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of Ontario

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de l'Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 18 April 2000

Mardi 18 avril 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 18 April 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 18 avril 2000

*The House met at 1331.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MACKENZIE AND OPEONGO
HIGH SCHOOLS

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I'm absolutely delighted and honoured to stand in my place today as the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke to pay tribute to the students and staff of MacKenzie High School in Deep River and the staff and students at Opeongo High School in central Renfrew in the Douglas-Eganville-Cobden area.

Both of these high schools have in the last 10 days produced their annual musical. Saturday night I had the pleasure of joining several hundreds of people who packed the Childs Auditorium in the MacKenzie High School in Deep River to watch a splendid production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. The week before, I was at Opeongo to see the students, ably directed by Derek Tolhurst and Jennifer Vallance, in a production of West Side Story.

To the directors—and I might that add Graham Wolfe ably directed the production at Deep River on Saturday night—I just want to say congratulations, because much is said about public education and young people today. Well, those two musicals reminded me and the thousands of people who had the opportunity to watch those performances just how hard-working, how energetic and how innovative and creative are the young people of the Ottawa Valley and Ontario today.

To those students, to their parents, to the volunteers, to the staff, I want to say that you were an outstanding credit to yourselves, your class and your community, and you've brought enormous credit to public education. Premier Harris and others, who regularly dine out on attacking the public school system, would do well to join me in paying tribute to these wonderful people.

COBOURG LIONS CLUB

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): Last Thursday evening the Cobourg Lions Club celebrated their 50th charter anniversary. That means 50 years of volunteer service. The Cobourg Lions Club is made up of people who volunteer their services and time to the community.

The club's motto is, "We serve." Many hours have been devoted to helping the blind and those less fortunate.

The guest speaker was Judge Brian Stevenson, who is the associate chief justice of the Court of Alberta and a past president of Lions Clubs International, which is the largest service club in the world. At the anniversary celebration, special recognition was made of Cy Murphy, Bert Medhurst, Don Macklin and Mac Lees. All four are charter members and were key players in the organization of the Cobourg Lions Club some 50 years ago.

It is fitting that this anniversary took place during Volunteer Week. Volunteering offers us the opportunity to enjoy the personal satisfaction that comes from helping others, builds a better future for ourselves, our families and our communities, allows us to receive recognition and appreciation, provides the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends, provides the opportunity of becoming a member of a team, have fun and, most importantly, make a difference.

Members of the Lions Clubs International have made a difference, and Thursday evening was an opportunity for its members to celebrate.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Before we continue on with members' statements, joining us in the Speaker's gallery today we have Mr Mark Napier, who was a member of the Stanley Cup champion Montreal Canadiens and the Edmonton Oilers. Would all the members join in welcoming Mr Napier. He was also a teammate of mine on the Memorial Cup in 1975. He went on to greatness and I became the Speaker. So here we are.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I'm glad to have this occasion to raise the subject of some people who are often forgotten in this House; that is, the frail elderly and the chronically ill who are in long-term-care facilities, and many more who would wish to be because they need that assistance. I want to remember that the great fanfare of a few years ago when we had long-term-care beds announced hasn't been realized in a great many communities. Toronto, the largest area of the province, is one of those, where less than 20% of the beds that were promised have been delivered. Most of those haven't been built yet.

I want to refer specifically to an organization that provides long-term care to Polish seniors. Copernicus

Lodge in my riding has been waiting for many, many months and they are in the same position as many non-profits. In the first round of choices by this government, they gave funds to private companies and omitted these important community needs. There are whole communities with frail elderly people who aren't getting the services they require.

In addition, the chronic care hospital in my area, Runnymede, has been extended in its funding for one year. Again, a government is forgetting about frail and chronically ill people by making them wait, by making them not know what the future is.

The hardest thing for families is not to have a secure future. This government for some reason, after the election, has forgotten about that, has forgotten these people. Today, I hope we will remember them and I hope the government will act very soon.

GRAPE AND WINE INDUSTRY

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): We in Niagara are extremely proud of our grape-growing and wine-manufacturing industries. They are an important part of the Niagara economy and an extremely important part of the Ontario economy. As well, they've been producing better and better product every year and have been acquiring international acclaim for the award-winning wines that are being manufactured in Niagara.

Unfortunately, the Wine Content Act was imposed upon us as a result of the free trade agreement. This act, which will expire in December of this year, permits wines with up to as much as 75% foreign grape content to be labelled "Ontario wine."

On behalf of the people of Niagara and the grape growers and vintners of Niagara, I call upon this government to assure us that the Wine Content Act will not be extended or re-enacted and that indeed this government will require that wines labelled as Ontario wines be 100% Ontario grape content. Anything less is misleading to the consumer and does a great disservice to the incredible contribution that those small wineries, those boutique wineries, those family-run wineries down in Niagara contribute to the acclaim that Ontario receives internationally, as well as to the economy of Niagara and the whole province of Ontario. Wines of Ontario must be 100% Ontario wine. Anything less is an insult to this very important part of our agricultural industry.

PASSOVER

Mr David Young (Willowdale): This Wednesday evening marks the beginning of Passover. Passover is a time of celebration and reflection, a time of family and of community. Passover marks the birth of Jews as a free people and their emergence as a unique nation in history by celebrating their liberation from slavery.

On Wednesday and Thursday of this week Jews from around the world will participate in evening Seders or festive meals with their families and friends. At each

Seder a traditional meal is served and the story of the Exodus from Egypt is passed from generation to generation. The food and wine enjoyed at the Passover table, the recital and the prayers remind Jews of how their strength, resilience and faith has allowed them to endure much over the last number of centuries.

Passover is also a time to reflect upon how fortunate we are to live in a province, and in a country, that has made tolerance for the diverse religions and customs of its people the hallmark of our national identity.

I would like to conclude by wishing all those of the Jewish faith in Ontario and in Canada a happy and healthy Passover. Hag Samaech.

HIGHWAY 138

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I would like to bring to the attention of the House the current condition of Highway 138 in my riding. I am sending a letter over to the Minister of Transportation right now to outline some of the specific concerns.

Highway 138 links the International Bridge, Cornwall and the 401 to 417, one of the main arteries to the nation's capital. The highway sees approximately 10,000 vehicles a day. Due to the high volume of heavy machinery that travels this road, huge ruts and grooves have worn right through the pavement.

Bus line owners have vehicles that travel the road daily. Often the passengers on these buses are children on their way to school. Because the road is so grooved and rutted, the safety of the children is often compromised.

The condition of the road also means that vehicles that travel the road regularly need more frequent repairs. A vehicle in need of repair often places the drivers and the owners at risk and unnecessary expense.

Highway 138 between the boundary of Cornwall and Monkland has been in need of repair for several years and it desperately requires reconditioning. I urge the Minister of Transportation to provide the necessary funding to upgrade this provincial highway.

1340

DEVELOPMENT IN BRAMPTON

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): I'm here today to bring more great news from Brampton. During our sessional break, Coca-Cola president Jarratt Jones announced on February 23 the company's plans to build a brand new facility in my riding in Brampton. Coca-Cola is investing \$150 million in a new bottling plant, the largest ever capital investment by the company in Canada. It'll be the company's largest production and warehouse facility in our country.

This facility will include manufacturing, sales and distribution. Construction of the new plant will begin this spring and some operations will begin in the spring of 2001. Overall, this new facility will employ 540 people. In fact, they've already added 250 new jobs in Ontario

over the last 24 months, contributing to the over 700,000 new jobs created in this province since the Harris government came to power in 1995.

With Coca-Cola's announcement of the new plant located near Highways 410 and 407, they're also right across the street from another world-renowned brand, Bacardi Canada. With these two facilities located across the street from each other, they'll provide a unique gateway to the city of Brampton in my riding.

Imagine, Speaker, if you or any members of our House want to come to Brampton for a visit, we don't say rum and Coke in Brampton, we say Bacardi and Coke.

DEVELOPMENT IN GREATER NAPANEE

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Last fall I spoke to the Legislature about the town of Greater Napanee, a treasure of eastern Ontario, when the community was recognized by the Toronto Star in a story that praised the progressive way in which the town is marketing itself.

Well, the town of Greater Napanee is making news again. This time it has been recognized by Harrowsmith magazine as one of the 10 prettiest communities in Canada—one of only three in Ontario to make the list. This historic community, with its stone buildings and viaduct, has been recognized by the magazine for its picturesque beauty and Loyalist heritage.

This year the community has qualified to compete nationally in the Communities in Bloom competition and, as I speak, the town is preparing for the internationally famous Walleye Weekend on May 6 and 7, which will attract over 7,000 visitors to the region.

Beauty is not the only thing Napanee has to offer. In fact, business is booming, with Goodyear tire manufacturing, Gibbards Furniture, the newly expanded A&P, and a new Flying J Travel Centre leading the way. Napanee is especially proud of its small local businesses that provide service with not only a smile but also a generous serving of rural hospitality.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the people of Greater Napanee for their successful initiatives to raise the profile of this wonderful community.

CANDIDATES IN FLAMBOROUGH

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): Last Thursday the member for Hamilton East blurted out a challenge, asking for proof that he was being cynical about the decision to take more time to consider Flamborough's municipal future. The member asked if he's being cynical. I believe it's the members on this side of the House who should be cynical after hearing the member ask questions in this assembly to promote the Liberal nomination of Mayor McMeekin.

What's interesting is that in his bumbling rush to imply ulterior motives, the member did not even bother to consult with his candidate before making his accusa-

tions, despite invoking the mayor's name twice. What's also interesting is Mayor McMeekin's reaction to the announcement. In contrast to Mr Agostino's rant, Mr McMeekin told the Brantford Expositor, "It shows that they're taking a good, serious look at it and they're really taking into account the interests of citizens here."

Later, Liberal candidate McMeekin told the Hamilton Spectator, referring to Minister Clement: "He needs more time, and I respect that. It's a tremendously complex undertaking. He wants to make sure he does the right thing the first time."

Making cheap political plugs for a political candidate without taking the time to consult with the candidate beforehand demonstrates that the member and his Liberal Party higher-ups are once again out of touch, not only with Ontarians but even with their own candidates.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Reports by committees?

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): Mr Speaker, I'm in your hands. This is a bit of a historic moment because it's both a report from committee and the introduction of a bill.

The Speaker: Actually, it isn't reports by committees; that will be done during introduction of bills. It is a new process and I'm told that's when it will be done, but thank you.

Reports by committees? Introduction of bills? The member for Scarborough East.

Mr Gilchrist: Thought I'd never get a chance.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR L'ASSOCIATION ONTARIENNE DES EX-PARLEMENTAIRES

Mr Gilchrist moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 65, An Act to establish the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians / Projet de loi 65, Loi constituant l'Association ontarienne des ex-parlementaires.

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

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to give second and third reading to this bill right now. I believe it's been discussed by all House leaders and all members of the caucuses.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I believe I heard some noes.

A short statement by the member.

Mr Gilchrist: This is indeed a first, and I hope members from all parties will recognize the uniqueness of this initiative. Last year, the standing orders were changed to allow a third mechanism for the creation of bills. No longer is it just the government or private members that can initiate bills; they can be created in committee. Every

member of a standing committee has an opportunity to put forward under standing order 124 an initiative and to have that pursued through the committee with a guarantee it would then be debated here in the House.

This bill represents the first such initiative. I would be remiss in not thanking the members from all three parties who declared their unanimous support, and in particular a working committee of former parliamentarians representing all three parties who worked very hard over the past few months to put together this initiative. I look forward to the support of the House leaders in all the caucuses when we go through second and third readings.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I move unanimous consent that all Tory government members be made immediate members of that club.

The Speaker: That's not a point of order.

JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR L'OBLIGATION DE RENDRE DES COMPTES EN MATIÈRE DE JUSTICE

Ms Mushinski moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to make Ontario judges more accountable and to provide for recommendations from the Legislative Assembly for appointments to the Supreme Court of Canada / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant à accroître l'obligation de rendre des comptes des juges de l'Ontario et prévoyant que l'Assemblée législative fasse des recommandations de nominations à la Cour suprême du Canada.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

The member for a short statement.

1350

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): This bill will require the Attorney General to table an annual report of the sentences that are handed out by judges in serious, non-plea bargained criminal cases compared to the maximum sentence under the law. This will let the government, law enforcement agencies and the public at large know which judges believe that stiff sentencing is an important way to protect law-abiding citizens and motivate lenient judges to give out tougher sentences.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CASINOS

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Can you tell me why you have decided to sneak through new

rules that will allow the creation of at least 13 new, full-blown, Las Vegas-style casinos in Ontario?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The leader of the official opposition should know, or he ought to know, that's not accurate. There's no such plan and we've been pretty clear on that.

Mr McGuinty: Let me draw to the minister's attention then, first of all, the fact that he has presided over the single greatest expansion of gambling in the history of this country. I will also remind him that after he'd completed that he said, "No means no," and that there wouldn't be any more expansion of gambling.

We discovered that on the 21st day of March past a regulation was passed here in Ontario behind closed doors, in secret, which allows this minister to turn our 13 slot casinos at racetracks into full-scale casino operations complete with roulette, blackjack, poker and craps tables. You said, Minister, that you would not proceed with any such expansion but now we discover that in fact behind closed doors you have been paving the way for another unprecedented expansion of gambling here in Ontario. What have you got to say for yourself?

Hon Mr Hodgson: I don't know what planet you live on, but nothing could be further from the truth. I don't know what advice you're getting but that regulation was necessary when we merged, for operational purposes, the Ontario Lottery Corp and the Ontario Casino Corp. There's no change in the regulations. In fact, they're restrictive. Racetracks that have slot machines are not allowed to have table games unless they have a referendum like any other community in Ontario. We are acting responsibly in a regulated manner and I must say we are cleaning up the mess that your government left us with those three-day casinos operating all over the province with no way to control them.

Mr McGuinty: I'd ask that the minister simply take the time to review his own regulation, which he himself would have consented to. It specifically says:

"The following rules apply if the gaming premises is located at a racetrack: The prescribed limit on the number of games of chance conducted at a table or a wheel of fortune is determined with reference to the number of gaming positions and all of those games of chance on the premises. The number of gaming positions at all of those games of chance must not exceed 420."

It says here that you can have tables and games of chance at racetracks. When did we ever discuss this here in public? You put out a release at the drop of a hat. You'll hold a photo op here, a press conference there. You run ads on TV. But this change to a very important regulation has come behind closed doors in complete secret and it clearly provides for the distinct possibility—you're paving the way, in fact—for the creation of 13 new full-scale, Las Vegas-style casinos in Ontario at our racetracks. Again, why have you done this behind closed doors when you specifically promised that there would be full public consultations?

Hon Mr Hodgson: Quite clearly you're wrong. Our policy is quite clear on this. We've been clear on this from the very beginning when we inherited this mess of

unregulated gambling that took place in these three-day casinos that you had no problem with. But the police had problems with it, charities had problems with it. We've allowed for a regulated, controlled environment if gambling is to take place in this province.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Would the member take his seat. Come to order. I can't hear the answer when the members are shouting across at the minister. Chair of Management Board.

Hon Mr Hodgson: Let me make it clear for those who may be watching this on TV: You're absolutely wrong. We are restricting, that there be no tables at race-tracks unless, like any other community, they have a referendum. No does mean no, and we're putting it in the regs that way.

Mr McGuinty: I would encourage the minister to look at the regulation then.

FIREARMS SAFETY AND CONTROL

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My next question is for the Premier. We believe that gun ownership is a responsibility we all have to take very seriously. That goes for real guns as well as fake guns. Right now, today, in Ontario criminals are using phony guns to terrorize people on our streets and place the lives of our police in danger.

Most recently, here in Toronto there was a very tragic case of a man who was shot dead by police when they mistakenly thought he had a real gun when in fact it was a fake gun. My colleague will shortly be putting forward a private member's bill which will remedy the situation and begin to regulate fake guns here in Ontario. That initiative has the support of our police. I daresay once the public becomes aware of this, they will support it too. Will you, Premier, support this bill?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I indicated this morning that anything that helps bring awareness to this debate and advances the cause is something I welcome. You're asking me to support a bill I haven't seen yet. It hasn't even been introduced yet. You know how much I trust you to put the facts forward as you say they are. Let me say on behalf of your member, not you but your member, who has shown some courage in speaking out, that we welcome the opportunity to review his bill. If we think there are some good things in it, we would be happy to support that.

Mr McGuinty: I have had a page place in your hands just now, Premier, a copy of the bill, which has yet to be translated and so we can't introduce it in its official form yet.

Today in Ontario, if you are old enough to buy a comic book, then you are old enough to buy a fake gun, old enough to buy a BB gun, a pellet gun, a starter's pistol or a replica gun of some kind. The police are asking for this legislation.

Let me just read what Chief Brian Ford from Ottawa said: "While control of real guns is without question in

the opinion of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police a job of the federal government, the province could complement its efforts by strengthening regulations on the sale of fake guns."

Mr Bryant's bill quite simply provides that you'll have to be 18 years of age to buy one of these fake guns. Furthermore, you will have to submit to a background criminal record check. We think that is simple. We think it's reasonable. We think it's in the public interest and the interest of public safety, generally speaking. Premier, again, will you support this initiative?

Hon Mr Harris: If you were halfway serious, you would have sent the bill over for me to review and take a look at. I'm happy that I have it now and I'll be happy to take a look through it. Let me applaud the initiative of your backbench member, far in excess of your or your party's commitment to fighting crime, to the Young Offenders Act, for penalties for those using replica guns, all initiatives that we have taken strong action on. Now that a backbench member has—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Harris: Well, I've touched a nerve. These soft on crime—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Would the Premier take his seat. Order. Premier, continue, please.

Hon Mr Harris: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I clearly hit a sensitive nerve among a leader and a Liberal Party that, like their cousins in Ottawa, have been soft on crime and have ignored every recommendation from every police force that has come forward, to clamp down and be tougher in penalties on crime, particularly those with handguns, replica guns and all those areas. I have indicated that the member for St Paul's—

The Speaker: Order. The Premier's time is up. Final supplementary.

1400

Mr McGuinty: Premier, if you look at the record, you are soft on guns. You're going before the Supreme Court of Canada and challenging federal gun control legislation. One of your own caucus members is appearing in NRA commercials that are being aired today in the United States of America. You're the one whose minister yesterday rejected this idea outright, dismissed it completely.

What we are doing now is asking you if you are prepared to support this very important initiative that is about to be supported by our police and by our public. Do you know, Premier, that in Ontario today, if you are 10 or 12 years of age you can buy the fake gun, the BB gun or the pellet gun but you can't buy the ammunition. You have to be 18 to buy the BBs or the pellets. It simply doesn't make any sense. What we're asking again, Premier, is that you support this eminently reasonable and sound piece of public policy.

Hon Mr Harris: I very much appreciate that this leader of this party has a lot of catch-up to do, because you have been soft on crime. You've refused to support initiatives we have taken over the last five years, whether

it's the Young Offenders Act, tougher penalties for those who—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier take his seat.

Would the member for Windsor West and the member for Ottawa Centre come to order.

Hon Mr Harris: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. All the screaming and yelling and disobeying of the rules is typical of the kind of penalties you save for others who disobey the rules.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the Premier take his seat.

Would the member for Essex come to order. We are not going to continue when they shout across.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Last warning for the member for Essex. Last warning for the member for Windsor-St Clair. If you continue, we'll have to ask you to leave. Last warning for both of you. We can't continue when you're shouting across to the other side. Last warning for both of you.

Hon Mr Harris: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me say that we welcome the initiative of the member for St Paul's. He's the first member of this Liberal caucus that I have seen in five years who has actually expressed an interest in this area. If and when he actually introduces the bill, we would be happy to take a look at it.

ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Health. Last week three members of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health board resigned. The board chair, Bill Curry, the vice-chair, Nora McCabe, and board member Pat Capponi all resigned. At least two of these board members say there are serious concerns for patient care that must be addressed. In community meetings, patients, advocates, survivors and families have come forward because some of the most vulnerable patients in Ontario are losing services because you have cut them.

Minister, this is your strategy. It's your plan and your policy that is causing this turmoil and is putting services to some of the most vulnerable citizens of Ontario at risk. What are you going to do to fix the turmoil you have created?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): The leader of the third party knows that during the time our government has been in office, we have concentrated significant efforts to ensure that those who suffer from mental illness are indeed getting the additional services they require. In fact, we have been undertaking consultations, first with Mr Newman, and more recently we have had the new PA undertake that responsibility. We are building a continuum of care that starts with prevention, goes through to the community and ends up with hospital care. We have invested more than \$150 million in community- and hospital-based services. We have \$19.1 million and 140 new beds for community-based mental health services. We have set

aside \$45 million for supportive housing for the mentally ill.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): Could we for a moment focus on the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Please understand that three years ago, when the order for the merger and amalgamation took place, your assistant deputy minister at the time, Ron Sapsford, made a commitment to members of the community, to the staff and to the professionals that there would be put in place a monitoring program to safeguard patient treatment at Queen Street and the community of mental health facilities that were being offered through that facility. What everyone in the community is saying now is that through the restructuring and through the merger, those safeguards weren't put in place. In fact, resources are being taken away from patient treatment and being focused on research, which meets a national and international agenda but does nothing for mentally ill patients on the streets of Toronto who need those facilities.

Two examples: The Lakeshore outpatient program was recently shut down and reallocated back to Queen Street, supposedly because of building renovations. Renovations have been done for a month; the services have not been committed to be reopened. There's an indication they're going to be moved out to Peel. A rehab program at Queen Street, the DARE program, and a couple of others have been shut down without any consultation or notice.

Minister, the three people who resigned were patient community advocates. Surely you're concerned, surely you've talked to them about why. What are you going to do?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Again I would say to the third party that our government has worked to ensure that there are community services in place. As the member well knows, we have expanded community-based mental health services. Today we have 51 assertive community treatment teams that are available to help people in the communities. We've set aside \$19.1 million. We have enhanced the court diversion programs, we now have psychogeriatric outreach, we are doing case management and we are providing crisis support services. So we have moved forward to ensure that more and more individuals can get the support that is needed in the community. Certainly we have seen an amalgamation of services within the city of Toronto, but I can tell you that today, based on the information I have just provided, there are more community services available 24 hours a day than ever before in this province.

Ms Lankin: One more time: the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Will you talk about that institution? You've merged the services of the former ARF, the Clarke, Donwood and Queen Street. In that, you promised to safeguard patient treatment within that facility. Everybody in the community is telling you that what has happened through that merger is that resources are being

put over to the research side and that patient treatment is going by the wayside. You have now had three very prominent, high-profile patient community representatives on the board of directors who've resigned, two of them publicly saying it's because patient treatment is not getting the right attention and they're not getting the proper information and accountability from the administration of the centre.

This is your responsibility. Please talk to people in the community. Talk to the heads of psychiatric departments in every hospital in downtown Toronto. They'll tell you they're getting the spillover. I'll tell you what people are saying out there, and it's not very nice. They're saying that within that centre right now, the patients at Queen Street are being used as guinea pigs for research. Minister, you need to step in and show who's managing the mental health system and who's in charge of these services at this institution and bring some accountability back to the process.

Hon Mrs Witmer: I think we need to take into consideration that the board of directors at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is in full operation and they are proceeding with their role in governing the hospital according to the mandate they are attempting to fulfill. There is a new chair and they are certainly moving forward. We have committed and directed over \$136 million there in 1999-2000 in support of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and we do believe they are meeting the governance of the CAMH and they're meeting the legislative requirements of the Public Hospitals Act.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This is a memo from John Cook, the general manager of Ottawa Housing, and in it he raises the red flag regarding your proposal to sell off 5,800 units of family housing.

The memo says that the homes cost taxpayers only \$186 a month to cover their costs, but if you sell them off and he then has to rehouse the 5,800 families, it will cost taxpayers \$642 a month, three times the amount in rent subsidies. Your proposed sell-off is unfair to the 5,800 families—they will have to move—and it's unfair to taxpayers, because they'll have to pay three times the price. Can you tell us, please, why you're putting forward a scheme that would deprive 5,800 families of their homes and would cause taxpayers to have to pay three times the price in terms of rental subsidies?

1410

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): The operative word here is "proposal." We are proposing that if there are ways to deliver better housing for the tenants who are affected, as the honourable member says, we are looking at ways to do that at less cost to the taxpayer. I know the honourable member hadn't had a lot of experience when he was in government at looking to do things better for less, but the whole purpose of this exercise is to elicit proposals. In some

cases the proposals will make sense; in other cases the proposals won't make sense. I give this to the honourable member: In the cases where it makes sense, we'll do it, and in the cases where it doesn't make sense, we won't do it. It's as simple as that.

Mr Hampton: Your government already announced this last fall as a fait accompli, and since then the municipal councils in Hamilton-Wentworth, Toronto, Brantford and Durham have all come forward and said that it's a crazy idea; it doesn't result in less cost, it results in more costs and thousands of families lose their homes. Moreover, even your own housing authorities, whose members you appoint, have come forward—Grey county, Owen Sound housing authority, Ottawa-Carleton housing authority, South Simcoe, Barrie, Wellington, Guelph—and said this is a stupid idea. To top it off, when you realize that it's the Ontario Realty Corp that will be selling them—you know, the ORC that puts money into the pockets of your corporate friends—it's then a really bad idea.

Minister, tell the people of this province: Why is your government putting forward a strategy that will triple the cost for taxpayers and kick thousands of people out of their homes?

Hon Mr Clement: I have to correct the record here for those who are watching or listening. There is no plan to kick anyone out of homes. The plan is this: If there is a way to house them in other forms of accommodation where they can be housed at less cost to the taxpayer, we will do it. I have directed the Ontario Housing Corp to give us a plan, sensitive to different regions and circumstances, and then we will examine the plan. We will only do it if the tenant can be protected and if the taxpayer can be protected. That's what this government on this side of the House is all about.

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Chair of Management Board. I ask the Chair about a property, the Ernest C. Drury School in Milton. This property was declared surplus on May 15, 1998, by the Ontario Realty Corp, and the town was given until July 8, 1998, for the first right of refusal as a municipal corporation. However, what is disturbing in all this is a letter that the ORC received from a company called Leisureworld Inc, which says, "Further to our letter of April 21, 1998, and our recent discussions of the past few days, we are now prepared to confirm our intention to enter into a binding agreement for the purchase of the property." They sent a \$25,000 cheque which was deposited and accepted by the Ontario Realty Corp.

Minister, can you explain to the House why the ORC got into a deal for a property and accepted a cheque two months before the property was put on the market for everyone else to bid on?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): As the member of the opposition knows full well—at least I have been able to gather, if the newspaper reports are correct—you're aware of the

situation and you're aware that the Ontario Realty Corp has a board of directors which was approved by this House through the proper process. They are responsible for overseeing the senior management's day-to-day operations.

You are also aware that there's a review going on of all past transactions and that this particular property you're talking about has not closed. You're aware that before it closes, if it is to close, it will be reviewed to make sure it has followed all the proper processes that are in place to protect the taxpayer. If that hasn't happened, it will not close.

Mr Agostino: Clearly, when you look at this, it's another case of the minister saying: "I know nothing. It has nothing to do with me; it's the ORC." Again he cannot take responsibility for the decision.

The reality is this: On July 7, the town of Milton said, "No, we're not interested in the property." On July 8, the ORC signed a deal with the same company that had sent a cheque for \$25,000 two months earlier. Maybe it's a coincidence. Within 24 hours you had a signed deal. It has been closed. It's now before the Ontario Municipal Board for a zoning change. Minister, you don't even know the facts in the case. It closed on July 8, a day after Milton said, "No, the town of Milton is not interested in the deal."

So you have a developer who sent in a cheque for \$25,000 and a letter of intent two months earlier. You accepted that. On July 7, the town of Milton said no. At that point you had a responsibility to put that property out for public tender and public opportunity to bid on it. On July 8, within 24 hours, you received final closure on the deal, signed, sealed and delivered. Now that property is before the OMB—nothing to do with your ministry, nothing to do with the ORC—for the zoning matter in the town of Milton. This is clearly another case of something gone wrong with the Ontario Realty Corp, clearly a case of mismanagement and mishandling—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member's time is up. Chair of Management Board.

Hon Mr Hodgson: As the member obviously knows, or should know, the reality is that the real estate corporation's board of directors has instructed the senior management to review all past sales and transactions to make sure they're in accordance with the new, tighter procedures that have been implemented by that board to make sure taxpayers get better value from the Ontario Realty Corp. They're taking real action and there are real improvements taking place there. That's what we've done.

What you're alleging is that the transaction has closed at the registry office. That's not the information I have been given by the board of directors of the Ontario Realty Corp, and if it hasn't closed, it will be reviewed to make sure the proper policies have been followed.

ORGAN DONATION

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): My question is for the Premier and it has to do with organ donation. The

son of one of my members of staff has recently undergone a successful kidney transplant. He was on dialysis for several years and couldn't partake of activities that someone of his age should be enjoying. His mother has told me how different his life has become, thanks to the generosity of another individual in becoming a donor.

In Ontario there have been many organ transplants performed with similar successful stories that have given hope to people of all ages. The donors and the recipients come from many diverse backgrounds, but they all have one thing in common: the gift of life, whether they are giving or receiving it.

Premier, it has been six months since your advisory board on organ and tissue donation was established. Can you please tell the members of this House what the advisory board and this government are doing to increase public awareness for organ donations?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I appreciate the question because I haven't had many good questions this session, and I appreciate the member's interest.

As I indicated, the advisory board on organ and tissue donation was announced in the throne speech last October, and it is chaired by Don Cherry. They have an expert panel of those who have a great interest. Don Cherry, as I think many members would know, not only has an ability to reach a lot of people but he has a vested interest. He has said many times his son Tim would not be alive today were it not for his sister Cindy who donated a kidney.

So I have asked the panel, which includes many other experts and great spokespeople like Tie Domi and Muggsy Bogues from the Raptors, who have agreed to help us spread the word, and we are doing a lot of that. We expect a final report by the end of May. We will make that report public, and we hope those recommendations will assist us to correct a record that we're not real proud of in Ontario on the number of organ donors.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The Premier's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Stewart: We all know that we could need a donor organ someday. In fact, right now there are 1,200 adults and children waiting for kidneys in Toronto alone, with 200 more across the province waiting for other transplants. The unfortunate fact is that many will die waiting.

Premier, there are no two ways about it: We must increase Ontario's organ donation rate. What is being done to make this happen?

1420

Hon Mr Harris: We are trying to raise awareness and we are awaiting recommendations. This government has taken action. We have put over \$2 million into donation awareness campaigns. We've spent almost \$4 million since taking office for organ transplant programs. But I want to say it is clearly not enough; he's right. We have a serious obligation to do all we can to increase the number of organ donations in this province, and also to look at any other barriers that are there, once they are donated, to getting them to those who need the donation.

Our millennium challenge was to double Ontario's organ donor rate over the next five years; it's not just to invest in programs, it's awareness. Undoubtedly some dollars are going to be required as well.

I can tell the member we look forward to the recommendations at the end of May. We're not waiting to help raise awareness and we will act quickly to substantially increase—

The Speaker: I'm afraid the Premier's time is up.

TEACHER TESTING

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): My question is to the Minister of Education. Liberals believe that teachers should be accountable. We believe they should be accountable to the public through their college and to their employers directly. Unfortunately, yesterday we heard that you still disagree. Even though kids need to be taught by professionals who have the respect of people in this province, you are persisting. You're persisting even after the College of Teachers, which is supposed to provide teachers their standards, just like any other profession, has said no. Even though other jurisdictions that have tried teacher testing have found that it doesn't work, that there is nothing to be gained from a written test, you persist.

Minister, stand in your place. You're the head of organized education in this province. You're here to defend public education. You should deal with the issue of teacher morale. Admit that this was just a political ploy cooked up a year ago and agree to drop the written test and restore some of the respect that teachers in this province absolutely deserve from you.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I had no idea the advice from my colleague from Durham would have had such an impact on the education critic from the opposition. Anyway, thank you very much for the question.

The reason we think an appropriate teacher testing program is so important to quality education in this province is to help make sure that every teacher is as up-to-date as possible to meet the challenges they are facing in the classrooms today. There is a great deal of support for actually doing that.

We've consulted widely. We've listened to the advice of the College of Teachers. Contrary to what the honourable member would like to profess, they quite acknowledge that written assessments of knowledge are part of appropriate competency testing. They were very clear on that.

No one is advocating, like the unions keep advocating, that somehow or other we're going to have 100,000 teachers sitting in some little stuffy gym filling out some silly little true and false multiple-choice questionnaire. The only people who are advocating that, it appears, are the unions. That is certainly not an appropriate way to measure the effectiveness of teaching.

Mr Kennedy: Minister, you can sing and you can dance but you're stuck with this sad-sack policy until you decide to distance yourself from the backroom people

who cooked it up. You keep saying that you'll have a written test. You know that has no validity in terms of testing what real knowledge there is. You know that because your ministry has told you that. You know that because the college has told you that. You know that because Fraser Mustard said, "Focus on preschool kids and provide a better environment for teachers to teach." And you know that because a former Minister of Education, your former boss, Bill Davis, told you, "Don't have a written test for teachers."

Minister, will you drop the political pretense? Will you stop attacking teachers gratuitously?

I see your other boss has left the room. He doesn't have the grace—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member has asked the question. Minister of Education.

Hon Mrs Ecker: I must say to the honourable member, I was very pleased to put my name on a ballot that had Mike Harris's name in 1995. I was very pleased to put my name on a second ballot in 1999.

They keep setting up this straw man or straw woman or straw person of some written assessment. I would like to challenge the honourable member. Where were they when his party supported the Royal Commission on Learning, which the NDP put out, which recommended recertification for teachers every five years? Where were they? They supported it then. Why aren't they prepared to support an appropriate teacher-testing program now? Assessing knowledge is one piece of competency. Everyone agrees with that. We want to assess competency, knowledge, classroom management, all of those things that make up excellent teachers. I don't know what he's so afraid of, but teachers in this province are not going to have any problem with any kind of teacher-testing program because—

The Speaker: The minister's time is up.

RURAL SUMMER JOB PROGRAM

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Could you put 10 seconds back on the clock. We'll start over again, please.

Mr Barrett: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, in speaking with people in my riding and across rural Ontario, they have indicated their concern about the availability of employment for young people in rural areas. Many communities in rural Ontario are worried about losing their best and brightest young people to the city because of greater job opportunities.

Keeping young people in rural communities, with their new ideas and fresh approach, is integral to keeping those communities strong. We've seen some positive results from the summer job service offered by your ministry. This program has given many students a good start with some great experience working in the rural economy.

Minister, could you give us an update on the program status of your ministry's summer jobs service for the coming year?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I want to thank the member for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant for the question. I can assure the member that there will be an opportunity to assist students in his riding and in all other rural Ontario ridings this summer with summer job employment.

The rural summer jobs service program continues to be an important part of our government's commitment to create new job opportunities for students in rural communities. Under the \$50.8 million investment in summer jobs program administered by my colleague the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Ontario government has committed \$3 million to be administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and it will encourage employers to create new job opportunities for students in rural Ontario this summer.

Mr Barrett: Thank you, Minister. You're right. Many students and agri-businesses in my riding have participated in and benefited from the program, and I know many students and employers will be interested in applying. I appreciate the involvement of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. I know the members will be very interested in passing on information regarding the program to constituents to help boost youth employment in rural communities.

Minister, could you clarify the details of this program for the House. For example, what are the criteria for students and employers to qualify, and how many students and how many employers do you expect to sign up this year?

Hon Mr Hardeman: Thank you very much again. I want to assure all members of the House that any student who is returning to school in the fall, following the summer of employment, is a resident of Ontario and is eligible to work in Canada is able to participate in this program. Students can find employment through the rural and agri-food employers operating and offering jobs, any jobs, in Ontario. The employer must have workplace safety and insurance coverage, as well as third-party-liability insurance coverage.

I expect this program will encourage some 850 employers to create 45,000 jobs for Ontario students this summer. I think this will be a very worthwhile program for rural Ontario.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It's about the continuing Flamborough farce. A short time ago, Minister, you told the citizens of Flamborough that they could leave the new amalgamated city of Hamilton-Wentworth if they met certain conditions. They went out, they met the conditions, they put together a plan, they have other municipalities that want to take them in. But now, on the verge of a by-election in Went-

worth-Burlington, you're suddenly starting to hesitate; you're starting to hem and haw.

1430

Minister, will you make and fulfill your commitment to the citizens of Flamborough? Will you now acknowledge that they have a plan and keep your promise to fulfill that plan?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): The process that we committed to has been undergone in the sense that we offered an opportunity to discuss, not only within Flamborough but also within other host municipalities in the rest of Hamilton-Wentworth, in Brant county, in Waterloo county and in Halton region, the potential future of Flamborough. As the honourable member surely must know, there are a lot of issues involved in that: not only issues of the aspirations of Flamborough, but also the impact of those aspirations not only on the host municipalities—which is important as well, because we always said there had to be a willing host—but also the impact for the Flamborough taxpayer.

Unfortunately, through the process that it has undergone, there has been a disparate number of numbers, of calculations of impacts on property tax, not only to the Flamborough residents but also in the outlying regions, and we're sifting through that to get to the right answer.

Mr Hampton: Minister, no one in the Hamilton-Wentworth-Burlington area believes you. They know that this is all about your posturing before the call of a by-election in Wentworth-Burlington. They know that you are trying to delay this until after the by-election.

Minister, a whole lot of people came together: people in Brant county; people in Waterloo; people in Burlington; people in Hamilton. They all want to know; they all need to know. Would you at least give a commitment that you will announce a decision on Flamborough by the end of this week?

Hon Mr Clement: The leader of the third party used the term "posturing." I just want to make that clear now: The honourable member used the term "posturing." As the honourable member knows, the last time he raised this issue he mentioned the NDP candidate in that particular by-election three times. So I ask the honourable member's indulgence to take his accusation of posturing with a bit of salt.

The honourable member wants to know what the answer is. The answer is that we will do what can be done that is in the best interests of the taxpayers, not only in Flamborough but also in other host municipalities, because we see our responsibility not only as one of posturing, but as one of seeking the best result that is going to have the least amount of impact on the taxpayers, because they are the ones paying the bills. The honourable member seems to forget the plight of the taxpayers. On this side of the House, we never forget it.

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): My question is to the Minister of Health. I want to return to

Cancer Care Ontario's recommendation that there be a province-wide screening program to detect colorectal cancer at the earliest stages, before it becomes deadly.

You said yesterday, Minister, that you had to take into consideration concerns that had been expressed nationally and internationally that are compelling you to take a cautious and measured approach. But the recommendation for a provincial program in Ontario was based on a thorough study that was done by the expert panel that you put in place. The members of the panel looked at the cost of the program and they weighed that against the lives that would be saved with the screening program, and they recommended a provincial screening program for all individuals over 50 years of age. They specifically recommended against the pilot program that you're proposing.

Minister, your own expert panel said clearly: "It is unlikely that a significant decrease in mortality, morbidity or direct/indirect societal costs will occur in the absence of clear, specific guidelines aimed at the majority of individuals at average risk for colorectal cancer."

Colorectal cancer is expected to kill 2,300 Ontarians in this next year alone. Your pilot project might save one or two. But I ask you today what you'd say to all the others whose deaths might have been prevented with a full provincial screening—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Time is up.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Our government has invested over \$155 million in cancer services and cancer care since 1995. In fact, we have been moving forward in order to ensure that the appropriate screening programs can be put in place. As you know, we have breast cancer screening programs, we're doing cervical screening programs and we will be continuing to make announcements in future months indicating movement in the area of prevention. We are certainly working collaboratively with not only Cancer Care Ontario but others in the province who have a keen interest in ensuring that the incidence of cancer decreases. Unfortunately, the incidence of cancer continues to increase, but in specific response to the member's question—

The Speaker: I'm afraid the time is up. Supplementary.

Mrs McLeod: You're not working collaboratively with Cancer Care Ontario on this particular program. They're recommending a full provincial screening program. They thought you agreed. They say you're stalling and backing off what you were prepared to support. You can't use concern about evidence as an excuse for inaction.

Again from the report, the recommendations of your own expert panel are supported by the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, the Ontario Association for Gastroenterology and the Ontario Association of Pathologists.

There is only one reason why you're refusing to put in place a full provincial screening program and the reason is you're not prepared to pay for it. You said as much

yesterday when you said you had to take into consideration the high cost of the program, and yet you are probably paying more for the treatment of this cancer in its advanced stages than you would be paying for the screening program.

Minister, I don't understand your government's action on this. I don't understand a government that can spend millions of dollars advertising its concerns for health care and yet refusing to put in place a screening program for a cancer that kills 2,300 Ontario men and women every year. I guess all I can ask is, how does your government place a cost—

The Speaker: I'm afraid the member's time is up. Minister of Health.

Hon Mrs Witmer: As I indicated yesterday, we are awaiting the Canadian Task Force Report on Preventive Health Care. They have yet to endorse the colorectal cancer screening. As you know, no other country in the world has undertaken that type of screening program. What we have said to Cancer Care Ontario is that we want them to embark on a pilot program, as they are doing in England and Scotland. There are still some concerns that have been expressed, both nationally and internationally, about a population-based approach to colorectal screening. Until such time as those concerns are dealt with, we are suggesting that they move forward with a pilot program, as is being done in other countries.

MARRIAGE

Mr Bob Wood (London West): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Right now you must be a minister, a judge or a justice of the peace to perform a marriage ceremony. It would greatly increase access to service for the public if other qualified persons were authorized to perform marriages. Would you be prepared to consider appointing non-ministers as people authorized to perform marriages?

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): The short answer is yes. The Registrar General's office receives numerous inquiries with respect to civil marriages. This is a concern, and I think a growing concern. The ministry is reviewing this issue with the hopes of coming forward with a new direction in the near future.

Mr Wood: How does the minister propose to establish qualifications for such appointments, and when does the minister think such appointments might begin?

Hon Mr Runciman: There are a number of provinces that have instituted what they call marriage commissioners. Apparently in those jurisdictions they are appointing retired public officials, people who have served in municipal government, provincial government or served their community in some capacity. We are certainly taking a look at that approach. We're also taking a look as well at the approach of current municipal officials—clerks, deputy clerks—although up to this point we have not had that discussion with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, let

alone the clerks themselves or the clerks' association. But those are the areas that we're currently looking at.

DOCTORS' SERVICES

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): My question is for the Minister of Health. My area was designated underserved for physicians in 1997. It was the first southern urban city to be designated under a northern rural policy; nevertheless, today we have fewer doctors than before our designation. We need about 45 more family doctors, and over 40 specialists.

Dr Sinclair, a family doctor, works an average of six days per week, and he reached his cap four months before the year-end. My question, Minister, is this: How much work do you expect out of Dr Sinclair for free?

1440

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the member knows, we do take the issue of physician distribution and supply very seriously. As a result, we had Dr McKendry do an initial review of the situation. His findings have been provided to Dr Peter George and the expert panel. They are now providing us with a long-term plan to ensure that as we move forward we will know precisely the number of specialists and family physicians that are going to be required throughout the province of Ontario and we can ensure that they are placed into communities where they are needed.

In response to the McKendry report, we did make some very short-term recommendations. Those are being implemented right now. As you know, we are increasing the number of foreign students in our programs. We are encouraging people to come back from the United States. I might add, over the past few years, between 1997 and 1998, the rate of physicians leaving Ontario has actually decreased—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. The minister's time is up.

Mrs Pupatello: Dr Sinclair in my riding says this: "I have continued to work well past the cap because I refuse to close my doors to people who did not want this situation any more than I did. I've lived up to my oath and I'm exhausted."

Minister, despite all the reports, there is no denying we have a shortage. You gave us the designation. You know there's a shortage. We have 30,000 to 40,000 people without a family doctor. He applied for the exemption and he was denied. I am asking you to review this case. Please review this case and help all the people in my riding who do not have a family doctor. Reports aside, the issue is real and it's there today. You can make a difference to help the people in my riding. I am asking you today to undertake to look at this application and provide an exemption for Dr Sinclair.

Hon Mrs Witmer: As the member knows, certainly there is always the opportunity to appeal. Again, I would emphasize the fact that our government has taken unprecedented steps to address the issue of physician

supply and distribution. It is an issue, unfortunately, that has gone on for many, many years in Ontario. We now have in place a panel which will develop, for the first time in the history of this province—no other government undertook to do this in the past—a long-term plan to ensure that we have the appropriate number of family physicians where they're needed, to also identify what kinds of specialists are going to be needed in the future, particularly in response to our aging and growing population, and let's make sure those specialists are located where they need to be.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. Last week our federal government finally announced a new funding package for Via Rail worth some \$400 million over a five-year period. That only works out to \$80 million per year, and we know that is the cheapest and most environmentally friendly way to travel and to ship goods: steel on steel.

It's good to see that they're finally spending some money, because they've refused to adequately fund health care, they've refused to adequately look after the debt and they've refused to look after payroll taxes—they just keep continually putting them up. However, it's good to see that they are committing to provide improved rail services to remote areas and rural Ontario. My Task Force on Rural Economic Renewal heard of the importance of infrastructure to rural Ontario.

Minister, what are you doing to expand our provincial highways into rural Ontario?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): We certainly understand the importance of highway infrastructure to rural Ontario. That's why we've been improving and expanding our highways. We've increased access to markets and we have opened up rural Ontario to more tourism.

Some examples of this are six-laning of Highway 401 easterly toward Port Hope, which of course goes through the honourable member's riding of Northumberland; we recently announced the four-laning of Highway 417 from Ottawa north to Arnprior, a \$75-million commitment; and we're well under way with Highways 11 and 69 four-laning to northern Ontario. We've proven our commitment to rural highway infrastructure.

Mr Galt: Many people view rural Ontario in this province as just a large parkland, family farms and some quaint little towns when in fact, if you look closer, there's an agri-food industry that's the second largest industry in the province of Ontario. Just last week it was announced that Ontario leads Canada in exporting agri-food products to the rest of the world. For example, exports of agri-food products to the US grew from \$5.1 billion in 1998 to \$5.5 billion in 1999.

Minister, this is a major industry in Ontario. Does your ministry have plans to improve transportation for

agri-food products from the rural areas to the urban centres and also from the rural areas to the US markets?

Hon Mr Turnbull: In answer to the honourable member, absolutely. That's why our last budget was \$936 million—more than any other government has ever invested in the roads of this province. We're in the midst of a four-year, \$1-billion upgrade of highways 401, 402 and the QEW. Since 1995, the QEW between Hamilton and St Catharines has had a \$206.9-million investment.

The Niagara needs assessment which I announced recently is another important aspect of this. Let me quote regional chair Terry Cooke from Hamilton-Wentworth. His statement was, "This is arguably the most important announcement we've seen in a generation."

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I'm afraid the Minister of Transportation's time is up.

LAKEVIEW GENERATING STATION

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. In your address to the board of trade this morning regarding your government's flawed air monitoring regulation for the electricity sector, you somehow forgot to mention that the biggest threat to the environment from this sector will come if your government allows the Lakeview generating station to be sold without first being converted to natural gas. As it now stands, operating at only 20% capacity, the coal-fired plant is the single largest polluter in all of the GTA. Clearly, any new owner will want to recoup his or her investment and will try to operate that plant at maximum capacity. We know that at 80% operating capacity the plant will have a tremendous impact on the amount of smog that will be produced and a tremendous impact in terms of air quality, the environment and public health.

Minister, if your government is really concerned about emissions from the electricity sector, will you commit today to making the conversion of Lakeview from coal to natural gas a condition of any sale?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): I want to indicate what I did say to the board of trade this morning. I said that it's my role as environment minister to ensure that environmental considerations are strongly represented in any discussions at cabinet. I also said that in decisions affecting the environment, the consequences cannot always be assessed in monetary terms only. Lastly, I said that in some cases environmental protection will cost more and in other cases the taxpayers will see less of a financial return if we attach stringent environmental standards to the sale of an asset. That's what I said this morning.

Ms Martel: I hope you're protecting the environment. That's what you're paid to do; that's what your role is.

My question though is, will you commit today that any sale of Lakeview will not occur without a conversion from coal to natural gas? You know this sale is not just about fiscal matters. The sale has enormous implications for the people all over the GTA in terms of the staggering

amount of smog that will be produced and the impact that will have on the environment and on public health.

1450

Clearly, environmental concerns about this sale have been well documented from the moment OPG announced publicly that it wants to have bids later this spring. In light of that, will you as Minister of the Environment post this proposal on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry so that people in the GTA will have a say on this important matter?

Hon Mr Newman: What I also spoke about this morning at the board of trade breakfast is a regulation requiring electricity generators in Ontario to report their emissions in the province. The monitoring and reporting regulation is indeed an important tool in the government's efforts to improve air quality, to protect the health of the people of Ontario.

The regulation, which is posted on the EBR today, comes into effect May 1. It's the next step in keeping our commitment to ensure strong environmental protection measures in Ontario's competitive electricity market take place.

My comments today were not in reference to any particular asset. The announcement could pertain to any government asset that could be up for sale. For example, some government buildings could require retrofitting to bring them up to date with current insulation standards.

LOW WATER LEVELS

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My question is again to the Minister of the Environment. We continue to face low water levels in Ontario. I'm therefore astounded to learn that the minister is about to award 74 water-taking permits to a company from Peterborough to take 10 gallons per minute out of the Trent River. That's potentially 15.8 billion gallons a year. That's for water pools and it's for dust suppression, although the permit can be sold for any other uses they wish.

Farmers in Ontario facing a dry summer are currently having conditions put on their permits that they can't draw water during June, July and August. If this continues, we're going to have to learn how to eat swimming pools.

Minister, assure this House that you will intervene to suspend the issuing of water permits until we've had the absolute proof that the needs of our farmers can be met.

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): The issue of low water levels is something that I take very seriously as Minister of the Environment. I know the Minister of Natural Resources does as well. We also recognize the impact that the low water levels have not only on the quality of water across the province but also on the economic vitality. I've met with representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture on various issues and I look forward to meeting with them again to discuss these issues.

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas essential health care services have been deprived of government funding because the Conservative government of Mike Harris has diverted these funds to self-serving propaganda in the form of pamphlets delivered to homes, newspaper advertisements and radio and TV commercials;

“Whereas the Harris government advertising blitz is a blatant abuse of public office and a shameful waste of taxpayers’ dollars;

“Whereas the Harris Conservatives ran on a platform of eliminating what is referred to as ‘government waste and unnecessary expenditures,’ while it squanders well over \$100 million on clearly partisan advertising;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Conservative government and Mike Harris to immediately end their abuse of public office and terminate any further expenditure on political advertising paid for by taxpayers.”

I affix my signature as I’m in complete agreement, as I know you are, Mr Speaker.

ABORTION

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): I’m presenting this petition on behalf of the member for Kitchener-Waterloo who, as you know, Mr Speaker, according to the standing orders, is unable to present petitions to this House. The petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario health system is overburdened and unnecessary spending must be cut; and

“Whereas pregnancy is not a disease, injury or illness and abortions are not therapeutic procedures; and

“Whereas the vast majority of abortions are done for reasons of convenience or finance; and

“Whereas the province has exclusive authority to determine what services will be insured; and

“Whereas there is mounting evidence that abortion is in fact hazardous to women’s health; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers funded over 45,000 abortions in 1993 at an estimated cost of \$25 million;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to cease from providing any taxpayers’ dollars for the performance of abortions.”

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the northern health travel grant was introduced in 1987 in recognition of the fact that northern Ontario residents are often forced to receive treatment

outside their own communities because of the lack of available services; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged that the costs associated with that travel should not be fully borne by those residents and therefore that financial support should be provided by the Ontario government through the travel grant program; and

“Whereas travel, accommodation and other costs have escalated sharply since the program was first put in place, particularly in the area of air travel; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has provided funds so that southern Ontario patients needing care at the Northwestern Ontario Cancer Centre have all their expenses paid while receiving treatment in the north which creates a double standard for health care delivery in the province; and

“Whereas northern Ontario residents should not receive a different level of health care nor be discriminated against because of their geographical locations;

“Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the unfairness and inadequacy of the northern health travel grant program and commit to a review of the program with a goal of providing 100% funding of the travel costs for residents needing care outside their communities until such time as that care is available in our communities.”

This is signed by a further 249 residents of my riding. They add their names to the thousands of other constituents who have sent in similar petitions. Once again I add my name in full support of their concerns.

ABORTION

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I have a petition from over 600 good citizens of Cambridge.

“Preamble: There has been no reporting of provincial abortion statistics for Ontario since 1995, and the educational and financial background of women choosing abortions would help us to understand the impact of abortion on society.

In an article by Thomas Strahan, published by the Association of Interdisciplinary Research in Values and Social Change 1991 newsletter, it concluded, ‘The repeated utilization of abortion appears to lead not to economic prosperity or social well-being but to an increased feminization of poverty.’

“Whereas we depend on statistics published by the Ministry of Health to assist us in responding to inquiries, in writing articles and in making presentations on abortion; and

“Whereas abortion is the most frequently performed surgery in Canada, and comprehensive abortion statistics are essential in order to conduct medical research on the effect of abortion on women’s health; and

“Whereas abortion statistics are essential in order to study the impact of abortion on infertility, sterility, post-abortion trauma, long-term psychological or physical complications and the established link between induced abortion and breast cancer; and

“Whereas as taxpayers we are obliged to pay the cost of abortions;

“Therefore your petitioners pray that the Legislature act immediately to provide Ontario’s annual abortion statistics.”

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have literally hundreds of petitions.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the northern health travel grant was introduced in 1987 in recognition of the fact that northern Ontario residents are often forced to receive treatment outside their own communities because of the lack of available services; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged that the costs associated with that travel should not be fully borne by those residents and therefore that financial support should be provided by the Ontario government through the travel grant program; and

“Whereas travel, accommodation and other costs have escalated sharply since the program was first put in place, particularly in the area of air travel; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has provided funds so that southern Ontario patients needing care at the Northwestern Ontario Cancer Centre have all their expenses paid while receiving treatment in the north which creates a double standard for health care delivery in the province; and

“Whereas northern Ontario residents should not receive a different level of health care nor be discriminated against because of their geographical locations;

“Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the unfairness and inadequacy of the northern health travel grant program and commit to a review of the program with a goal of providing 100% funding of the travel costs for residents needing care outside their communities until such time as that care is available in our communities.”

I am proud to affix my signature to these petitions.

WETLAND

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents Doreen Goodman, Stan and Libby Racansky and others.

“Whereas on July 28, 1999, a decision was made by the Ontario Municipal Board which will allow Courtice Heights development OMB file S960058 in Clarington to build upon part of Black-Farewell, a provincially significant wetland, the largest wetland complex in the GTA; and

“Whereas a large portion of this land included in the development plan of subdivision for Courtice Heights is not the property of the developer but is in fact owned by the residents of Hancock Road and Nash Road in Courtice; and

“Whereas information from MNR regarding this wetland was not made available to the OMB by the muni-

cipal planning department at the hearing in Clarington, and the existence of this information was denied by the municipal solicitor and the developer at the hearing; and

“Whereas the absence of the MNR information caused the OMB to believe the property in question was woodlot, not provincially significant wetland; and

“Whereas, as a consequence, the OMB allowed this development to be built without the setbacks and buffers required by MNR for wetlands standards; and

“Whereas the Legislature of Ontario should reverse the decision of the OMB referred to above and permit the petitioners to present the relevant information at a properly constituted review proceeding that was denied to us by the OMB in January 2000 without considering the consequences;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislature of Ontario to protect provincial interest since MNR, per the Honourable John Snobelen, Minister, is committed to protect this wetland.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature to this petition on behalf of my constituents.

1500

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): I present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Mike Harris’s misnamed Tenant Protection Act (TPA) has removed the rights of Ontario’s tenants and created a huge legal imbalance in favour of landlords; and

“Whereas the Harris government’s policies have directly led to the affordable housing crisis and resulting homelessness in Ontario today; and

“Whereas a recent study by the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation has proven that systemic flaws in the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal process have led to large-scale loss of housing without due process; and

“Whereas the provision of so-called maximum rent increases, coupled with vacancy decontrol and low vacancy rates, has placed tenants in a very vulnerable position; and

“Whereas full disclosure of the disposition of cases brought to the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal are not given to credit-reporting agencies; and

“Whereas Don Valley East MPP David Caplan has introduced Bill 36 to address the imbalance and unfairness in the TPA;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support and protect tenants by immediately calling Bill 36 for debate and passage.”

I agree with the petition and I have signed it.

LORD’S PRAYER

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer, also called Our Father, has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century; and

“Whereas such use of the Lord’s Prayer is part of Ontario’s long-standing heritage and a tradition that continues to play a significant role in contemporary Ontario life; and

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious convictions of many Ontario citizens;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord’s Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom, and do all in its power to maintain use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Conservative government has arbitrarily imposed a \$925 head tax on international adoptions; and

“Whereas the cost to the government for processing international adoptions is no greater than that for domestic adoptions, which are not subject to the head tax; and

“Whereas in the United States parents are offered a tax credit of \$5,000 to offset the enormous costs of international adoption; and

“Whereas the cost for an international adoption can range from \$20,000 to \$30,000,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows and demand that this head tax be immediately revoked.”

I affix my signature to this petition signed by 63 other citizens.

LORD’S PRAYER

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): The member for Scarborough Centre has presented a petition in support of saying the Lord’s Prayer, and I also wish to present names of people in my riding who feel the same way.

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord’s Prayer in its proceedings, in accordance with its long-standing established custom, and do all in its power to maintain use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I sign this petition and I fully agree with its concern.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the undersigned members of the Consumer Survivor Association of Lambton (CSAL), a mental health peer support facility, have used or are using the mental health system; and

“Whereas outpatient programs at the hospital have been withdrawn, our day program of peer support along with our medications assist in keeping our members out of the hospital and thereby significantly reduce cost for the Ministry of Health;

“Whereas, as of December 1, 1999, the government changed accessibility to bus passes, as of December 1, 1999, we must now complete and have a daily travel log signed. Valid destinations have now been reduced or eliminated. Now just medical appointments are accepted. Support programs such as the CSAL are not recognized as valid destinations. Previously we received a voucher. Now the amount is included on benefits cheques (not itemized). After February 2000 the subsidy of valid medical appointments only may not be the complete \$45;

“Whereas the undersigned members of CSAL feel that the changes regarding qualifying for a bus pass, eg, filling out a transportation log, are a humiliation and degradation for those on ODSP;

“Whereas people that need this lifeline need it not only for trips to see their doctor or psychiatrist, but also for community integration and interaction such as visiting the consumer/survivor association for peer support, as well as necessary shopping for food, medication, clothing and other reasons which keep patients from being hospitalized or isolated from their community;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“That the government of Ontario under Mike Harris designate CSAL as a valid medical appointment and that the bus pass vouchers are reinstated as previously issued.”

I shall affix my signature to this petition.

OAK RIDGES MORaine

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This petition is to the Legislature of Ontario.

“Whereas the Oak Ridges moraine is the rain barrel of southern Ontario and the headwaters for over 65 rivers and streams from Cobourg to Caledon; and

“Whereas the Oak Ridges moraine is threatened by uncontrolled development that is destroying precious natural wetlands, forest, groundwater and wildlife; and

“Whereas 465 world-renowned scientists, local residents and naturalists all support an immediate development freeze in the implementation of a comprehensive production plan for the moraine; and

“Whereas only the province has the power to co-ordinate planning over a wide area of nine regions in 26 municipalities, the province must act quickly; and

“Whereas every month new developments are being approved that will destroy the environmental integrity of the moraine;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“That the provincial government immediately freeze development on the Oak Ridges moraine and pass Bill 12, the Oak Ridges Moraine Protection and Preservation Act, so that there will be a comprehensive plan to protect and preserve the moraine for further generations.”

Because I agree with this petition, I affix my name to it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR

LA RESPONSABILITÉ PARENTALE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 13, 2000, on the motion for second reading of Bill 55, An Act to make parents responsible for wrongful acts intentionally committed by their children / Projet de loi 55, Loi visant à rendre les pères et mères responsables des actes fautifs commis intentionnellement par leurs enfants.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I believe the member for Niagara Centre had the floor.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Speaker, I only have 49 minutes and 17 seconds left. You know that I had to begin these comments last Thursday. We started them around a quarter to six, but of course you adjourned the House at 6 o'clock.

For the folks who don't recall Bill 55, it's this government's, as they would claim it, huge step forward for the victims of crime of the province of Ontario. It's the Parental Responsibility Act. It's as good as it gets here when you talk about advancing the interests of victims or in fact dealing, more importantly, with the phenomenon of crime.

Let's make it very clear right off the bat: Youth crime should be disturbing to all of us. Crime in general should be a concern of all of this Legislature and other legislatures. Youth crime is particularly disturbing, it's particularly repugnant, it's in many respects somewhat, as I said before, despicable because we don't expect our 12-, 13-, and 14-year-old kids to be doing these kinds of things. We shouldn't expect any member of our community to be doing these kinds of things, but it acquires some new tone when it's kids committing crimes, doing break and enters, robberies, crimes with weapons, assaults.

1510

You want to talk about responsibility and accountability: Instead of a parents' responsibility act, let's start talking about the government's responsibility to our communities. Let's talk about the government's responsibility to ensure that our communities are adequately policed. We know, it's a fact, that there are fewer police officers per capita in Ontario today than there were in 1994, at a point in time when revenues are far advanced beyond

what they were in 1994. It's a fact that there are fewer and fewer resources out there for those families—and you've got to talk about the families whose kids are caught up in the criminal justice system. There are fewer and fewer resources out there for those families who are seeking help as desperately as anybody ever could, who no more enjoy the delinquency, the falling off the rails of their kids than anybody else in the community does. Trust me in that regard. There isn't a family in this province that somehow celebrates when their kids get caught up in events that are beyond, quite frankly, any family's control.

Let's talk about how these families, in desperation, seek out mental health services for their kids, whether it's down in Windsor, where mental health services for kids are virtually non-existent, or in Niagara, where they're so scarce that there are huge waiting lists and more and more limitations on those kids who can access those services that families in desperate need with a delinquent kid find themselves on incredibly frustrating and quite frankly dangerous waiting lists for, and find themselves capable of utilizing fewer and fewer of those things that for a period of time in this province, before this government came into power in 1995, were growing and were being developed.

Just the other day Howard Hampton and I met with a group from the Durham area called Intercede, if I recall their name correctly. The Durham area members understand—quite frankly, we saw the letters the Durham area members wrote in support of Intercede. Intercede is a community-based group that takes youngsters who are not accused of violent crimes—that's an important distinction—and who are more often than not first offenders, and does intervention as an alternative to disposing of that young person's Criminal Code charge in the court system. It had an incredibly high success rate. It had an incredibly tight budget. In Durham—and there are other organizations that have attempted to do this same kind of work across the province—this group, which had the endorsement of the local police, of the local family courts, the judges and the crown attorneys, had been doing a wonderful job on a very tight budget, getting kids back on track. It had a huge success rate in terms of avoiding recidivism—you know what I mean: repeat offenders. Yet they found themselves defunded by this government. Notwithstanding the endorsement of their own MPPs in the government back benches, they still find themselves without the funds to perform what has been an incredibly effective service and a meaningful effort to reduce the phenomenon of youth crime.

You see, when all is said and done, as I said before, it's all after the fact. By the time the crime has been committed, it's too late; there already is a victim. Quite frankly, for most victims no amount of money can ever compensate for having been victimized. That's not to say that that's an inappropriate consequence or form of restitution that should be provided to victims. Look, we agree with the fact that victims should be compensated for their loss, for the personal pain they suffer. One of the

few ways you can do that in our kind of culture or our kind of society is with money to compensate them for where they're out of pocket. Nobody's disputing that. But these guys can't get it through their heads that the courts have always been available to victims of crime who want to pursue either the criminal himself or herself or, in the event that they are minor children, their parents if the parents are negligent. I told you this on Thursday. Victims have always had that recourse. There's nothing new in this bill with respect to a victim's right to utilize the civil courts, whether it's Small Claims Court for claims under \$6,000 or the other civil courts for claims in excess of \$6,000. My goodness.

The Attorney General and his backbenchers don't want to acknowledge that. Let me tell you what Professor Larry Wilson from the faculty of law at the University of Windsor has to say about this bill. He poses the question, what then does this proposed legislation, this Parental Responsibility Act, Bill 55, offer in terms of advancing or even altering the current state of the law of Ontario? He answers his own question: He says nothing. Professor Wilson of the faculty of law at the University of Windsor has done an incredible amount of research in this area.

Once again, why aren't some of you in the government backbenches accessing some of this research so you can talk about the legislation that you've been trying to applaud to a not-very-responsive audience out there? Most of the province of Ontario understands that this bill is a fraud. This bill does nothing to advance victims' rights. The people of this province very much want to see victims' rights established and upheld, and this government is very clearly guilty of abandoning victims in the most complete, total and absolute way.

How dare I say that? This is the government of law and order. It's the government that's going to tackle crime. It's the government of fewer police officers in our communities. It's the government of fewer crown attorneys. It's the government of more and more clogged courts. It's the government of privatized correctional systems, be they for adults or for young offenders, so that corrections will no longer be operated by the trained, skilled, competent professionals who are currently in our correctional institutions, our correctional officers, but rather will be handed over to low-paid, poorly trained employees in an American-based, corporate, for-profit corrections system which will have as its sole goal the maximization of profits and the mere warehousing of offenders, be they youthful, juvenile, young offenders or be they adult offenders.

The most tragic abandonment of victims in Ontario by this government was its Victims' Bill of Rights, and we in the opposition warned during second reading and during third reading that the then Attorney General for Mr Harris was not serving victims well. He was doing them a great disservice, but he forged ahead.

Two of Ontario's victims, two of our extremely tragic victims, two women who both happened to be from Niagara and whose cases were raised in this Legislature numerous times before the previous Attorney General as

we sought relief for these victims, whose cases were raised by both Jim Bradley and myself, Karen Vanscoy of St Catharines and Linda Even of Welland—when they sought some remedies under this government's so-called Victims' Bill of Rights, the courts had this to say. Mr Justice Day of the Ontario Court (General Division) said that this government's Victims' Bill of Rights does not intend to provide rights to the victims of crime. That's what he said.

1520

The interesting thing is that the government lawyers were in court, because, you see, the litigation was against the government. Both Ms Vanscoy and Ms Even, like so many other victims in this province, had been betrayed by this government. So they sought to litigate and sought a remedy for the betrayal of their rights by this government. Not only did the court rule that the Victims' Bill of Rights provided no rights to victims, but the government's own lawyers were arguing that. Do you understand what was going on?

The judge said this about Mr Harris's Victims' Bill of Rights, and he said it in the clearest, most unequivocal way. No judicial comment could be more straightforward and complete and beyond interpretation. The judge said clearly the Victims' Bill of Rights does not establish—understand that—any statutory rights for the victims of crime.

That ruling was just about a year ago today. Have we seen any response to that ruling by this government that wants to tout and applaud what they would say is their commitment to victims? Not a word. Not a single amendment. Not a single new bill. Not a single effort to remedy their betrayal of victims here in Ontario. They come up with this Bill 55, this Parental Responsibility Act, which is merely a statement of the law as it's always existed in Ontario, and certainly since 1986 when section 68 was passed as an amendment to the Family Law Act, which put the onus on parents of delinquent children to establish that they were exercising appropriate, adequate supervision and control over those minor children when those children committed a crime.

Let's understand a little bit about who these kids are. You've got to understand that the vast majority of kids who come into contact with the young offenders system are not recidivists. They are there as a result of those kinds of things that most families are familiar with: the shoplifting of a candy bar or those minor incidents that are oftentimes as much a part of growing up as anything else. So you see, the largest majority of people who go into our young offender courts are never charged again, never mind being compelled to appear before the court again. These kids made mistakes, they're dealt with by the court, and they move on with their lives.

These aren't the kids we have to worry about. What we've got to worry about are the kids who aren't just one-time-only offenders. We've got to worry about the kids who not only find themselves before the courts for a minor offence, but then return to the courts with an escalation of the seriousness of offences: the recidivists,

who constitute the smallest number of young offenders. But these are the ones this government isn't expressing concern about.

This government has its huge photos of broken windows in a vacant warehouse. I understand that. It has the photos of some downtown graffiti. I'm not sure it's young offenders doing that. From time to time it could be the patrons of House of Lancaster who are on their way home and merely want to let off a little bit of steam. House of Lancaster is that haircutting shop on Yonge Street, isn't it? I read about it in the paper the other day. These things happen. Are they desirable? Of course not. If we had enough police would we be able to more effectively police our communities so that they wouldn't happen? Of course we could. I'm concerned about graffiti; of course I am. As I told you before, I'm concerned about people who leave chewing gum on the sidewalk because I find that as repugnant an act, quite frankly, as most acts of graffiti. But what I'm really concerned about, that this government doesn't want to demonstrate any interest in, is that small group of hard core young offenders who become incredibly dangerous to their community, and who are destined to reappear in the adult criminal justice system. These are the people who cause the huge pain and losses to any number of families, seniors and young people. These are the people who end up going through the revolving doors of prisons.

I firmly believe that if this government is really serious about the rights of victims, it's got to make sure that our family courts—I appreciate it's not just family court judges, because the family court judge is blended with the criminal judge, but provincial judges. Would some of them please step into a young offender courtroom some Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday morning and take a look at the huge caseloads that our scarce number of judges are dealing with in these young offender courts. They are bloody sausage factories. Crown attorneys get their pile of files at 7:30 or 8 o'clock in the morning, and because they didn't finish working until 8 or 9 o'clock the night before, begin their work on the trials and matters to be heard in young offender court that morning at 8 or 9 o'clock with a new pile of 30 or 40 files.

This government doesn't want to talk about these courts. I suspect there are some members of their caucus—the member from Ottawa, Mr Guzzo, who was a respected judge, is very capable of explaining to them that under the Young Offenders Act, as under the Criminal Code, judges have the power to make orders of restitution, which have the quality or effect of a civil court judgment. But when crown attorneys are scarce in number, when judges are even scarcer, when police officers who effect liaison between the police force and crown attorneys are overburdened with far too many files because this government doesn't want to fund those types of activities, and when this government doesn't have a Victims' Bill of Rights, victims' interests aren't being advanced in those courts, as judges deal with bigger and bigger caseloads and have to resolve list after list on any given day in our provincial courts.

I heard the Attorney General in a scrum—because I criticize the fact he's telling people once again: "You've got to keep going to the civil court. You've got to pay your court filing fees." He says, "Oh, Small Claims Court, the fees are trivial." Let me tell you what the fees are in Small Claims Court. You've got to lay 50 bucks down right off the top to get a statement of claim issued. You can serve it yourself or hire a bailiff to serve it, a process server, and spend up to another 50 bucks, and before the matter gets set down for trial, you've got to lay down another 100 bucks. So you see, the minimum cost to a plaintiff, who indeed has been victimized, right off the bat is 150 bucks, with no guarantee (1) of getting a judgment, and (2) even if they get a judgment, no guarantee of collecting it.

The Attorney General says, "Oh, that's a trivial amount of money." He doesn't get it. It's those smaller sums that are the aggravation to victims of crime. It's the deductible, when your car window is smashed and your stereo is stolen, perhaps over on Bloor Street, down by Bloor and Christie. Perhaps if your Passat is parked there and the window is smashed and the stereo is stolen—those things happen, I'm told. You see, it's the deductible. Think about it. It's the deductible that causes the huge annoyance, as well as the fact that you had to go through all the inconvenience. Again, we understand that. We're not diminishing—it goes beyond irritation—the incredible interference in our lives that even these types of crimes create.

1530

But, you see, the Attorney General doesn't even want to contemplate it, doesn't even want to reflect on the fact that his own new court fees, user fees, for people who want to access the civil justice system provide an automatic deterrent for victims.

The Attorney General doesn't want to talk about the fact that his understaffed courts, along with his complete abandonment of victims' rights, means there is no personnel working in crown attorney's offices, working with police court liaison offices, working in the provincial court offices that deal with not only young offenders but senior offenders, to assist victims in getting the appropriate information together so that the crown attorney can make an application upon conviction for an order of restitution against an offender. They had that power under the Criminal Code and under the Young Offenders Act. That order of restitution has the same quality effect of a judgment received in a civil court. Think about it. As one of your colleagues used to say, this is a no-brainer.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I remember him.

Mr Kormos: Remember that? You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that that's a far more effective way of obtaining orders for restitution as compared to compelling people to use the Small Claims Court, or other courts in the event that the amount is in excess of \$6,000.

Again, if this government is really going to proceed with this bill it had better be prepared to go to committee,

because there are a whole lot of people out there who have things to say about this government and its deplorable history when it comes to victims and victims' rights, and more significantly, about this sham piece of legislation.

There are a whole lot of folks out there, people like Professor Larry Wilson from the University of Windsor, faculty of law school, an experienced person in the law, who has researched the issue around children, the courts and crime and this very issue of so-called parental responsibility, who will have some things to tell this government, some things that they ought to have been listening to before they embarked on this silliness that is presenting one of their biggest embarrassments of this year 2000 to date.

Go out there and listen to what people are saying. Listen to what families are saying. I told you about Bonnie Buxton, an advocate for children with fetal alcohol syndrome, one of those people trying to raise awareness of fetal alcohol syndrome and what that does to families and to those kids who suffer from it—they're out there—and a member of a group called the Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario, APSGO, founded back in 1984.

These are families in crisis. These are families with delinquent kids. These are families who are as often as not, as she relates in many of her comments, the victims of their own kids. These are the families of kids who suffer from fetal alcohol syndrome, who suffer from any number of other disorders—disorders that, because of the abandonment of the supports that those types of children used to have in our elementary schools, are no longer being addressed there—and disorders that create children, yes, who pose a danger to their community.

Ms Buxton writes about Nancy Dixon, the current president of APSGO, and she points out how this bill is so contradictory. She points out that, as Ms Dixon says: "One of the more powerful tools we've had as parents is to be able to involve the police and the court. After Bill 55, if you knew that your child had brought home stolen property, would you report him?"

She's talking about the dilemma that parents are put into by virtue of this bill, where they could be at risk—yes, Mr Mazzilli—of civil prosecution because they called the police on their kid. Will this bill serve as a disincentive, in more than a few cases, for parents to bring the police into the lives of their families for fear that, effectively, self-reporting is going to make them civilly liable, or that they'll even become the target?

The real issue here—and boy, this government can suck and blow from time to time, let me tell you, simultaneously—is that on the one hand this government wants to say that people have to be responsible for their own conduct, that people have to be accountable for their own behaviour, and that is a proposition that I don't think any of us has any opposition to, but now they're saying, "No, displace that." So now you make hard-working, good parents culpable or liable for the things that delinquent kids from their families do, when in fact those

parents almost inevitably—and I know you have tried to skirt the issue. You've tried to say, "We understand that most parents—but then there are these others." Well, name names. Come on.

As I told you last week, in terms of the law as it stands, there isn't a single reported decision with respect to section 68 of the Family Law Act. That's effectively what you've written here, section 68 of the Family Law Act, which puts the onus on parents to prove they weren't negligent in terms of the misconduct and delinquent acts of their minor children. There's not a single reported case. It has never been litigated.

As I told you, I called Jeffery Wilson, the lawyer who is the editor of the law report series dealing with children's law, an expert, probably the Canadian expert, no two ways about it. I said, "Mr Wilson, I couldn't find any reported decisions. Are there any unreported ones?" He's the guy to ask. Not one. To the best of his knowledge, section 68 had never been utilized, and what your bill is is section 68, which was the product of the NDP and Liberal accord between 1985 and 1987 and which puts the onus on parents of delinquent children to establish that they exercised reasonable and appropriate control and supervision of those kids. Not a single case in all of what is now 14 years, and not dissimilar to the Manitoba experience.

As usual, you guys missed the boat. The Manitoba legislation of 1997 is but an effort to incorporate our pre-existing section 68 into their law. Do you understand what I'm saying? You guys are trying to reinvent a wheel that wasn't round in the first place. Do you understand that? People out there know full well what's going on. You'd love very much if—look, I'd love it if you'd bring some resolutions before this House to talk about youth crime and the Young Offenders Act. I'd be pleased to engage in a discussion with my criticism of the Young Offenders Act, with my concerns about the inadequacy of the intervention and the fact that far too often it takes place too late. I believe that.

I told you before that there are basically two groups of young people in our young offender courts. There is the larger group, that's there once and once only—shoplifting and those very minor offences, part of growing up—who are never going to be back there. Right, aren't I? You're darned right I'm right. Then there is the second group, very small in size but nonetheless admittedly very dangerous to their families, their community, their peers—the whole nine yards. These are young people for whom it's imperative that there be speedy intervention, and effective and sufficiently long-term supervision, and the supervision may well have to be in a custodial setting. I understand that and folks out there understand that. Their families understand it.

But you are handing those facilities over to the private sector. This government is getting out of the corrections business, no two ways about it.

1540

You don't want to accept responsibility for the security of the community by ensuring that, these dangerous

young people will be kept in private, for-profit American—what was it? Camp Turnaround. Please; these were tough kids.

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): It's a great success story.

Mr Kormos: Yes, it was a great success. The getaway was a great success—the keys left in the van, the door unlocked. I hope somebody left a few bucks in the ash-tray so they could gas up, or at least the ministry credit card. What a great project that one was, an absolute failure from virtually day one. This government is getting out of the business of rehabilitation and of community safety. This government is getting out of the business of corrections.

Once again, I want to repeat to you: That group of youngsters for whom there is not speedy and effective intervention, including the prospect of, yes, incarceration, whatever you want to call it for minors, are the ones who are going to grow up to become adult criminals, no two ways about it. You don't do that by trying to spin your so-called support for victims, which was demonstrated to be a dismal failure and non-existent when it came to the Victims' Bill of Rights, when it came to Ms Vanscoy from St Catharines.

Do you want to know what happened in the case of Ms Vanscoy? Are you interested enough? Her case was raised in the Legislature by Mr Bradley and myself. Her 12-year-old daughter was shot dead in the head with a pistol and the case was plea bargained away, without consulting or advising Ms Vanscoy. As far as Ms Vanscoy is concerned, she's the mother of a beautiful 12-year-old innocent daughter who was murdered, murdered in the most complete sense.

Bradley and I spoke to the Attorney General on more than a few occasions in this Legislature saying: "Please intervene. You can't allow this to go on. The Victims' Bill of Rights surely must protect this woman, this mother of this dead daughter." The charges against the perpetrator were plea bargained away by, again, an incredibly busy court system that hasn't seen any meaningful investment during the course of your government. Judges are overburdened and crown attorneys are being called upon to handle far more cases than they should realistically be called upon to and for whom as a result—for all of us as a result—we see plea bargaining flourishing, even to the point of there being quotas imposed upon crown attorneys to get guilty pleas. What that means is plea bargaining. It's the story of Ms Vanscoy.

I'll tell you about Linda Even. Again, a woman I know, a bright, capable young woman whose common-law stabbed her, not just once, not just twice, but again and again and again and again, leaving multiple stab wounds the likes of which you rarely see on any survivor. Appropriately, he was charged with attempted murder. It wasn't an accident. The knife didn't slip out of his hand 20 times. Plea bargained away, to dispose of the case in our court system that remains so heavily burdened in crown attorneys' offices that are understaffed and police

forces that don't have the police officers to do the victim-police-crown attorney liaison.

Tell me if I'm wrong, Mr Mazzilli. You've got some experience with the system. Tell me that crown attorneys don't show up at 8 in the morning and get their pile of cases that they have to deal with that day. You know as well as I do that crown attorneys in every part of this province are working under an incredible handicap of too many cases and not enough preparation time. You saw the report—if you haven't, I'll make it available to you—a survey done by the Ontario Crown Attorneys Association that talked in very real terms about the amount of time they have to prepare for things like bail hearings. The pressure is on them to give effective plea bargains.

Ms Vanscoy and Ms Even sought relief, they sought a remedy. They believed that your Victims' Bill of Rights applied to them. Your Attorney General wouldn't intervene when he was asked to. At the end of the day, the courts in this province read your Victims' Bill of Rights and, as I've told you a couple of times now, said that the Victims' Bill of Rights does not establish any statutory rights for the victims of crime.

If you want to debate the Young Offenders Act, I'll be pleased to, by way of resolution so that that opinion of this House can be passed on to the federal government. I'd be pleased to. Do you want to be critical of it? I might well join you in a whole lot of criticism of it, as would a huge chunk of the public. The fact is, you have no jurisdiction to amend the Young Offenders Act, do you? It's not in your bailiwick. You'd like to play it; you want to play the issue. You want to play the public concern there is about it and the public concern for youth crime. I don't know where the Attorney General got his last bit of statistics that we heard in here, but I wish to goodness he'd start filing some hard copy, some paper copy of the source of some of his data when he talks about crime stats. But you guys cover your butt because you say, "We believe that communities should not only be free of crime but free of the fear of crime." That's very clever, because we used to nail your Attorney General before—the other one. Remember him? You don't remember him? Most people don't. We used to nail him time after time in estimates when he would come up with these numbers.

Look, I'm the first one to argue the point that I'm not overly impressed by statistical reductions in the amount of crime, because the fact is, it doesn't do you or your family any good to say, "Oh, you were the only victim of a break and enter this month." That doesn't help you. It doesn't help the victim of a break and enter or an assault or a rape to be told, "Don't worry, because the number of these offences has been reduced this year." It's little comfort to that victim. I understand that argument; I do. It's little comfort to that victim. But that's where you guys want to deal after the fact. You want to deal with it after the crime has been committed, after the victim has already suffered, and at a point which, although money may constitute some compensation, there is never going to be a real recovery of their life as it was before that attack on them, be it by virtue of crimes against their home or crimes against their person.

Why aren't we debating Bill 56, which could have been a Victims' Bill of Rights that really is a bill of rights? You know full well that would have gotten speedy passage here in this Legislature, because people in the opposition are as anxious as anybody could be, after seeing your dismal failure in terms of protecting victims, to create a Victims' Bill of Rights in this province that has real rights and that is enforceable, unlike the one that your government passed in 1996, that you all carried throughout the province, waving it like a flag as if it were something to be proud of, when it has ended up being your biggest shame.

Do you want to talk about young offenders and making sure that young offenders who have the propensity for recidivism are properly dealt with so you can reduce that rate of recidivism? Let's talk about it. But, unfortunately, you know full well that's going to involve talking about your plan to privatize corrections here in the province. It's going to involve your plans to get out of the business of protecting communities and of rehabilitating offenders. That's going to involve discussing the failure of your government during the time you talk about the prosperity, the new revenues. Don't tell me about 1995, when revenues were at an all time low, when we were in a deep recession. I was there, like more than a few other people around here. I was there.

1550

You want to brag about your huge new revenues? Good. Let's talk about investing them in community safety. Let's talk about investing them in police. We have fewer police per capita today than we did in 1994. Let's talk about investing them in probation officers. Let's talk about investing some of that money in a correctional system for young offenders which will be meaningful, which will have sufficiently lengthy terms so that young offenders can receive adequate treatment and the community can be properly protected. Let's talk about investing in courts and court staff and support staff to assist victims so they can apply for and get restitution orders.

And let's talk about your abandonment of those families of disturbed and often dangerous young people. Let's talk about what those families are, and maybe we'll hear from experts, people you should have been talking to already. We might hear from somebody like Professor Anne-Marie Ambert. Have you read any of her research? Didn't think so. I suggest you take a look at it, because this professor of sociology has, for in excess of 10 years now, been studying the families of delinquent children. Her expertise in this area is internationally acknowledged, and she has some very important things to say about the kinds of supports these families need, the kinds of community responses that have to exist and, more importantly, about those many, many factors which create a propensity.

No, I don't buy into the argument that if you're poor, ergo you're a criminal. But you can bet your boots there's some clear correlation between families where parents, even if there are two parents in the family, have

to work not just one job but two and three jobs, so they're never home. If they're one-parent families, they have to work even more jobs. We're going to have to talk about those women that you abandoned because of your mismanagement of the family support plan, the Family Responsibility Office. Those women whose monies you've allowed to disappear into your black hole up in Downsview are depending upon that money to enable them to do the supervision of their kids that all of us would like to see parents capable of doing but are forced out to your two and three jobettes at a time to support themselves and their families.

I'll agree with your proposition that being poor doesn't ergo mean you're a criminal—far from it—but don't dare suggest that your generation of new pools of poverty doesn't pose newer and bigger burdens on parents, good parents, parents who are as responsible as any could be but who are being stripped of those tools that might well have enabled them to protect a kid from delinquency, from being drawn into that level of deviant social behaviour. You don't want to talk about those things. You want to be very fluffy about this—oh, so fluffy.

Talk about the data that shows, in those American jurisdictions where similar legislation has been passed, there not only haven't been decreases in the amount of youth crime but there have been increases. Am I suggesting the law creates increases in crime? Of course not. What I'm suggesting is that this law has nothing to do with reducing the phenomenon of youth crime—nothing—and there isn't a single bit of data to support that proposition, neither the Ontario experience over the last 14 years—that's how long we've had section 68 of the Family Law Act—nor in those jurisdictions throughout the United States where, for a period of time, this became a very fashionable, trendy sort of approach. Start talking to these families who are struggling to provide leadership in their families as they're struggling with lower and lower wages and having to work at more and more jobs, and where they compete with the impact of the Internet, television, movies and pop culture. Start talking to these families who now feel even more inhibited about calling the police to intervene with a kid who's showing signs of delinquency for fear that they'll be held liable. Start talking to these families who need governmental support rather than being pointed at and put under the gun by a government whose passion to exploit the fear of and the repugnance for youth crime overrides and displaces any and all interest or capability it has to do meaningful things.

This bill is an embarrassment to this government. This government wants to exploit public concerns, many of which I share, the Young Offenders Act to its political advantage, when it knows that it doesn't have the jurisdiction, it isn't in its bailiwick, to impact that. It doesn't want to bring resolutions forward to discuss specific facets of it. Oh, it whines and complains because its justice ministers, if that's not an oxymoron, were denied access to the federal committee reviewing the Young Offenders Act.

Lesson learned, my friends. How many times did you slam the door shut in people's faces when they've wanted to come forward to testify, give evidence, participate in your committee processes, when you didn't think it was suitable to your interests to have them speaking out? More than a few and more often than has ever been experienced in this Legislature in the brief 12 years that I've spent here, more often than ever before.

So quit the whining. Introduce a Victims' Bill of Rights that provides real rights. Let's start talking about restoring ownership, control and accountability for our correctional system, young offenders included, or restoring that to the public sector so there's ministerial accountability and so we know we've got professionals in there.

Let's start talking about giving our crown attorneys, our police forces and our courts the resources to deal with young criminals and to make sure that victims are meaningfully involved and that those very simple restitution orders—restitution orders, you're familiar with those, aren't you?—are being ordered by the court and that victims aren't required to jump through yet more hoops with little prospect of being successful.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Questions and comments?

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I had no intention of joining the debate, but my friend from Niagara certainly stimulates that process, and his words were well taken.

I want to talk about the Parental Responsibility Act, the Safe Streets Act, Christopher's Law and the Sergeant Rick McDonald Memorial Act because these are part of the community safety process in Ontario that the Mike Harris government has introduced and will continue to introduce.

Along with those acts have come resources—1,000 new police officers in the province of Ontario. That is the commitment we have to public safety. The member for Niagara Centre talked about police officers on the street. Under his government, he should remember the social contract. Do you remember the social contract? He has forgotten that. I can assure you that during the social contract police officers went to work, were shown on the complement, but guess what? There was no money to pay them, so they were sent home. He wants to talk about numbers and who was really there. They were perhaps there on the books, ready to work, but there was no money to pay police officers across this province. There was no money to pay crown attorneys across this province.

The Mike Harris government cut taxes in order to stimulate the economy. We've seen a growth in revenue. What have we done with that revenue? We've invested it in health care, we've invested it in front-line policing and we have invested it in crown attorneys.

Not only do we need to come up with legislation that makes people responsible for their actions on an everyday basis, but along with that legislation we need to put financial resources into meeting those needs, which this government has done.

1600

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I want to commend the member from Niagara for a thoughtful and spirited address on the bill currently before the Legislature. I sat and listened carefully, as I know members on all sides did. I have to say that there's clearly a consensus around this place that we have a problem. We're dealing with a pretty serious issue, about which in principle there is agreement. I don't think there's anybody here who wants to vote against or act against the notion of individual or parental responsibility. If there is a person in that category, I'd like them to identify themselves, because I don't think that person exists.

The question the Legislature faces is, what measure might we enact that might improve the public good and the general concern that attaches to this question? It concerns me when I hear people who are a lot closer to the courts than I am, like Mr Kormos or Judge Guzzo, tell me there are some very real problems with this legislation: that it is redundant, that it is in fact not going to add materially to improving the condition we want improved. I have no interest in larding the statute book with redundant legislation.

The member from Niagara made a very good point. I for one would like to know, what does explain a plea bargain whereby someone who committed a capital crime was dealt with in the way he described, without the parent of the murdered child being consulted? I want to know that. I'm not interested in any nauseous craparoo from any politician on either side of this House diverting me from getting an answer to that serious and material question. There is a consensus and there is a problem. I want something more than cheap, redundant politics and legislation to tell the parents and the citizenry of my community that we're actually going to be serious about their concerns.

Mr Marchese: Mr Speaker, I'm not going to be able to get my 20 minutes in today's round of discussions. Again New Democrats are limited in their ability to speak in this place. We do our best with the time we've got. It's for this reason that I want to congratulate my friend from Niagara Centre on his passionate dissection of Bill 55 and passionate demystification of the bill, because we often need to be able to do that on the other side.

The points he raises are: Why is it that this law-and-order government permits fewer police to be roaming the streets of Ontario, 1,400 fewer policemen and police-women on the streets today than we had in 1994-95? This is a proven statistic. You can't say anything to the contrary. We have that as proof. Why does a law-and-order government permit fewer crown attorneys? Why does a law-and-order government permit our courts to be clogged as they are, which permits the kind of plea bargaining that the member for Niagara Centre was talking about, which is the kind of quota system you people would normally be against?

Why do they permit it? This is the question the public needs to ask. Why is it that this bill can pass, a Victims'

Bill of Rights, which is toothless and which Justice Day says proffers no statutory rights? The only right that is contained within the bill is the word "right" in the title. Other than that, there are no rights that flow from the substance of the bill. The point is, I say to the good public of Ontario, it isn't intended by this government to do anything useful; it's what they hope you believe this government is doing by way of law and order, but they're actually doing very little, and our member has proven it.

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I've been here, listening with interest to the member for Niagara Centre. I followed Mr Kormos's and Mr Bob Rae's government with great interest and I cannot recall, during their four-year or five-year tenure, any reference to victims, assistance to victims, or, for instance, a Victims' Bill of Rights. It took this government to introduce it.

There seems to have been a conversion. When the member for Niagara Centre was in power, and he certainly was, somehow he failed to do anything. I've been watching him since my election in 1995 and I cannot recall him talking to any great extent about the plight of victims. He seems to favour offenders for some reason.

He talks about the American theory. He has adopted the American theory holus-bolus, a theory that the Johnson commission came forth with in 1967 that all we have to do is help the offender and we will resolve all the ills of society. I don't happen to agree with the American theory that my friend from Niagara Centre puts forth as the ills of all our problems. I particularly refuse to deny the rights of victims now over some long-range theory that has never been proven.

This is an important act. This helps victims. In my opinion, it supports safer communities. It certainly gives parents a greater incentive to supervise their own children, and that is to be lauded.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Niagara Centre has two minutes to respond.

Mr Kormos: I'm only going to respond to one particular participant. The parliamentary assistant illustrates how irrelevant the real issues are when he denigrates this debate with the silly and stupid comment that somehow anybody in this Legislature would favour the interests of offenders over those of victims. You know that has never been suggested by any of the people who have been critical of this particular piece of legislation.

Your effort to characterize our concerns about the legislation, which is designed not to change the law in any meaningful way whatsoever, our criticism of your efforts to do that, with your sole goal being to generate some spin out of what has been an embarrassing record with respect to law and order, community safety and victims, illustrates the lack of interest, the disdain you and your colleagues have for a meaningful discussion of the issues of crime, community protection and corrections and ensuring that people not only do not get into our criminal courts but that they don't become recidivists.

Quite frankly, Parliamentary Assistant, your participation in this debate in that regard should be embarrassing

to you. It should be embarrassing to you as a member of this Legislature, it should be embarrassing to you as a lawyer and it should be embarrassing to you as somebody who has the responsibility of advancing your Attorney General's political agenda. I find that type of commentary to be repugnant, to be unparliamentary in the broadest sense and to be nothing but an effort to avoid the real debate and the real issues.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am sure that all the residents of Algoma-Manitoulin would appreciate that since you are celebrating your 50th birthday today, you should probably have the afternoon off. I would move unanimous consent.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, but that's not a point of order.

Mr Conway: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just want to give the member for Cambridge an opportunity.

The Acting Speaker: Is that a point of order?

Mr Conway: I think it is a point of order. I look at what is considered unparliamentary around here and I don't know how we can do business. When we get into a debate like this, and any one of us says of the other, "It's my contention that you"—

The Acting Speaker: The member will take his seat. Further debate?

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): It's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate on Bill 55, An Act to make parents responsible for wrongful acts intentionally committed by their children. I would like to start out my discussion here by mentioning to the members opposite, who seem to believe that the steps this government took in the first four years in office, since 1995, were inappropriate and wrong-headed, and I just want to point out to the people at home, that a good gauge of the support for the direction of this government on law-and-order issues comes from the fact that virtually every police association in Ontario endorsed the re-election of this government in the 1999 election and just about every one of those police associations endorsed all of the steps we took in the first four years of office.

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I would also point out that early on with our Safe Streets Act, which the opposition opposed vehemently, many friends of mine back home, who are not necessarily Progressive Conservative supporters, said when they watched on TV they couldn't believe that their members in their party could get up and oppose that piece of legislation. I think some of those points are relevant to make here.

And just to try to lighten things up for the members opposite, it reminds me of a story I heard recently about the different positions of the Liberals, the NDP and our government on law-and-order issues. The story goes like this. There's a man sitting on the street out here at Queen's Park and he's been mugged. He's been robbed and he's been roughed up a little bit. Along comes Mike Harris and Mike Harris leans over and says to him, "My gosh, are you OK?" The gentleman says, "Yes." He says,

“Wait right here, I’ll go and get the police,” and Mr Harris runs off. The next person to come up is Mr Hampton, the leader of the NDP. He leans over the gentleman and he says: “Gee, tell me, which way did the perpetrator go? We need to get him some help.” Then the third person who comes up is Dalton McGuinty, the leader of the Liberal Party. He leans over and says, “Tell me, what did the other two guys say?” It’s a little levity, a little story that I’ve heard several times. It kind of points out the difference in positions on the law-and-order issue between the three parties in Ontario. I got a small chuckle from a member opposite, which was my goal.

At the outset, I want to congratulate the people of Ontario on this bill. Several years ago the Premier introduced a group known as the crime commission. The Ontario Crime Control Commission was made up of my seatmate, the member from Cambridge, Mr Gerry Martiniuk, Jim Brown, a previous member from Scarborough, and Bob Wood, the member from London South. I believe those gentlemen have now been joined by Mr Mazzilli, the member from London-Fanshawe, a former police officer himself. He has replaced Mr Brown on the Crime Control Commission.

I had the good fortune of having the Crime Control Commission come to my riding and have a public forum, a public meeting, a town hall meeting, which everyone was invited to. We advertised widely and a lot of people came out to that and a lot of people made submissions on their feelings about law and order in Ontario. I believe the Crime Control Commission has had over 80 public meetings across Ontario in the last couple of years.

Back in—I believe the publication date was 1998—

Interjection: Yes.

Mr Maves: We had the first Ontario Crime Control Commission Report on Youth Crime. It’s very instructive to note that, of some of the things they talked about, one which they urged this government to do in the future was parental responsibility legislation, and here it is introduced.

The people of Ontario spoke and the crime commission went out with a mandate. They listened to the people of Ontario and made a report. That report is based on what they heard and here is the government listening and implementing what they were asked to implement.

They also brought forward the idea of citizens’ courts. This is especially instructive for the member opposite. Maybe Mr Marchese hasn’t been listening in the past four years when he talks about court backlogs. One of the ways we’ve reduced that is through introducing citizen courts. We have six right now across Ontario. These folks do alternative forms of sentencing and it keeps first-time young offenders out of the court system, perhaps out of facilities where they have repeat offenders and more hardened criminals who would be a bad influence.

I have a quote from Vic Toews, the Manitoba Attorney General. He talked to the crime commission about their experience with citizen courts in Manitoba. His quote was: “They hold the kids accountable to their

community. They are harsh and effective. The recidivism rate is only 10%.” That is remarkable. I have to tell you that the recidivism rate in Ontario for youth who are incarcerated in some of our facilities is not good. The amount of recidivism that occurs in this province is still quite high, and it is something that we need to continue to work on.

The member for Niagara Centre told us—and of course we all know the story now—about the very early days of the opening of Camp Turnaround, a boot camp, as some refer to it here in Ontario, which, again, the people of Ontario asked for for many years. When we implemented that, yes, there was early on an incident that happened there, but what the members opposite should know is that the recidivism rate there is about 40%. That’s not very good, but it’s lower than just about every other facility in Ontario. Some of our members shouted across the way that Camp Turnaround is a success and, measured against existing facilities, it is.

To tell a cute story and have a laugh about it, and then write off Camp Turnaround and the whole idea of boot camps because you can tell a funny story and try to embarrass the government I think is doing a disservice to this debate. So it’s instructive to know some of these things.

I want to congratulate all the people who attended these crime commission forums across Ontario in the last couple of years. I want to congratulate the crime commission, not only on the implementation of citizens’ courts, which was a recommendation by the people of Ontario, not only now by the implementation of the parental responsibility legislation which we have before us today, but also in further initiatives like calling on the federal government to make changes to the Young Offenders Act, calling for the Safe Schools Act with our code of conduct—and I think we’re going to make some more moves toward the Safe Schools Act in the near future—and the safe streets legislation. All of these things came out of those forums, came out of this government going out to communities and actively soliciting input from the people of Ontario. Many of those are in this first report of the Ontario Crime Control Commission. They’re being implemented. Listening with both ears open.

I did notice one member is quoted in one of these reports. When he’s talking about parenting and parental responsibility, Bill Brunt says, “Parents should be subject to providing restitution to the victims of young offenders.” And the recommendation, quite simply, is:

“The commission recommends that the government of Ontario develop and implement parental liability legislation. The legislation’s goal is to provide victims of youth crime with the right to seek financial restitution from the young offender’s parents.”

And here it is. So I congratulate the commission on their work. I congratulate this government for listening.

I also want to say that it’s true that there is already on the books the possibility that a parent, a taxpayer, a homeowner, a victim can sue for compensation from the

perpetrator of a crime, and that is important to know. Parents have a duty under current law to supervise their children. They may be liable if they are negligent in this duty. The problem is that the burden of proof is solely on the victim, and this really isn't fair to victims.

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Under the current law, victims must show that they suffered damage, that the damage was related to the conduct of the parents, that there is a duty recognized in law to control a child's activities and that the damage was reasonably foreseeable. This, you can see, puts a considerable burden on the victim.

The difference with this bill is that our government wants to make it easier for victims to get justice by simplifying this process. So, under the proposed act that we have in front of us today, a victim would only have to do two things: prove that the child caused the property damage and establish the amount of the damages.

Now, under the act, special circumstances are taken into consideration. The parent would either prove that the youth acted unintentionally, and therefore the parent wouldn't be held liable, or that they, the parent, exercised reasonable supervision over the child and made reasonable efforts to prevent the child from causing the damage. If the parent could prove that, then they wouldn't be held liable for compensation. Right now the onus is purely on the victim and extremely difficult to do.

I want you to understand what you're asking people to do. The member over there went on at great length about criminals and the situations they face, but let's talk about the victims for a minute. When the crime commission was out in Hamilton, I remember they had an elderly couple in their 70s from Hamilton whose house had been broken into, their premises had been broken into, and this changed their lives forever. These people were now afraid to go back in their home.

In this Legislature, sometimes we hear about break and enters, and maybe some of us, people in their 30s like my wife and I, have a break and enter. Well, we may go home and we may call the police and they come and investigate, and we call the insurance company and it's over and done with. We get an alarm system put on the door, and that's it. We feel a little bit more secure because now we've got an alarm system and so on. But put yourself in the shoes of that 70-year-old couple. These people's lives are changed forever. Now, if the couple wants to seek compensation, to try to teach maybe a youth perpetrator a little lesson in life, the burden of proof is totally on this 70-year-old couple. I don't think they would necessarily have the resources to do this, and in the state of mind that they're in, is it fair to ask them that? We think not, and that's why we have this change, and that's what the material change is in this legislation.

These are very important aspects. I remember, in my own situation, growing up in Niagara Falls. I have an older brother, who's two years older, and a younger brother, two years younger. We lived central to three schools that we went to, elementary and secondary schools. The back door was always open when I grew up. My friends came over for lunch, my friends came over

after school, and they all knew they were welcome and that the back door was open. My mother came home several times and found my friends sitting on my couch in front of the TV with milk and cookies or whatever, watching television after school, and my brothers and I weren't even home yet. It was an open atmosphere. It was, "Welcome to the home." We could live that way, and we did live that way. What a great way to be able to live in this wonderful province of Ontario and in my great city of Niagara Falls.

Well, my mother, one day, when we got a little bit older, got broken into. The door was locked on this occasion, but they broke in and rummaged through all her belongings. My mother, at the time, was probably in her 50s, and it really affected her. It really had a negative impact on my mother. She had some fear when she was now home alone. Two years later, with locks on all the doors—now we've got extra locks on all the doors—it happened again. They go upstairs and rummage through all of your personal belongings, they take your jewellery and they take my mother's mother's jewellery—my grandmother had passed on.

These property crimes may seem on the surface when you hear about them—we always hear about them and read about them in the paper. They're in the little column in the newspaper. You hear about them, and that's the end of the story. But there are a lot of people in this province who have been the victims in this type of crime, who have had their lives altered forever, and it isn't fair. We need to try to address that. That's why we've been taking a lot of the steps that we have been taking, with the Safe Streets Act and with a variety of other pieces of legislation, with 1,000 new officers coming in. That's why we had the crime commission, so that the crime commission could go out there and talk to these people and let them air their concerns and give us some of their solutions that we could use to deal with these problems.

The Safe Streets Act is a perfect example. There were so many people and Toronto police officers who told me that they were powerless to do anything to some of these people who were soliciting for squeegeeing or for other things on the streets of Toronto and scaring individuals. I remember hearing radio shows when we passed that legislation and the number of people who were calling in to the radio stations telling their stories of how they had been intimidated into giving money to somebody. I don't mind anyone being entrepreneurial, but harassing and intimidating somebody into giving you money is not something that is on any more in the province of Ontario.

I don't stand back from this piece of legislation and I don't stand back from the safe streets legislation and apologize to anybody for it. It's time we brought in these pieces of legislation. These are pieces of legislation that the police are telling us they need. These are pieces of legislation that the public, through the crime commission and through people coming into our offices and talking to us, are telling us they need.

Again I want to congratulate the member for Cambridge and the member for London-Fanshawe and the

member for London South, Mr Wood, on the work they've done. I want to congratulate all the people who appeared at those forums and made these suggestions—Bill Brunt, for one, who suggested the Parental Responsibility Act. We need to continue on.

The code of conduct in schools: I remember four years ago talking to teachers. I remember having discussions with them about the prep time issue and a lot of secondary school teachers saying to me: "We wouldn't necessarily need all the prep time we have right now if we could do something with the one or two guys or gals in our class who disrupt the whole class. Help us do something. Get the board to give us some backbone and support us when we try to discipline kids." Now we're bringing in a code of conduct to deal exactly with what they asked us to help them deal with. It's not every kid in the class—no one ever thinks that—but it's the one or two bad actors they haven't been able to deal with: "Give us the ability to deal with them and then our job is a lot easier." We're listening and now we're bringing in a code of conduct province-wide.

I congratulate the government. I congratulate the crime commission. I congratulate all those people who have taken the time in over 80 forums across Ontario to come out and make their views heard. I congratulate the police associations across the province for telling us what tools they need to do their job, for supporting us on the pieces of legislation we have brought in. A lot of that stuff is generated from their ideas. It's high time there was a government that listened to the victims and listened to those front-line officers. I'm proud of this bill and I'm proud of all the other law-and-order bills this government has brought in. I support it today.

1630

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): First of all, let me comment that this government has a greater track record at verbalizing their support for crime and punishment legislation than they do in enacting legislation that will ensure there are safer communities.

I look at the nice pages we've had this session. I look at Rowan Denny from Collingwood and John Craig McEachnie from Ajax. They have listened for three weeks, and I wonder if they are not thinking it would be far more productive for the members of this Legislative Assembly to pass meaningful laws, to pass meaningful acts and to enact programs that will ensure that our youth won't be led into crime or have to choose crime as an alternative in order to eke out an existence or for whatever other reason. I'm sure that when they go back to their schools, and when they go to high school next year, they'll want to be very proactive at ensuring that their actions will set an example for others to follow, so that when their fellow students see John Craig or Rowan, they will say, "Those are the examples I want to follow."

The reality is that if we invested in meaningful programs in our elementary and high schools, the incidence of youth crime would drop drastically. The code of conduct is not new, and we will be debating that at the

appropriate time. Rowan and John Craig already have a code of conduct in their schools. That's not new. What would be new for this government is to enact meaningful legislation that ensures our youth are protected.

Mr Marchese: The member for Niagara Falls is so full of self-congratulation that it's really sickening. I only have a couple of minutes to make a few comments, but you will recall that they used to talk about the Victims' Bill of Rights as their crown jewel. They don't talk about it too much any more, because they are embarrassed by it. Mr Kormos made reference to this, but I'm going to refer to it again: In May 1999, Superior Court Justice Gerald Day ruled that Ontario's Victims' Bill of Rights had been deliberately written to be a toothless policy document which would be unenforceable in the courts of law. Judge Day said: "I conclude that the Legislature did not intend for the Victims' Bill of Rights to provide rights to the victims of crime. The act is a statement of principle and social policy beguilingly clothed in the language of legislation. It does not establish any statutory rights for the victims of crime."

But to listen to these guys—M. Maves on the other side—they're constantly listening to victims, says he. Judge Day told them there are no statutory rights contained within that bill, except in the title, which gives victims the impression they are getting something, but they're getting nothing.

In the other reference with respect to this bill, Professor Larry Wilson said, "What, then, does this proposed legislation offer in terms of advancing or even altering the current state of law in Ontario?" He says, "Nothing." What these fine Tories are offering the Ontario public is placebo politics. It is all intended to make people feel good about law and order, but there is naught by way of law and order in this bill.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond for a couple of minutes. I'd certainly like to compliment the member for Niagara Falls on an exceptional and very thoughtful presentation. He brought forward a lot of interesting points, talking about the crime commission, responsible for bringing forward the citizen courts. He talked about the code of conduct that we will be bringing in for students in our schools and improving safety and security in our schools. He talked about Project Turnaround. I had the privilege of visiting Project Turnaround in early March. I met with the director and several of the guards there, along with several young people who now reside there, hopefully, for them, for a short period of time. Certainly it's a very impressive operation.

I hear the opposition talking about how terrible privatization is. I sat with the director at a desk and she was telling me about how all the people who work there try to save money, and the desk she sat at cost them \$1. When you look at privatization, that is the kind of saving they take very seriously.

The member for Niagara Falls also talked about victims and how their lives get changed afterwards. Certainly seniors are very concerned about security and

whether the door is double-locked. I know my mom is. I can understand his comments, and he said it very thoughtfully.

The thing I don't understand is this bill about toy guns that was brought forward by the member for St Paul's. How silly can we get? Even the Leader of the Opposition wasted his time today talking about a bill on toy guns. I suppose he'll want to bring in a bill also on toy swords and maybe pet rocks, because they can become a weapon. You remember the story about David and Goliath and how the pebble knocked down and killed Goliath—

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): You know how serious this government is when you get the drivel that just came out of the past member talking about toys. There's a lot of difference between pet rocks and toy guns. Toy guns are used in crime.

The speaker from Niagara Falls mentioned the Safe Streets Act. I recall that he said how he had heard officers from the city of Toronto say how much they appreciate that act. I'm sure they do in Toronto, but you know that act covers rural Ontario as well. When it comes to these guys, one size fits all, notwithstanding the fact that I don't think anybody would say that a squeegee kid is a criminal. I don't think anybody suggests that a panhandler is a criminal. They have problems, absolutely no doubt about it, and we want to help them with their problems. But what you guys do is just treat them like criminals.

What's happened, then, with their Safe Streets Act? I've had to introduce a private member's bill because there are charities in this province that are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars because of your Safe Streets Act, which keeps firefighters, university kids in Shinerama and Good Fellows off the street.

Interjections.

Mr Crozier: Well, it's the truth. It is absolutely the truth, and furthermore, the Attorney General then says, "They can go on medians and curbs and sidewalks." The bill doesn't say that, and they can't go on medians where there are no medians, they can't go on sidewalks where there are no sidewalks, and they can't go in parking lots, because the bill won't allow it. So these guys say, "We'll let you break the law." Well, police officers can't do that. If there's a complaint, they have to act on it.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Niagara Falls has two minutes.

Mr Maves: On the last part, I remember distinctly the day that the west lobby was filled with police officers and the members opposite tried to make that same comment. The Premier of this province got up and said, "I trust the judgment of the police officers of the province of Ontario." They began to clap and cheer, and I remember the Speaker had to calm them down. It was a big embarrassment for the members opposite. Why they would want to bring that up again, to their own detriment, is beyond me.

The member from Trinity-Spadina left the room while I talked. He clearly didn't listen to the material change I outlined that this bill brought in. He didn't pay any attention. He talks a lot. Also, if he had paid any attention whatsoever, he wouldn't be saying what he said, because he insulted the people of Ontario, because the congratulations I gave were predominantly to all of those people who attended the over 80 public forums across the province of Ontario to give input on crime and law-and-order issues.

Christopher's Law, the pedophile registry we brought in, I'm proud of that. The Rick McDonald act, stiffer penalties for those who flee from police officers and end up in car chases, I'm proud of that. The Safe Street Act: I spoke long on that, and I'm proud of that one. Doubling the funding for the RIDE program, the stiffer penalties for DWI—the NDP didn't take it seriously; we do. The community policing partnership: 1,000 new police officers. I'm proud of all of those initiatives, as I will be when we bring in a new code of conduct province-wide to help teachers and kids learn in their school. We're going to continue to work on other promises like fast-tracking for municipalities that want to bust crack houses.

Interjections.

Mr Maves: The member from Trinity-Spadina can continue to mock this all he wants, but the people of Ontario want some action taken on law and order, and this government is doing it.

1640

The Acting Speaker: The member for Sudbury.

Mr Bartolucci: I'll be splitting my time with the member from Windsor West.

Any type of crime is unsettling to society in general. Youth crime is particularly unsettling to the people of Ontario. I believe the people of Ontario want us, the legislators of this province, to act in a very responsible way and bring in meaningful laws, meaningful acts that will address the problems. The reality is that the people of Ontario want the type of legislation which will stop crime from happening as opposed to reactive legislation.

This is exactly what this bill is. This bill is redundant legislation, because the operative sections of this bill are already found under section 68 of the Family Law Act. When I stand up here and talk, I like to give you the views of the people of Sudbury, whom I represent. It's not often, though, that I quote the editorialists in the Sudbury Star because, to be perfectly honest, they've been pretty friendly to the government across the way. But I do want to outline a little of what they said.

On April 5 they said: "The latest legislation is a waste of time. In introducing its Parental Responsibility Act the province further entrenches its reputation as a bastion of law and order and appeases Conservative Party supporters. But beyond these two points it is doubtful the law will accomplish anything."

It goes on to say, "It is unnecessary legislation which makes the assumption that parents of young offenders are negligent or irresponsible." It ends by simply saying, "This law will do little to make streets safer and is simply

a waste of time and money." You would do well to listen to the editor of the Sudbury Star in this instance.

Let me tell you what John Rimore, from the John Howard Society, says: "The government is attempting to control a social problem through legislation. The Tories aren't thinking through the situation in that they are actually making it more difficult to be responsible if parents have to keep looking over their shoulders whenever their children go to the mall, or whatever the case may be." I suggest to you that the front-line people who are involved should be listened to in this instance.

What concerns me the most is that this is the government that supposedly says that everyone has a responsibility. Yet when it's given the opportunity to exercise its responsibility, it runs away from the issue.

I am not going to rehash the Al McLean sex scandal again. I'm not going to rehash that. But I'm just going to outline to the House and to the people of Ontario that what this government did was run away from the problem. They ran away from the problem. Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservative government ran away from the problem. They would not accept responsibility for what a member of their caucus said.

Interjections.

Mr Bartolucci: I don't want to spend a lot of time talking about that affair.

Interjection: That's awful.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Bartolucci: But I do want to explain to the members of the House who are heckling, I do want to talk for a minute to the members on the government side who have trouble coming to grips with reality and the truth, about some of the legislation they let die on the order paper because they wanted to prorogue the House and try to run away from the affair.

You all remember my bill in this House. It was called Bill 18, An Act to protect Children involved in Prostitution. I have to be perfectly honest with you that these children, who have been sexually exploited and sexually abused because Bill 18 has not come into law yet, are holding this government accountable.

Every time a john picks up a kid under the age of 18, every time a pimp exploits a child under the age of 18, be proud of yourselves, members on the other side. You allowed the legislation to die in order to avoid your own little affair. Well, I have reintroduced the act. It's now called Bill 6. It's exactly the same act as Bill 18.

I challenge you, across the way, to pass this bill into law. You want to talk about police officers being in favour of legislation. You want to talk about chiefs of police being in favour of this legislation. I'll match my support for this legislation with the chiefs of police of Ontario or the police associations of Ontario with any legislation that you've introduced because this has meaning to it, this has bite to it. This protects the most vulnerable in our society, those children who are sexually exploited or those children who are sexually abused because of johns and pimps.

This government will do nothing to enact that legislation. But today I challenge this government to pass my

legislation. I challenge this government to call my legislation for debate. You will find out what the associations of police chiefs across Ontario think of this legislation. You will find out what the Police Association of Ontario thinks about this legislation. Do you know what? I haven't stopped there, because in my quest to protect children, I will continue to introduce legislation that will punish those who take advantage of children.

And so, we talk about Bill 32, an act to amend the Highway Traffic Act, which will disqualify a person from driving if in fact he uses his or her vehicle trying to solicit sexual favours from a child under 18 years of age. I challenge you to pass that legislation as well. I challenge you to not only talk the talk, I challenge you to walk the walk. Do I have support for it? Absolutely. The Police Association of Ontario has come out in support of it. Police chiefs around this province have come out in support of it. Craig Bromell has come out in support of it, ensuring that his association will do whatever it can to ensure that meaningful legislation is passed.

Interjection.

Mr Bartolucci: The Minister of Transportation across the way tries to mock Craig Bromell. The reality is he is your friend. I could produce the letter any time the Minister of Transportation wants showing his support for this legislation. I would suggest to this government that they should have the courage to pass meaningful legislation, not to play politics any longer with their so-called law-and-order agenda.

I would challenge this government to listen to Michael Bryant's legislation and pass it because, contrary to what one Conservative member said earlier, it will save lives. A man's life was taken because he chose to use a phony gun. We have to respond to the needs of our society. We have to respond to the needs that we find in the different groups of society. Therefore, we have to be broad in our scope. We cannot be narrow in our agenda. The Mike Harris government is very narrow in its agenda on law and order.

There are some parts of the law-and-order agenda that need to be addressed. One part, a meaningful part, in my estimation the most important part, is how we protect our youth, how we protect our young from those people who would take advantage of them. I challenge the government: Don't bring in meaningless legislation. Bring in legislation that is important and will serve a purpose. Pass the type of bill that addresses the needs of our society as opposed to your own philosophical, political agenda.

1650

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): I appreciate sharing my time with the member for Sudbury, and especially with our Speaker who is sitting here today on his 50th birthday. We'd like to say happy birthday to him as well.

I'm very happy to speak to this bill today in the House. It's called the Parental Responsibility Act. I want to talk about government responsibility where our children are concerned. While this government intro-

duced a bill in the House last week that's meant to make parents responsible for the behaviour of their kids—what motherhood and apple pie that is; of course parents are to be responsible for their children—what I'd like to ask the government is, how responsible are they when it comes to helping families who are in crisis?

Last week, while they did their political stunt of introducing this kind of bill into the House, in my hometown and in my county, our member for Essex attended a meeting of over 700 people who arrived by invitation of a gentleman named George Johnson, a retired CAW worker, who was reading accounts of children's mental health patients, clients who are in crisis, and couldn't believe what little reaction there was from anybody in authority who was prepared to help these kids in crisis.

Why it is so relevant to the discussion today is best illustrated by a quote from Connie Martin, who is the director of Maryvale, a wonderful program in our community that deals with adolescents in crisis. What she says of the large, long waiting lists of kids who need service for mental health issues is that while they wait, they kill themselves, try to kill others and become the kids you're afraid to see on the streets. What she says specifically is that these are kids from all walks of life: The children on the waiting list come from middle- and upper-class families as well as lower-income families. A two-year waiting list puts them at great risk.

In this time where we would have 700 people come and be interested in these children, come and be interested in hearing the kinds of crises that attend kids in my community who cannot access children's mental health agencies because the waiting lists are so long, these are some of the kids this government chooses to only want to address by virtue of, "Who is paying the bill when they break the window?" I want to ask the government the question: After we have identified that these children need help, who is responsible for the fact that these agencies, whose mandate it is to serve these kids, can't do their jobs because they lack the resources from this government? Not only have they not funded the increased need over the course of the last five years, they have cut the resources they had before, all under this guise of restructuring children's services. Ultimately and in the end, we have fewer services for kids who are in need.

I want to talk about those kids in this House today who are getting in trouble with the law, whose parents have advocated on their children's behalf for years, who have struggled with the issues of dealing with their children who are in trouble, and the best this government can give us is the bill. I want to ask the government who they truly believe to be responsible when they made the political decision to cut services for these agencies for these same children.

I would like to know why it is that so many organizations can come forward in support of a petition that this gentleman George Johnson brought to the fore in that environment where he had many organizations come forward and agree that this is a priority. The government

needs to understand that if they don't help at the front end of these problem children, the problems will get worse and ultimately these kids will not fare well in life. Does this government feel they have any responsibility for these kids at all?

Children's mental health agencies right across Ontario command a budget of less than one major Toronto hospital. This is what they've dealt with all these years on a shoestring budget. Here we have the fifth year of the Mike Harris government and the best he can do for these kids is advance a bill called the Parental Responsibility Act, when they have at their disposal the ability to help these kids when they truly need the help and they are denying these kids the help.

Why is it that St Barnabas' Church and Rev Bill Bradley say, "Of course we support such a resolution and the use of resources for that purpose"? Norman Sinclair, who is a retired teacher, said the same thing. He is troubled by the underfunding of children's mental health facilities.

There are educators right across Ontario who, from primary grades, see children who need to have intervention through children's mental health agencies but don't get it. When those children get to grade 8 or grade 5, the problems still exist because we haven't been able to get these kids the services they require. Likewise, Marion Sinclair, who is also retired, read with interest information in our local newspaper that addressed the issue and asked why the government doesn't respond. This organization of people also received a letter of support from the Windsor Police Association.

When the police associations for the nation came to Windsor for a conference, I asked if I could speak for five minutes on their agenda at the top of their conference for one, sole purpose, and that was to request of the police associations across the board, when so many of them as individuals are going to do volunteer work—it is very typical to find police officers doing volunteer work for children's mental health agencies. Why? Because they know that if they don't address the underlying issues with these kids, these are the kids they pick up off the street because they're in trouble. The police know this. The police know their neighbourhoods.

I went to that convention to ask them specifically to be involved in advocating for these organizations that are there to provide the help families need and not to get kicked when they are down, to honestly look for support from a government that's going to help where the help is truly required. The police association in Windsor, under the signature of John Moor, the administrator, said, "Yes, we support the resolution calling for better funding of children's mental health agencies." They recognized the need to do that.

Organizations like our health unit are also very supportive. The Victims for Justice Coalition says the same thing: "The growth populations in penitentiaries and adult psychiatric facilities across Canada can certainly attest to the cold, hard facts. The cruel reality is, if we do not offer the necessary psychological services to a child

or adolescent, then as a community we have to bear the responsibility of children becoming more violent and graduating to our federal penitentiaries.”

Why is it that it makes such good sense to help kids when they need help, and the government fails to do so to the point where just prior to this group having their meeting, the minister had the gall to send a letter down to talk about how he was going to visit the facilities before the summertime? We can send you all the information you need. You don't have to come to visit, although we love to have ministers visit, as the Minister of Health well knows. Come to Windsor to see for yourself what the situation is truly like on the streets when kids can't get the services they need. But that's cold comfort to families like Anne Beneteau, who spoke at length about the trials and tribulations she has gone through with one of her children because the services aren't there when they are needed.

I ask the government to review its priorities, to not just look at what's going to be politically saleable for you and your constituency but to be responsible as a government to go after the issues that have to be addressed. A two-year waiting list for services for families with kids who are getting into trouble is not acceptable. It wasn't acceptable in 1993, when the cuts to these children's agencies began, and it's certainly not acceptable now, because the current government continued those cuts despite the rising number of kids who need the services.

In my Essex county area in particular, the statistics are absolutely appalling for the huge number of kids who are on waiting lists. To have 700 children on waiting lists in a community the size of mine is totally unacceptable. It's unacceptable to me, to George Johnson and to any number of hundreds of people who have taken the time to go to a forum entitled Kids in Crisis, and to write letters to my office and to the minister's office saying, “You need to help us while there's time to help these children.”

I don't like the notion that the government would use children in some attempt for more political pap for their constituency. I want to see the government be responsible and do the right thing and help the children when they need it most.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr Marchese: I want to support the two previous speakers by adding the following: This bill does nothing to deal with the causes of crime and does nothing to prevent crime. It's quite clear. We know this. They don't talk about parenting programs whatsoever, things that would be helpful to parents. They don't talk about lack of basic literacy and how that affects an individual's life. They don't talk about how not providing adequate special education programs in the system affects people's lives. They don't talk about early childhood education, and how if we had early childhood education in our system, it would do a great deal to prepare students for a better life and we would be able to detect problems early should they be in a school system.

1700

They don't talk about giving opportunities to adults, because much of what they have done through adult

education has been cut severely by this government. It's part of the ongoing training and education that people need to be able to feel good about themselves. They don't talk about how stress at home affects young people and adults. They don't talk about the stress of having two people work at two or three jobs and the problems this brings in the home. They don't talk about how the inadequacy of housing affects people's lives and how that brings people to the brink of homelessness and to the point of crime at times.

These are issues we need to talk about: the fact that we don't have as many policemen and policewomen on the streets as we did in 1994; 1,400 fewer today than in 1994. And this is a law-and-order government in a good economy. Imagine that. We have fewer crown attorneys to deal with the problems we have in our court system, and they're clogged. We have cuts in the inner-city schools, where we have a great deal of poverty. Tories deliberately are not interested in this issue and they know Bill 55 does nothing new to reduce crime. They know this and that's the tragedy.

Mr Mazzilli: I'm happy to join in this debate and comment on some of the things we've heard from the member for Sudbury and the member for Windsor West. The member for Sudbury talked about meaningful legislation. Today we heard that the leader of the official opposition is going to support some sort of provincial act in relation to toy guns. Can you imagine? If he would just check, where is the definition of a firearm? It's in the Criminal Code. First, we have the federal Liberals refusing to fund health care and the leader of the official opposition refusing to do anything about it. Now we have the federal Liberals refusing in any way to take responsibility for the Criminal Code and to define firearms. Yes, toy guns are a problem sometimes, when they're used in the commission of an offence. Why does the federal government not write that into the Criminal Code? Do we now, as a province, have to interfere in some of the federal issues on how to define that? No, we should not, and your leader should not support such a bill, because it is political.

We are looking for meaningful resolutions for these things. The meaningful thing we can do as a province is to create legislation that is under provincial guidelines and to provide the financial resources to back some of the federal initiatives that are responsible for policing. That's what we've done: hired 1,000 new police officers in the province.

The member for Trinity-Spadina, at great length, goes into police officers. There are more police officers today, because of a thriving economy, than there ever were. You should speak to police officers in the province.

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): I would like to comment on my colleagues from Sudbury and Windsor West for their analysis of this bill. Both members backed up what they had to say by citing references in their community by people to whom they have spoken. I suppose the basic message, which was also part of the Sudbury editorial, was that this does not go very far. It makes one

point: It appeals to a certain perception that this is going to be get-tough legislation, but anyone who takes a look at it says it's pretty light on resolution. If you know anything about trying to resolve social problems, then you've got to get at the underlying reasons or causes of delinquency or the breaking of the law by adolescents.

The editorial from the Sudbury Star I think sums it up: "It is unnecessary legislation which makes the assumption that parents of young offenders are negligent or irresponsible." I suppose a lot of people will disagree and say, "Well, in fact there is a point that it can be dealt with soon."

The member for Windsor West talked about the children's mental health centres. While the government has said they've added some immediate money right now—they have added it for a special, dedicated new program—they have not helped provide some recovery money for money that was taken away from them to deal with the 6,000 to 8,000 youngsters who are awaiting some basic services by these centres which do an extremely important and valuable job, and indeed are the preventive beginning of helping youngsters to cope with the difficulties they have so that down the line they will not be breaking the law.

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's a pleasure just to respond very quickly to Bill 55, which I hope to have a chance to speak on in the future, perhaps tomorrow.

I know when Mr Flaherty introduced this bill it certainly rang true to me, as a parent of five children. We all have a responsibility to make sure they understand respect for property and that there are consequences for our actions. We should always look at it in a positive way, because 95% or higher of the children really are positively motivated and positively influenced.

It's really more important to hear the signals and symbols we're talking about here, that there are consequences for our actions. That's basically what we're saying. Parents should take the role and try to influence the positive outcomes of their children. I don't see it in any kind of negative way; I see it as a constructive signal to our young people that we appreciate those who don't get into trouble, but for those who do, there are consequences for your action.

You look to the weakness of the federal government, not to just slam the feds or the Liberals here—

Interjections.

Mr O'Toole: No, that's not my intention. My intention is really to say most Canadians have been demanding that the Young Offenders Act be stiffened, not become entirely a punitive instrument, but send that signal to young people that we coexist in this universe and that we all have rights and we all have responsibilities. In the development of children, parents have a role, and a responsibility I might add, to teach them and to make sure that they are being held accountable for their truancies, in whatever form, again focusing on the positive and saying that most young people I'm familiar with are a positive contribution to our communities.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Sudbury has two minutes to respond.

Mr Bartolucci: I'd like to thank those four members who responded to the joint presentation from the member for Windsor West and myself.

If there's one thing that I'd like to leave the House with, an idea for us to ponder, it is that we should, without any reservation, lower the temperature in this place and start looking on both sides of the House at good ideas and enact good ideas, because good ideas become good legislation. The reality is that Bill 55 is not good legislation; it is redundant legislation. Michael Bryant, the member for St Paul's, has a bill that he's going to introduce that is good legislation. It will protect the lives of police officers. It will protect the lives of innocent bystanders. And you know what? That's important to me.

I believe the legislation that I've introduced over the course of the last five years is good legislation because it protects children. It protects those children who are the most vulnerable. I believe members on both sides of the House have a responsibility to pass legislation that deals with social issues so that the ramification of our legislation is a better world, a better society, a better opportunity for those children who are disadvantaged, for those children who are most vulnerable.

I challenge this government not to run away when it has a problem. Avoid running away. Avoid proroguing the House to get away from the problem. Let's deal with meaningful legislation, let's pass meaningful laws, and let's make a better Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

1710

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): I will be splitting my time today with Joe Tascona, the member from Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford.

I rise today to speak in favour of the Parental Responsibility Act, put forward by the Honourable Jim Flaherty, Attorney General of Ontario. I would like to discuss why such legislation has become necessary in today's society. What has happened with our young people that has created a need to legislate parental responsibility? I know there are many colleagues in the House today who have a clear understanding of the need of change in direction for our youth.

In my riding of York North there is a real concern for the direction of our young people and how they are being influenced and guided. We must, as a society, assist parents and professionals who deal with youth and give them the proper tools they will need to deal with youth criminal activity.

A lot of this change should stem from the federal government, with drastic changes to the current Young Offenders Act. The current Criminal Code for Canadian youth is like a get-out-of-jail-free card. Individuals under the age of 18 are fully aware of the fact that they are virtually unpunishable with respect to criminal activity. If you talk to front-line police officers and other professionals who deal with teenagers on a day-to-day basis, they will tell you that the teenagers of today are fluent in the ins and outs of the Young Offenders Act and have full knowledge of any potential consequences of each

criminal activity. They will also tell you that the young people of today who engage in criminal activity have no qualms about letting authorities know that they, the authorities, are powerless to stop them or punish them in any meaningful way.

This is one of the reasons that legislation like this has become necessary. Although there have been many cries from across the country to the federal government to change the Young Offenders Act, so far there has been a refusal to listen. We as a province are unable to make the changes that are truly needed to discourage youth from participating in all types of criminal activity, so we have to take whatever steps we can to facilitate steering our young people in a positive direction. We must look at whatever recourse we have to steer our justice system with respect to youth in a positive way.

Unfortunately our hands are still tied, as a government and as a society, to deal with violent criminal activity in Ontario. What we can do is start talking about ways to deal with other types of criminal activity. This particular piece of legislation will address the issue of property crimes. If you look at the numbers, 47% of all cases heard in Ontario under the Young Offenders Act in 1998 were related to property crimes. That is why this legislation is so important to the people of Ontario; 47% is a very significant portion of all youth criminal activity. This is something we have the ability to change. When property is damaged or stolen, who is paying for it? It has to be fixed or replaced, so where does that money currently come from? Does the taxpayer always have to foot the bill for criminal activity caused by public property damage? Should the insurance companies pay for private property that is stolen or vandalized?

When the insurance companies do pay, that means an increase in premiums to the citizens who in fact are the victims of these crimes. Why should they foot the bill for the repairs and the replacements? Property crimes are not victimless crimes, as some would like you to believe. There are always financial consequences for someone when property is stolen or vandalized. Usually the individuals who are committing the crimes are not in a position to pay the cost of damages. Does that mean no one should pay? Who is supposed to be responsible?

The purpose of this legislation is to direct the financial responsibility where it belongs. Parents, under normal circumstances, must be responsible for their children's actions. That does not mean that we are here to punish parents for incidents that are beyond their control. There are many situations in which parents have done everything they can for their children, situations where parents can show that they have taken steps to properly monitor their children's activities and sought outside help where necessary or when damage is caused unintentionally. These are all factors that this bill takes into account.

Every case under this act will be judged on an individual basis to ensure fairness to the families as well as to the victims. I feel that this bill can encourage parents to become more involved in the activities of their children, their children's lives, and monitor these activities. We

live in a very fast-paced society where it is very easy to fall behind in quality time with our family.

We have teachers who have expressed concerns about safety in our schools and citizens who are concerned about safety in their homes. We currently do not have the tools in place for Ontario to seek damages when it comes to youth crime. This bill will allow victims of crime greater access to justice. Under the current legislation, victims have a very difficult time recouping any cost associated with property crime. This will create a greater balance in our justice system.

This bill is not the only answer. These changes must work in conjunction with other or recently changed legislation as a package. Our government has brought forward many changes to create a safer and more prosperous Ontario. There is still more to do.

This bill should be seen in the context of many of the following initiatives: a code of conduct for students which gives teachers more authority in the classroom and on school property to discipline more effectively students who are not following the rules; our community policing partnerships program, which will put 1,000 net new front-line police officers on the streets of Ontario; our Safe Streets Act, which gives police more authority and options in dealing with aggressive panhandling and other intimidating behaviours; the creation of child-friendly courts, which provide specialized services to make the courtroom less intimidating for young victims and witnesses.

All of these initiatives are designed to provide the context in which this piece of legislation is developed. It is part of our government's initiative to address the concerns of the people of Ontario, those people who have expressed concerns regarding the safety in our streets, our homes and our schools. This bill is just another example of our government's commitment to make Ontario a safer place to work, live and raise a family.

1720

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):

I'm pleased to join in the debate after the member for York North. Certainly she set out very clearly the need for this legislation.

I would just like to say that there is a need and there is a demand for this legislation. Youth crime is a concern for Ontarians. When MPPs talk to their constituents they hear this. The Crime Control Commission heard this in more than 70 town hall meetings that it conducted. In its report on youth crime, the Crime Control Commission said it heard repeatedly from Ontarians the view that the root of youth crime is poor parenting and that parents need to take a more active role in controlling and shaping the behaviour of their children. In particular, the commission heard that parents should be held responsible for the actions of their children. We have spoken to organizations that represent communities, business, police and cottagers, and all say they would support a law that holds parents responsible for acts of intentional property damage committed by their children.

Safe communities is a very serious subject which affects all Ontarians. What does that mean? It means

being free from the fear of violence against a person, family and property; respect for others and taking responsibility for actions; homes that are sanctuaries and people's property is safe and secure, places where people go about their busy and productive lives without experiencing property damage; municipal parks and transit that aren't damaged.

Just last weekend I was in one of the parks. I take my children to the park every weekend. What you find there is that these are children who do not come from well means. They come to the parks and think it's a lark to jump on children's swings. The end result is damage, and that deprives a child from being able to use that park's equipment and it results in intentional damage to the property of the public. If you speak to them—which I did on that occasion, and said, “Don't go on those swings and don't damage that property”—they know better. I think if they're shown some guidance they're not going to go out and basically damage property.

I think there's an education component about this legislation which goes to the root in terms of parents knowing what's going to be the impact of their child's actions. It's not just the child or the youth we have to deal with in terms of their actions; there has to be a message sent home to the parents. As you know, most parents in Ontario are responsible and do their best to supervise their children properly. While the world is changing, the role of parents in teaching their children standards of behaviour has not changed. The proposed act would reinforce those standards and expectations. It's commonly agreed that parents are responsible for their children. The act is realistic about the challenges that parents encounter, but we also have to focus on the victims' rights. People who have their property damaged and their lives disrupted by intentional acts of violence and mischief have a right to protect themselves from this type of conduct.

What we're setting out is a very straightforward approach, a statutory offence which reverses the onus. The onus is not on the victim; the onus is on the perpetrator of the crime, and through a Small Claims Court procedure, which is a very friendly procedure that does not require a lawyer. In fact, this process leads to fairly expeditious results with respect to dealing with property damage. That's one of the things that is missing from our approach with youth: to set up a system where the results of their actions are driven home, with consequences. Certainly if you talk to people with respect to this issue they'll say one thing: that youth know their rights. The problem is, they don't seem to understand that there are consequences for the actions they take. Far too many times the youth hide behind the court system with respect to the implementation of the Young Offenders Act. That's something that is not right. Obviously this government has taken its case to the federal government on many occasions to deal with this issue, unfortunately not with the results that this government wants and, I think, that the general public wants with respect to the Young Offenders Act.

So this is a measure, this is a step. Some people may say, “It's already out there,” but I think if you ask 99.9% of all Ontarians whether they knew about this, they would say no. It's something that I would think a lot of lawyers don't know about, because they may not practise in that particular area. It's not something people know about.

What we're driving home to the public and to the parents who have children who may get themselves in trouble, we're hammering home a message that this piece of legislation allows that for parents who have children who get involved in this activity, there are going to be consequences, not only for the parents but also for the child. But it's also for the victims so that they understand there is a process whereby they can protect their rights. Far too often it's the victims whose lives are disrupted, whose property is stolen, who are forgotten in the system. We shouldn't have a system that discourages them from protecting what is theirs. What is theirs is a right to live in a safe community. At the same time, we're sending a message to the people who decide that they want to break the law in an intentional fashion that that is just not in the cards. As I say, there are many youth out there who are very good. It's the exception we have to deal and the severe consequences that come from that exception.

We're trying to send out a clear message to the parents to deal with their children's conduct. I think there's an educational component to that also, because what we're sending out there is a message that this conduct is not acceptable and that there are consequences. I think that parents will take heed with respect to what could be the ramifications of intentional damage to public property and to private property and to the violation of people's lives, because it isn't a lark. It's not something that the people want to accept. What we have to do is take a stand. This is a stand with respect to safe communities.

As we have noted already, this is a problem that is not an overreaction to nuisance or mischievous behaviour. Victims of property crime don't consider the damage, destruction or loss of their property to be a nuisance or mischievous. In 1998, 18,755 property crime cases were heard in Ontario under the Young Offenders Act. That is 47%, almost half of all Young Offenders Act cases in the province. This does not suggest nuisance or mischief. It is entirely reasonable that victims of property crime have an easier way to obtain compensation from the parents of children who have damaged, stolen or destroyed their property, and that is just what this proposed legislation does.

When I was dealing with this issue on my monthly television call-in show, we had an insurance adjuster who phoned in speaking about this legislation and about young offenders' actions in general. It was shocking, the views that he put forth, in terms of how young children are used by adults to perpetrate their own activity with respect to, in my area, the city of Barrie, what they call break and enters—B and Es—using them to go into a home and violate that home to obtain whatever property they can, and the frustration that this individual felt as an insurance adjuster—and he was quite candid with his

views of how rampant that problem was—in not being able to bring this conduct to heel and to deal with the problem at hand.

That's not the issue that we're essentially dealing with here, but it's also a symptom of the deeper problems that we are facing with respect to young children being used by adults to bring forth their own means of breaking the law. That's just not acceptable in terms of trying to develop a policy with respect to safer communities.

What we're dealing with here is a piece of legislation which takes the essential first step of educating the public, bringing responsibilities to parents and bringing responsibilities to the youth, but also protecting victims. That's of number one importance.

1730

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): As you sit and listen to members of the government speak to this bill, you might actually get the impression that the members opposite believe this bill adds something to the issue of parental responsibility. Because I was puzzling over what ways the bill I see before me could add anything to the issue of parental responsibility, I was very pleased that my colleague from Sudbury brought forward earlier this afternoon the editorial from the Sudbury Star, which indicates quite clearly that this is needless legislation. Certainly, as I look at what's on the statutes of Ontario now, in regard to this aspect of parental responsibility, it seems to me that we already have almost the identical law that the current government is bringing in. Currently in Ontario, under the existing Family Law Act, the onus of proof to establish that a parent has exercised reasonable supervision and control over a child already rests on the parent.

We know, as we look at other jurisdictions for some guidance on this, that laws that are similar to what is proposed in this legislation, in Manitoba, for example, have not been particularly effective—an almost identical law in Manitoba. As of February 2000, only 13 applications have been made under the Manitoba legislation. Of those 13 applications, only four claims have resulted in judgments against parents, two in judgments against the child and seven have been dismissed. I submit that this is not a model of something that's really going to advance parental responsibility.

The member for Trinity-Spadina suggested earlier that this is placebo politics. I think it is less than that. I think this is simply this government once again looking at a hot button and trying to create an image that it is doing something, rather than actually acting. This is a government that wants to portray itself as being tough on crime, and their version of getting tough on crime is to get squeegee kids off the streets while they're in a federal court trying to fight against gun control. This is a government that would not support a bill from the member for Sudbury that would actually protect children who are going to be coming under the auspices of adults who want to encourage them into prostitution, and will not apparently support the bill my colleague presented this afternoon on fake guns.

Mr Marchese: A number of Tory lawyers on the other side have spoken. I think their credibility as lawyers is on the line. But they don't seem to give a damn, and it's scary. This is the most ruthless government I have seen in a long time, the most ruthless and reptilian I have ever seen in this place. They are inexhaustibly political. They don't care about the causes of crime, and they don't care about prevention. I know that. The sad thing is the public doesn't know that. They're giving the illusion, the appearance, of being the law-and-order party, yet they do little with respect to law and order. But they have given the appearance of doing so, and you have to admire them for doing that.

To Mr Tascona, the lawyer who spoke previously, Professor Larry Wilson says this about your bill. Listen closely: "What, then, does this proposed legislation offer in terms of advancing or even altering the current state of the law of Ontario?" Professor Wilson says, "Nothing." But to this lawyer who spoke previously, what Professor Wilson says is irrelevant; it doesn't matter. What matters is: "Have we been able to convince the public that we are the law-and-order party and that we are actually doing something about what this law purports to do? It does nothing new, but we repackage it, reintroduce it and say we're going to deal with crime through this bill simply by the mere repackaging of it." It is unbelievably pitiful. What they're engaged in is placebo politics. The sad thing is that people are buying into it, and that is the most tragic and pitiful expression of politics that I have seen in this place in a long, long time.

Mr Mazzilli: It's again a privilege to respond to colleagues in this House who obviously do not represent real Ontarians, real people who want real changes and real benefits. Instead, what we hear from the opposition is legislation introduced that perhaps bans toy guns, when the jurisdiction and the definition of that is in the Criminal Code. What we also hear from the opposition is how registering some guns is somehow going to prevent crime in Canada, instead of perhaps hiring 2,000 police officers. That's really the question. Do we spend \$200 million registering long guns, which are shotguns that hunters have, that people in rural Ontario have, or is that \$200 million better spent on hiring 2,000 police officers and targeting criminals, because that's what the people of Ontario want?

We've tried all the education initiatives. Do you know what we find? You're educating people who don't commit crimes, people whose families take the responsibility of educating their children. If we want to prevent crime once and for all in our province, we need to invest in front-line officers to target the real criminals. That's what the Mike Harris government has done: invested financial resources in hiring 1,000 new police officers in this province to go to the front lines and work with communities and prevent crime.

I ask the opposition to stop the political bills they've put forward, the bills that show their federal counterparts' lack of responsibility in those areas.

Mr Patten: I want to respond to the member for York North, whom I perceive as one of the least partisan

members in the House. I must commend her for identifying many of the things that might address doing away with the crimes we are here to attempt to address, but I must point out to her that what she identified had nothing to do with this bill, and the need is for something to be done in other areas.

The member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford said that there is already something on the books and that we must take a stand. When we talk about taking a stand, he rattled off some statistics, that 47% of youngsters who broke the law were involved in property crimes. I'm not sure how many of those are B and Es, break and enters, but I do know this, or at least I recall these statistics from when I was Minister of Correctional Services: that 70% of B and Es had to do with addictions or some kind of drug dependency, which was one of the motivations to steal and to resell and gain money to perpetuate a particular habit.

It seems to me that the approach by this government is, get tough, be tough, appear to be tough and this will solve all the problems. Any of you in your hearts will know that we must invest in rehabilitation and in education. When you see the cutting of some of the correctional programs that were designed to help to try another way, an alternative lifestyle, an alternative set of relationships, an alternative set of supports in terms of personal development for youngsters and things of that nature, you know that the government cut most of these programs, so it's punitive.

It doesn't work very well because all it does is shove these youngsters back into a situation where they will return and the recidivism will be as high as ever. This does nothing to help parents to be more responsible, in my opinion, other than to be defensive.

The Acting Speaker: Response? Further debate.

Mr Crozier: It's a pleasure for me to stand before the Legislature today and add my comments to those of other members with regard to Bill 55. I appreciate the comments of other members. I appreciate them because it adds some different dimensions to the debate on bills, both on the government side and on the opposition side. I appreciate their comments in that I believe, for the most part, they sincerely believe what they're saying. But it's passing strange that the member for London-Fanshawe has twice today argued the fact that guns are the purview of the federal government. I don't disagree with that, but the strange thing is, your government is before the Supreme Court arguing that it's the provincial purview.

If the member for London-Fanshawe believes that it is in the provincial jurisdiction, as his government is arguing before the Supreme Court, then I would suspect that my colleague who introduced a gun bill today with regard to imitations of real guns would support that. Perhaps the member for London-Fanshawe and I can sit down outside this debating area some day for a coffee and he can tell me why he would stand here and argue one way when his government is in the Supreme Court arguing the exact opposite.

1740

By far, we all know that the majority of young people in this province are good, hard-working, fun-loving kids, young adults. And we know that the majority of parents in this province are responsible, law-abiding parents who want to pass those values on to their children.

We also know that any kind of crime is serious crime, but perhaps with youth crime we have a different perspective because youth crime, if not treated properly, may then turn into more serious crime at a later time. But youth crime, with the right supports—the right family support, the right parental support, the right community support and the right government support—can bode well for those young people in the future. For example, we all know that firefighters in this province don't go around showing people how to light fires. They go around fighting the fires, but another, extremely important job that they do is that they work hard on preventative measures.

We know that police services in this province go out and investigate crime, they enforce the law, but at the same time there's a part of that police service in all communities who work on preventative measures, crime prevention. I think that's where this bill falls absolutely flat on its face. There is absolutely nothing in here about prevention, either before the act or to help young people and parents after the act.

We know through the background on this law that currently in Ontario victims already have the common law right of action against young offenders and their parents. That's under the Family Law Act. This bill would say that you can take that to Small Claims Court. The court situation isn't quite so intimidating and the limits that are set on it are lower. Well then, why didn't you just simply amend the Family Law Act? Why take the time and the effort of the Legislature to debate a whole new bill which really doesn't contain anything new, and, in my view, doesn't contain anything helpful? Currently in Ontario, as I said, under the Family Law Act, the onus of proof to establish that parents exercised reasonable supervision and control over their children is in the law. We already have it, and that's in the Family Law Act that was passed back in 1990.

Currently in Ontario there's no statutory limit to the amount a victim can recoup from parents of a wayward child. But if someone suggests to a victim in this case that they take it to Small Claims Court, I certainly hope they are well advised that it very well might limit the amount the victim can recoup under the law.

The Parental Responsibility Act was first discussed back in 1996. Why did we take four years to get to this? Why didn't you bring in the Parental Responsibility Act in 1996 when it was first discussed? That would lead some cynical person to think that what they're doing in this case is what they do, for example, with long-term care beds. They like to kind of announce these over and over. They like to bring them up from time so that we'll spend our time in this Legislature discussing this bill when we could be discussing the Ontario Realty Corp,

where there very well might be, where it has been alleged, where the auditor is looking into, a great deal of money being lost by residents of the province of Ontario. If that isn't a crime, I don't know what is.

So someone who's more cynical than I am might suggest that this is one of those diversionary tactics, one of those things that might take up time in the Legislature when there are other issues that we should be discussing at the same time.

As of the end of February 2000, there have been 13 applications made under the Manitoba legislation, which is similar to this. That legislation was passed back in 1996. So in four years, under similar legislation in the province of Manitoba, 13 applications have been made. Of those 13, there have only been four claims which have resulted in judgments against parents, two have resulted in judgments against the youth and seven have been dismissed, adjourned or discontinued. Does that mean that youth crime is any less important? No, it doesn't. I think what it shows is that it's legislation like this that has a lot more smoke and screen about it than any real effect.

We think this bill will certainly benefit lawyers and insurance companies, because they will be able to make claims on behalf of the victim. What I go back to saying, and I think what most of us say in this Legislature we sincerely believe, is that I believe in parental responsibility. Joan and I have raised two children. They're now grown, out of the house and working on their own. Did we have problems with our children? Thank goodness, we didn't. Was it anything that we did as responsible parents that was magical? No, it wasn't. In fact, there were times—and this certainly doesn't involve crime—when my son and I, for example, might not have agreed on a particular issue and Joan always had to remind me that you can't put an adult's head on a teenager's shoulders. We have responsible parents in this province and we have responsible parents who are trying to deal with problems in their household, but I'm not sure that this bill is going to help in that respect.

Our leader, Dalton McGuinty, said over a year ago on this particular issue that parental responsibility is an important legal principle. He went on to say, "I don't see anything particularly new in that." Dalton McGuinty knows very well, as does our caucus and I think others in this Legislature, about parental responsibility. Many of us in this Legislature have children who are grown and have left the home. Many of us have young children from babies on up to young adults.

This bill, though, as I pointed out earlier, is another re-announcement and that's all it is. The initiative was first announced back in 1996.

I wonder why, at this particular time, the government's focusing on petty crimes that can be resolved in Small Claims Court, when people are concerned about the gun epidemic in the province and in-your-face crimes like home invasion and violent assaults. Yes, if you're a victim it may seem not to matter the degree of crime. The fact that your property has been vandalized or your home

has been damaged is important to everybody and you do feel like your privacy has been invaded. Yes, young offenders should take personal responsibility for their crimes, but I think young offenders need some support in that respect. We need to concentrate on prevention, as well as some support after the crime.

1750

For example, I take an excerpt from the bill. It says that in determining whether a parent has exercised parental responsibility and supervision over the child, a number of factors have to be taken into consideration: age, "the prior conduct of the child; the potential danger of the activity." But there are two important ones that I want to focus on. The next two listed in the act are "the physical or mental capacity of the child" and "any psychological or other medical disorders of the child."

I want to mention to you this evening a public forum I attended last week in the county of Essex. It was called Kids in Crisis. Mr George Johnson, president of a CAW local chapter of retirees, wanted to do something to help kids in his community. He knew there were problems and he wanted to bring those to the forefront, so this public forum was held and over 700 people attended. With all our concern about education and health care, I have to say that this forum was one of the best-attended and had the most number of people of many forums that we've held in our riding and in the area of Windsor-Essex on a wide range of topics.

One of the speakers at that forum was Glen Stannard, the chief of police in Windsor, and I want to share with you a couple of things the chief of police in Windsor was concerned about. He said that what the police need to support them is more residential and day treatment facilities, that they're grossly inadequate, grossly underfunded. Chief Stannard said that 20% of the youth under 12 are their contacts. Twenty per cent, one fifth, of the young offenders that they come in contact with are under the age of 12 years old. His question was, what will happen when they're 16 or 18 years old if they don't have the kind of residential and day treatment they need? This bill does absolutely nothing to address that.

The youth branch finds that oftentimes when they end up in police hands, it's because they had nowhere else to go. They may have had all the parental guidance and all the parental support that could possibly be given. But can you imagine someone under 12 coming to you who has come in contact with the police because of the kind of crime we're speaking about in this bill and the only answer they have is, "There was no place else to go"? Chief Stannard said there are more youth on the streets today under medication than ever before, and he attributes that to simple lack of support.

There were a number of citizens at this who came out and spoke about their own personal problems, about how they tried to work under the system, how they tried to support their children, and what a brick wall they ran into. There was some funding announced, coincidentally, the day before this forum was held. Minister Baird announced some funding for a comprehensive crisis

service at Hotel-Dieu Grace, 24-hour-a-day support. We appreciate that. We appreciate that they're going to provide that kind of funding. But you know what? Those who were at this forum said: "The problem is, once they're through the door"—much the same as once they're through the door in the police station—"there's nowhere to go. There is no support for them after that." There is a waiting list, as a matter of fact. Some 22% of the youth they see coming through their doors have to wait, sometimes up to two years.

The funding that was provided just last week is a first step, but the problem is that it falls about \$5 million short. There are 1,000 young people in Windsor-Essex alone, and we're told there are over 10,000 across the province, who need this kind of support. That's why I would encourage the government, when we get to committee with this bill—and I hope we even get out to public hearings on this bill so you can really hear what your people, your constituents, and my constituents are saying.

We need the kind of support that will help these young people before a crime is committed, in the way of prevention, and if, God help us, it does happen to some young offender, we need to give them the support after so that, in Chief Stannard's words, we won't have to worry as much about what it's going to be like when they're 16 or 18 years old.

We heard a psychologist speak at this meeting and tell us that even good kids, good parents, when put under a

great deal of stress—stress in their home environment, stress at school, parent stress at work—problems start to evolve.

The kind of support we're talking about goes back to our education system. I was principal for a day at Gosfield North public school last week—600 kids in the school—and visited all the classrooms. I said, "Wait a minute, there are a lot of students in this classroom." I thought the government said there should only be 25. There were classes of 30 and some over 30. Why is that? It's the funding formula. It doesn't work when it comes to some areas of the province. We have to support education so we can prevent the kind of youth crime that we're all concerned about.

We have to depend on health care and social help so that these young offenders, these young people who are supposed to be affected by this bill, who have physical or mental problems or who have psychological or other medical problems, are helped by us.

Yes, you have to be responsible and you have to take responsibility for what you do, but we have to pass legislation that also supports them, that helps them out of that problem so they will make good citizens in the future.

The Acting Speaker: It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women / ministre des Affaires civiques, de la Culture et des Loisirs, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		Gerretsen, John (L)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)		Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Broadview-Greenwood	Churley, Marilyn (ND)		Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Bruce-Grey	Murdoch, Bill (PC)		Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme		Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)		Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Carleton-Gloucester	Coburn, Brian (PC)		Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)		Wood, Bob (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)		Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général	
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels	
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)	DeFaria, Carl (PC)	
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)	
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)		
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines		
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail		
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Brenda (PC)		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion		
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)		
Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nepean-Carleton	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nipissing	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	Clark, Brad (PC)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thornhill	Molinari, Tina R. (PC)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie L. (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Wentworth-Burlington	Vacant
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Willowdale	Young, David (PC)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Sean G. Conway, Alvin Curling,
Gerard Kennedy, Frank Mazzilli, John R. O'Toole,
R. Gary Stewart, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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Finances et affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Doug Galt
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Doug Galt, Monte Kwinter, Tina R. Molinari,
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Garfield Dunlop, Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac,
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Clerk / Greffier: Viktor Kaczkowski

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Lyn McLeod, Marilyn Mushinski
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Marilyn Churley, Brad Clark, Caroline Di Cocco,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Jerry J. Ouellette, R. Gary Stewart, Joseph N.
Tasca, Wayne Wettlaufer
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Règlements et projets de loi privés**

Chair / Présidente: Frances Lankin
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Brian Coburn,
Garfield Dunlop, Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy,
Frances Lankin, Bill Murdoch
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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