. If the New Democrats and Liberals cared about the financial interests of families and the rising costs of affordability and inflation in this province and country, then they would have supported the Ontario Child Care Tax Credit, which puts \$1,250 in the pockets of a child; they would have supported the enriched child care tax credit, which enhanced it to \$1,500, but they opposed that too; they would have supported enthusiastically \$1.8 billion in direct financial support—roughly \$1,200 per family in cash support—during the pandemic, but they opposed that. I think there's an inconsistency in their logic.

We're ensuring accessibility and affordability through provincial actions. We're insisting that the federal government step up from the 2.5% they contribute to provincial child care. We're going to do so in a constructive manner with the federal government so we deliver affordability—\$10 a day for all families in this province.

RESPONSABILITÉ GOUVERNEMENTALE

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: C'est-tu donc bien le fun quand on peut changer les règles comme on veut, surtout quand on ne veut pas qu'elles s'appliquent à nous?

In 2019, this government passed legislation that set penalties for the Premier and the finance minister if a budget was not delivered on time: They would have to pay 10% of their salaries into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The finance minister then said in the Legislature that it would stop “March Madness,” which he characterized as the “annual habit of year-end spending sprees.” He proudly declared, “It’s gone.”

But now they’re changing the rules as they go, to suit them. That accountability guarantee that the former finance minister touted—that’s what’s gone, and this is the second time they missed the deadline.

Why did this government change their own accountability rules? To save the Premier and the minister \$15,000 for not doing the job that they were so confident they could do?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, as you know, the budget was being delayed this year so that we could properly evaluate, as we come out of COVID-19 restrictions, and work with our partners to ensure that what we present to people as we head into an election was the accurate picture of where the province was.

Having said that, I will remind the member that she and her party actually voted in favour of that motion that was brought to the House just last week.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: The government is completely avoiding scrutiny by delivering the budget at the end of April, just before the June election is called.

The FAO reported last week that this government underspent on health by close to \$1.3 billion—during a pandemic, no less—and the rosy financial picture they’ll want to paint won’t have to tell the story of how they achieved their numbers.

Le premier ministre aime dire aux Ontariens que le pire endroit où donner leur argent est au gouvernement. Il parle, bien sûr, de son propre gouvernement.

The Premier keeps telling Ontarians that the worst place to give their money is to government. He is, of course, talking about his own government.

Mr. Speaker, why is this government delivering the budget at the end of April instead of March? Election-time shenanigans?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill.

Mr. Michael Parsa: In fact, since the beginning of the pandemic, our government has been forthcoming and transparent with the people of Ontario about the state the province is in. In fact, this will be the ninth update that our government is going to be providing to the people of Ontario since the beginning of the pandemic, in contrast to the record of the previous government that that member is a part of, who missed, eight times, their—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Mr. Michael Parsa: Ontarians deserve a credible plan for a recovery that’s based on fiscal planning and the most recent information available, some alluded to by the government House leader.

Mr. Speaker, all along, we’ve said that we’ll look at what is best for Ontarians. We will make sure that every single decision that we make benefits Ontarians, makes life more affordable for Ontarians—the exact opposite of what the previous government, supported by the NDP, did for Ontarians.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Jamie West: Speaker, I have a young constituent in my riding of Sudbury. Her name is June. June is a bright and fun-loving little girl. She’s going to be seven in April. June is autistic, and she was diagnosed in 2017. In 2018, the member for Nickel Belt asked the Liberal government about June’s lack of funding, about her lack of support.

I’ll be honest; the Liberal and Conservative governments have both failed this little girl and her family.

June’s parents were told they were going to wait six months for funding, so they cashed out their RSPs, they took on extra work, they worked overtime. They did whatever it took, just like you or I would do, Speaker, to give their daughter a leg up. June has been waiting more than four years now for clinically prescribed need-based services that never come.

And June isn’t the only one. The OAP wait-list has skyrocketed to over 50,000 children in this province. That’s double the amount of children on the wait-list since the Conservative government was elected.

My question is, how much longer will June and the other 50,000 children have to continue to wait?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Our government is committed to making sure that the children who indeed have a diagnosis of autism are getting the supports that they need. We doubled the funding initially, to \$600 million a year. We have over 40,000 children who are receiving services through a continuum, or a multi-pathway mechanism, for our program. We are making sure that children in need and their families are receiving it. We’ve addressed the waits for people receiving the funding for their items that they have already submitted. We are acknowledging the need to listen to the autism advisory panel, the implementation working group, and make sure that the independent intake organization is meeting its goals.

We are on track, and we are making good progress. We understand the frustrations with the previous government’s efforts. We have increased our ability to take in more children into the programs, with the capacity-building grants for 80 groups, to address what the previous government never did.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

Mr. Jamie West: Back to the Premier: The minister had talked about \$600 million in the budget. What he neglected was that they only spent \$334 million. They left 56% of that money on the table while children were suffering and families were struggling for resources.

I think that talking about having 650 kids in core services is not historic support; it's a failure.

The fact of the matter is, the Financial Accountability Officer reported the Conservative government didn't spend \$137 million on this program in 2021. The Conservative government withheld \$174 million in 2020. The little that's been provided is always a day late and a dollar short.

1140

I want to remind the government, the Premier promised, when he was running, that they'd never have to protest on the lawn, and they've been here time and time again.

Families like June's can't keep waiting. They're in a crisis.

Why does the Conservative government insist on cutting costs at the expense of children like little June?

My question, Speaker: Will the government provide support so that June and all of the children with autism can finally receive timely, needs-based services? We're talking about 50,000 children.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Our program has been developed by the autism community for the autism community. It is a needs-based, comprehensive program. In fact, we have almost five times as many children receiving supports as did the previous government. That's real support for children and their families. We are making good progress on our target in core clinical services as well.

The reality is that the FAO report is a snapshot in time. We are projecting increased spending in the last quarter of 2021-22 in this program, and we fully anticipate meeting that target of \$600 million in investments for these children and their families, who are so deserving.

GO TRANSIT

Ms. Lindsey Park: My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

The last time I rose to make a statement in the House about the GO train to Bowmanville was February 20, 2020, when I don't think any of us in this House realized what we were about to face. As the pandemic hopefully moves towards an endemic state and restrictions are removed, more workers are returning to office buildings in the city. As commuting patterns resume, more people will be wondering about the status of the GO train to Bowmanville.

Can the minister please provide an update to my community?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I want to thank the member opposite for her question.

I know that extending GO rail services to Bowmanville will be a game-changer for the residents of her community, as well as for all of the residents of Durham region. I want to assure the member opposite, as well as the residents of Durham, that our government shares in this desire to see this important project move forward as quickly as possible. Why? Because Durham is one of the fastest-growing regions in the entire province, with over a million people expected to call it home by 2041. We know

that commuters need to see better, more reliable, faster and more connected transit to meet the demands of this growing population.

Speaker, we are making significant strides in making this project a reality for the people of Durham. As the member noted in February 2020, the Metrolinx board endorsed a preferred option for the initial business case and reached an agreement in principle with CP on the use of their tracks for the preferred route. Discussions are under way with CP to finalize a commercial agreement. I hope to be able to share an update with the House soon.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Ms. Lindsey Park: I want to thank the minister for her efforts to get this project moving. I remember our very first conversation about it within days of her being appointed minister.

The people of east Durham have been waiting a long time for this project to come to fruition. Metrolinx has openly mused about it as a priority project for decades. As our community continues to grow—and, I note, as gas prices rise—the need for more and better transportation options is clear.

There is a plan for the extension. When will we have the rail deal finalized and construction contracts signed so we can get these stations built?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I hear the frustration in the member opposite's voice. The Bowmanville GO extension has been on the table for over a decade, but the Liberals let it sit on the tracks, as they do with many important projects. In 2016, the then Premier and member from Don Valley West told the Canadian Press, "To realize the" Durham "region's true potential ... the GO train cannot keep turning around at Oshawa." Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Liberals just let that happen for over a decade under their watch.

Well, under the leadership of Premier Ford, I am pleased that a memorandum of understanding between Metrolinx and the region has been formalized. This just reaffirms our shared commitment to advance the delivery of this project. Metrolinx also recently completed geo-technical work in the CP-owned corridor, which is a critical preliminary step to getting shovels in the ground and seeing this project turn into a reality as soon as possible.

Speaker, we're saying yes to delivering more rail service to communities beyond Oshawa. I look forward to sharing another exciting milestone on this work in the coming weeks.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Windsor West has a point of order.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I just wanted to take the opportunity to correct my record. When I did my question earlier, I believe I said that the member for Ottawa Centre had stayed up and provided security in the lobby of a hotel, but what I meant to say was that it was actually a private

apartment building, and there was a fire in their lobby, and he was providing some security in their lobby.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members may, in fact, correct their own record by way of a point of order, like the member for Windsor West—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order.

Is this a point of order?

Mr. Jamie West: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Sudbury on a point of order.

Mr. Jamie West: Thank you, Speaker. I think we all need some good news. I just want to wish my CA, Nicole Ayotte, congratulations. Her son Frederick was born today.

Applause.

DEFERRED VOTES

LEGISLATIVE REFORM

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion regarding amendments to the standing orders.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote now on a motion for closure on government order number 12, relating to amendments to the standing orders.

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

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll ask the members to please take their seats.

On March 1, 2022, Mr. Calandra moved government order number 12, relating to amendments of the standing orders. On March 2, 2022, Ms. Sattler moved an amendment. On March 2, 2022, Mr. Mantha moved an amendment to the amendment. Mr. Miller from Parry Sound–Muskoka has moved that the question be now put.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Romano, Ross
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	MacLeod, Lisa	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Parsa, Michael	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Pettapiece, Randy	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Piccini, David	
Harris, Mike	Rasheed, Kaleed	

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Hassan, Faisal	Sattler, Peggy
Blais, Stephen	Hunter, Mitzie	Schreiner, Mike
Collard, Lucille	Karpoche, Bhutila	Simard, Amanda
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Fraser, John	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Vanhof, John
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	Park, Lindsey	Yarde, Kevin
Gretzky, Lisa	Rakocevic, Tom	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 55; the nays are 26.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to standing order 51, I am now required to put the question on government order number 12.

Mr. Calandra has moved government order number 12, relating to amendments to the standing orders. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Same vote? I heard a no.

The division bells rang from 1155 to 1156.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On March 1, 2022, Mr. Calandra moved government order number 12 relating to amendments to the standing orders.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Rasheed, Kaleed
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Romano, Ross
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Ke, Vincent	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Kusendova, Natalia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Lecce, Stephen	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	MacLeod, Lisa	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Dave
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	Walker, Bill
Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy	Yakabuski, John
Harris, Mike	Piccini, David	

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Hassan, Faisal	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Hunter, Mitzie	Simard, Amanda
Collard, Lucille	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Taylor, Monique
Fraser, John	Mamakwa, Sol	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	West, Jamie
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	Yarde, Kevin
Gélinas, France	Rakocevic, Tom	
Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 56; the nays are 25.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

ONTARIO CONSUMER WATCHDOG
ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022
SUR L'ORGANISME ONTARIEN
DE DÉFENSE DU CONSOMMATEUR

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

Bill 77, An Act to provide for the development and implementation of a plan to establish a consumer watchdog organization / Projet de loi 77, Loi prévoyant l'élaboration et la mise en oeuvre d'un plan visant à créer un organisme de défense du consommateur.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next we have a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 77, An Act to provide for the development and implementation of a plan to establish a consumer watchdog organization.

Call in the members. This will be another five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1159 to 1200.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Rakocevic has moved second reading of Bill 77, An Act to provide for the development and implementation of a plan to establish a consumer watchdog organization.

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

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Hassan, Faisal	Sattler, Peggy
Blais, Stephen	Hunter, Mitzie	Schreiner, Mike
Collard, Lucille	Karpoche, Bhutla	Simard, Amanda
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Fraser, John	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	Park, Lindsey	Yarde, Kevin
Gretzky, Lisa	Rakocevic, Tom	

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

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Romano, Ross
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	MacLeod, Lisa	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Parsa, Michael	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Pettapiece, Randy	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Piccini, David	
Harris, Mike	Rasheed, Kaleed	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 26; the nays are 55.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business at this time, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1202 to 1500.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I beg leave to present the 19th interim report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Hogarth presents the committee's report. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: As a member of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight, I am pleased to table the committee's 19th interim report.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the membership of the committee for their work: our great Chair, Daryl Kramp; Tom Rakocevic, who is our Vice-Chair, who has done a great job standing in for Mr. Kramp; Bob Bailey; Gilles Bisson; John Fraser; Robin Martin; Sam Oosterhoff; Sara Singh; Donna Skelly; and Effie Triantafilopoulos; as well as substitute members Stephen Crawford, Lisa Gretzky and Joel Harden.

The committee extends its appreciation to the Solicitor General for appearing before the committee. The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during these hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Clerk of the Committee and, of course, the staff of

legislative research. Thank you to everybody and thank you, Speaker.

Report presented.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Dave Smith: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Meghan Stenson): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill PR 54: An Act to Revive 2492725 Ontario Inc.

Bill PR 64: An Act to Revive Navigation Project Management Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FROLANDER ISLAND RESORT (2003) LTD. ACT, 2022

Mr. Dave Smith moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr67, An Act to revive Frolander Island Resort (2003) Ltd.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 89, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE HEALTH CARE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LE FINANCEMENT TRANSPARENT ET RESPONSABLE DES SOINS DE SANTÉ

Madame Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to promote transparency and accountability in the funding of health care services in Ontario / Projet de loi 97, Loi visant à promouvoir le financement transparent et responsable des services de santé en Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member for Nickel Belt care to briefly explain her bill?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Absolutely. The bill enacts the Transparent and Accountable Health Care Act. Under the act, major health care organizations, such as Ontario

Health, Ornge, independent health facilities, long-term-care homes, group purchasing organizations and professional corporations that bill OHIP etc., that receive at least \$1 million in public funds from the Ministry of Health in a year are required to comply with the executive compensation as well as the public sector salary disclosure, so that everybody who makes more than \$100,000 would be disclosed.

These organizations are also deemed to be governmental organizations for the purpose of the Ombudsman Act. The Auditor General of Ontario is authorized to do value-for-money audits and audit all aspects of their operation.

The same requirement applies with respect to publicly funded suppliers. A publicly funded supplier is a person or entity that receives directly or indirectly at least \$1 million in public funds in a year from any major health sector organization or from other publicly funded suppliers—so think about stuff like security, maintenance, house-keeping.

FAIRNESS FOR ONTARIO'S INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED WORKERS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 POUR UNE PLUS GRANDE ÉQUITÉ ENVERS LES TRAVAILLEURS DE L'ONTARIO FORMÉS À L'ÉTRANGER

Ms. Begum moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act to establish a framework for the recognition of internationally trained and educated workers in Ontario / Projet de loi 98, Loi visant à établir un cadre pour la reconnaissance en Ontario des travailleurs formés à l'étranger.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member for Scarborough Southwest care to briefly explain her bill?

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, Ontario is home to many new immigrants—old and new—who come here with the hope for a better life and more opportunities. However, upon arriving, many highly trained professionals face barriers and obstacles trying to find work in Ontario, including having their credentials recognized and navigating the system to find employment in their own fields.

This bill enacts the Fairness for Ontario's Internationally Trained Workers Act, 2022. The act provides that the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development shall establish a foreign credential recognition advisory committee that shall make recommendations to the minister regarding the employment of internationally trained workers. The act also provides that the Minister of Health shall establish an internationally trained and educated health care professionals advisory committee that shall make recommendations to the minister regarding the employment of internationally trained and educated health care professionals.

Speaker, this bill will bring together the relevant stakeholders and finally give the fairness that internationally trained workers deserve.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 60

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 60, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Health Protection and Promotion Act in respect of addressing gun violence and its impacts, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader has moved that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 60, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Health Protection and Promotion Act in respect of addressing gun violence and its impacts, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

ANTI-RACISM ACTIVITIES

Ms. Jill Andrew: This petition is entitled “Make Holocaust and Genocide Education Mandatory in Ontario Schools.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there has been an alarming increase of anti-Semitism impacting Ontario schools, synagogues, and communities;

“Whereas Jewish Ontarians have a right to live and worship in their communities safely and without fear;

“Whereas Jewish community members have called for Holocaust and genocide education to be made mandatory in school curriculum in order for our students, staff, and families to be made aware as to how to actively combat anti-Semitism in their schools and communities;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make Holocaust and genocide education mandatory across” all of our “Ontario schools.”

I couldn’t agree more. I’m affixing my signature and will pass it over to Zane for the table.

1510

HIGHWAY SAFETY

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Angèle Poulin and Shawn Bazinet from Wahnapiatae in my riding for this petition.

“Make Highway 144 at Marina Road Safe.

“Whereas residents of Levack, Onaping and Cartier, as well as individuals who travel Highway 144, are concerned about the safety of a stretch of Highway 144 in the vicinity of Marina Road and would like to prevent further accidents and fatalities; and

“Whereas three”—now five—“more accidents occurred” since “summer 2021 resulting in severe injuries, diesel fuel spilling into the waterways, the closure of Highway 144 for several hours delaying traffic and stranding residents” as well as the deaths of two people and their dog; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has completed a review of this stretch of Highway 144, has made some improvements and has committed to re-evaluate and ensure the highway is safe;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of Transportation review Highway 144 at Marina Road immediately and commit to making it safe, as soon as possible....”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk with page Kristian.

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I received this petition from Linda Heron, who wrote it. She and her granddaughter and some of their friends gathered the signatures. She has asked me to present it to the Legislature for them because they are opposed to the building of the proposed Highway 413. This is Linda’s petition:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will produce over 17 million tonnes of additional” carbon dioxide “emissions by 2050; and

“Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will cost the Ontario taxpayers upwards of the 2018 figure of \$6 billion to save 30 to 60 seconds driving time; and

“Whereas 400 acres of greenbelt and 2,000 acres of farmland would be paved over, habitats that supports at-risk and endangered species would be damaged, and affected rivers and streams would be polluted;

“Whereas building more highways does not reduce traffic, but actually encourages more vehicle use; and

“Whereas there will be real harm to historic Indigenous sites;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Stop the plans for building Highway 413.”

We know that I support this petition. I will sign it and send it with Benjamin.

ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

Ms. Jill Andrew: This petition is entitled “Invest in Ontario’s Arts and Culture Sector.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the arts and culture sector contributes \$28.7 billion to Ontario’s GDP and creates over 300,000 jobs;

“Whereas the Ontario Arts Council budget has not been increased at Ontario’s rates of inflation, exacerbating the income precariousness of artists and cultural workers, some of whom are making less than \$25,000 a year and lesser still for those of equity-seeking groups;

“Whereas many artists and cultural workers in Ontario are also gig-economy workers, who are often underpaid and unprotected due to misclassification;

“Whereas the income precariousness was made worse through the pandemic through issues of regulatory unfairness of the arts and culture sector, disproportionately impacting the performing arts sector and OAC-determined priority groups, including” Black, “Indigenous,” racialized, “women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQIA2S+ artists and cultural workers;

“Whereas the reinstatement of the Indigenous Culture Fund is a vital step to truth and reconciliation for Indigenous peoples of Ontario through its protecting of Indigenous arts, culture, heritage, language, ceremonial practices, and knowledge-sharing;

“Whereas the impact of arts and culture is inter-ministerial with proven benefits across many ministries including education, mental and public health, infrastructure, tourism, and job creation;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to adequately invest in the arts and culture sector, including supports for equity-seeking groups, small, medium and grassroots collectives in our communities, and individual artists, to ensure their personal and economic survival.”

I enthusiastically agree with this petition, affix my signature, and pass it over to Tanisha for the table.

SCLÉROSE EN PLAQUES

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais remercier Gisèle et Estelle Shank, de Garson dans mon comté.

« Clinique spécialisée en sclérose en plaques à Sudbury...

« Alors que le nord-est de l’Ontario affiche l’un des plus hauts taux de sclérose en plaques (SP) de l’Ontario; et

« Alors que des cliniques spécialisées dans la sclérose en plaques fournissent des services de soins de santé essentiels aux personnes atteintes de sclérose en plaques, à leur fournisseur de soins » ainsi qu’à « leur famille; et

« Alors que la ville du Grand Sudbury est reconnue comme un centre des soins de santé dans le nord-est de l’Ontario; »

Ils et elles demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario de :

« Mettre en place immédiatement une clinique spécialisée dans la sclérose en plaques dans la région de Sudbury, composée d’un(e) neurologue spécialisé(e) dans le traitement de la sclérose en plaques, d’un(e) physiothérapeute et d’un(e) travailleur(-euse) social(e) au minimum. »

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais la signer et je demande à Leah de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

ANTI-VAPING INITIATIVES FOR YOUTH

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Michelle Ellery from Sudbury for these petitions.

“Protect Kids from Vaping....

“Whereas very little is known about the long-term effects of vaping on youth; and

“Whereas aggressive marketing of vaping products by the tobacco industry is causing more and more kids to become addicted to nicotine through the use of e-cigarettes; and

“Whereas the hard lessons learned about the health impacts of smoking, should not be repeated with vaping, and the precautionary principle must be applied to protect youth from vaping; and

“Whereas many health agencies” including the Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society “fully endorse the concrete proposals aimed at reducing youth vaping” in my bill, Vaping is not for Kids;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To call on the ... government to immediately pass Bill 151, Vaping is Not for Kids Act, in order to protect the health of Ontario’s youth.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it, and send it to the Clerk with my good page Leah.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): She is a good page; she’s from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a petition that I haven’t had the opportunity to read in a few days:

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

Speaker, I still support this petition, will affix my signature, and send it to the table with Pania.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Just before I continue: I’ll withdraw the comment. I should treat all of

the pages with the exact equal fairness, which I do. So I'll just withdraw that and we'll go on to the member from Nickel Belt.

RETIREMENT HOMES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker. She is a very good page, and so are they all.

I would like to thank Raymonde Petryna from Val Caron in my riding for these petitions.

“Oversight, Regulations and Limits on Fees Charged by Retirement Homes....”

“Whereas residents of retirement homes are mainly seniors on fixed incomes who often pay very high amounts for rent and services and cannot afford big cost increases;

“Whereas we are seeing more financial hardships on seniors, their families and caregivers who support them, due to retirement homes exponentially increasing the costs of the services they provide to their residents;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To protect retirement home residents from financial exploitation, the government should implement oversight, regulations and limits on the fees charged by retirement homes for all services they provide to their residents.”

I support this petition, Speaker, will affix my name to it, and send it to the table with page Julia.

1520

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Doly Begum: I have a petition here for Highway 413.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will produce over 17 million tonnes of additional CO₂ emissions by 2050; and

“Whereas the proposed Highway 413 will cost the Ontario taxpayers upwards of the 2018 figure of \$6 billion to save 30 to 60 seconds driving time; and

“Whereas 400 acres of greenbelt and 2,000 acres of farmland would be paved over, habitats that support at-risk and endangered species would be damaged, and affected rivers and streams would be polluted;

“Whereas building more highways does not reduce traffic, but actually encourages more vehicle use; and

“Whereas there will be real harm to historic Indigenous sites;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Stop the plans for building Highway 413.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Morgan.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Anne Matte from Azilda in my riding for these petitions.

“Gas prices....”

“Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

“Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

“Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

“Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows:

“Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Zane.

POST-STROKE TREATMENT

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It's nice to have the opportunity to stand and bring voice on behalf of my constituents. I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas young adult stroke survivors in Ontario continue to be denied provincial government-funded physiotherapy on the basis of age, after completion of their initial rehab programs; and

“Whereas, as a consequence, these young adults are prevented from recovering to their best potential and possibly returning to work or continuing their post-secondary studies; and

“Whereas, to date, both Liberal and PC governments have failed to permit such funding, although both parties have previously taken steps to publicly support its implementation;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand Ontario's government-funded community physiotherapy clinic program to include stroke survivors between the ages of 20 and 64 with a doctor's referral, and after completion of initial rehab programs.”

I am pleased to sign this petition and I will send it with page Kristian to the table.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): We have time for a very abbreviated petition.

DOCUMENTS GOUVERNEMENTAUX

M^{me} France Gélinas: Une petite pétition de M^{me} Colette Pilon de Capreol.

Les accents :

« Alors qu'il est important d'avoir le nom exact des personnes sur les cartes émises par le gouvernement telle la carte santé;

« Alors que plusieurs personnes francophones ont des accents dans l'épellation de leur nom », comme moi;

« Alors que le ministère de la Santé a confirmé que le système informatique de l'Ontario ne permet pas l'enregistrement des lettres avec des accents; »

Ils pétitionnent « l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario pour qu'elle s'assure que les accents de la langue française soient inclus sur les cartes santé émises par le gouvernement de l'Ontario » et ce, avant la fin de l'année 2022.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUPPLY ACT, 2022

LOI DE CRÉDITS DE 2022

Mr. Sarkaria moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 96, An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022 / Projet de loi 96, Loi autorisant l'utilisation de certaines sommes pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2022.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Mr. Sarkaria.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: As the President of the Treasury Board, I'm pleased to rise here today to discuss the Supply Act for the 2021-22 fiscal year. I will also be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the MPP for Mississauga–Lakeshore.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the passage of the Supply Act by the Ontario Legislature is required for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, by the government of Ontario and legislative offices.

The government's priorities are crystal clear. As Premier Ford and I have said time and time again, we will not spare any expense to protect the health and safety of the people of this province, and that is why we have made and continue to make historic investments and leverage the province's full fiscal firepower to protect the health and safety of all Ontarians. We're doing this by delivering world-class programs and services that Ontarians rely on, to lay the foundations for a stronger tomorrow.

Let me be clear: Our government investments have allowed us to move swiftly and safely to respond to the government's pandemic. That, combined with the ongoing dedication and sacrifices of Ontarians in following public health advice, has brought us to where we are today. With the worst of Omicron behind us, we are maintaining momentum as we fight against and aim to defeat COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, PA Cuzzetto will later continue to outline some of the critical and immediate investments that we have made and continue to make. But beyond those investments, we are building a better, stronger Ontario that not only protects the people but also lays the foundation for long-term economic growth and a rebound in the province of Ontario and beyond.

We are supporting people and businesses in every corner of this province, investing in infrastructure that will

maximize job creation and strengthening our competitive workforce. Record investments like Highway 413 will position Ontario for prosperity and position Ontario as an economic powerhouse across this country and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time for our province. After an unprecedented period of personal and economic uncertainty, we know that there's hope on the horizon. We are confident that our government is positioned for a future in which we are on the other side of COVID-19 because of the progress that our investments have given way to. This is progress worth protecting as we prepare Ontario's hard-working families, job-creating businesses and growing communities for what's to come.

Since the onset of the pandemic, our government has provided unprecedented levels of support to protect lives and livelihoods and ensure that Ontario remains open for business. That's why we introduced the \$293-million Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant for small businesses that were subject to closure under the modified step 2 of the reopening plan, Roadmap to Reopen. Simply put, it provided small businesses with a grant payment of up to \$10,000 at a time when they needed it most. That is crucial support for the small businesses and job creators that are the very backbone of this province's economy.

Mr. Speaker, that is just one of the many supports worth highlighting. For example, we also launched the Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program. This \$300-million rebate program provides property tax and energy rebates to eligible businesses that were required to close or reduce their capacity.

1530

Our government understood that cash flow was going to be a challenge for some of our province's small business owners. That is why we are providing up to \$7.5 billion to a six-month interest-and-penalty-free period for Ontario's businesses to make payments for most provincially administered taxes.

The one thing that all of these supports share in common is their purpose: to address our small business community's concerns. We heard their anxiety, and we listened. We got to work right away and provided unprecedented investments to the jobs at the core of our communities and our economy, because we know they will also be at the core of our long-term economy and our recovery.

Our government's vision for Ontario's future is both ambitious and exciting. It is a vision of a prosperous tomorrow for all Ontarians, and planning for a stronger tomorrow means making the right decisions today. Tomorrow's prosperity depends on today's actions. That is why we are not only investing in Ontario but actively building it as well.

For far too long, our roads, highways and transit systems did not keep pace with our growing population. Families across Ontario wasted too many precious hours sitting in gridlock, waiting for public transportation. As we continue planning for the future, we understand the need to build transportation infrastructure that will get drivers and their families to where they need to go when they want to get there while protecting their time and money.

One example of this is Highway 413. The number of commutes on the 413 is expected to exceed more than 300,000 per day while reducing commute time, travel time for Bramptonians and drivers in Halton, Peel and York regions by up to 30 minutes each way. The construction of the 413 alone is estimated to create 3,500 jobs and contribute \$350 million to our economy. For families in my community in Brampton and across Peel region, Highway 413 will provide faster and easier routes between their homes and jobs. It will be the difference between sitting bumper to bumper in traffic and getting home to have dinner with your family and loved ones. Our government is proud to be building Highway 413.

Our infrastructure investments will go well beyond Highway 413 as well. Infrastructure is a key component to building Ontario for generations to come, and that is why we are getting shovels in the ground. We have committed more than \$2.6 billion to expand and repair Ontario's highways and bridges. This will improve more than 580 provincial highways and bridges over the next four years.

We're also investing an additional \$1 billion in the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund over five years to support over 400 small, rural and northern municipalities. In addition to creating good-paying jobs and accelerating economic growth, this funding will help keep our communities safe by repairing roads, bridges, and water and waste water infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, during the pandemic, the workers of Ontario had our back and our government had theirs. An important part of having their back includes our plan to provide workers, families, young people and newcomers with opportunities to succeed in Ontario. Ontario is fortunate to have the abundant critical minerals to build resilient and strong supply chains for the industries of the future, such as electric vehicles. In fact, under the leadership of the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, we have strengthened our position as one of North America's and the world's premier jurisdictions for responsibly sourced minerals, and we are currently developing the first-ever Critical Minerals Strategy. The new strategy will help generate investment, increase the province's competitiveness in the global market and create jobs and opportunities in the mining sector and beyond, right here in the province of Ontario.

In 2019, Ontario produced more than \$10 billion worth of minerals, accounting for 22% of Canada's total mineral production. While we are proud of this accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, we know we can and need to do more. It is only through further investments in this area that we will once again put Ontario back to a position of prominence in the global auto industry. Our focus on the future of the auto industry has already paid dividends. Ontario has secured investments—commitments—of \$5.6 billion from major auto manufacturers for electric vehicle supply chain capacity.

But the province needs to continue building up the local workforce to take advantage of these opportunities. That is why we are encouraging more young people to pursue rewarding, well-paying jobs in the skilled trades. The

newly launched crown agency, Skilled Trades Ontario, will help our province achieve just that. It is designed to improve trades training and simplify services while promoting the trades, developing the latest training curriculum and standards, and providing a streamlined, user-friendly experience for tradespeople. That is why our government is also investing an additional \$90.3 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, in the skilled trades strategy.

With an eye towards the future, we also recently launched the advanced manufacturing and innovation competitiveness program. This new project, spearheaded once again by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, will help companies get the tools, technology and talent they need to grow, compete and innovate in an increasingly competitive global market. The two-year, \$40-million program will support advanced manufacturing businesses' investments in the equipment, advanced technologies and skilled workforce needed to improve competitiveness and growth. As we continue to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, it will further promote manufacturing in Ontario while creating and retaining good jobs in every region of this province.

Our government understands that the pandemic was a time to reassess and change careers for many. As landscapes changed, many industries were reshaped. To give many people of Ontario the ability to change along with it, we invested an additional \$5 million in the 2021-22 year to expand the Second Career program. This program will provide these Ontarians with the flexibility and resources required to pursue new career paths without sacrificing the time and personal development they've already invested into their careers.

1540

We also recognize the need to equip Ontarians with the skills required for these jobs. That is why we are also providing more training opportunities for workers and have proposed to extend the Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit for this year. The latest extension of this program will provide an estimated \$275 million in support to about 240,000 people, or \$1,150 on average. In addition, we are implementing initiatives to help Ontario's younger generation and future workers discover their passion for skilled trades. Namely, we are enhancing the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and Pre-apprenticeship Training Program and creating career fairs aimed at the skilled trades. These initiatives will support the hard-working industries that are the very backbone of this province, the people who contribute to what has rightly been called the Ontario spirit.

The supports that have been highlighted today are just a few examples of how the government of Ontario has their backs. All of these supports will bolster tomorrow's workforce that will help to build stronger supply chains and accelerate our economic recovery.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important for us to recognize the sacrifice that has been made by the people of Ontario in this past year. Ontarians deserve to be commended for their sacrifices, tireless work and commitment to

protecting the health and safety of their fellow Ontarians. The people who demonstrated the Ontario spirit that saw our province through the worst days of COVID-19 and will see us to a brighter future and a more prosperous future, and the people who are raising future generations of Ontarians who will call the better, stronger province we are building home: I would like to thank each and every one of you for your dedication to each other and, more importantly, to our province.

As I've said time and time again, our government has a duty to protect the people of Ontario and pave the way for this province's recovery. We have made historic investments to those ends. I have outlined some of our investments in modern, world-class infrastructure that meets the needs of Ontarians today and tomorrow. I have highlighted our critical supports for Ontario's business community. And I have highlighted our plan to grow Ontario's economy and enhance job creation across this province. But, Mr. Speaker, some of my proudest work to date that I've had the opportunity to accomplish here in the House in the last year were significant investments for the city of Brampton, a city that has been left behind for far too long, ignored by the previous government for 15 years, and ignored by the members of the opposition who, in coalition with the Liberal government of the past, refused to support the people of Brampton.

Mr. Speaker, our government made historic investments into the city of Brampton. For one of the fastest-growing cities in all of Canada, our city only had one hospital. It was our government, recognizing the needs of Bramptonians highlighted during COVID, the health care needs of that city, announcing a brand new hospital for the city of Brampton: a new hospital with 250 beds, a 24/7 emergency centre, and another hospital that the city of Brampton residents can rely on.

After 15 years of absolute neglect from the previous government, Premier Ford and our government invested in the people of our city. Not only to that, when we look at the long-term-care sector, especially within the city of Brampton, from 2011 to 2018, the previous government built zero beds in the city of Brampton. Our government has already, within the last four years, put forward a plan to allocate over 600 beds in the city of Brampton. This will make a significant difference in our fight for health care equity within our city. Once again, what the previous government neglected to do for 15 years, this Premier and this government committed to the city of Brampton in changing that when we got elected last year.

Mr. Speaker, another significant investment that is being made in the city of Brampton relates to a new medical school that will be built and created in the city of Brampton with the support of Ryerson University. This will be one of the first medical schools in the GTA in over almost 100 years. It is a historic investment in the changing of how the city of Brampton has been treated by governments in this province. Once again, those students who study, who live in Brampton, study in Brampton will then have the opportunity to not only train as doctors in Brampton but also serve patients at the new Brampton

hospital or the existing William Osler hospital. This speaks to the significant investments that our government continues to make, especially in the face of the previous 15 years when our city was neglected and ignored by the previous government.

We're fixing our health care system, especially in Brampton. We're fixing it all across this province. We've also announced one of the largest hospitals to be built in Mississauga, in Peel region, as well, and this will continue to build upon our government's legacy of adding additional capacity to the province.

As we speak about the important need to invest in health care, that is also supported by the increasing need to make investments into the city of Brampton with respect to infrastructure.

I mentioned Highway 413 previously. Being one of the fastest-growing cities of all of this country, it is important that our infrastructure is also built to keep pace with that growing population. It's unfortunate that the members opposite and the previous government cancelled that very important transit corridor that our communities and our region so desperately needed. That is why I'm so proud that our government has recommitted and confirmed that we will continue to build Highway 413 for the people of Brampton so they don't have to stay in gridlock, that they can spend that time—instead of being tied in bumper-to-bumper traffic, they can take that time and spend it with their family. They can spend it to do what they would like to do instead of being unproductive in gridlock. Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to invest in not only the people of Brampton, but this province.

1550

As I continue to highlight some of the important, critical supports for the people of Ontario and our business community, we have also highlighted our plan to grow Ontario's economy and enhance job creation across this province. In addition, PA Cuzzetto will speak further to the significant investment that our government has made in the health care and education systems. Our spending this year is preparing the people and businesses of this province for a bright future. These investments will help us emerge more resilient than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, I rose today to discuss the Supply Act for the 2021-22 fiscal year, which is a routine parliamentary procedure. However, this has been anything but a routine year. If our government has learned anything from this global pandemic, it is that our success as a province belongs to the people of Ontario, and as we look to the future, we must look together. By investing in Ontario today, we're helping build a better Ontario for hard-working families, job-creating businesses and growing communities tomorrow. We want to build a better, stronger Ontario, and together we will.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: As always, it's an honour to rise here today in my role as parliamentary assistant to the President of the Treasury Board to speak with respect to the Supply Act for the 2021-22 fiscal year. While the

Supply Act is perhaps not the most headline-grabbing process in the Ontario Legislature, that does not diminish its importance. In fact, Speaker, I believe it is critical that the members—and, in fact, Ontarians—have an understanding about how the Legislative Assembly authorizes the use of the public purse.

Two guiding principles of the government of Ontario are transparency and accountability. It should go without saying, Speaker, but it is sometimes overlooked: Every dollar spent comes from the province's hard-working taxpayers. These are the same taxpayers who, over the past two years, have faced unprecedented hardship and have touched all areas of life, both in this province and around the world.

I'm happy that we are appearing to be on the other side of the Omicron wave. And it's worth repeating that the people of Ontario are the reason we are finally here, in a position to gradually and cautiously ease the public health measures. Businesses are getting back on their feet, restaurants are filling once again, movie theatres and gyms are back in business, and we're all looking forward to the return of summer festivals and events, in my community of Port Credit and right across this province. We are only here because the people of Ontario have stepped up to the plate and done their part. They sacrificed and they helped their neighbours and communities. I would just like to take this opportunity before I go into the mechanics of the Supply Act to thank them.

Speaker, in the face of this unprecedented global pandemic and public health crisis, the business of government had to continue, and continue it did. I'd like to begin by providing an overview of the government's fiscal cycle. Following the prorogation of the Legislature, the government tabled the 2021-22 estimates on November 4, 2021. The expenditure estimates provide details of the operating and capital spending needs of the ministries and legislative offices for the fiscal year. This is the government's annual formal request to the Legislative Assembly to approve spending requirements. If they pass, the estimates provide each ministry with the legal authority to spend their operating and capital budgets. If this Supply Act passes, this represents the final approval by this House of expenditures proposed by the government in these estimates, plus any additional estimates that have been tabled during the fiscal year.

Speaker, it is important to note our government is not proposing any new spending or programs today. We are only seeking the approval of spending outlined in the 2021-22 estimates. This government introduced a Supply Act to provide the final authority for this government's and this assembly's spending.

Speaker, while there will be no test on this, I believe it was important to review the process today. I would like to use my remaining time to outline the government's unwavering and unprecedented support to two key areas that will play a vital role in the future of this province: health care and education.

I'll start with our government's investment in health care. Our government's priority from day one of this pandemic has always been the health and safety of the

people of this province. As we have said many times in this House, we will do whatever it takes to protect the lives of Ontarians.

It's worth taking the time today to outline some of the investments we have made in more detail. These are the investments that will protect our progress and protect the most vulnerable among us. Our government is proud to make them.

Speaker, just under a year ago, on March 24, 2021, our government released the 2021 budget. The budget was designed to continue record investment in response to the global pandemic, and that's exactly what it did. It brought total investments of \$16.3 billion to protect people's health and \$23.3 billion to protect our economy. With these new investments, the Ministry of Health 2021-22 plan increased to \$74.1 billion. This is an increase of \$1.05 billion over 2021 estimates. That's an increase of 1.4%. But if we include time-limited COVID expenditures, the Ministry of Health's 2021-22 plan actually shows an increase of \$4.26 billion, or 6.5% growth. And, as we outlined, in the province's 2021-22 third quarter finances, our government has provided \$1.3 billion in additional funding to support our hospitals, just during the last few months. This includes expenses like personal protection equipment, additional staff, infection prevention and control measures and funding to support the rollout of the booster vaccine. In total, the government has now invested over \$1 billion in providing wide vaccination programs that are now the envy of many countries around the globe.

Speaker, Ontario has one of the highest vaccine rates in the world, with almost 32 million doses administered. Over 90% of eligible people, over 12 million Ontarians, have received both doses and are fully vaccinated. In addition, about seven million booster doses have been administered and over 54% of eligible Ontarians have received at least one booster shot. This continues to lead in Canada and is almost the highest rate in the world. From the quick rollout of the first shot to the distribution of the booster shot, it has been excellent for the people of this province.

I would like to thank the thousands of people across the province who made it all come together during the peak of the COVID-19 vaccination rollout. Eligible Ontarians were able to book appointments at over 3,150 locations across Ontario, including over 2,500 pharmacies and over 650 mass vaccination clinics, hospitals, primary care settings, pop-up and mobile clinics. This is incredible, but we know that the job is not done yet. That's why we continue our last-minute struggle to reach eligible Ontarians who haven't yet received their first or second dose. This includes mobile and drive-through clinics, community-based pop-ups, dedicated clinic days for people with disabilities and their families, town hall meetings in multiple languages and translation services. These measures are reaching communities with new and more accessible opportunities for people to receive their COVID-19 vaccination.

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The benefits of this tremendous effort are easy to see, because vaccinations remain the best tool to slow the

spread of COVID-19 and protect our province's health care system. Even in a few short months, the province benefited. By October 2021, vaccinations had reduced the risk of contracting COVID-19 by almost 10 times, the risk of hospital admission by 20 times and the risk of ICU admission by almost five times. This was \$1 billion well spent.

But of course, this does not account for all the new spending by our Ministry of Health. The ministry also spent \$2.3 billion for testing and contact tracing to help make Ontario's workplaces and businesses safer. To keep workers and their customers safe, the government is providing rapid tests as a screening tool for small and medium-sized businesses through the provincial screening program. To date, over 28 million rapid tests have been distributed to over 30,000 sites. In total, the province has directly procured over 157 million rapid tests. We're now distributing five million every week to pharmacies and grocery locations across Ontario, plus 500,000 to community partners in vulnerable communities. Vaccinations and testing are important pillars of this government's response to the pandemic.

To protect our hospitals, front-line heroes and our most vulnerable people, Ontario has made over \$1.4 billion available for personal protective equipment, including over 344 million masks and over 1.2 billion gloves. These are critical supplies, Speaker. They ensure our front-line heroes are protected, and they have helped to slow the spread of COVID-19.

To ensure every person who requires hospital care can access a bed, the government has invested an additional \$5.1 billion to support hospitals since the pandemic began. This includes \$1.8 billion in 2021-22 to build new hospital capacity, including 3,100 new beds across the province, for a total of approximately 17,000 medical and surgical beds. Through these additional investments, the province has more than 2,400 adult and pediatric ICU beds. They are important spaces for those who are most vulnerable and they are now helping us address surgical backlogs and to keep pace with patients' needs across Ontario. We have committed \$342 million over five years to add over 5,000 new and upskilled registered nurses and registered practical nurses as well as 8,000 personal support workers to strengthen the health care workforce.

I'm pleased that I can also highlight spending that was just announced that will benefit the health care workers who have given so much to the province. The government is investing \$763 million to provide Ontario nurses with a lump sum retention incentive of up to \$5,000 per person. Speaker, Ontario's nurses deserve compensation in line with the other jurisdictions around the world. This payment will help to retain nurses across the health sector and it will help stabilize the current nursing workforce. This spending was necessary during this critical time to ensure that all patients can continue to access the health care they need and deserve.

To protect communities across Ontario and to provide the best health care possible, we're also getting shovels in the ground to build, modernize and expand our hospital

system. As I said last week, the province's \$30.2-billion hospital infrastructure plan begins with the single largest investment in hospital infrastructure in Canadian history, the complete rebuilding of the Mississauga Hospital in my riding of Mississauga-Lakeshore. At 24 storeys and almost 2.8-million square feet, the new state-of-the-art Mississauga Hospital will be the largest and most advanced hospital in Canadian history—also, triple the size of the current hospital, which first opened in 1958. To think, Speaker, I was born at that hospital, and my two sons were born there. As well, my sister worked in medical records, and my niece was a candy striper in this hospital. For me, it's a milestone for my family.

But as our mayor, Bonnie Crombie, said, this pandemic has brought to light some real limitations to the current hospital. COVID-19 has highlighted the need for a significant upgrade at this aging facility, in many cases long overdue. Over the next two decades, demand for hospital services at the Trillium Health Partners facility is expected to grow about seven times more than the average hospital in Ontario.

The truth is, Speaker, this investment should have been done 15 years ago by the previous government, but the former Liberal government kept saying no. I'm proud that this Premier and this government said yes to a historic, game-changing project in Mississauga.

With this historic multi-billion-dollar investment in Trillium's health workers, we're adding over 600 more hospital beds, for a total of almost 1,000 beds at the Mississauga Hospital site, and over 80% in private rooms. The new hospital will include an expanded emergency department, one of the largest in Canada, with 23 state-of-the-art surgical operation rooms, up from the 14 that we had.

When I had my heart valve replaced 12 years ago, I could not even have it done at my own hospital. I had to have it done at Toronto General, because they did not have room for me.

This, like I said, is overdue for the province of Ontario. I'm so glad to be part of this extraordinary investment in our province here. It will include new advanced diagnostic imaging facilities, a new pharmacy and clinical laboratory, a new eight-storey parking structure with spaces for almost 1,500 vehicles and a connection to the new Hazel McCallion LRT on Hurontario. The first phase of this construction, which will begin this year, will replace the current parking structure with a new structure on the land that is now used for surface parking. The project includes a new in-patient care tower nearby at the Queensway Health Centre in Etobicoke. Together, this investment will expand hospital service, improve access to care and reduce wait times for patients in both Mississauga and Etobicoke.

But Speaker, there are hospital expansion projects planned or under way in communities in every corner of this province, from the new Windsor-Essex acute care hospital, to planning for a new modern hospital facility for the Oak Valley Health Uxbridge Hospital. As well, we have spent over \$548 million over three years to expand home and community care services every year for up to

28,000 patients recovering from surgery and up to 21,000 patients living with complex health conditions. This will allow these patients to continue their recovery in the comfort of their own homes.

This government has always promised to unleash our full fiscal firepower to support the health and safety of Ontarians, and this is what we have done. Our government continues to do the hard work to provide our loved ones with the quality of health care they deserve, care that is provided by the best health care professionals in the world.

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Health care is our top priority. The pandemic has shown us that we need to strengthen our health care system. We listened and we acted. The list of our investments in health care is long, but each one is vital to the health and well-being of Ontarians.

Speaker, this government is also taking action to fix long-term care so that every resident can experience the best possible quality of life. Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission concluded that "challenges that had festered in the long-term care sector for decades—chronic underfunding, severe staffing shortages, outdated infrastructure and poor oversight—contributed to the deadly consequences for Ontario's most vulnerable citizens during the pandemic."

The province's plan to fix long-term care includes three priorities. First, we're adding staff to improve direct care. Second, we're building more modern, safe and comfortable long-term-care homes for our seniors. Third, we're enhancing oversight and inspections. I'd like to take a few minutes to address each of these points here today.

First, we have committed \$4.9 billion to hire over 27,000 new long-term-care staff over four years to ensure that long-term-care residents receive an average of four hours of direct care per day by 2024. This new long-term-care staff includes thousands of new registered nurses, RPNs and personal support workers right across Ontario.

Local long-term-care homes just in my own community alone will receive almost \$14 million more annually by 2024, including \$4.5 million for Camilla Care Community, \$3.5 million for Chartwell Wenleigh residence, \$3.1 million for Sheridan Villa, \$1.7 million for Erin Mills Lodge and over \$1 million for the Mississauga Long Term Care Facility. This is an important part of our government's plan to fix long-term care and improve the quality of life for our seniors. This funding also includes \$42.8 million for homes to increase the care provided by health professionals, including physiotherapy and social workers, by 10% this year.

Secondly, we have committed to invest \$6.4 billion to build 30,000 new long-term-care beds and to upgrade 28,000 current beds to modern design standards. This includes 877 new beds and 275 upgraded beds in Mississauga-Lakeshore—more than any other riding in the province of Ontario. This includes 630 beds at two new long-term-care homes on Speakman Drive in Sheridan Park in Mississauga-Lakeshore.

Partners Community Health, a new non-profit organization, will operate these beds, which will be ready later

this year as part of the government's accelerated build pilot program. This project will also include a new health services building and the first residential hospice in Mississauga, operated by Heart House Hospice. Again, there are projects like this in various stages of planning and development in our communities right across Ontario. These projects will fulfill our promise to Ontario seniors to ensure that they can live in the dignity and comfort they deserve.

Speaker, I want to be clear: Our priority isn't just improving the long-term-care facilities that some of our seniors call home. We understand that many of our loved ones want to live at home for as long as possible. We listened to our constituents, like the Mississauga Seniors Council, and we addressed these very real issues. That's why we're investing to expand the community paramedicine program, including almost \$10 million in Peel region alone, to help more seniors stay safe while living in the comfort of their own home and in their own community.

We're also helping more seniors live with safety and dignity in their own homes by extending the Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit to 2022. That credit allows seniors to claim up to 25% of up to \$10,000 in eligible expenses to renovate their principle residence to make it safer and more accessible.

Finally, we are investing \$72.3 million over three years to hire 156 new inspectors to double the number of long-term inspections across Ontario by this fall. These new inspectors will give us the eyes on the ground we need to ensure that our seniors are receiving the best possible care. And with a national-leading ratio of one inspector to every two long-term-care homes, our government will ensure there are enough inspectors for both complaint investigations and for proactive visits.

We know this pandemic has taken a toll—and not just an economic toll. For front-line health and long-term workers—those who bravely led the way in our ongoing fight against COVID-19—I know that the anguish and fatigue they experienced was at times overwhelming. That's why we have invested \$12.4 million over two years to expand our mental health and addictions support for these heroes.

Just last week, the Premier announced a new million-dollar investment for the Runnymede Healthcare Centre first responders post-traumatic stress injury rehabilitation treatment and assessment centre. This will provide a comprehensive mental health program for first responders across the GTA who are affected by work-related stress or trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Critical supports like this are a clear sign of our ongoing support for those who helped the province down the road of recovery. They will never be forgotten.

Lastly, I also have the great honour to speak today about some of the important investments that our government has made in education throughout the year. Again, the list is long but it's worth our time today, because education at all levels will support the growth we need as we build towards a brighter future.

We know that in-person learning is critical for the mental health, development and academic achievement of our children across Ontario. Parents, teachers and children have all demonstrated incredible resilience since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, but our kids deserve to be in school where they can learn alongside their friends.

The province is doing everything possible to ensure in-person learning is as safe as possible with the single-largest investment in public education in Ontario's history, including a \$1.6-billion plan to protect our schools against this virus, fully supported by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health. The additional resources went to a wide range of critical support, including social distancing through smaller classes, enhanced cleaning protocols, mental health initiatives and other health and safety measures in student transportation.

We have not hesitated to spend this money to make the education of our children as safe and as effective as possible.

At the same time, this new spending has also protected our teachers, those on the front lines of education. Our teachers and support staff are doing the hard work preparing Ontario's children for a brighter future, and they deserve the support we have provided. This includes \$600 million in ventilation improvement to make sure that the air that our children and their teachers and support staff are breathing will be as clean as possible. We are using the high-quality MERV 13 air filters, running ventilation systems longer and changing filters more often, and all schools without a mechanical ventilation system have stand-alone HEPA filters for every classroom, a total of 125,000 HEPA filters so far. This support has allowed us to reopen in-person education, a valuable activity that only a few years ago we all took for granted. Where in-person schooling is still a challenge, we have provided additional support to remote learning technology, including improving broadband within school buildings.

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As with our investments in building new hospitals, we're also proud of the substantial investments that we have made in education facilities throughout Ontario. We are investing in two capital building programs, representing \$600 million in funding, to support 78 schools and child care projects. The capital program will create 19,732 new student spaces and 1,525 new licensed child care spaces in schools. These new spaces will be supported by the investment of \$565 million to build 26 new schools and 20 permanent additions and renovations.

The government is investing almost \$43 million to create over 1,500 new licensed child care spaces across the province. This includes 18 infant rooms with 180 new spaces, 28 toddler rooms with 420 new spaces, 36 pre-school rooms with 864 new spaces and seven family-age-group rooms with 105 new spaces.

As part of our plan to support access to safe, affordable and high-quality child care, Ontario has committed up to \$1 billion to create up to 30,000 new licensed child care spaces over five years. Over 23,000 new spaces are

approved so far, which will support families, and help to build a stronger and more accessible child care system. There are 32 different child care centres across the province that will receive funding for renovations or additions. These projects will help to make sure that the new generation of Ontarians gets the best possible start.

Speaker, we're always looking for new, cost-effective ways to expand educational opportunities throughout the province. That's why we reached out to school boards across the province to explore solutions for accelerated school construction through a pilot project using the same method that we have been using with long-term care throughout the province. This program will deliver efficiencies and reduce building time so that students can take advantage of new, updated schools sooner. This investment is part of our government's overall commitment to provide \$14 billion to support school construction over 10 years. In total, there are over 300 child care education projects in development across Ontario, with more than 100 under active construction. Our government is proud to support the construction of new education infrastructure across Ontario.

I can reaffirm today that this government has kept its commitment to the people of this province and, most importantly, to the future of this province, through ongoing and significant investments in the key priorities of health care, long-term care and education. Despite the global pandemic, we have kept the wheels of this government in motion, and we have made the real investments necessary to build a stronger and better Ontario.

Speaker, I'll close by reiterating that when our province faced a global pandemic that stopped the world in its tracks and affected Ontarians in every corner of this province and in every business imaginable, from rural and northern Ontario to those who live here in the city of Toronto, one thing was clear: We were all in this together. We all faced this challenge, a challenge that no one foresaw, a challenge unlike any other, and the people of Ontario came together.

The government of Ontario played its part too. It didn't hesitate to respond with unprecedented funding, some of which I have been able to outline today. This funding went to build our testing capacity, to develop and implement successful vaccination programs, and outfit our front-line workers with PPE.

Speaker, responding to this pandemic is a heavy responsibility, and our government did not spare a cent when it came to the health and safety of Ontarians. That's why I'm proud to serve with Premier Ford and to serve as the parliamentary assistant to the President of the Treasury Board. I'd like to thank him and his team for all their hard work on this supply bill.

I want to thank you all for this today. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It is interesting to listen to a one-hour speech on the supply bill. I will mention that the supply bill, for those of you who are watching at home—

which basically is my parents, Allan and Sheila Wood, in Peterborough. Hi.

Interjection.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Your parents, too? Yes.

There were four people here; they left—looking fairly disappointed, I might add. When we return after the March break, people are going to be allowed back in their House, and I think that's going to bring some more energy into this Legislature, and I'm really looking forward to that.

The supply bill is, essentially, the authorization of spending for the government. It's an administrative piece of legislation that permits, or is permissive around, the paying of the bills, of course, and ensuring that the government has clearance around the expenditures that are before us.

It is worth noting that this quarterly supply bill says the expenses of the public services are \$2.3 billion less—in a pandemic, I might add—and that investment in the public service is \$1 billion less. So when the President of the Treasury Board says it's crystal clear, for us on this side it's actually clear as mud. This government is incredibly good at making announcements and cutting ribbons but is not so good at following through with the investment that they promised, and I have an hour's worth of examples to prove my point.

I will also say that we need some good news, and I just want to let the House know that my son, Aidan Fife, passed his skilled trades test. He passed his examination for being an electrician. He got 83%, and—

Applause.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much. I'm very proud of him. I'm looking forward to him making way more money than me, and also being very happy—which he actually is almost doing right now.

The context for the supply bill gives us an opportunity, as legislators, to reflect on where the money has been spent or where it has not been spent. We watch budgets, for instance, very carefully. Budgets, as I've said in this House, are moral documents which indicate to the people we serve how we have invested or not invested. So these choices are fairly reflective, or should be reflective, of what we've heard from the public.

I sit on the finance committee, as do the member from Kiiwetinoong and the member from Kingston and the Islands. We heard some very compelling testimony to this government about what they should be doing, especially after these two years of very challenging times.

Budgets matter, Mr. Speaker. Imagine our surprise when this government introduced a piece of legislation which changed their own imposed deadline, that they had to bring in a budget by March 31. Much ado was made about fining the Premier and the finance minister if they failed to do so, and the argument at the time, the narrative that was put forward, in government legislation, was that if they did not do this, they would pay a fine, a percentage of their salaries. In fact, this did actually happen last year. This year, though, the government has moved the goalposts, changed the rules and relieved themselves of that fiscal responsibility, that accountability measure that they actually imposed upon themselves.

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I'll just relate to the folks who actually care about this, because fiscal years do matter. Many agencies, many not-for-profits who are dependent on knowing, and in full disclosure, what their budgets will be can't count on that March 31 date. The only ones who missed that date—and you'll remember this, Mr. Speaker—is in 2014 when then-Premier Kathleen Wynne decided to drop a budget and go right into an election. You'll remember, that budget had no scrutiny on it. There was no accountability. In fact, that budget then got changed when they came back into the Legislature. So it was really a work of fiction.

There's a lot of speculation that this government, under the Doug Ford government, will be doing the same thing in this election, for sure. Why would you change the date? We have a fixed date. The other good news, Mr. Speaker, is that there are only 37 more sitting days, if all goes to plan, for this session of this Legislature.

Back in 2019, on April 11—and this is from Hansard—the then-finance minister said, “As part of the budget legislation, our government is proposing a new, robust accountability framework called the Fiscal Sustainability, Transparency and Accountability Act.” Now, you've got to hand it—that's a really good title. We've seen some less-good titles come through this House—in fact, many. “This represents the first comprehensive change to Ontario's fiscal planning legislation in 15 years.” And it lasted two years, Mr. Speaker.

“In addition, the proposed act would require governments to deliver the budget by March 31.” We agreed with this. When I was the finance critic under the former Liberal government, it was like chasing money down a black hole. I did serve, actually, with the member from Nipissing as a critic. Listen, they did almost everything they could to prevent us from doing our job. In fact, one day, prior to the fall economic statement, they took us down into this bunker and took away our phones and released a budget document—I believe it was the fall economic statement at the time—and kept us in the dark on it. Listen, I welcomed the fact that we were going to have a set date that the government was going to table a budget in the Legislature, that there would be some transparency. We may not agree on what the government was doing within that budget document, but at least we would have it in hand and we, as legislators, could do our job, which is to hold the government to account.

He went on to say, “In addition, the proposed act would require governments to deliver the budget by March 31.

“And perhaps more importantly, the act will include an ‘Accountability Guarantee’—well, the guarantee did not last too long in this place—“for both the Premier and the Minister of Finance. They will each” have to “pay a fine equal to 10% of their Premier and ministerial salaries for each missed reporting deadline.” At that time, the minister turned to the Premier and said, “Sorry I didn't tell you about that one earlier, Premier. We are, quite literally, putting our money where our mouth is.” No, that is not happening any more. Delaying the budget goes against everything that the government of the day brands themselves as around fiscal responsibility.

We have no idea, really, when the budget will be dropped. For me, budget season is a good time. I do need to find some other hobbies, I guess, but I enjoy that process of holding the government to account during the budget process. It is unfortunate the government is rewriting their own rules to their own benefit. I think that this undermines confidence in the Legislature and, one could argue, our democracy as well. We will find out when the budget is dropped, we will find out what's in it, but we may not get a chance to be thorough in our responsibilities around holding the government to account.

In the fall economic statement—just going back to some financial commitments that the government has made—they've really missed the mark on housing. I wanted to talk about housing because all of our members are experiencing great crises in each riding across this province. Waterloo housing prices are off the charts. It's happening in London; it's happening in Hamilton; it's happening in Sudbury, in Nickel Belt. It is the crisis of the day. I talked about my son being a skilled trade worker, now a certified electrician. His chances of buying a home over the last two years were significantly reduced. In fact, he's 23 years old. He's already put several offers in on homes, but when the asking price is \$200,000 over an already inflated cost of a house, those dreams die. As a parent, but also watching my parents go through their housing challenges, this is across the entire age spectrum.

The housing crisis is so real, and this government has listened to very few people—and I'll quote a few people—but they've refused to close loopholes and increase Ontario's non-resident speculation tax from 15% to 20%. This would be a progressive move that you, as a government, can do. You did not introduce a new speculation and vacancy tax on residential property. This is a tool in your toolbox that you can leverage. You've refused to regulate and ensure taxation on short-term rentals like Airbnb.

I want to tell you, I remember so clearly watching the former finance minister, Mr. Charles Sousa, doing a stand-up with Airbnb and looking to the president of this—it used to be called an app economy or sharing economy, but really it wasn't about sharing at all. He said that we're really going to work hard to figure out how Airbnb can pay their taxes. Nobody asked the small businessman or small businesswoman how they can figure out how to pay their taxes. It's non-negotiable.

The track and tax of preconstruction condo flipping: We heard in budget committee that the empty condos that are across this province, especially here—I mean, if you just look out the window of Queen's Park, these are, as described by several advocacy groups on affordable housing, empty safety deposit boxes in the sky. Various people from across the country, from international investors, are using those condo investments—they didn't care how much it cost because they are using those condos to launder money. It's well documented. It's something that can be tracked. The government should be interested in tracking what's happening and then collecting information about beneficial ownership of real estate and

making it public. These are recommendations that we have shared with the government, that our critic, MPP Bell, has put forward.

Then the rental market is a whole other mess in Ontario. We need to stop the unfair renovictions and now demovictions. Whole buildings are being destroyed to put up high-priced, high-cost condos, and there's no negotiation around inclusionary zoning. By doing nothing you're making the problem worse for people across Ontario. Our critic on this has been very strong, and I want to thank her for her work on that.

The small business grant program has been a huge issue in this House. We got a fairly good picture of how poorly executed this program was from the Auditor General when she audited the government's books with regard to how the small business grant was administered or not administered, especially in this third round. This is directly from her report: "Auditor General finds" that the government of the day "gave \$1 billion away it shouldn't have" or is leaving to sit idle.

"According to the annual report from the Auditor General, the" PC "government gave \$210 million to businesses that were ineligible to receive anything, \$8 million to businesses that had no revenue loss whatsoever, and gave some businesses \$714 million more in support than they lost in revenue."

This is a quote from our leader. The PC government dragged their "feet for 10 months of the pandemic before finally" cobbling together "a support program in place over just two days.... Helping small businesses wasn't a priority for" this government, "so he launched a late, half-baked program ripe for abuse." This is exactly what happened.

She goes on to say, "I can't imagine how it feels for mom-and-pops to know that while they were closing their doors and walking away from their dreams, Ford was shovelling millions over to businesses that didn't need it."

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This was a reflection of what happened in the first year of the pandemic. I think to add insult to injury, the government did not even go after the \$210 million that went to businesses that didn't qualify. I don't know about you, but I still think that \$210 million is a lot of money, especially when we're looking at this third round of funding and the number of businesses that have not qualified.

The auditor's report also shows that the government had troubling practices for contracts it was handing out. In some cases, people who were very familiar with the government received contracts. It gave a \$2.5-million contract to an extension to Facedrive, while ignoring red flags that Facedrive was in crisis. I believe our Premier actually even appeared in some of the advertising for Facedrive. So big questions on how the small business grant was administered. You can tell that this is a visceral, emotional issue for so many, because 85% of the businesses in Ontario are small businesses. We know who they are. They're in our communities. They contribute to local charities. They're the fabric of our communities.

After one year—this was actually just a year ago in a Toronto Star article from February 18, 2021—the Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that Ontario's COVID-19 was the worst in Canada for businesses. Dan Kelly said this: “It was very surprising that Premier Ford would reference CFIB in a fundraising email.” That really hurts. You have an organization that has been listening to their membership for a full year struggling to navigate a sloppy, messy, incoherent small business grant program, and then they see that the Premier has used their name in a fundraising email. I have to say, I think that is reminiscent of some of the things that we heard during the years of the Liberal government.

Mr. Kelly goes on to say: “From a small business perspective, the ... handling of the economic ramifications of the pandemic is the worst in Canada.... Ontario small business owners feel like cannon fodder in the fight against COVID.” He “pointed out that ‘for most of the second wave, Ontario was the only province to maintain a policy allowing big box stores to remain open while shutting down tight indoor shopping in small retailers.’

“This will go down as one of the most anti-small business measures in Canada’s history.”

That was the second wave. Obviously, we went through a very tumultuous time just prior to Christmas. The Premier stood in his place and said, “We are not going to shut down businesses again.” Two days later, he shut down the businesses and created some more barriers to access financial aid given, based on capacity and the level of loss. You had to prove that you really had lost revenue and go through a bunch of hoops and barriers.

At that time, I stood in my place in this House and I quoted a number of the businesses that had said that the program was “a nightmare”; that it was “ridiculous”; that it was “just an awful experience”; that “it just looks like rank amateurs, top to bottom”; that “the government simply doesn’t seem to know what it is doing.” These are the business owners’ descriptions of the Ontario Small Business Support Grant program. All of us must have heard these stories. I can’t imagine how it would be for some of my PC colleagues who, for the longest time, said that they would be the champions of small businesses, and then to have small businesses relay this feedback back to them.

One business owner at this time said, “I’ve never seen a program that just didn’t have anyone there”—there was just nobody there. “There’s no one you can write to, no one you can call, there’s no other number to ask to be elevated to speak with someone else. Ever.” This lack of meaningful support or information is an issue not only with the grant program, but with highly affected sectors such as tourism or event venues.

I raised this issue yesterday, particularly for our female entrepreneurs. There was no gender lens applied to this funding. There was no recognition that women have unique challenges accessing capital, accessing loans, starting businesses, especially when they’re navigating those caring options that they carry, as well, as women, whether it be children or with parents.

I’ll quote from the Globe and Mail today. I’ve just taken you through two years of critique, two years of opportunities where the government could improve the small business grant program and learn from those experiences, take the feedback and then adapt the program. This is from the Globe and Mail today: “Thousands of Ontario Restaurants, Small Businesses Waiting on Ontario COVID-19 Relief Grants.” So you can see, it’s just a tale of two very different Ontario experiences. When the President of the Treasury Board gets up and his parliamentary assistant gets up and says, “We will spare no dime”—yeah, not so much.

This is directly from the Globe and Mail’s article today. This is from journalist Dustin Cook, who just joined us from Edmonton. He quotes Mr. Sinopoli, and all of us should know this name, because he’s created a hospitality support group, essentially. He co-owns three restaurants through the Ascari Hospitality Group. “The money is urgently needed to pay staff and get supplies now that these businesses are allowed to reopen to full capacity.” The government has said indirectly, has floated this idea that the pandemic is over and now that the businesses can open, everything will be okay. Well, that in and of itself really demonstrates such a disconnect from the reality that small businesses have experienced in Ontario. The average small business is \$190,000 in debt. You don’t ramp back up to 100% when you’re carrying that much debt. You don’t.

Listen, confidence is still not there. That’s what businesses have told us. In fact, I participated in a small business round table in Ottawa with my colleague from Sudbury and the member from Ottawa Centre. Some of those stories that we heard really stay with you. The government never factored in the subsidiary businesses to, say, a hotel. One lady on that call was fairly emotional. She said, “Listen, I provide the sheets and the towels and the laundry service for the hotel.” She didn’t qualify, because she was technically not closed; however, if the hotel was not operating, if the hotel was not open, her business was irrelevant at that point in time. She and many businesses like that were never considered eligible for some resources.

He goes on to say—this is Mr. Sinopoli: “‘We took the hits and now when they say, okay, we’re going to give you 10 grand—which frankly is an insult in terms of the amount of money—we don’t even get that,’ he said in an interview. ‘Everyone is on a knife edge struggling and there’s no help.’” So there is a pattern here from this government, particularly around the small business grant.

The minister who introduced the red tape reduction, another one last week—or maybe it was the week before—said they would take 20 days to respond to new applicants. Mr. Sinopoli and folks in my riding have been waiting over 40 days.

The member from Sudbury raised a really interesting issue with me the other day. He said that when our staff actually do call to advocate for businesses in our riding to see if they can access the small business grant, we get people who are not connected to government, who don’t

even know what an MPP is, who refuse to pass the call up to a supervisor. In fact, one of his calls ended up getting hung up on, because they were like, “No, you can’t speak to our supervisor. We don’t know who an MPP is.” The question is, really, what is actually going on? We’re going to find out, Mr. Speaker, because businesses, particularly those businesses that have paid the ultimate price during this pandemic, deserve to have the truth.

As the finance and Treasury Board critic—listen, you give me a lot of material to work with—I said that it’s crucial that this round of funding get out there to get businesses back on their feet and able to hang on until the anticipated summer boom. This is what we’ve heard, particularly from restaurants.

1650

I want to say, when the Premier stood in this place and said, “We’re not going to shut you down,” but then two days later—restaurants stocked up, and they incurred additional costs, because they said, “We’re going to be able to open.” The government never acknowledged those costs. So when the Premier opens his mouth and makes a promise, you can understand why people are so concerned, because there is a pattern at this point.

The last quote from the article, which is an excellent article: “At this stage in the pandemic, this government should have learned their lessons from the first two rounds. Restaurants have said they just need to get to patio season so they feel they are definitely at the end of their rope and losing patience for good reason”—says the critic for the Treasury Board and finance. I could go on.

The government even promised to find some efficiencies during this period of time. Much ado was made about throwing fax machines out, and aged technology—but even the glitchy online business registry that the government rolled out has major law firms telling clients to avoid Ontario. This is interesting—because it goes on to say that the new online business registry is so rife with system shutdowns, technical glitches and substantive problems that major law firms are advising clients to register out-of-province. I raised this in question period. I must tell you, I did not receive a sufficient answer.

At the end of the day, having talked to a lawyer whose main business is actually to navigate these registries and to help business handle the reams of paperwork that they must do, especially through the Ontario Business Information System—he said that, really, this measure was driving businesses out of Ontario, not a good thing to be doing during a pandemic.

The government received this letter from every law firm up and down Bay Street. It was a scathing 12-page letter to the minister. They said that the Conservatives’ new plan is so broken that it is “negatively impacting our firms, clients and service providers,” and that it is having a chilling effect on doing business in Ontario in general.

I went on to ask the Premier why they were so set on driving businesses out of Ontario. Consumer confidence, economic confidence—this is how we will rebuild.

We on this side of the House are very focused on rebuilding and making that new economic reality a more

inclusive economic reality, and you certainly don’t do it by undermining the basic mechanisms of an economy.

I’m going to leave it at that. But I have to say, the small business grant program is not working, and I would urge the government—because there is some urgency here, when you listen to a small business person like Mr. Sinopoli, when they are at the razor’s edge. So fix the program. Get the money out there. Give them a fighting chance to reboot.

Also, while you’re at it, try to establish some consumer confidence in the tourism and restaurant sector. You have levers and tools at your disposal. You are using government advertising to tell everybody how great you are. Why don’t you siphon a little bit of that off and share it with this sector, so that people know that these establishments are open and that they are safe? That is what we would do.

Moving on to education: I will note that education in the supply bill is set at \$31.2 billion. Earlier this quarter, there was a reduction of \$500 million—half a billion dollars—in this school year. Why is that so important? It’s important because masks are now no longer going to be compulsory in our education system after the March break, on March 21. We learned that today from the medical officer of health. And yet, HEPA filters are not prevalent in our schools. I heard the parliamentary assistant say that there are 40,000 out there in the province of Ontario, but I just asked the Minister of Education a question around—two years into this pandemic, we’ve known for some time that the goal is to get indoor air closer to outdoor air, with constant, well-mixed ventilation and to lower the CO₂ as much as possible with the help of portable HEPA filters, in order to keep students safe at school. Yet the government has operated with no sense of urgency to get an adequate amount of HEPA filters to schools and to child care centres.

I met with the HVAC association of Canada. They have said, why hasn’t the government activated all of these good local regional companies across this province? You have an opportunity to address an infrastructure backlog in Ontario, which is a well-established hangover from the former Liberal Party. You can actually ensure that schools don’t have to close again. Ontario had the most school closure days of any province across the country. We don’t want to go back there; you don’t want to go back there. But the way you prevent that from happening is you invest in health and safety.

In Waterloo region, parents were fundraising for HEPA filters. Listen, parents were desperate. They did not feel confident in this government’s plan to ensure that health and safety was a priority. In fact, last September, the Minister of Education had already guaranteed that he’d give the school boards enough money and time to get mechanical ventilation or HEPA units in every classroom. But in Waterloo region, I’m here to tell you, one in five classrooms has HEPA filter units. The fact that some school boards and some schools are fundraising is ultimately a very significant equity issue because not everybody is going to be able to do that. I hope that we can agree that

parents should not have to fundraise for health and safety measures in our education system. I hope that we can find some common ground on that.

And I do want to say, in case you don't know or in case you're not connected with kids in schools or family members who are teachers or principals or supervisors, COVID right now is rampant in our schools. My sister works in the Peel board. My husband works in the Waterloo Region District School Board. Kids are away for five, 10 days. Sometimes, though, they are still in class, even though they have siblings who have COVID at home. The failures to fill in our schools are off the charts. A failure to fill is when somebody calls in sick because they were tested and they are ill; they need to isolate. That leaves everybody in the entire school scrambling to fill those classrooms.

The government can say, "That's not true," but even the medical officer of health said that the number that we have—I think today was 2,198—it's at least 20 times that, or 10 times that now because it is falling, which is really good news. It's falling, but that number is still huge. But, Mr. Speaker, we do not have comprehensive testing in Ontario, so we actually don't really know what the number is. The most accurate number is from waste water.

I have to say, I feel, as a parent, and based on the parents who are reaching out to me, that lifting the mask mandate, particularly in our schools, when we have younger students who cannot be vaccinated—I'm triple-vaccinated; I still got COVID. I was still very sick. I can't imagine going through that without being triple-boosted. This is a cautionary tale. I just want to put that out there. There's a lot of angst in my community of Waterloo region about that.

The other piece that is connected to education, of course, is the fact that we still don't have a child care deal, a \$10-a-day child care deal, even though three months ago the Premier of this province was in a press conference and said that they were very close, that the communication had been ongoing and that it was imminent. That was his word, "imminent." We learned yesterday that the plan has just been sent to the federal government with the details for the federal minister to review—MP Gould, I think it is. So there's a huge disconnect from what the Premier said three months ago, that we're very close, and then we learn that yesterday the plan was just forwarded to the federal government. So what really is going on?

1700

Every day, every month that passes where parents in Ontario are denied, and the only province in Canada that does not have a deal—every day, every week that passes where this deal is not signed, not sealed, not delivered is another disadvantage for families across this province, including women, who have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic.

I want to spend just a little bit of time speaking about the work that our member from Kiiwetinoong has been doing on the Indigenous file. I notice in the supply bill that under Indigenous affairs, \$88 million is forecasted for expenditure. We heard in budget consultations, particularly from the friendship centres that really hold—because

80% of Indigenous people are actually in urban centres—this trust around maintaining culture and health and safety and education in urban centres—we've heard from them that when you compare what non-Indigenous community services are funded at versus what they are at, the disparity in funding is huge and it is systemic.

Our member, the member from Kiiwetinoong, has said "Our children are not numbers or benchmarks for policy measurement. They are human beings. We are human beings. Indigenous families and communities have ways of caring for our children based on the practices that we have, the laws that we have and the traditions that we have as First Nations people, as Indigenous people, but also our ways of life." He goes on to say, "Despite making up to 4.1% of the population in Ontario under the age of 15, Indigenous children represent approximately 30% of foster children. Indigenous children are overrepresented at all points of child welfare decision-making. This overrepresentation increases as service decisions become more intrusive."

It's still so powerful that the member from Kiiwetinoong has to come into this place and remind the government that Indigenous children are human beings. That sense of abandonment—and he does talk about two Ontarios. How can you deny that that exists, especially when you see the funding allocation, year after year after year, not being representative of the population? We are certainly hoping—if we get to see the budget, if we get to analyze the budget on whatever date—that this government changes that.

I started off my comments by talking about how this government is really good at making announcements, but not really good at following through on those announcements and ensuring that the investment is actually spent, and we have the Financial Accountability Officer's latest report to prove that. In 2021, \$1.5 billion did not get spent in health, \$243 million did not get spent in education. Post-secondary education was underfunded. Children and social services is projected by 2023 to be almost \$1 billion underspent; and justice, \$46 million. In total, this adds up to about \$5.5 billion.

I know that the government has said that the Financial Accountability Officer—it's a snapshot in time. That's actually not the case with the Financial Accountability Officer. He is projecting based on your calculations, and there is a formula—it should be the same formula that you use—around the real cost of delivering public services. So you can see, when we track the funding, that there's \$2.3 billion less in the supply bill and that there's \$1 billion less in investments in the public service.

I seem to be clearing the room a little bit, but that's fine.

The province spent \$119 billion over the first three quarters of the 2021-22 fiscal year, which was \$5.5 billion less than planned. So you made announcements about funding for health and for education, you made announcements about children and community care, but that money did not get out the door. So one has to wonder, now that there's a significant contingency fund at the government's disposal—had the Liberals done this, I think that you

would have said that you're squirrelling away that money, because there are no expenditures attached to that money. It is essentially a slush fund. A lot of that money did come from federal grants that were specific to the pandemic. They were federal transfers that were meant to be spent on health care, that were meant to be spent on education, and that funding did not get to where it was supposed to go.

In the health sector, the province has spent \$999 million, just 39%, of the \$2.5 billion which was in the revised budget for the COVID-19 response program. There was also lower-than-expected spending on payments to physicians, provincial drug programs and hospital capital projects. Well, you know, this is a government that will talk about a hospital capital project, but we can see where the money is not going. There were significant hospital projects that came forward during the budget consultation process. The Peterborough regional hospital came forward, the Brantford regional hospital came forward, as did—Waterloo region has put in a request of \$12 million to start the process of planning for an additional capital project, which is more than warranted given our population growth.

In the education sector, the province spent \$733 million, or just 43%, of the \$1.7 billion budget for the school board capital grants program. This is incredible. Here you have an opportunity to address a systemic infrastructure deficit in our schools—this is windows; this is ventilation systems. This investment would actually ensure that if there is another wave, schools can remain open. I thought that we had agreed that we're not proud of the fact that Ontario schools had the most school closure days in the entire country.

As of December 31, 2021, \$3.1 billion in unallocated funds remain in the contingency fund and time-limited COVID-19 fund, but then we received the update for this quarter which upgraded that. When we say to the government, "Show us the money," and then we try to follow the money, we realize that it's sitting in a contingency fund and did not get to hospital capital projects and did not upgrade our classrooms or invest in ventilation systems. That, for us, is a true missed opportunity.

The other thing, under children, community and social services, which is pegged at just over \$18 billion, is this long-standing issue of autism. We've been through cycles of autism drama here in this Legislature. I feel that this community has really just been pulled along with various promises. I mean, who could forget the front page of the paper with a big hug from the then minister responsible for autism, promising that this would fix it? But there are now 51,000 children on the wait-list for autism services in Ontario and advocates say people can't wait for a needs-based program any longer.

This is from one of our members, Jamie West: "These families, God bless them for being so patient, really deserve better than this...."

"When you say 'we're going to fix the programming,' you scrap the old one and three and a half years later you don't have a new one in place—all you have is the name of it—you only have 600 kids registered. Like 600 kids is a drop in the bucket for 51,000."

Now the alliance is being told that the new program will be rolled out some time this fall. Can you imagine? Can you imagine the promise, the hope that was given to these families at the very beginning? The special select committee of advocates and parents who came to Toronto in the summer of 2019, who dedicated their own time and volunteered their expertise and lent the government their knowledge to design a program that would finally work—and, at the end of the day, you have 51,000 children still on that wait-list. How is that even ethical? How can the minister stand in her place and talk about the 600 children who now have service but not think about the 51,000 who are still on the wait-list?

This is just from November. We're in March, right? "Parents Losing Trust in Ontario Government as Autism Program Wait-List Grows," from November 21: "When the province announced its plan for a new funding and services model for the program, the number of children registered and waiting to enrol has grown to more than 50,000, according to provincial figures." These are your figures.

1710

This is one parent, Alina Cameron. She's the vice-president of research and the northern representative on the Ontario Autism Coalition in Thunder Bay. This is a direct quote from her: "I don't think this government's going to make good on their promises." She was right. "They've missed every single self-imposed deadline and every single self-imposed target. Every single one." Every single one: That's a far cry from the hope and the promise that was given to these families.

Adrianna Atkins said she spent a lot of the pandemic at home, about 400 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay, with her six-year-old son Marshall. Marshall requires intensive behavioural therapy, but the government didn't provide any additional funding for travel. Can you imagine saying, "Okay, you can have this service, but we're not going to help you get to that service"? You might as well be offering no service. And to be isolated in that—

Interjection.

Ms. Catherine Fife: What are you heckling me? Have you got something to say?

That is the truth of what happened—

Interjection.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Not you; it was her.

The autism file is a complete mess again. I have to say, one of the strongest advocates in Ontario is my good friend Janet McLaughlin. I track her son Sebastian. His grandfather came here when the Liberals messed up the first time and when they messed up the second time. I can guarantee you, when this House is open to the public, when the people's House opens again, those advocates are going to be back here. And we will welcome them, because they have been waiting for their day in justice and it did not happen under this government.

Mr. Speaker, I'm unfortunately running out of time.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Aw.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I know you're sad.

But I wanted to communicate some of the angst around the municipal comprehensive reviews that are happening

across Ontario. This comes from a local environmental group and advocate. They say that the MCRs—the municipal comprehensive reviews—are under way across the province right now, with some astounding outcomes in places like Hamilton and Halton, where they're actually proposing, against what the government is proposing, no urban boundary expansions—because they see the logic in that—no more farmland loss and better intensification of their existing urban areas, with more public transit, more active transportation and complete 15-minute walkable communities.

There's a very tense relationship right now between the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and municipalities. These official plans are in the works and the government has a vision, which sometimes runs counter to the municipal visions. We saw that with Hamilton and Halton. What folks are saying is instead of threatening and imposing these visionary plans, the provincial government should be doing everything possible to help out the upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities to meet their Paris accord targets.

The green development standards, for instance: We need to do far better on this file than only having to meet the absolute minimum of the Ontario building code. There are significant efforts under way here in Waterloo region, Halton, the city of Toronto, Whitby, Markham and Vaughan to develop green development standards, but the government needs to make sure that they're a partner in this and not a barrier to this kind of progressive planning.

I think the greenbelt expansion and protected areas piece is still a hot point for this government. We've heard that the expansion of the greenbelt along the Paris Galt moraine has been parked until perhaps after the election. I think a lot of these things may be parked until after the election. But they want to make it clear that "opening up the greenbelt of a similar amount"—and that's the language that's in the legislation, "similar amount"—for housing expansion in a misguided attempt at creating affordable housing supply—this group goes on to say that that would be disastrous. Recycling, energy conservation, actually achieving reliable rail service, reinstating electric vehicle incentives in the development of a true plan to make Ontario an EV leader—not just the rhetoric—need to happen.

I have to say, there's a lot of interest. I feel that if the pandemic had not happened, for instance, climate change and the energy file would be key issues that we would be talking about in this House on a more regular basis, and progressive planning as well. We've certainly heard a lot about highways that may or may not get built, but when I'm thinking of Highway 413 and the business plan that the former government brought in, I will say that not even the Liberals were willing to make that poor of a business decision, especially when you factor in the research, the data that demonstrates that a 10-year highway that runs parallel to Highway 407 is not going to address the congestion issues that we have.

I'm going to spend very quickly on nursing, because it seems the government thinks that if you build a bed, then that bed will somehow take care of that patient. You need

people. You need specialists. You need a human resources retention and expansion plan.

What the Minister of Health announced this week—and I want to wish the Minister of Health well as she moves on to the next stage of her career, after serving the public. But the announcement that was made earlier this week of \$5,000 to RNs—apparently, if you look at where we started from March 2020—we're now two full years into this—full-time nurses work 2,000 hours annually. Many of them, actually, over the course of a year, worked more than that because of Bill 124, which overrode their collective bargaining rights and which reduced their ability to take vacation and time off. But even at 2,000 hours annually, this is \$5,000 for 2.5 years at 2,000 hours, or the equivalent of \$1 an hour.

One RN who is an OR nurse just retired, burnt-out, and she's not alone. There's many, hundreds and hundreds, who are actually doing that. One RN—and this is coming from a constituent who is very focused on finance. This RN came to him for tax advice as she is leaving her hospital to go to the USA for a US\$100,000 per annum salary.

Given the feedback we received from the nursing community, nursing leaders and various hospital executives, this \$5,000 is really seen to be a serious insult, especially because you're leaving Bill 124 still in play. It seems like—I mean, our leader this morning called it a bit of an election gimmick. If that was your intention, if your intention was to hold this \$5,000 cheque to see if it would work, I think, based on the feedback, that you now fully understand that it will not work, that it is not a systemic solution to the understaffing and overworking of our health care staff.

So this individual goes on to say that Bill 124 really is the problem. And one has to wonder why the government is so entrenched in this, because it has proven to have exactly the opposite effect around having consistency. It has actually destabilized the health care heroes you talk about. It is very much focused on women who work in the province of Ontario in the public sector, and I think that our critics yesterday raised that issue very well.

But don't believe me, because I'm just the finance critic. What they've said here is:

"A group of health care unions on Monday called the retention payment a 'temporary fix' that they said won't help retain nurses who want long-term support.

"SEIU Healthcare, Unifor, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions and the Ontario Nurses' Association issued a joint statement that was also critical of the fact that other health care workers were excluded from the retention bonus." I mean, it's a messy rollout. There's no silver bullet here, and that silver bullet does not cost \$5,000.

1720

"We are once again cautioning you against further demoralizing the workforce by providing one-time payments to some, but not all, health care workers," the union presidents said in an open letter to Premier Doug Ford.

“While you’re promising up to \$5,000 for nurses, what they really want is the support to do their jobs well and to do them safely.”

“The group called again on” the Ford government “to repeal Bill 124, which caps annual public sector wage increases at 1%, and asked the government to ‘move past the band-aid pay-as-you-vote gimmicks.’”

There are other things that can be said, but I have to tell you, Ontario right now is 22,000 nurses short. This is probably an understatement.

Finally, I just want to get on the record the issue of iGaming—and I want to thank the member from Windsor West. The main focus of iGaming—and I know the government is fairly sensitive about this—is that thousands of land-based casino workers are still laid off, and potential future job losses at land-based casinos; lower revenue to the treasury for public services provincially and at the municipal level; concerns echoed by Indigenous leaders, mayors, chambers of commerce, workers and unions, as well as addiction support providers. The government has said that they’ve been working on this iGaming thing for two years. They’re asking the government to take a step back and ensure that workers currently laid off will all be called back before the rollout of the regulation, and that assurances are worked in that there will be no land-based casino job losses. The government has made no assurance that that will actually happen.

Given your track record, there are genuinely some concerns about rolling out this iGaming. The small business grant didn’t go well. Energy costs did not go well. Gas prices did not go well. We still have no child care deal in the province of Ontario. One has to wonder why. You have the knowledge and you have the data at your disposal to address where investment is needed and perhaps where it is not.

My colleague from Nickel Belt introduced a transparency and accountability bill, because you don’t even know, in the health care budget, which is actually set at \$66 billion, \$434 million—when contracts get sub-contracted out to various groups, as she mentioned, if it’s laundry services, if it’s food services, if it’s maintenance services, you don’t know if those contracts are actually good contracts, if they’re in the best interests of the public. We know this from the Auditor General. She did a review of it. In fact, I think the member from Nickel Belt brought forward this accountability and transparency legislation, particularly in the health care sector, because of the Auditor General’s report to this House. As the former Chair of that committee—if the government actually listened to some of the recommendations in those plans, you would stay out of some hot water. So I think that it

warrants your attention, but it’s sometimes hard to hold you to that.

Our member from Scarborough Southwest, on the international doctors, nurses and health care professionals piece—this is one solution that you do have. The fact that she has been advocating for four years for fairness for international workers—particularly when, at the very last minute when there was a huge nursing shortage, you said you were going to bring in these nursing students, you were going to allow international nurses to be in hospitals, but you weren’t going to count those hours towards their certification. That was insulting.

Value the people who are delivering the public services. Pay them accordingly. Recognize the work that they are doing to hold the social fabric of this province together.

Whatever happens with the budget, I think the people of this province are onto you. They want to see a budget debated in this House. If the government does not do that, especially after you broke your promise around a fiscal accountability guarantee in the last legislation, I want to say, they will never trust you again. It’s feeling very similar, in my opinion, to how it felt just before the 2018 election. When you’re knocking on doors, the predominant character and emotion is anger, and when that happens, anything can happen in an election. I remember the entire Liberal caucus was completely wiped out, to only seven seats, because that trust was broken. When you break your own promises that you’ve embedded in legislation, and then you bring in legislation to officially break your promise, it doesn’t make it any better.

Thank you very much for your time today, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Pursuant to standing order 67, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sarkaria has moved second reading of Bill 96, An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I’ve heard a no.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Second reading vote deferred.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you’ll find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The government House leader has suggested that if we seek it, we will find the clock has been set to 6 o’clock. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Agreed.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Valerie Quioc Lim, Wai Lam (William) Wong,

Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (IND)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
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	Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA) / Ministre associé des Transports (RGT)
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
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 Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
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
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (NBP)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutilla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Hon. / L'hon. Jane (PC)	Burlington	Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues / Ministre associée déléguée au dossier de l'Enfance et à la Condition féminine
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (OP)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (IND)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Associate Minister of Digital Government / Ministre associé délégué de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines, des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
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 and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises et à la Réduction des formalités administratives
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Vacant	Ajax / Ajax	
Vacant	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Vacant	Elgin—Middlesex—London	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Randy Pettapiece
Teresa J. Armstrong, Toby Barrett
Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Goldie Ghamari, Randy Hillier
Christina Maria Mitas, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ian Arthur
Ian Arthur, Will Bouma
Stephen Crawford, Catherine Fife
Ernie Hardeman, Mitzie Hunter
Logan Kanapathi, Sol Mamakwa
Jeremy Roberts, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Michael Bushara

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Logan Kanapathi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Mike Schreiner
Jill Andrew, Robert Bailey
Will Bouma, Guy Bourgouin
Chris Glover, Mike Harris
Logan Kanapathi, Sheref Sabawy
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: Gilles Bisson
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Deepak Anand, Aris Babikian
Gilles Bisson, Lorne Coe
Wayne Gates, Robin Martin
Norman Miller, Billy Pang
Amanda Simard, Marit Stiles
John Yakabuski
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lucille Collard
Lucille Collard, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova
Jim McDonell, Suze Morrison
Randy Pettapiece, Gurratan Singh
Donna Skelly, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Laurie Scott
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Rima Berns-McGown, France Gélinas
Goldie Ghamari, Mike Harris
Faisal Hassan, Jim McDonell
Sam Oosterhoff, Laurie Scott
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Taras Natyshak
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Hogarth
Deepak Anand, Toby Barrett
Jessica Bell, Stephen Blais
Stephen Crawford, Rudy Cuzzetto
Christine Hogarth, Michael Mantha
Taras Natyshak, Michael Parsa
Amarjot Sandhu
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Aris Babikian
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Fraser
Aris Babikian, Lorne Coe
John Fraser, Vincent Ke
Laura Mae Lindo, Paul Miller
Billy Pang, Jeremy Roberts
Dave Smith, Daisy Wai
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Présidente: Natalia Kusendova
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Bhutila Karpoche
Aris Babikian, Jeff Burch
Amy Fee, Michael Gravelle
Joel Harden, Mike Harris
Bhutila Karpoche, Natalia Kusendova
Robin Martin, Jim McDonell
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Vanessa Kattar

Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight / Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations d'urgence

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Tom Rakocevic
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Tom Rakocevic
Sara Singh, Donna Skelly
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell