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Mardi
12 mai 2026

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 12 May 2026

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 12 mai 2026

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING HOMES AND IMPROVING
TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE
ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 POUR LA CONSTRUCTION
DE LOGEMENTS ET L'AMÉLIORATION
DE L'INFRASTRUCTURE DE TRANSPORT

Mr. Graydon Smith, on behalf of Mr. Flack, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act to enact the Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act, 2026 and to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 98, Loi édictant la Loi de 2026 sur l'harmonisation des tarifs et l'intégration des transports en commun et modifiant diverses lois.

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you, Speaker, and good morning. Just note that I'm sharing my time with the member for Thornhill and the member for Simcoe–Grey this morning.

I'm pleased to rise and speak to third reading for Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act. At this stage, members have had the opportunity to review the bill, debate its contents and examine practical changes it proposes in second reading, but here in third reading I want to bring it back to what Bill 98 is really about. At its core, this legislation is about helping Ontario build better, build faster and build in a way that reflects the realities communities are facing across this province. It's about removing barriers that no longer make sense. It's about making planning systems work better. And it's about giving municipalities, builders, workers and families a process that is clearer, more consistent, and more focused on results.

Speaker, from my years in municipal government, I saw first-hand how good intentions can be undermined by outdated systems. I saw projects delayed because processes became too complicated. I saw duplication create confusion, and I saw costs continue to rise while approvals slowed down. When that happens, those costs don't disappear; eventually, they make their way into the price of a new home.

That reality is felt by the young people trying to enter the housing market, families looking for more space, seniors

looking for housing options that better fit their needs, and workers who simply want to live in the communities in which they work. Bill 98 is about addressing and meeting those challenges in a practical way. It contains targeted reforms to help Ontario's planning and building systems function better for the people that they are meant to serve.

Speaker, municipalities today, they're busy. They're trying to do several things at once. They're trying to keep their infrastructure functioning. They're trying to manage growth responsibly in their communities. They want to keep their communities affordable, and that's not easy. It's laudable, but it's not easy. Municipal leaders are planning for growth while maintaining roads and bridges, water systems and waste water infrastructure. They're supporting housing development while managing rising costs and increasing expectations, and they're doing all of this while the timelines matter more than ever. Bill 98 recognizes that reality. It recognizes that planning systems should support good local decision-making, not bury municipalities in unnecessary processes, and it recognizes that local planning can remain local while still becoming clearer and more consistent across Ontario.

Speaker, one of the important areas Bill 98 addresses is official plans. Official plans are there to guide growth, to provide that clear framework for how a community develops over time. They should align land use infrastructure, servicing and community priorities, and they should be understandable to councils, staff and, most importantly, applicants and residents alike. But over time, many official plans have become increasingly difficult to navigate—organized differently from one municipality to the next. One municipality uses terminology that's different from another; policies get structured differently, and that creates uncertainty. Staff spend more time interpreting policies, applicants spend more time trying to understand requirements, and residents often find it harder to participate meaningfully because the documents themselves have become too difficult to follow.

Bill 98 proposes to simplify and standardize official plans across Ontario, creating consistency, creating that clear framework and planning documents that are easier to read, compare and implement. Speaker, I think we'd all agree that if somebody walks into their town hall, no matter where it is, and asks for a copy of an official plan, they should be able to crack the cover on it and understand what it means, where the community wants to go, where council has chosen those points to move forward in. But, too often, it is just a jumble of planning talk and speak that is not in plain language, and so it becomes very difficult for people to follow along with that document that is the main narrative of where communities want to go. This

legislation, if passed, would help create a planning system that's more understandable, more usable, more user-friendly.

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute has recognized the value of this direction, noting that simplified and consistent official plans can help streamline approval timelines for municipalities and home builders. And that's exactly the point: making planning more usable and more approachable. The time where somebody could walk in, get the specs, get the plan, understand the zoning and build a home all by themselves is rapidly disappearing, because over time, incremental changes to the rules and regulations at the local level—while done with the best of intentions—have created a very difficult-to-navigate situation. I like to think of it as a multi-layer cake. The knife should be easy to go through that cake, but we've got cake that stops the knife almost instantly in terms of process before you're trying to saw through it. You should never have to saw through a cake, as far as I know. That would probably be the worst cake you've ever had.

We want to keep moving forward with changes that help municipalities and help the people who want to help municipalities grow, so we need to talk about siteplan control as well—an incredibly important issue. It helps ensure development functions properly, literally, on the site. It addresses issues like drainage, grading, access, servicing and compatibility with surrounding infrastructure. And make no mistake about it, those things matter. They matter for safety; they matter for infrastructure, for protection, for the long-term success of any development. But over time, in many cases, again, site-planning control has expanded beyond that original intent and purpose.

There is a difference between encouraging good design and making optional design preferences mandatory in ways that add cost and delay. Municipalities will continue to review development. They'll continue to protect infrastructure, and they will continue to make sure that projects are safe and functional. But Bill 98 proposes to refocus site plan control on the matters it was originally intended to address: to prevent unnecessary requirements from driving up costs that are ultimately passed on to homebuyers.

0910

The Ontario Association of Architects estimated that site plan delays cost Ontario's economy roughly \$3.5 billion annually. I know my voice is hoarse today: I didn't say million; I said billion, with a B. That is an incredible amount of money, and all that money ends up on the plate of homebuyers in Ontario. The developers front the cost, but the buyers pay the cost.

We have a fundamental challenge in our province where it takes too long to build because the regulatory environment has become too complicated. I don't say this to cast any aspersions at any municipality. They all brought the best of intentions to the processes that make their particular set of rules tick and their processes move forward. But, unfortunately, Speaker, I think every member in this chamber probably experiences calls from home builders and people who want to get developments off the ground that will be incredibly positive for communities expressing frustration at things like site plan control, that

it simply is taking too long, that there are components that, again, while full of good intentions, really result in bad execution, more cost, more time. And again, the cost of that time makes things end up on the plate of the homebuyer.

So we can do better, and Bill 98 proposes the framework to help communities do better. We can take a look at minimum lot sizes in communities. Our planning systems need to continue to evolve, and, in some areas, overly large minimum lot sizes limit the number of homes that can be built on already-serviced land. Every time we do that it's a reduction in flexibility. Every time we do that it's an increase in cost. It can make it harder to create those obtainable housing options for that first-time buyer, that young family, that senior looking to downsize.

So Bill 98 is going to allow the province to establish more consistent minimum-lot-size standards through regulation, particularly in urban residential areas. Let's use the land that we already have serviced better, supported by existing infrastructure. Give those builders flexibility to respond to what people actually need. Support more starter homes. Support smaller homes and housing options that get people that first step through the door.

Speaker, I want to talk a little bit more about infrastructure. I mentioned it a few times already. We know subdivisions can't proceed where water and waste water capacity is unavailable. Communities can't grow responsively if infrastructure planning doesn't keep pace with that growth. It's important in rural, northern, small and fast-growing communities, and I count the communities that I represent in Parry Sound–Muskoka among those. Many municipal leaders have told us the same thing: We've got land; we've got demand; we've even got local support, but we don't always have the servicing capacity needed to move housing forward.

Bill 98 proposes a framework for communal water and waste water systems, and systems that can serve multiple homes provide another servicing option where the full municipal system may not yet be available. They are regulated. They are structured to protect public health. They are designed with long-term accountability and sustainability in mind. And so if we're serious about building homes across Ontario, we need to recognize that communities do not all face the same servicing realities.

Speaker, a lot of us attended the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus reception yesterday. They had a lot of great people there, municipal representatives from all throughout eastern Ontario, but also a number of businesses that are surviving, thriving and growing in eastern Ontario. I commend them all.

One of them was a service provider that focuses on just this issue, on communal water systems that can be deployed to allow housing to occur in areas that might otherwise be problematic. And you know the old saying that this isn't your father's or grandfather's Oldsmobile, or whatever it was—that tells you how old I am, pulling out old marketing lines like that—well, communal water systems ain't your father's Oldsmobile. They have come a long, long way in terms of technology and scalability and

quality, to a point where, if we aren't using communal systems to solve the challenges we have around housing in Ontario, we are simply missing a huge opportunity.

Bill 98 allows us the window to take that opportunity to make sure that these things that are essential to growth, these new tools, can be brought to bear, because we can't ignore the infrastructure challenges, as we've talked about. But we can't also pretend that endlessly increasing costs on new housing has no consequence for affordability. We know that infrastructure costs, again, go into the mix of what ultimately that new home cost. So we need to help keep the input costs as manageable as possible for people trying to buy or rent a home.

Speaker, people need to understand what those costs are. They need to understand how development charges, for example, affect what they're paying for that home. There needs to be more transparency around that. Bill 98 helps accomplish that.

Development charges are talked about a lot. They help municipalities fund growth-related infrastructure, supporting roads, water, waste water, parks and other community services, the real costs that municipalities have. Nobody disputes that. But we also know that development charges are a significant contributor—and, in some cases, a barrier—to housing prices. Some communities have DCs as high as \$150,000. Others, in smaller communities, may be less, but for all families, no matter where you are, that additional cost to a home is significant when you look at the total cost of a home. They deserve to know what those costs are.

Around development charges—I've told this story before, but it bears repeating: There's an opportunity for municipalities to view DCs in a different light. In the past, DCs have been viewed as a tool to build infrastructure, and maybe when things were flying high, people weren't paying attention to the costs they were paying quite as much. They just paid the shot and on they went. But it's different days today, and we know the cost of these DCs, as I've talked about, can be very impactful on the price of a new home.

Back after the financial crisis in 2008, when I was mayor in my community in Bracebridge—of course, Bracebridge is part of Muskoka—we had some choices to make. We saw home sales dry up, and we saw the toll of a global financial crisis hit a small town. You have one of two choices, I think, when a situation like that arises. You can say, "Okay, we'll just take our lumps and ride it out and hope things get better. We're not going to really make any changes. We're pretty satisfied with the way things are at from a process, regulatory, DC basis. And we hope it changes soon." Or you can take a bolder approach and say that we want to do something about this. We want to intervene and make sure that this tool, which can be punitive on the cost of a new home, gets dealt with, and look at it from an economic development standpoint and look at it from a community growth and opportunity standpoint. That's what we did in Bracebridge and Muskoka.

We lowered development charges, not because of any one particular project that was happening in any one particular community, although I did have a builder in my community close their sales office and leave two phases

into a 10-phase project. We did it because we knew that, region wide, if we didn't take that moment to intervene, lower costs and signal to everybody involved, not only the home builders but the homebuyers, that we could have your back, things weren't going to change, they weren't going to get any better.

0920

So, we took that step. We worked with homebuyers. We talked with the real estate community that were representing the homebuyers. We got builders and buyers and the municipal government around the table, planners talking about what we can do to make things better. In the end, we lowered development charges by 50%. And I'll tell you, the return on that was massive and monumental. We saw building come back in the community. We saw sales offices open again. We saw the other eight phases of that project get built out, just in my community alone. In the end, the municipality was in a far, far stronger financial position because we had taken that step, because we had taken that intervention.

You need to pick your spots when things are maybe not going exactly the way you want them to go, and say, what can we do better? What can we do better as a municipality? We've asked ourselves that question as a government. How can we provide the flexibility and the guidance for municipal governments to be able to take the steps they need to impact real local positive change for homebuyers in their communities all throughout this province? Bill 98 along with other bills that we had passed prior to Bill 98 do just that. They give municipalities the direction and the tools to remove that latticework of regulation that gets in the way of getting things built.

We need to keep in focus at all times what the number one goal is. The number one goal is to have homes built for people to live in our communities, whether it is a city, whether it is a small village. Everybody needs the same thing. Every regulation that gets passed, every barrier that gets put in the way needs to be pushed aside and swept aside. And we need to continue to work on behalf of homebuyers in this province so they can realize and attain the dream that we had, that they have and that the generation that comes after them will have.

Speaker, thank you very much, and I now share my time with the member from Thornhill.

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

Ms. Laura Smith: I'm so pleased to rise today in support of Bill 98, the Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026, and I do so in my capacity as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I want to thank the minister from Parry Sound–Muskoka for his leadership in his role, not only here in the House but also as a mayor in his area. I also look forward to hearing from my friend from Simcoe–Grey as we share our discussion today.

Speaker, our government has been very clear about the challenges before us. It takes too long and it costs too much to build in Ontario, and we're fixing that. This is not just a catchphrase. It is the reality facing too many fam-

ilies, too many workers, too many seniors and too many young people who are looking at the housing market and wondering whether they will ever be able to find a home that they can afford.

For far too long, the system has become slower, more complicated and more expensive. Projects get caught in layers of review. Requirements differ significantly from one municipality to another, requiring boutique approaches that inhibit the ability of smaller builders to access the market. Planning documents have become longer and harder to understand, and infrastructure costs are pushed up front. By the time a project finally moves forward, the costs have gone up, the timelines have stretched and the people who pay the price are the homebuyers and renters of Ontario.

This is why this bill matters. This bill builds on the progress our government has already made through Bill 17, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, and Bill 60, the Fighting Delays, Building Faster Act. It builds on our work to cut costs, streamline approvals and our efforts to increase and improve the streamline approvals and make the housing system more predictable. It builds on major actions our government is taking to make life more affordable, including cutting the HST on new homes, securing historic support to reduce development charges and investing in the housing-enabling infrastructure that communities need.

Bill 98 is another step in that plan. It's about getting shovels in the ground faster, it's about lowering unnecessary costs, and it's about reforming how Ontario plans, approves, services and builds housing. It's about protecting Ontario's future by making sure that the families can continue to live, work and build their lives in the communities they call home.

Speaker, one of the most important parts of this bill is the work to simplify, streamline and standardize official plans. Official plans are supposed to be about planning for growth. They should help municipalities make clear decisions about where housing, employment, infrastructure and community services should go. They should give residents, builders and municipal staff a clear understanding of how a community is expected to grow. But in far too many cases, official plans have become bloated, complicated and detached from that core principle. They can be hundreds, or even thousands, of pages long, and they can vary dramatically from one municipality to another. They can be difficult for the residents to understand and difficult for the builders to navigate. When every municipality has a different structure, a different format and a different way of organizing the same basic planning information, it creates uncertainty. Uncertainty leads to delay, delay leads to costs, and costs lead to homes becoming less attainable for the people of Ontario.

Our government is clear on our message: It is time to simplify, streamline and standardize official plans. By moving towards a more consistent format, we can make official plans easier to read, easier to compare, easier to review and easier to implement. That helps municipalities, it helps builders, it helps residents and, most importantly, it helps get homes built faster.

This is not about taking away responsible planning. It's about making planning work better for everyone. Because when a young family is looking for a home, they're not helped by a 1,000-page planning document that takes years to update. They will be helped by a system that is clear, efficient and focused on results.

Bill 98 also takes important action on site plan reform. The site plan process was created for a practical purpose: It's meant to look at how a site functions, things like access, safety, grading, stormwater, servicing and how a project fits on the land and into the surrounding community. These are important considerations and they will remain important considerations.

But over time, in some municipalities, site plan control has moved far beyond its intended purpose. It has become a place where additional requirements are added, where projects are redesigned again and again, and where costly, enhanced development standards can be imposed, even when they do not improve health or safety.

Our government has been very clear: The days of premium and costly design standards that do nothing to enhance building safety while adding unnecessary cost must come to an end. It's as simple as that. When municipalities impose out-of-scope requirements at the site plan stage, the costs do not disappear; they are built into the final price of the home. When a project is delayed by repeated rounds of comments, the cost does not disappear; it gets passed on. And when builders are focused to redesign projects to satisfy inconsistent local requirements, the cost does not disappear. It lands on the shoulders of the families, the renters and the first-time buyers. That is not acceptable.

The site plan process is not working as intended. The legislated 60-day timeline has too often become the exception rather than the rule. According to the Ontario Association of Architects, costs associated with site plan delays are estimated at \$3.5 billion per year. That's a B—\$3.5 billion a year. This is \$3.5 billion in lost opportunity. This is \$3.5 billion in additional costs. That is \$3.5 billion standing between Ontario, families and the homes they need to buy.

0930

Bill 98 takes action by prohibiting unnecessary enhanced development standards and by consulting with experts on how best to modernize site plan control. The goal is simple: a faster, more predictable, more coordinated and more cost-effective approval process.

Let me be clear, Speaker: This is not about weakening health and safety. This is not about ignoring stormwater management. This is not about saying that responsible development does not matter. It's about focusing on the process on what actually matters and stopping the use of unnecessary requirements that add costs and delays without improving outcomes for residents.

Bill 98 also recognizes that if we want to build more attainable homes, we need to look honestly at the rules that shape what can be built. That includes minimum lot sizes. In many communities, outdated local rules require lots to be larger than they need to be. That limits the number of homes that can be built. It makes it harder to create smaller,

smarter homes. It pushes up the land costs and it reduces the options available for people who are trying to get their foot in the door. Our government is giving home builders more flexibility to meet the needs of communities and future homeowners by establishing minimum lot size standards. This is practical. This is common sense. It's about making better use of land in the communities where people already live and work.

Not every family needs the same kind of home. Not every buyer can afford a large, detached home on a large lot. Not every senior wants to remain in a home that no longer fits their needs. A healthy housing system needs options. It needs starter homes. It needs rentals. It needs seniors' homes. It needs family-sized housing. It needs homes in large cities, small towns, rural communities and northern communities. Bill 98 supports that broader housing continuum.

One way it does this is by extending development charge exemptions to not-for-profit retirement homes. Through Bill 17, our government exempted long-term care homes from development charges. We're building on that work by extending relief to not-for-profit seniors' housing, and that matters because seniors' housing is not separate from the housing supply conversation. It's a key part of it, and when seniors have more opportunities to downsize into housing that meets their needs, that can free up existing homes for families and first-time buyers. It creates movement within the housing market. It supports older Ontarians who want to remain close to their community, their family and the services that they've relied upon. And it helps build a housing system that works for people at every stage of life.

A well-functioning housing system is a fluid housing continuum. It means young people can find rental options. It means families can move into homes with more space. It means seniors can downsize with dignity. It means workers can live closer to where they work. And it means communities can grow in a way that supports people from one stage of life to the next. Bill 98 helps move us closer to the goal.

Another important part of this legislation is development charge transparency. For far too long, many homebuyers have not had a clear picture of the government-imposed costs that are built into the price of a new home. Development charges and other fees can add significant costs.

I'm just going to give you an example. In some cases, development charges can increase the cost of a home by more than \$150,000. That's real money. That's money that can affect a young family's mortgage. That's money that affects whether a renter can move into ownership. That is money that affects whether a new home is within reach or out of reach.

Homebuyers truly deserve to know where their money is going. When somebody makes the biggest financial decision of their life, they deserve transparency. They deserve to understand the how much of that purchase price is connected to municipal fees, charges and government-imposed costs. That's why Bill 98 includes measures to consult on disclosing development charges and other

hidden costs in an agreement of purchase and sale. This is about consumer protection, this is about transparency and it's about having an honest conversation about what is driving the cost of housing in Ontario. If we are serious about making housing more affordable, we have to be serious about the costs built into the system. We cannot pretend those costs do not exist. We can't hide them; it's as simple as that. We have to show them clearly and work to reduce them. That is what our government is doing.

Bill 98 also addresses one of the biggest barriers to growth in many communities: water and waste water infrastructure. Housing cannot be built without infrastructure. Homes need roads. They need water. They need waste water servicing. They need the basic system that will allow communities to grow safely and sustainably. But this infrastructure is very expensive, and too often the cost of new infrastructure is placed upon an upfront on new housing through development charges. That makes homes more expensive before a family even moves into the home.

Our government continues to advance our plan for publicly owned municipal service corporations. And I want to be very clear on this: These are publicly owned corporations—public, not private. They are a tool to help municipalities finance and deliver critical infrastructure in a way that supports growth, spreads costs more fairly over time and avoids placing the full burden on the new homebuyer.

Municipal partners have been very clear that they need those tools. They need these new tools, and they've been clear that water and waste water infrastructure is a major challenge. They have encouraged speed and efficiency in establishing municipally owned public service corporations. I've personally heard from many of our municipal partners, and they are very interested in this possibility. This model gives municipalities other options—another option. It supports long-term planning and it helps protect continuity of service. It helps support workers and existing contracts. It helps ensure that infrastructure can keep pace with the housing growth Ontario needs.

Our government will continue to protect Ontario by advancing innovative policies that ensure everyone has a place to call home. That includes recognizing that different communities face different servicing challenges. In rural and remote communities, the issue is often not a lack of demand for housing. It's not a lack of interest in growth. It is the fact that traditional municipal servicing may not be available, and individual wells and septic systems may not always be the right solution.

That's why Bill 98 supports a framework for communal water and waste water systems. These systems can serve multiple homes, often in the range of approximately 20 to 200 homes. They can enable new communities to be built in areas that cannot currently access municipal water systems. They can act as a bridge between large and municipal servicing systems and individually owned systems, and they have been used successfully in other jurisdictions.

This is about unlocking housing in communities that have been held back by infrastructure limitations. It's about rural Ontario. It's about northern Ontario. It's about

smaller communities that want to grow but need practical tools to do this. Like all public utilities, these systems will remain highly regulated. They will be subject to safeguards. They will be required to be safe, financially sustainable, properly operated and properly maintained. This is responsible, this is practical and this is exactly the kind of innovation we are thinking of and we need if we are going to meet Ontario's housing needs.

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Speaker, Bill 98 also forms part of a broader planning reform, and our government is not just reforming how Ontario builds but we are reforming how Ontario plans. People are looking for homes. They are looking for results. They are looking for a place to live, raise a family, build a career and remain in the communities they love. But the status quo is not working. It's too slow, it's too expensive and too complicated. It has left far too many people wondering whether home ownership will ever be possible, too many families facing higher rents and fewer options, and too many communities struggling to build the infrastructure and housing that they need to grow.

Our government will not accept that. We will no longer accept obstruction, duplication or unnecessary costs escalating. That stands in the way of families trying to find a home. We are working with municipal leaders, home builders, workers and community partners who share our commitment to building a stronger, more self-reliant Ontario.

Bill 98 is not a stand-alone action. It's part of a broader plan. It works alongside our HST relief on new homes, its historic support to reduce the development charges—these are historic, monumental moves; they're bold moves—investments in housing-enabling infrastructure and the reforms already advanced through Bill 17 and Bill 60.

This bill is about people, essentially: the young person saving to find a first home, the couple hoping to start a family, the senior looking to downsize, the worker who wants to live closer to the job and the small-town community that wants to grow. And that's why we're acting. Bill 98 simplifies official plans, reforms site plan control, reduces unnecessary costs, supports attainable housing and expanding senior housing options, improves development charges transparency and advances publicly owned water and waste water tools. This is how we make life more affordable, support growth and protect Ontario's future. I hope you will support Bill 98.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Simcoe–Grey.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and good morning.

It's a pleasure to join this debate on Bill 98, on behalf of the hard-working residents of Simcoe–Grey. I'm particularly pleased to be involved in this legislation because of my responsibilities as a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, but also because I have eight years' experience in municipal government. I served on town council in the great town of Collingwood and on the upper-tier government, the county of Simcoe. As well, I serve on the standing committee for infrastructure, housing and cultural policy, and we had the

hearings on this bill, so I come armed with many of the comments that we heard from the witnesses before the committee that went into bringing this legislation back for third reading.

During the time that I served on local council and county council, I got first-hand experience in terms of dealing with official planning issues—which is the overarching framework—permitting issues and planning processes that go into issuing the permits, issuing site plan approval and then issuing the building permits that will get houses built. What I saw during my time on the municipal level was that it's not just about getting the permits issued; it's about having the infrastructure in place that can accommodate the growth.

I saw first-hand in Simcoe county how the lack of servicing can lead to what I would call opportunistic growth. In other words, the areas that don't have the servicing barriers can grow, and perhaps they grow faster than they should, given the other infrastructure that they have in terms of hospitals, schools, roads and transportation that are critical to sustaining and promoting what we call complete communities. And that is the ultimate goal in the planning world, is to have complete communities throughout your town, throughout your region so that those communities can thrive and grow as an organic whole independent of some of the larger framework issues.

It is with that framework and experience that I stand before the House today to speak in support of this important legislation that is part of this government's ongoing and iterative agenda to address the housing crisis. We want to address that crisis in ways that are sustainable, planned, forward-thinking and, as I said, give rise to the development of complete communities.

And that challenge, Mr. Speaker, is very real. Because across Ontario, people are feeling the pressure of a housing system that has become too slow, too costly and too difficult to navigate. As we heard from both the associate minister and my colleague from Thornhill—and I will be repeating some of the things they said, and that's only because it bears repeating, because it is important given the crisis that we are facing.

We have young people who are trying to get into the housing market, and we have seniors that are trying to downsize and remain in the communities that they grew up and thrived in. We want to get workers living in residences that are close to the jobs and the lives they lead so that they spend less hours commuting every day.

We see these challenges across the province. We see it in the GTA, but we also see it in rural Ontario. And I've said many times in this House that this government—not only on this side of the House, but as rump on other side of the House—represents people from all area codes across this great province. That cannot be said of the official opposition or the third party. We represent all of Ontario and we have to come up with plans, particularly in housing, that are going to make all communities strive across this great province, both in the GTA and to the north.

Our province is growing faster than any other province in Canada. Our population is 40% of Canada's population

and we are the economic engine of Canada as well. We have brought over one million jobs to Ontario since 2018, and we have attracted over \$77 billion in foreign investment to Ontario in the automotive sector, the tech sector and the health sciences sector.

We are growing our school system, our education system, skills development programs and we have created two new medical schools, all in an effort to make sure that we have the pipeline for the employment of the future, to make sure that we give our young careers to last them a lifetime and to serve and grow our province as we move forward.

People from across the country and around the world continue to choose Ontario because of the opportunities that exist here. That growth is a sign of confidence in our province, and it also places enormous pressures on housing, on infrastructure and on transportation systems. That's why this government is acting and that's exactly what this legislation is to address as part of our agenda.

As part of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, we are modernizing planning rules. We are working to streamline approvals. We have and continue to invest in housing-enabling infrastructure. We have supported municipalities that are meeting their housing targets, and we continue to remove barriers that have slowed projects down for far too long. This is an ongoing process and Bill 98 is directly part of that work.

This legislation recognizes that something critical has to be done to move our housing supply forward, and we know that housing does not happen in isolation. As I said, it requires critical infrastructure to support the developments, whether that be roads, transit, water systems, waste water servicing, electricity or transportation connections. It depends on a planning framework that is clear, predictable and consistent, and it depends on infrastructure systems that can support growth instead of holding it back.

That is why Bill 98 takes a broad and practical approach to address a number of these issues. It recognizes that if we want to build more homes, then we must also build and modernize the infrastructure to support that growth and promote the complete communities throughout our region and our province.

The legislation before this House includes measures to reduce delays, lower costs, improve coordination and modernize systems that have become unnecessarily fragmented, duplicative and complex over time. Speaker, that work matters and that is why we're before the House today on this legislation.

One of the key components of this legislation is the modernization and standardization of planning tools across Ontario, and a big part of that are official plans for each community.

Official plans are master frameworks that are the guide to growth and provide clarity about how communities will develop responsibly and sustainably over time. They address housing, they address commercial districts, they address industrial or employment lands and they also address things like hospital lands in areas. These official plans are the overarching framework that then the municipality fills in with their planning bylaws that will implement that growth

strategy on the ground, from site plans right down to permitting processes.

Unfortunately, Speaker, over the years, many official plans had become lengthy, inconsistent and increasingly difficult to interpret. As a former municipal politician, I know these plans have become too big and too cumbersome. I know during my term as mayor in Collingwood, we were overhauling our official plan, and good practice is to make sure you review your official plan every 10 years, and the plan process took four years to get that, done and through. We were offered many add-ons and additions and nice-to-haves, but the reality is you need to get these plans done. They need to be succinct, they need to be concise and they need to be clear.

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Different municipalities have different plans. They have different terminology. They have different formats. This creates confusion and uncertainty in the planning and building community. It slows approvals, it increases the administrative burden and it adds cost to the process. This bill proposes a more standardized approach to official planning across the province. That means a common structure, clear land use designations and more consistency between municipalities. This is about making the planning system easier to navigate and more efficient for everyone involved. It means reducing the time that a municipality must spend in developing their official plans so that the plans can be put into action, bylaws can be created and permits can be issued. A more predictable planning framework means less time spent deciphering process and more time focused on homes built.

Bill 98 also takes important steps to address delays associated with site plan control. Site plan review exists for a reason, and it plays an important role in ensuring developments function properly within the community, but, in many cases, site plan requirements have expanded well beyond what is necessary for health and safety. Again, over time, it has been a case of mission creep. In some municipalities, increasingly prescriptive aesthetic and design requirements have added significant costs and delays to projects without improving housing outcomes.

This legislation would prohibit municipalities from imposing certain mandatory enhancements to development standards that go beyond core functional requirements. That includes areas such as ornamental landscaping requirements, decorative design elements and other features that can significantly increase costs and timelines. At the same time, we are maintaining important protections related to stormwater management, servicing, safety and accessibility that remain fully in place to protect the consumer and the outcomes. The goal here, Mr. Speaker, is balance. Good design matters; so does process and affordability.

This bill also launches broader consultations on structural reforms to the site plan process itself, including measures to reduce repeated rounds of feedback that can stall projects indefinitely. Every month a project sits idle means additional carrying costs, additional financing costs and additional uncertainty. All of those costs eventually show up in the final price of the house while also delaying its time getting to market.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated at the outset, a very major part of this legislation is infrastructure, because housing cannot proceed if the infrastructure needed to support the housing is not available. As indicated, that includes water and waste water systems, it includes roads and highways, and it includes public transit.

Bill 98 contains several important measures related to water and waste water infrastructure, particularly in areas where servicing has historically limited growth. That is a particular concern for residents in my area of Simcoe county and rural areas where there's not necessarily access to municipal services or significant expansion of municipal services is required. It's difficult to get new homes built and to get growth, and growth is necessary for the municipalities to sustain themselves, to be able to meet their budgetary needs, to continue to provide the services that their residents are used to.

The challenge is not whether there's demand for housing in smaller municipalities and rural municipalities; the challenge is whether the infrastructure exists to support that housing. Communal water and waste water systems can help address that issue. These systems, which can support multiple homes in areas without full municipal servicing, are already used successfully in other jurisdictions around the world. In fact, there's a development in the Town of the Blue Mountains, in Grey county, which has a communal system, and there are easements that run across all of the titles to the land to allow for the system to reach the homes.

This legislation creates a stronger and clearer regulatory framework for those systems in Ontario while maintaining strong public health protections and oversight. That means more opportunities for growth in communities that would otherwise struggle to support new housing.

The bill also reinforces Ontario's existing framework around public water systems by ensuring that drinking water systems owned by publicly owned water and waste water corporations continue to be treated as municipal systems under provincial law, and schedule 8 to the legislation makes that very clear by adding publicly owned water systems to the Safe Drinking Water Act, which we all know—those who have served in the municipal world—is a critical piece of legislation to protect our residents and also imposes personal liability on all council members if they fail to maintain a safe drinking water system.

That will apply to the proposed municipal service corporations that we are proposing in this act. That means, whether the water system is directly operated by the municipality or by a municipal services corporation, it remains subject to the same rigorous licensing, testing, operator certification and public health standards that Ontarians already rely on today.

The discussion around the publicly owned municipal service corporations is a very important one and one that's very much in my mind coming from council in Collingwood. In my riding of Simcoe–Grey, there's a great deal of infrastructure sharing. Collingwood takes water from Georgian Bay and sends it down to New Tecumseth and Alliston to provide safe drinking water for the residents there. So it services about 80,000 people and it has, in the

60-kilometre pipe, joints where other municipalities can attach to draw their drinking water. It's a critical piece of infrastructure for our region and one that received HEWSF funding from the government of \$70 million, as well as some additional funding to help make sure that they get the plant expansion done to make sure they can continue to provide that water and to accommodate the growth that's coming to the region.

The town of Clearview sends waste water to the municipality of Wasaga Beach. It also sends waste water to the town of Collingwood, and the town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is drawing water through Innisfil from Lake Simcoe. So these things are happening organically because what the municipalities are seeing first-hand is that the cost burden of doing these projects on their own is too much so they need to share it.

When you take planning and you lift it up for infrastructure, and do it across all 16 member-municipalities in the county of Simcoe, there's a huge upside to that. That upside is it takes it off the municipal tables, so it takes off the cost of the implementation, it takes off the cost of maintenance, it takes away the asset management planning burden and it also reduces and relieves some of the DC burden. These are all things that we're seeing first-hand that are either affecting the front-end cost of a home or affecting a municipality's ability to grow in a sustainable and planned way.

By putting it in the hands of a publicly owned municipal services corporation, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw your attention to schedule 9 of the bill, because it says in the very first section, "Subsection 2(2) of the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025 is repealed and the following substituted:

"Same

"(2) A corporation may be designated for the purposes of subsection (1) only if,

"(a) the corporation is incorporated under the Business Corporations Act; and

"(b) no shares of the corporation are held by a person other than a municipality, the province of Ontario, the government of Canada or an agent of any of them."

Further down:

"Limitation on sale or transfer of shares

"(3) The shareholders of a water and wastewater public corporation shall not sell or transfer the shares of the corporation, except to a municipality, the province of Ontario, the government of Canada or an agent to any of them."

This prescribes the way that the company can be owned. The shareholders of the company will be the governments that respond to the people. These assets are owned by the public. They will continue to be owned by the public and no shares can ever be transferred to anyone other than one of these levels of government that are, again, ensuring that these critical assets are publicly owned.

So what does that do at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker? It does a number of very important things. Under the Municipal Act, municipalities have a debt load restriction—they cannot have a debt load that's greater than 25% of their own source revenue. And at the cost of these types of

infrastructure, that makes it very difficult for a municipality to do.

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Secondly, municipalities have restrictions about the type of financing they can enter into and the terms of that financing. If it is owned by a publicly owned municipal corporation, the debt load is different. If we look to the local distribution units in the energy sector under the OEB, their mandate is to be 40% equity, 60% debt, to allow them to finance the type of infrastructure they need to make sure that when someone hits a switch, the lights go on. It would be the same in the water world. To allow those municipal service corporations to enter into different types of debt arrangements where they can finance longer, they can pay over time—because these are the type of assets that should be paid for by multiple generations. You can't pay for it all upfront, and that's what the municipalities are finding out. That alleviates that stress, and it allows for the regional planning to move forward in a way that's responsible, intentional and planned for the long term.

If you consider the fact, Mr. Speaker, that across the province of Ontario, we have an infrastructure deficit in excess of \$200 billion, this is the type of forward thinking that we have to implement in order to crack that nut, to get moving, to get the infrastructure in the ground that can support the development that we need so that we can get the houses built of all types across the continuum.

We know that this government is taking aggressive steps with the HST rebate, also with an \$8.8-billion DC plan over 10 years with the federal government to help municipalities recoup DCs and make these types of planning decisions. It's all part of the business case to get homes in the ground.

We know since we passed the HST that the housing starts have taken off. We know with the DC reductions, it's going to make upfront costs cheaper, and that, we have seen, is stimulating growth right away. We've seen these things take effect.

While this is an iterative process, we are getting there. We have much to do, and Bill 98 is a critical piece of that agenda moving forward, Mr. Speaker. That is why I support it wholeheartedly, and that is why the municipalities that I have talked to in my riding all support this type of initiative moving forward, because it's making critical changes to the existing infrastructure to make sure we can move forward responsibly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): It is now time for questions.

Mr. Chris Glover: Recently, it was announced in the city of Waterloo that they're actually going to have to cancel a housing project, in part because of the downloading of development costs onto municipalities. Municipalities across this province are facing double-digit tax increases because of the consistent downloading of not only this Conservative government but the last Liberal government.

So what is your government going to do to actually get housing built? Because everything you've done so far has resulted in Ontario having the second-lowest number of housing starts of any province in Ontario.

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you for the question.

I would beg to differ. Putting infrastructure dollars into municipalities, which we have done by the billions of dollars, is exactly the kind of thing that gets housing built. Removing the HST on the cost of new homes built in Ontario is exactly the kind of thing that gets housing built. Having a development charges program that supplements the cost of development charge implementation in municipalities is exactly the kind of thing that gets housing built.

We are seeing the results of that, Speaker—we are seeing the results of those changes. If you survey sales offices throughout Ontario right now, you will see a real uptick in the number of new homes being built and constructed.

But, of course, we'll continue to be there for our municipal partners to make sure that the questions around infrastructure, the challenges around infrastructure are met. We're all eyes wide open on that and continue to make investments with municipalities to ensure that what they need to make sure that they can grow into the future is what we can provide.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, everyone.

Ontarians want to save money, especially on energy bills. They want to live in comfort, they want to reduce greenhouse gases, and they want to help create good, green jobs, which is the green economy, which is the way of the future. The rest of the world is going that way.

Ontarians are writing to me so upset that this government is killing the green development standards. So I would like you to give me—any of the speakers—a concrete example of how and when green development standards have slowed down housing.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: The government is doing no such thing. We're not killing green standards. What we are doing is defining in the building code to make sure that it sets out the minimum standards.

We don't require people to buy EVs. Actually, the federal government did for a while, but they've now abandoned that, because it's not working. What we're doing is enabling people to make the choice: Do you want an EV or no EV? Do you want green standards or no green standards? That's your election, and if it makes economic sense, as my friend opposite has said many years, then people will do that for the right reasons. We're not taking away the ability to do that. We're giving people choice.

What we're doing is making sure homes are built, codes are consistent, planning is consistent so that developers know what they need.

If you want a green roof, if you want an EV, go ahead and buy it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Brantford—Brant.

Mr. Will Bouma: I appreciate the opportunity to ask a question of my colleague from Simcoe—Grey.

I listened with interest to the speeches from all of our colleagues and, Speaker, if I may, without trying to take anything away from it, this bill seems somewhat mundane, but that's also what I think is the genius about it is: It's just

taking care of things. It simply makes sense to get houses in the ground faster.

I was wondering, especially with this background in municipal politics—and I know he touched on some of that—what are some of the really good things with your background that the member from Simcoe–Grey would like to highlight again for the House this morning?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I want to thank my colleague and bench mate for the question. What I'm seeing with the eight years that I was in the municipal world, what I saw first-hand, the biggest hurdle, and I continue to see it today, is the necessary infrastructure to support housing development, and this bill is tackling that head-on. As I said, a number of municipalities in my riding have got HEWS funding, but it is a massive undertaking for them to go through the procurement, go through the implementation and make sure it happens on time. A municipal service corporation does so much to alleviate the burden on the individual municipality in terms of their financing restrictions, their debt restrictions, asset management planning and DCs and lifts it to a corporation that can do these things in a different way, that makes sense in the long term, will plan it on a regional perspective and is publicly owned and can never be anything other than publicly owned.

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

MPP Wayne Gates: This bill has a great title, but there's a lot missing from it to help families in my riding of Fort Erie, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Falls and across the province. Here's what's missing that will actually make a difference: Bring back real rent control on new builds from 2019; stop renovictions, particularly for seniors; building public and non-profit housing: That would help us.

This government has had years to build housing and meet its own goals. Every year, we should be building about 150,000 homes according to their plan, but last year, we built 65,000. Housing starts have fallen every year since 2022. The solutions proposed in this bill give the minister more power over how municipalities plan.

How can this government tell us that the minister needs more control over planning when home building is going in the wrong direction with 65,000—

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: I'm sure the member across the way would agree that what we want to do to get homes built in Ontario is reduce the complications, reduce the barriers, reduce the amount of time it takes to get new homes built and ultimately reduce the cost on new homes for families and seniors and those looking to either upsize or downsize in Ontario.

It's clear, Speaker, that what we have been doing is working. Bill 98 will be a part of that, should it be passed, and we're excited about the changes it will bring, because simplicity equals less time, equals more approvals, equals an opportunity to build the homes that he wants in his riding and that we all want in our ridings throughout Ontario. So we'll continue to work with municipalities to streamline the processes that remove costs from the

systems and get more people into new homes. That's what it's all about.

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

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have a question for the minister on communal water systems. I think communal water systems already exist in Ontario; they have existed for a very long time. They have been very practical and implemented in various areas of the province which don't have access to large, sophisticated systems that we have most typically in urban areas. Of course, over time, technology has changed and technology has improved. We now have technology today that we didn't even have 10 years ago to treat water and to provide for healthy and clean water for communities across Ontario. This technology is fantastic.

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I'm wondering if the minister might comment on communal water systems. What does this bill do about communal water systems, and how can this bill help communities in Ontario with communal water systems?

Hon. Graydon Smith: I appreciate the question from my seatmate next door here. Speaker, I think we're at an opportunity point where we see that technology has really increased. That has been brought to bear for communal systems, and we want to make sure that we can implement that all throughout Ontario.

When we talk about communal systems, I think in the past we would think about systems that get implemented in very rural areas, maybe using some shared components around wells or septic. Those days are gone, and what we're talking about now are very high-tech systems that can be implemented at scale to meet whatever the size of the development being contemplated is, whether that's 25 homes or 50 homes.

We know that we have opportunities in communities all throughout Ontario; they just need to be serviced. Being able to use this new, evolving and improved technology to solve that problem is critical and it's an exciting opportunity.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: The member just mentioned about voluntary action. If voluntary actions are so successful, why don't we make seat belts voluntary? Why don't we make speed limits voluntary?

Toronto has exceeded its housing starts by 51% with having a Toronto Green Standard in effect. It's a proven fact in the largest city in North America that the green development standards did not slow down housing. In fact, EllisDon, Minto and Tribute—all big, reputable developers—have approved it and—

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

Hon. Graydon Smith: Speaker, with the greatest of respect to the member across the aisle, it's that attitude that is exactly the problem: that there is no serious interest in solving the housing stalemate that exists in some municipalities in Ontario; rather, it's fostered and encouraged.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): It is now time for members' statements.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ASK FOR ANGELA

MPP Monica Ciriello: This week is Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, and I rise today to recognize a program that embodies exactly what that recognition means in action.

Three quiet words: “Is Angela here?” Ask for Angela is a community safety initiative that gives someone experiencing gender-based violence, coercive control or human trafficking a discrete way to signal for help at participating locations that they already feel safe going to, whether it be a grocery store, a pharmacy or a nail salon.

I was recently at the Victim Services Toronto announcement to launch this initiative. What struck me was how simple and how powerful this program is. At participating locations across Ontario, trained staff recognized the phrase and they are brought to a safe place. They connect them without judgment to a 24/7 crisis line in over 35 languages, free of charge.

This program is delivered on behalf of Ontario’s Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, because we believe that protecting victims is not optional. This initiative is already saving lives and is in place at over 225 locations, with more than 8,000 staff across this province trained to provide this service.

Human trafficking doesn’t always look the way we imagine, and neither does domestic violence. This government is clear that we stand with victims and we fund programs that protect them.

UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: ᑭᓄᓂᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄ

Today, I want to recognize four young people from the north who represented Treaty 9 homelands at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. While many leaders have stopped talking about Ontario’s Bill 5 and Canada’s Bill C-5, Ryan Fleming, Jeronimo Kataquapit, Ramon Kataquapit and Kohen Mattinas have not backed down. They continue to be among the loudest voices speaking out against the government’s violation of First Nations treaty and inherent rights.

Jeronimo launched a Here We Stand movement, bringing attention to the Attawapiskat River and pushing back against the Ring of Fire developments.

Ramon and Kohen are founders of the youth-led Okiniwak movement, opposing fast-tracked mining in northern Ontario.

Ryan is a doctoral researcher who has given powerful talks on Bills 5 and C-5.

On the last day of the forum, Jeronimo raised a question of how government can respect environmental protection

and Indigenous rights while operating in the opening of the Ring of Fire. For Jeronimo, it is not possible to do both.

Again, meegwetch to these leaders for reminding us who we are accountable—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Members’ statements?

OTTAWA CHARGE HOCKEY TEAM

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Speaker, I would like to start by requesting unanimous consent for me to wear the sports jersey of the professional women’s hockey team of Ottawa, the Ottawa Charge. Is that all right?

Interjections: Agreed.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Great. Thank you. There we go.

Interjections.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you, everybody.

There is excitement in my riding of Kanata–Carleton, and all of Ottawa. At a packed Canadian Tire Centre in Kanata, we’ve recently hosted an extraordinary hockey game.

The Professional Women’s Hockey League is taking North America by storm, and Ottawa’s own Ottawa Charge has punched their tickets to the playoff finals. The women will play either Minnesota or Montreal in the finals, which should start on Monday, May 18.

I want to wish interim head coach Haley Irwin, captain Brienne Jenner and all of the members of Ottawa Charge all the very best in these finals.

For coach Carla MacLeod, who is battling cancer, please know that we are all thinking of you. You’ve got this.

We are so proud and inspired by all of you, and for the ladies of the Ottawa Charge, we are so proud of everything you have achieved. You’ve got this. Go, Ottawa Charge, go!

PRIMARY CARE

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: Access to primary care is one of the most important issues facing families today.

Last week, I was pleased to announce an investment of \$4.1 million as part of Ontario’s Primary Care Action Plan to expand interprofessional primary care teams across Halton. Teams included Dorval Medical and OakMed Family Health teams and Support House in my own community, led by Connected Care Halton.

Thanks to this funding, more people will have access to collaborative, team-based care that brings together family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers and other health professionals. More than 10,000 residents across Oakville, Halton Hills and Milton who currently do not have access to a family doctor will be connected to the care they need, closer to home.

This is part of our government’s plan to connect 500,000 more people to primary care and ensure everyone is connected to a family doctor or primary care team by 2029.

I want to thank all of our health care partners for their leadership and collaboration as we continue to build more

patient-centred care for families across Oakville North–Burlington, Halton region and Ontario.

ONLINE GAMBLING

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This government made Ontario the only province in Canada to open the door to private, for-profit online gambling sites. Since then, these relentless companies have flooded our phones, computer screens and sporting events with non-stop ads telling young Ontarians that gambling is cooler than smoking.

By allowing this constant pressure, the Ontario government has helped normalize online gambling, targeting young fans and pushing many towards addiction and financial ruin.

Speaker, can you believe that in 2025, \$98.3 billion were gambled on licensed online platforms in Ontario. That's a 26% increase from the year before, and it just keeps growing. It's no wonder that studies show problem gambling affects one in five young adults here, with many of them reaching out desperately to addictions hotlines for help.

1020

Speaker, young adults are the target here, and this government is doing nothing to help. In fact, with youth unemployment hitting a country-high 17%, and with this government's recent cuts to OSAP, young people have never felt so financially desperate, which is a known link to gambling.

It's time for the government to step up and show leadership. Ban these relentless predatory online gambling ads and properly fund addiction services to give those who need help the chance they need to break the cycle and get their lives back.

KINGSVILLE HIGHLAND GAMES

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have more great news from Essex county. The Highland Games are a celebration of culture and heritage for people who have Scottish and Celtic background, and this time, the Highland Games are going to be held in Kingsville, Ontario.

The Kingsville Highland Games feature sporting events and cultural events such as bagpiping and drumming; strength contests like the hammer throw, the sheaf toss, the stone throw, the caber toss, a tug of war; highland dancing; a clan village where people can explore their heritage and their background; sheep shearing; sheep herding; and, of course, the famous haggis hurl.

This great event is co-sponsored by several great organizations, including LIUNA 625 and the Rotary Club of Kingsville. And this government supports the 2026 Kingsville Highland Games with a grant in the amount of \$20,000.

I want to thank the minister and the Premier for supporting the power, the culture and the tradition which is the 2026 Kingsville Highland Games.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I want to thank two grassroots organizations whose members believe that people who use or have used drugs deserve safe and equitable access to care without stigma. Thunder Bay's DEK Foundation was founded by Carolyn Karle after the tragic loss of her daughter to an unintentional overdose.

Moms Stop the Harm is a Canada-wide network of families impacted by substance use harms and deaths.

The province's Homelessness Prevention Program offers transitional shelter to people made vulnerable by being homeless, and this is important. But when a person has successfully completed addiction treatment, there is nowhere safe to go and there are no long-term recovery supports. Because of this, the risk of relapse is high.

DEK and Moms Stop the Harm fundraise and advocate for housing and wraparound supports for those who have just finished substance use treatment, but they need a willing government partner.

Deaths in Thunder Bay from unintentional overdoses are six times the provincial average. After-treatment housing and wraparound supports are urgently needed to stop this tragic loss of life.

I implore the government to work with DEK and Moms Stop the Harm. The right supports will save lives and ease those in recovery towards healthy relationships with themselves and others.

Thank you. Merci. Meegwetch.

THE BLESSING CENTRE

Mr. Will Bouma: I'm pleased to rise today in the House to talk about an incredible organization and initiative in my community. The Brantford Blessing Centre, in many partnerships including the Brantford General Hospital and the Ontario health team, serves hot meals at dinner time to clientele numbering roughly 200 people a day—no judgment, no questions asked.

The Blessing Centre is run by volunteers comprised of community members and churches that take turns cooking and maximizing donated and collected food to be given to people in need.

A large part of the Blessing Centre's operation is rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste from places like the Brantford Food Bank, Zehrs, Cobs Bread, Sweet Bakery and Costco. That allows them to keep their cost per meal to 85 cents.

In order to transport all this rescued food, the Brantford Blessing Centre was in dire need of a new refrigerated van. A commercial food van is a large expense, and it seemed out of reach for the Blessing Centre. But, Speaker, I'm happy to report that S.C. Johnson, whose Canadian headquarters is in our Brantford community, graciously donated a van to the Blessing Centre in order for them to continue their incredible work.

Stories like this make me incredibly proud to represent Brantford–Brant. What happens when our community

comes together for the benefit of others shows that Brantford–Brant is the best place to live, work, play and raise a family in this great province.

CANADIAN ITALIAN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: Today I rise to recognize the Canadian Italian Business and Professional Association, better known as CIBPA, and the incredible contributions of the Italian community in our province. For generations, Italian Canadians have built businesses, created jobs, supported local charities and strengthened communities across Ontario. Through organizations like CIBPA, that spirit of giving back continues in remarkable ways.

Since 2011, the CIBPA Education Foundation has distributed or pledged more than \$2 million in bursaries to over 1,100 students. They've also supported institutions like COSTI, Villa Colombo and the Italian Immigrant Aid Society. In Eglinton–Lawrence, we see the legacy every day, especially along Dufferin Street, where Italian-owned businesses, restaurants, cafés, bakeries and family-run shops continue to bring culture, opportunity and vibrancy to our neighbourhood.

I would also like to warmly welcome John Mandarino, director, and Dario Dibennardo, membership coordinator, who are here with us today in the Legislature, along with the broader community in leadership and membership. Thank you for the important work you do supporting professionals, entrepreneurs, and young leaders through your charitable initiatives and Ontario's business community.

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise today to thank everyone who attended the University of Guelph's reception last night. I was inspired by the agri-food innovation on display and by the all-party support for the University of Guelph's efforts to improve life.

Guelph's excellent, teaching, research and service record is motivating people to support the university, including, most recently, the largest donation in Canadian history to a business school.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to Stu and Kim Lang for their \$51-million investment in the Gordon S. Lang School of Business and Economics. The Lang School has a strong focus on responsible leadership. They are training the leaders of tomorrow to solve complex problems and to act with integrity. Their investment will launch Lang GoodWorks, a learning program that centres the business school's "business as a force for good" mission. Through GoodWorks, students will participate in paid internships in the charitable and non-profit sectors, finding placements that align with their values and develop their social impact potential. I could not agree more with Stu: "We believe in the power of education to not just shape careers, but character."

I want to thank Stu and Kim for their generous investment in young people and their education. I'm so grateful

for their commitment to supporting a new generation of ethical business leaders here in Canada.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I want to draw attention to the Speaker's gallery and introduce a member from the riding of Flamborough–Glanbrook and one of our very proud greenhouse growers, Jan VanderHout. Thank you, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Graydon Smith: Just a moment: 19 years ago today was a pretty good day for me. I married the love of my wife, my beautiful wife Melissa, and I just want to wish her a happy anniversary. I love you. Sorry I couldn't give you a card.

Mr. Billy Pang: Today please join me in welcoming the parents of legislative page Jason Wu from Markham–Unionville, Mr. and Mrs. Wu, on Jason's page captain day. Congratulations, Jason, on this well-deserved honour.

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Mr. Tyler Allsopp: I want to welcome the scholarship recipients from the Vector Institute to Queen's Park this morning. As a critical part of our AI ecosystem, these grads represent some of the best AI talent the province has to offer. Welcome to Adrienna Tan, Cynthia Wang, Daniel Niu, David Carciente, Fu Yao Qiu, Jack Emo, Maxwell Levy, Mithunan Ravindran, Sarah Rabie, Sohan Sanjeev and Teodor Cirstoiu. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Marit Stiles: It is my great pleasure today to introduce to everyone the very first cohort of the Ontario NDP summer youth internship program. They were selected from all over Ontario from over 850 applications. I'm going to go just by first names because it will take too long if I do everybody. Congratulations and welcome Marlo, Sophie, Ahmed, Jayden, Wyatt, Alex, Emily, Avery, Emmanuella, Minh, Olivia, Remiel, Ashley, Zeynab, Erin and Farhana. Welcome to your House. We are so excited to have you here.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Good morning, everyone. I would like to give a special welcome to my incredible nephew jazzy Jack Emo, who's here with all the smart cookies getting the award from Vector Institute. Thank you. Welcome to your House.

MPP George Darouze: I'm pleased to welcome founder Travis Blackmore, Ben Kennedy and Matthew Koopman from Lionhearts to Queen's Park today.

Travis founded Lionhearts in 2014. Last year, I had the pleasure of touring their incredible facilities in Stittsville, Kingston and London. They support an amazing community, those in need.

Thank you for the work that you do. Welcome to your House.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I'd like to welcome three members from my constituency of Simcoe North: Krista Prankard, Marty Prankard and Robyn Seidenberg.

I'd also like to welcome, from my ministry, John Bayes Jr. and his father, John Bayes Sr., who was also MPP Brian Saunderson's childhood hockey coach.

I would also like to welcome back Adam Cotter and Alyssa Alibaksh. Thank you for being here today.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Investing in young people is one of the most important things we can do here in this place, and I want to welcome Madelaine Lamarche, who joined my team as stakeholder and partner relations adviser, and Zara Kohan, who is starting as an intern. Welcome to our team and to this magnificent place.

MPP Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome AJ in the front row there. He got here at 8 o'clock this morning to be here from Project SHARE; he's executive director. You do great work, my friend. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I would like to welcome the team from UHC-Hub of Opportunities in Windsor. Welcome to Ali Bazzi and Mena Rimac.

Hon. Nina Tangri: I'm happy to welcome Zubair Choudhry, Taslima Nasreen, Michael Saniga, Jose Morgado, James Green and William Xiaojun Wei of the Society of Professional Accountants of Canada, RPA. Welcome to Queen's Park. Please join us at a reception at lunchtime in 228 and 230 immediately following question period.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: It's my pleasure to welcome Walter Vaz from Heritage Winery and Cidery, who is chair of the Ontario Craft Cider Association, and Janice Ruddock, the executive director. They invite everyone to the cider reception tonight between 5:00 and 7:00 in rooms 228 and 230.

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I'd like to wish my wonderful colleague from the great riding of Mississauga–Malton a very happy birthday.

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: I'd like to welcome a great resident of Beamsville, Derek Cartlidge, the president of Thornbury Craft cider, who is here today. Welcome to Queen's Park. It's great to see so many folks from the cider industry in the House.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I want to recognize and wish my colleague to my left—although kind of to my right—a very happy birthday yesterday: Bobby Ann Brady, MPP for Haldimand–Norfolk.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Parkdale–High Park? No. Anybody else? All right. I can't believe that.

It is now time for question period.

QUESTION PERIOD

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Marit Stiles: This government has been in total denial about its record on health care. Five years ago, 90% of patients in emergency rooms were waiting an average of 2.7 hours before getting their initial assessment. But based on a study that was released just yesterday, we know now that that number has gone up 67%. Last year, patients waited four and a half hours in an emergency room before they even had an initial assessment.

Why has this Premier allowed wait times to get so out of control?

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I think it's really important for us to look at the entire data component. When we look at CIHI data, in fact, we see that Ontario continues to lead Canada in terms of initial assessment in an emergency department. When we expand by 3,500 beds already—net new beds in the province of Ontario—that allows our hospital partners to make sure that people who need to be in our emergency departments and ultimately get admitted have that opportunity. That, of course, is separate and apart from the 3,000 beds that we are also building with net new capital.

We're making the investments in people, in capital to ensure that Ontario continues to lead Canada and continues to provide world-class health care.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, that's a very creative response. We'll get to some of that in a minute.

But I do want to talk about admission rates, because they are even worse: 90% of patients are waiting 44 hours before being admitted. This is a 52% increase. It is totally unacceptable, Speaker, and the government is failing to retain health care workers or open beds that would unblock our emergency rooms. Yet the Premier and this Minister of Health stands up every single day, day in and day out, claiming that they are making life better.

Why has this government completely abandoned patients in emergency rooms?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: As I've said many times in this House, you can have your own story, but you can't have your own facts. And the facts are that Ontario leads Canada in terms of initial assessment in our emergency department.

Did we have to rebuild our health care system? Absolutely we did. Did we make that commitment through capital builds, through people, through ensuring that we have more opportunities for people to train in medical fields? Absolutely we did. We've seen that, in fact, there is a 15% increase in the number of nurses who are working in our publicly funded hospital system.

We make the investments. We ensure that the capital is there. And we also fund appropriately; as I've said many times, a 50% increase in hospital capital operating since our government took place in 2018.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: The lowest beds by population in Canada; the lowest number of nurses by population in Canada.

In Canada, emergency wait times are the canary in the coal mine, Speaker. These are not just statistics. These are people, these are patients—patients who need care, who are waiting two full days before they are even admitted, 44 hours. It is utterly disgraceful. They are firing staff, they are letting our hospitals crumble, and they refuse to do what is necessary.

When will this government show us a real plan to fix hospitals in Ontario?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Speaker, \$60 billion in hospital capital infrastructure: Those are new hospitals in Ottawa, in Windsor. Those are expanded hospitals in Mississauga, in Niagara. Those are investments in our hospital system—when we expand with a brand new medical school in Brampton, where we already have individuals who are training to be physicians, and we're in the works and planning for Scarborough, of course, and also in Vaughan.

Those are the investments our government makes, because when we came into government, when Premier Ford led this government, he was very clear that we needed to make the investments to ensure that people continued to provide and get world-class health care in the province of Ontario. When we make those investments, we not only have the world coming to Ontario, but we also have individuals who want to practice, want to train, want to work in the province of Ontario.

COST OF LIVING

Ms. Marit Stiles: I don't think the government has ever been so out of touch, really, with where people are at in the province of Ontario as this government.

Speaker, let's go back to the Premier again, because this Premier continues to let the cost of living get completely out of control, and more and more Ontarians are looking for relief in any way they can.

1040

Last year, over one million people relied on food banks to feed themselves and their families; one in three were children. Food bank use has gone up every single year since this government was elected and there is no relief in sight, Speaker.

So I want to ask the Premier when this government will take meaningful action and address the cost-of-living crisis in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Well, I rise both as Minister of the Environment and acting Minister of Infrastructure in answering this question, Madam Speaker.

Under the leadership of Premier Ford, we are making record investments in building the Ontario of tomorrow and that has huge economic impacts across the province: \$236-billion investment over the next 10 years in infrastructure—the largest capital investment in Ontario and Canadian history. The jobs that are created—hundreds of thousands of jobs in the construction sector as a result—and the spin-off of that is strong resilience for Ontarians, protecting Ontario, building the Ontario of tomorrow and making sure that there are opportunities for all, prosperity for all. That is the way to protect Ontario.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: It's beyond me why the acting Minister of Infrastructure was responding to that question,

unless their plan is to just build more food banks. But I would say that is not a solution to the crisis we are facing.

Last year saw a record-breaking 8.7 million food bank visits in the province of Ontario. Many of those were students—the same students that this government has cut OSAP for. Students are using food banks and this Premier accused them of buying luxury perfume. Remember that?

Well, guess what? We have learned very clearly today, as we all suspected, those were completely made-up accusations. Students are having their funding cut, they are using food banks, and this Premier is buying himself luxury private jets—totally out of touch.

Why is this government letting life get so unaffordable for the people of Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Member for Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: The changes we're making to OSAP are restoring sustainability to this program so that the program stays viable for generations. If our government had not acted, the pressure would have decimated OSAP.

Under the Liberal McGuinty-Wynne government, the grant-to-loan ratio was actually 15%, and 85% until 2017—less grants than what we've introduced. When the grants were flipped in 2017 to 85% grants and 15% loans, the Auditor General found that to be unsustainable, ballooning costs of the program on the backs of taxpayers by the billions.

When the Liberal federal government decided to eliminate grants for career college students, creating a \$2.3-billion pressure on OSAP, it was the last straw. We had to act to protect OSAP and protect taxpayers.

This change is part of our suite of actions, including our \$6.4-billion investment that will ensure students can continue to access world-class education for decades to come.

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

MPP Lisa Gretzky: Back to the Premier: You chose to spend \$30 million on a private luxury jet for the Premier and billions on a private luxury spa in downtown Toronto, so don't tell us that you can't afford to fund OSAP.

After eight years under this Premier, food bank use in Ontario has skyrocketed 165%, with 8.7 million visits last year alone. In Windsor and across the province, rents are out of control and jobs are disappearing. People working full-time can't even afford groceries. The number of seniors using food banks has doubled under this government's watch and one in three users is a person with a disability.

When working people, children, people with disabilities and seniors go to bed hungry, that isn't leadership; that is a failure of your government policies.

So to the Premier: When will he admit that his government is so out of touch—and frankly, entitled—that they prioritized buying a \$30-million luxury jet for the Premier over ensuring that families have enough food to eat in this province?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Madam Speaker, our government has been focused—day one—on making life more affordable for Ontarians. In fact, we've been the only party in this Legislature that has been focused on this. We've taken action to make life more affordable.

The member referenced those on disability. It was this government that introduced the largest increase to the Ontario Disability Support Program. As of July this year, we'll see an increase of 22% in less than four years.

It was this government that stood by students in school, that increased the Student Nutrition Program to \$37.5 million. That wasn't it; we didn't stop. We partnered with organizations to say, "Come on. The spirit of the Student Nutrition Program is collaboration." As a result, our partners increased that funding by an additional \$5 million so that no student in this province goes to school hungry.

We will not stop fighting for—

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

GOVERNMENT JET

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the President of the Treasury Board. I've lost count on how many exact times I've asked this question, but let's take another kick at the can. To the President of the Treasury Board: Who owns the Premier's luxury jet?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Another day, another day of dysfunctional headlines in the Liberal Party. It's fascinating. You can't run a nomination, but you want to run the province of Ontario.

The people of Ontario gave Premier Ford a mandate to make our lives more affordable. We brought forth a budget to cut the gas tax by 10 cents.

I ask the Liberal leader today if he would tell the people of Ottawa, the people of Ontario, why he believes every commuter should pay more for gasoline; why he believes a young person trying to own a home should pay 100 grand more for the achievement of home ownership; why he believes a small business owner should pay 30% more to run a business in an economic war.

Get your priorities straight and focus on the issues that matter to the people of Ontario: affordability, taxation, jobs. That's what we're seized with.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I will remind members that you address your questions and responses through the Speaker.

Back to the leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: If the minister could spare Ontarians his leadership audition, we would like to get an answer about the Premier's luxury private jet. Nobody over there can answer it. The government has lost its way and, apparently, lost a jet too.

The President of the Treasury Board signed off on this, and then cabinet were all happy to go along for a ride: "Buckle up, guys."

Is the President of the Treasury Board going to stand up and tell us anything about the Premier's luxury private jet? Maybe the simplest question is, who actually owns it right now? I do not understand why that is such a difficult question to answer. Can the President of the Treasury Board please provide that information?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: The member opposite, the leader of the third party—again, for the third time, because they can't get themselves elected after 15 years of mis-managing this province—cannot seem to take an answer. That question has been asked many times and answered over and over again.

What the people of Ontario are focused on is our government delivering on the mandate that we were elected for for the third time, with an even greater majority in this House. Because the people of Ontario know that our party is the one that is here to protect Ontario, that we are going to deliver on the priorities of affordability, of building, of getting people back to work.

After 15 years of Liberal government, jobs left this province. Our government, under the leadership of our Premier, is delivering jobs—manufacturing jobs that were chased away by the Liberals—and prosperity for Ontarians, which is something—

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'm not sure why the President of the Treasury Board doesn't want to talk about jets. But I have asked this question 20 times—20 times—and not once has the President of the Treasury Board stood up and said, "We own the private luxury jet" or "Somebody else owns it, but this is where it is." Obviously, you guys don't want to answer the question, and that's fishy; it smells fishy. Why is that?

1050

Speaker, there are 700,000 Ontarians out of work. People can't afford groceries, gas, rent—they can't afford to live, except cabinet is happy to buy the Premier a luxury private jet. And now they can't even tell us one single detail about it, and they've got to obfuscate who owns the jet right now—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I will ask you to withdraw.

Mr. John Fraser: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Mr. John Fraser: The question is simple: Who owns the Premier's private luxury jet?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Small Business.

Hon. Nina Tangri: I want to thank the member for that question because it allows us to remind everyone in this province the very first thing that they did when they took office was to increase taxes by \$2 billion. Speaker, supported by the NDP, they drove jobs and investment out of this province. They let hydro rates skyrocket. They left people and businesses in despair. That's why, after eight

years, Liberals still have only 14 seats. The NDP haven't won an election in almost 40 years.

But with three majority governments, the people of Ontario support our plan to grow our economy while putting money back into the pockets of hard-working people and businesses. We've done that through our 2026 budget by reducing the small business corporate income tax rate all the way down to 2.2%, supporting 375,000 small businesses up to \$5,000 a year.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: I guess we shouldn't be surprised—and the question is to the President of the Treasury Board—because the President of the Treasury Board also has allowed the Premier's office staff to go from \$2 million in 2018 to \$8 million now—four times.

So enough about luxury private jets; obviously, no one wants to tell me who owns it.

This is the third day I've been asking this question. We know that a company owned by Carmine Nigro, very close personal friend of the Premier, is suing the government for \$500 million for compensation for air rights that he never actually owned. And it's been reported that he was offered \$78 million for air rights that he didn't own, and he said no.

Now the government has settled for an undisclosed sum—an undisclosed sum—a year ago. So let's try this: Can anyone over there tell us how much Mr. Nigro's company was given?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: As that member knows, the process of expropriation is dealt with through Metrolinx. We don't get involved. No political member gets involved in that.

But what I can tell you is that we're delivering the largest public transportation mandate in the history, not only of this province, but the country. For 15 years, the Liberals neglected to build in Ontario. What have we been doing? We've been getting shovels in the ground on transformational projects—projects that support thousands of jobs, Madam Speaker. In Scarborough, the Scarborough subway extension is supporting 3,000 jobs for people across this province. We're introducing measures like One Fare that are going to save the people of Scarborough and others \$1,600 every single year, Madam Speaker.

That's what we're focused on, that's what we're building and that's what we're going to continue to do.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Any reasonable person, Speaker, would say that Mr. Nigro's companies have done well and Mr. Nigro has done well by this government. He was appointed by the Premier as the chair of the LCBO, on Invest Ontario, appointed to Ontario Place, and his companies were at the centre of the greenbelt. He's also got his seat at the family table for family events.

Now, given that his company was offered \$78 million to settle, which is crazy enough as it is, you've got to think if they settled after that, that amount is north of \$78 million, and that's why I'm asking this question.

Will somebody over there tell us how much the government settled for with Mr. Nigro's company for air that he actually didn't own?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: We are focused on building in this province. After 15 years of the Liberals building upside-down bridges, not investing in infrastructure, not getting transit built, we have been singularly focused on making sure that we deliver on the mandate that we were elected on three times consecutively by the people of this province. Not only that, but we're supporting thousands of jobs, whether it's the Ontario Line that supports 4,700 jobs, whether it's the Scarborough subway extension that supports another 3,000 jobs, Madam Speaker.

These are transformational projects that will change the way people move across this province and across this city. That's what we're going to continue to focus on. Last year, we hit a record of over 76 million people using our GO trains and UP Express system. For the first time, there's an over 10% increase that we've seen.

We're going to continue to build upon that because that is what we were elected to do. That is what we will focus on, and that is what we'll continue to do for public transportation in this province.

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

Mr. John Fraser: The government's lawyers were arguing that actually the air had no value because Mr. Nigro didn't own the land on either side, so it's pretty hard to build on air if you don't have something to put a foundation in. It sounds like a good argument, right?

Despite that, the government settled, probably for more than \$78 million, a year ago, and they don't want to tell us because it's protected. It's the people's money.

How is it that an order-in-council appointment of this government can sue the people of Ontario for \$500 million and still have an appointment? That's a question.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Let's continue to talk about our plan to build in this province, when we look at, for example, the Northlander, a project that was cancelled by that previous Liberal government and supported by the members of the NDP. I've spoken to countless members on this side that remember the day that the NDP members abstained from voting and abstained from supporting the Northlander project.

But guess what? Our government was elected on a mandate to restore the Northlander, and that is exactly what we are doing, while delivering public transportation for those in the north was neglected by the previous Liberal government who classified the north as a wasteland, Madam Speaker. We're building the road to the Ring of Fire. We're bringing back the Northlander. We're supporting historic investments into northern Ontario, and

we are going to continue to do that because we were elected on a mandate to build this province of Ontario, and that's what we'll continue to do.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. For years, this government has ignored major red flags and warnings from Conestoga College faculty, staff and community members about management problems, lack of oversight and zero accountability, only too happy to watch Conestoga's wildly unchecked growth in international student tuition used to fund college operations. In 2023, Conestoga brought in more than 30,000 international students, generating a quarter-of-a-billion-dollars surplus for the 2024 provincial balance sheet.

Speaker, did the government look the other way and choose not to audit Conestoga earlier because they wanted Conestoga's surplus to pad provincial books?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: A robust audit found financial mismanagement and poor board governance practices at Conestoga College. In order to protect Ontario students and taxpayers, we took immediate action to restore financial sustainability to the college by appointing an administrator.

We've been clear with all of our institutions: Our government's record-setting funding for colleges and universities must be used to drive student success. Any misuse of public funding is completely unacceptable, and we will not hesitate to intervene if our institutions fail to put students first.

We have complete confidence that under the leadership of the administrator the college will return to good fiscal management where all decisions are centred on their core mandate: preparing students to launch good-paying jobs and careers.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: You know, Madam Speaker, this government would know a few things about misuse of financial taxpayer dollars.

This government can't wash their hands of this crisis, because you helped create the crisis at Conestoga College. For years, this Premier starved the post-secondary sector and allowed colleges to become financially dependent on international student tuition just to survive. That was never sustainable, and the college sector has been saying this for years. Now the government wants to talk about financial mismanagement after standing by while this crisis grew at Conestoga.

To the Premier: While communities, workers and students are dealing with the fallout, will you at least take some responsibility for the crisis that you helped create?

Mr. Lorne Coe: The findings of this audit showed poor financial decision-making. I'll just provide a few examples: a 55% salary increase for a president in one year,

amounting to a salary of over \$636,000; a \$23,000 luxury trip to Italy taken by three senior leaders; and a termination payment for a former president that totalled 83 times their monthly salary.

This was an unacceptable use of our historic funding, and we took swift action to protect hard-working students and taxpayers. We've relieved the board of their duties and have appointed an experienced administrator who will get the school back on track with no disruption to the students and their learning. Because when it comes to our students, we will not hesitate to take whatever action necessary to protect their future.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: A close friend of the Premier, Carmine Nigro, offered to buy air rights above a CN rail line that Metrolinx also wanted to own. Then, after not paying CN, he sued Metrolinx for half a billion dollars.

Speaker, Metrolinx is controlled by this Premier and his cabinet. It takes its direction from the government. Mr. Nigro talked to the Premier on his phone, for which the records are now hidden by this government's dark changes to FOI laws.

It all stinks, and it begs the question: Is it a coincidence that Mr. Nigro tried to buy the same air rights that Metrolinx wanted?

Through you to the Premier: Did the Premier and Mr. Nigro have a plan to profit from this air rights deal by suing Metrolinx and getting a settlement from the taxpayers' purse?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Let's talk about this government's record on public transit. In fact, let's talk about how the Liberals, for 15 years, abandoned the people of Scarborough. For 15 years, they didn't build a single thing in Scarborough.

We're delivering one of the largest rapid transit investments in Scarborough's history—three new stations; that's what we're putting forward. We're delivering that at a historic pace. We're delivering the One Fare program that supports the residents of Scarborough in accessing public transit.

Madam Speaker, we are going to continue to ensure that we make the investments for communities across this province as we develop one of the most integrated public transit plans across North America, and doing so by also supporting thousands of jobs. The Scarborough subway—3,000 jobs are supported by that project, which the Liberals voted against, and a community that they abandoned for 15 years. We're—

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

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: This shady Ford Conservative government is making their rich friends richer with schemes like the greenbelt, Skills Development Fund and now air rights.

This air rights saga has the making of the next Ford family Netflix series. Mr. Nigro buys air rights that Metrolinx also wants. Mr. Nigro sues Metrolinx for half a billion dollars. The Premier recommits to the friendship with Mr. Nigro by reappointing him to the board of the LCBO. Mr. Nigro gets even richer from an out-of-court settlement with Metrolinx. The Premier smiles, won't talk about it, and no one will tell taxpayers how much of their money the Premier's friends get from his government.

My question to the Premier: Did the Premier benefit from this deal, and will he remove Carmine Nigro from his government board positions now?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, you want to talk about shady? Take a look at what happened this weekend in Scarborough. You have your own members, elected members of the Liberal Party, calling into question election processes. A week before, you had the Leader of the Opposition calling for a political opponent to be jailed. This is what the opposition has sunk to in this province. This is not acceptable.

We're delivering for the people of Scarborough, and that is why we have received three consecutive majority mandates in this province. We're focused on the things that matter to the people in this province: delivering on transit, creating jobs, making life more affordable by introducing tax cuts, as well as the One Fare program. That is what we're going to continue to do because that is what the people want us to focus on.

We're focused on delivering large infrastructure projects that are going to transform the way Ontarians move across this province, and we're going to do so by creating thousands of jobs in those projects.

HOUSING

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Whether it's someone trying to buy their first home, rent closer to work or find a place to raise a family, the message is clear: We need more homes.

At the same time, it has become increasingly more expensive to build housing. Taxes, fees, development charges, interest costs, delays and red tape all drive up the cost of construction.

When the cost of building rises, these costs are ultimately passed on to homebuyers. That's why our government has taken major action, including removing the HST on new homes and working with the federal government to reduce development charges.

Can the associate minister explain how these measures will help lower the cost of building, support more housing supply and get more homes built for the people of Ontario?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thanks very much to the member for Burlington for that great question. I would say it's exciting times for homebuyers in Ontario.

As she referenced in her question, we know that the HST removal on new home builds in this province is having a major difference for people who want to buy new homes in Ontario. The phones are ringing off the hook in

sales offices. That means that communities grow. That means people have an opportunity to get into that home. That means that municipalities have an opportunity to continue to grow. So the measures this government are taking are working.

When we look at that, coupled with development charge reform and the \$8.8 billion that we'll be putting into development charge relief for municipalities over the next 10 years, it's nothing but good news for homebuyers in Ontario. We continue to be on their side to make sure that the dream of home ownership is alive and well, and people are realizing it today.

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the associate minister for that response. It's encouraging to hear that our government is not only focused on the pressures families are facing today, but also the next generation.

We know that the cost of building is only one side of the challenge. Even when builders are ready to move forward, projects can still get stuck in long approval processes, duplicative requirements and red tape that slow down construction even before a shovel gets in the ground.

That's why Bill 98 is so important. It builds on our government's broader housing plan by cutting red tape, reducing delays and helping move projects from planning to construction faster.

Can the associate minister please explain how Bill 98 works together with our other measures to help get more homes built faster and make housing more affordable for families in Ontario?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you very much again to the member from Burlington for the question.

I love the light moans and groans coming from the other side of the House, because they can't stand the fact that we're doing the things that need to be done to get more people into homes in Ontario. It galls them. It galls them. It galls them that we've reduced the HST on new home builds. It galls them that we've reduced development charge stressors for people. It galls them that Bill 98 will reduce the red tape that is present in every municipality that stops homes getting built quickly.

Our government has taken real, tangible action and is delivering real, tangible results for homebuyers in Ontario. We'll never stop doing it. We'll always make sure that dream of home ownership remains alive and well for everyone that wants a home in this great province.

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TRUCKING SAFETY

MPP Lise Vaugeois: To the Premier: According to the Ontario Trucking Association and the just-released Auditor General's report, many new drivers are pushed out onto our highways without having been taught the skills they need to drive big rigs safely. We also know from government records that there are as few as eight people responsible for inspecting over 270 commercial driving schools.

What is your plan to hire and train enough commercial driving school inspectors so that no driver is put on the road without being fully trained and legitimately licensed?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: We take safety and training with the highest regard at the ministry and that is why we have been supporting the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and assisting with auditing of those schools.

Just since November of this year, we have conducted over 50 audits of schools and we have also increased the amount of transportation enforcement officers on our roads to over 198. Just this year alone, 92 additional officers were hired. And guess what? That member over there voted against those measures and the additional dollars that were put in to support those individuals, to ensure that our roads keep safe.

We will continue to ensure that we have the highest standards across this province and that is what we're going to continue to move forward on.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: We vote against their measures on highway safety because—you know what, Speaker? They're not working. And the Auditor General's report adds to that.

We sincerely hope that they listen to the Auditor General because, for years, they haven't been listening to the people who drive the highways. When we did our tour, tow truck operators told us that there were licensed operators in Ontario who did not know how to use air brakes. A contractor who keeps our roads clean told us that he refused to help a transport driver who did not know how to back up a truck—licensed in Ontario.

The Auditor General identified it, but they know it—we all know it—and they have refused to act. Why?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Speaker, we continue to act and we continue to improve and increase the amount of investment into road safety and into those who are auditing our safety, our schools. That is why we have worked with the ministry of colleges to enhance that enforcement and to support their role as the administrator of that program—50 audits just since this December, and we'll continue to improve upon that.

But any time any measure is put forward in this House, whether it be road safety, whether it be enforcement officers, whether it be investments into those roads to make them more safe, those members get up and vote against those measures every single time. They had an option, a week ago, to support the budget, which continues to invest in Highway 11, continues to invest in Highway 17, which continues to invest in road safety with the additional officers on our roads, but once again, they refused to support those measures.

We're going to continue to ensure that we build a strong and more robust system, and that we will do by working with those in the industry and the stakeholders in keeping Ontario some of the safest roads—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Kanata–Carleton.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I rise today to ask why this government is so focused on attacking democracy here in Ontario.

The government used the “notwithstanding” clause when courts ruled that their third-party political advertising law was unconstitutional, thus ignoring the ruling of a superior court. This government is under RCMP criminal investigation for backroom greenbelt deals, which rewarded insiders and friends of the Premier. This government eliminated fixed election dates and raised contribution limits to get money from their rich insider friends. And in the latest budget—in the budget, a bill which should be about outlining spending and economic issues—the government tried to hide removal of access to freedom of information. Why? Because the courts ruled that the Premier had to disclose his records.

This government is so focused on hiding things. I want to ask: Why can't you focus on helping Ontarians instead?

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

Hon. Stephen Crawford: I'm not sure if the member opposite read the budget, because the budget that we passed a few weeks ago was focused on supporting Ontarians, making life more affordable, supporting small businesses. A 30% tax cut for small businesses, that's what small business owners asked for. We delivered; you voted against it. The opposition voted against it, Speaker.

We also brought in a ticket sales recap at face value to help consumers, to help make concerts and sporting events more affordable for the people of Ontario. They voted against that as well.

Speaker, we are focused on building an economy, building infrastructure, building roads, bridges and highways. We're focused on delivering results for the people of Ontario, making life more affordable and creating jobs and economic growth so Ontarians can prosper for years to come.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Kanata–Carleton.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Another disrespectful response—it's more deflection, more distraction, more distortion of the truth. But while this government is focused on luxury jets and luxury spas—

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

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Withdraw.

While this government is focused on luxury jets and luxury spas and the Toronto waterfront, Ontario's unemployment rate is now 7.5%. Ontario's unemployment rate in 2018 was 5.6%, so unemployment in Ontario is up two percentage points than where it was eight years ago. However, our neighbouring province of Quebec, their unemployment rate is currently 5.4%—2% better than Ontario and better than its historical average.

Whatever you're doing, it isn't working for Ontario. When are you going to focus on Ontarians?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Bay of Quinte.

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: It's a pleasure to answer this question today. But we are not going to take any lessons from the Liberal Party that shipped 300,000 jobs out of our province. Our government has been focused on investment attraction and job creation, and we have the results to show it. Just last month, Ontario led the nation in job creation: 42,400 jobs created, 39,000 of them in the private sector and 8,700 in manufacturing alone.

Take a look at some of the new investments we've brought in. Microsoft: investing \$19 billion, including in sites in Markham, Etobicoke and Vaughan, creating 1,250 new jobs; Toyota is investing \$1.1 billion in Cambridge and Woodstock for new RAV4 construction; General Motors: \$691 million in St. Catharines to build new V8 engines; and IMT Precision: investing \$305 million in Ingersoll, creating over 400 new jobs.

It is this government that's focused on investment attraction, job creation and making sure the people of Ontario can put food on the table and can have a great place to work, and that party did not do it for 15 years.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: My question is for the Premier. Ontarians are feeling pinched every time they go to get gas. In my riding, people are telling me they can barely afford to get to work, drop their kids off at school or go to health care appointments. Ontarians are being forced to choose between filling up their tank or buying groceries because this government has kept us all hooked on gas while greedy oil and gas companies gouge us.

Canadian-based and mostly American-owned oil and gas billionaires are set to make an additional \$100 billion in profits this year alone. That's 54 cents a litre—just another day in Ontario where everyday people are being gouged by the ultra rich with the help of the Premier.

Speaker, my question to the Premier: Will he call the Prime Minister, ask him to implement a wealth tax on the billionaire oil and gas companies and return this money back to the people of Ontario?

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: This is like bringing back the national energy policy, for which our government will oppose.

Madam Speaker, I think what I would simply say is, we were proud to unveil a gas tax reduction, which we then made permanent in the last budget on the basis of cutting the cost for every family and commuter by 10 cents, for the parents who drive their kids to school, for individuals who go to work, for all families that require the automobile experience, which is the reality for 90% of us in this vast land.

We also unveiled the largest energy savings program in Canadian history—\$10.9 billion. Not ironically, it was a Progressive Conservative government that made energy

efficiency a priority: 2-to-1 savings for the people of Ontario, new insulation, new home heating, smart metres. Even solar on their battery, we're now incenting with a third bursary. I thought the member opposite would have supported that.

But the member opposite should know, we support all conventional energy sources, including oil and gas, which is why we want Canadian oil to prevail over Vladimir Putin's.

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

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Ms. Aislinn Clancy: This is proof that they're in bed with oil and gas companies, and they turn a blind eye to 54 cents a litre in profits. That's why life is so expensive in Ontario: because this government is in their pockets and puts profits over people.

Big oil and gas companies do what they always do, a tale as old as time. Companies like Enbridge max out their PC profit donations and make backroom deals, and then this government does their bidding. First, they kill the EV market and all the jobs that go with it by getting rid of rebates, ripping out chargers, blocking new chargers from being built. Then they block Ontario Energy Board decisions, so that everyday Ontarians keep paying for Enbridge pipelines on their bills.

Every time this Premier makes a backroom deal, Ontarians pay the price: higher bills, more on groceries, more on gas. Speaker, back to the Premier: When will this government remember that it is their job to put the people of Ontario ahead of the profits of the billionaire class?

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, it is our job as parliamentarians to fight for affordability. And when the member opposite enabled the Liberal Party to buy contracts—33,000, no less—at 10 times above market, sending every family, every senior, every individual to energy poverty, there's just simply no virtue in that, and the member opposite should know better. That's why, when we brought forth a budget to cut gas taxes, to make energy efficiency a priority, to cut taxes for every income bracket, the member opposite opposed that measure.

Madam Speaker, the reality is in the words of Kathleen Wynne, "People have told me that they've had to choose between paying the electricity bill and buying food or paying rent.... Our government made a mistake. It was my mistake." Will the leader and the members of the Green Party accept they too made a mistake, enabling the triumph of ideology over affordability for the people we serve in this province?

PUBLIC TRANSIT

MPP Monica Ciriello: My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Hamilton, as you know, is one of the fastest-growing cities in Ontario, but for years, residents have faced increased congestion, commutes and limited rapid transit

options. Families, students, and workers need dependable transit that gets them where they need to go, safely and efficiently. That's why our government is moving ahead with the Hamilton LRT and delivering the infrastructure this city needs for the future.

Speaker, can the minister update the House on the important progress being made right in Hamilton for the LRT project?

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

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Thank you to the great member from Hamilton Mountain for that question.

Our government is embarking on the largest transportation expansion plan in North America. We're investing \$70 million in public transit across this province, and that includes the Hamilton LRT, Speaker.

We've officially awarded the first major civil utilities contract for the Hamilton LRT, a huge step forward in getting this transformational project built. The design and detailed construction planning is under way, including utility relocations, bridges, sidewalks, and traffic control systems and other critical infrastructure along the way.

Speaker, this 14-kilometre line will connect approximately 50,000 daily riders to 17 stops across the city and deliver more reliable transit for the people of Hamilton. That's what we're going to do, Speaker: We're going to deliver transit and ensure that ridership is easy, convenient and accessible for Hamiltonians and Ontarians alike.

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

MPP Monica Ciriello: Thank you to the parliamentary assistant for that great update, and thank you for all you do for the Ministry of Transportation.

Our government understands that modern public transit is more than just about getting people from one place to another; it's about connecting communities, supporting local businesses, creating jobs and making life easier for families and workers across this province.

Once complete, the Hamilton LRT will connect people to key destinations in our city, including McMaster University, downtown Hamilton, Hamilton Stadium, Gage Park, Ottawa Street and Eastgate Square. This project will help reduce gridlock, shorten commute times and drive economic growth across our region.

Speaker, can the parliamentary assistant share how the Hamilton LRT will help support Hamiltonians through their growth and prosperity?

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Thank you again to the member from Hamilton Mountain.

Absolutely, our government is delivering world-class transit for the people of Ontario and supporting the people of Hamilton for generations to come. Once complete, this LRT will put tens of thousands of people within walking distance of fast, reliable transit. This line will provide connections with the local and regional transit networks, making it easier for residents to travel across the city and throughout the region.

This project will deliver economic development and create thousands of good-paying jobs. As Hamilton con-

tinues to grow, our government will be investing in the infrastructure needed to keep people moving and have reliable, fast transportation ready at their doorstep.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

MPP Alexa Gilmour: My question is to the Premier. The Ontario Autism Coalition has surveyed families across 64 school boards and found education plans written but not followed, accommodations promised but not delivered, children locked out of classrooms because there are no adults there to support them.

Nearly three quarters of families reported safety concerns at school, and an estimated 22,000 students with disabilities weren't attending at all last year—22,000. How can this government call Ontario's education system inclusive when so many children are literally being pushed out of it?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: Let me just at the outset say I don't disagree with many of the things in the member's question, that's why we're taking a very serious look. I announced a number of weeks ago that we're going to take a serious look at special education delivery across the province of Ontario. The members have heard me say it. It doesn't matter—I can get up here and tell you that we've increased funding substantially. Who cares? As long as we're not getting the results that we expect from the system, then something has to change.

We've heard from the autism community—but not just the autism community, others with respect to seclusion, and I'm troubled by it. I'm troubled by some of the things I saw in the Auditor General's report. We'll have a bit more to say on that later on today.

But as I said, I think some of the actions that we've seen at school boards across the province of Ontario and the inaction from my ministry are unacceptable, and we'll make some changes to it.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Parkdale—High Park.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: To the minister: You've had eight years to fix these. There are 22,000 children that weren't pushed out of the classrooms by accident.

The province's own Financial Accountability Office confirms that per-student funding is at the lowest level in a decade—a decade. School boards are already spending more on special education than this government gives them, and the Auditor General report confirms what students and families have known for years: When the funding fails and falls, then educational assistants will disappear, IEPs will go unfollowed and children will get sent home.

This is not a coincidence; this is a policy choice. When will the government make a different one?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank the honourable member for the question. I thank the Minister of Education for the

work that he's doing and the investments and the commitment that he has made when it comes to special education in our province.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to supporting families with children and youth with autism in our province, our government stepped up. I want to thank the President of the Treasury Board because she's in this chamber. In this recent budget, we saw an increase to the Ontario Autism Program by an additional funding of \$186 million, bringing our total funding to nearly \$1 billion. Thank you very much, Madam President.

Why is it so important? Because we want to make sure that outcomes for every child, every youth is improved in this province. To do that, we want to provide that support early on. That's why we have a program that was developed by the Ontario autism community for the autism community. That work is upstream. That investment is early on to make sure every child and youth in this province—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

CONDITIONS IN SCARBOROUGH

MPP Andrea Hazell: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Premier. This government is claiming it put Scarborough back on the map. Let me bring them back from their fantasy island. For eight years, this government has engineered a crisis in Scarborough through deliberate underfunding and systemic neglect. The facts are undeniable.

Last Saturday, I joined Scarborough West Hill at their youth job fair. Over 500 students patiently waited in line looking for work. You know what the sad truth is? That 90% of them will never find a summer job. Youth unemployment in Scarborough has hit over 20%, double the provincial rate. This isn't a coincidence; it's a policy choice.

So through you, Madam Speaker, I ask: Does the Premier believe the people of Scarborough deserve less?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam: I welcome this opportunity to highlight the disastrous legacy of the previous Liberal government in Scarborough, Madam Speaker. The people of Scarborough called on the previous government to expand the subway system. For 15 years, they have done nothing. But this Premier in just one year secured the funding, expanding Scarborough's subway expansion, and almost 50% of the tunnelling is completed—3.5 kilometres.

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Madam Speaker, the people of Scarborough pleaded with the previous Liberal government to repair their emergency department and build a new hospital. They rejected Scarborough people's request. This government, in short years, secured \$1-billion funding, building a brand-new hospital in Birchmount, redeveloping the emergency department—and announced and completed Northpine imaging concourse in Scarborough, expanding

the MRI services. We announced the first-ever medical school, and this year we are welcoming the first batch of students—

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

MPP Andrea Hazell: To the associate minister: You know what? SHN opened a campaign called the Love, Scarborough campaign. You know who was featured in that campaign? MPP Hazell. We raised over \$200 million for that Scarborough hospital through that campaign.

I'll tell you something else: The hospital is running over 200% capacity. Wait time is almost nine hours. Come again with new information.

Listen to the heartbreaking stats in Scarborough:

—37% of children are living in poverty;

—more than 1.6 million food bank visitors;

—87% of food bank users are working three or four

jobs;

—youth unemployment again is over 20%;

—70% of the residents cannot access mental health.

This is what systemic racism looks like in Scarborough. I've been living it since 1988.

Madam Speaker, through you, I will ask again so the families in my riding of Scarborough—Guildwood and in Scarborough can get a clearer answer: Does the Premier believe a child in Scarborough deserves to go to bed hungry?

Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam: Liberals and NDP don't know a thing about Scarborough, Madam Speaker.

No government can take credit for Love, Scarborough. Love, Scarborough is successful because of the unsung heroes of Scarborough, like small business owners, nurses, doctors and average people in Scarborough. No government can take any credit for Love, Scarborough.

This government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has never raised the tax on the backs of the hard-working people of Scarborough. We have cut the gas tax; that saves billions of dollars. We made transportation more accessible by giving back \$1,600 with One Fare.

For all these cost-saving measures, both Liberals and NDP voted against. We will never take lessons from Liberals on delivering for Scarborough.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Mr. John Jordan: Speaker, my question is for the acting Minister of Infrastructure. Families in my riding of Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston want to see investments that help make housing possible. They were excited to hear that our government is investing more than \$14 million to build better water and waste water systems in Smiths Falls and North Frontenac, building on previous funding through the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program to fix aging roads, bridges and water systems. These record infrastructure investments are making new homes possible while also protecting existing homes from health and safety risks.

Speaker, can the acting minister explain how this investment will help communities in Lanark and Fron-

tenac counties support local growth, protect public health and safety, and contribute to our government's plan to build more homes and create stronger communities across Ontario?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I thank the excellent member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston for his strong advocacy.

Madam Speaker, through his advocacy and under the leadership of our Premier, our government is working to protect Ontario through what I've already referenced, our \$236-billion capital plan. Building homes starts with making the right investments in core infrastructure, particularly water, waste water and stormwater systems. In Smiths Falls, the member's riding, more than \$13 million is supporting a trunk water main upgrade and a sewer separation project that will significantly improve water system reliability for approximately 1,380 existing homes. It will strengthen fire protection capacity and unlock additional waste water capacity to support future housing development. Also in the member's riding, in the township of North Frontenac, more than a million dollars is helping to rehabilitate and expand stormwater management in the village of Plevna.

TABLING OF SESSIONAL PAPERS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that the following documents were tabled from the Office of the Auditor General in Ontario:

- a special report on the Family Responsibility Office;
- a special report on Large Commercial Truck Driver Licensing;
- a special report on Special Education Needs; and
- a special report on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Ontario Government.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer given to the question by the Minister of Energy and Mines regarding the Premier's private jet. This matter will be debated today following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion 18 relating to allocation of time on Bill 114, An Act to Amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.
The division bells rang from 1136 to 1141.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On May 11, 2026, Mr. Clark moved government notice of motion number 18, relating to allocation of time on Bill 114.

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

Ayes

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Allsopp, Tyler | Grewal, Hardeep Singh | Racinsky, Joseph |
| Anand, Deepak | Gualtieri, Silvia | Rae, Matthew |
| Babikian, Aris | Hamid, Zee | Rickford, Greg |
| Blais, Stephen | Hardeman, Ernie | Riddell, Brian |
| Bouma, Will | Hazell, Andrea | Rosenberg, Bill |
| Bowman, Stephanie | Hsu, Ted | Sabawy, Sheref |
| Bresee, Ric | Jones, Sylvia | Sandhu, Amarjot |
| Calandra, Paul | Jones, Trevor | Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh |
| Cho, Stan | Jordan, John | Sarrazin, Stéphane |
| Ciriello, Monica | Kanapathi, Logan | Saunderson, Brian |
| Clark, Steve | Kerzner, Michael S. | Scott, Chris |
| Coe, Lorne | Khanjin, Andrea | Shamji, Adil |
| Collard, Lucille | Leardi, Anthony | Smith, Dave |
| Cooper, Michelle | Lecce, Stephen | Smith, David |
| Crawford, Stephen | Lumsden, Neil | Smith, Graydon |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy | McCarthy, Todd J. | Smith, Laura |
| Darouze, George | McCrimmon, Karen | Tangri, Nina |
| Denault, Billy | McMahon, Mary-Margaret | Thanigasalam, Vijay |
| Dixon, Jess | Mulroney, Caroline | Tibollo, Michael A. |
| Dowie, Andrew | Oosterhoff, Sam | Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. |
| Downey, Doug | Pang, Billy | Tsao, Jonathan |
| Dunlop, Jill | Parsa, Michael | Vickers, Paul |
| Firin, Mohamed | Piccini, David | Watt, Tyler |
| Fraser, John | Pierre, Natalie | Williams, Charmaine A. |
| Gallagher Murphy, Dawn | Pinsonneault, Steve | |

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

Nays

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Armstrong, Teresa J. | Gélinas, France | Sattler, Peggy |
| Bell, Jessica | Gilmour, Alexa | Schreiner, Mike |
| Brady, Bobbi Ann | Glover, Chris | Shaw, Sandy |
| Burch, Jeff | Gretzky, Lisa | Tabuns, Peter |
| Clancy, Aislinn | Kernaghan, Terence | Vanthof, John |
| Fife, Catherine | Mamakwa, Sol | Vaugeois, Lise |
| French, Jennifer K. | McKenney, Catherine | West, Jamie |
| Gates, Wayne | Rakocevic, Tom | Wong-Tam, Kristyn |

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 74; the nays are 24.

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

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE SITTINGS

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

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order: First, I want to thank members for their support of government notice of motion number 18.

I'd like to announce that the night sitting scheduled for this evening has been cancelled.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1146 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm really thrilled to have two of my summer interns, Sam Kinsella and Adam Pagnello, here in the gallery, along with my EA, who is soon leaving to go to Amsterdam to do his master's.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs pursuant to standing order 109.1(a).

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Ms. Armstrong presents the committee's report. Does the member wish to make a brief statement? Thank you.

Pursuant to standing order 109.1(a), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

PETITIONS

LABOUR LEGISLATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Tammy Wheely from Val Caron in my riding for these petitions. They're called "Enact Anti-Scab Labour Law."

Strikes and lockouts are rare. About 97% of collective agreements are negotiated without any work disruptions.

Anti-replacement worker laws have existed in Quebec since 1978 and in British Columbia since 1993; in Ontario, we had it when we had an NDP government, but it was taken away when the Conservative government came into power.

Anti-scab legislation reduces the length and divisiveness of labour disputes. The use of scabs during strikes or lockouts is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short term or long term.

We had a one-year strike at the mines in Sudbury—about 2009; lasted until 2010. The damage it did to my community is still there 15 long years later. Some families don't talk to one another anymore, and some community members don't socialize with one another anymore, because of the use of scabs. This has to stop.

We petition the Legislative Assembly to pass the anti-scab labour bill to ban replacement workers during strikes and lockouts.

I fully support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask my good page Devin to bring it to the Clerk.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislature asking the federal government to restore full navigation to the Rideau Canal by installing a structure that's going to enable all marine traffic through the LaSalle Causeway for the 2026 boating season, which marks the 200th anniversary of the start of construction on the canal. The federal government has installed a temporary-fix bridge, which essentially restricts marine traffic through the LaSalle Causeway in Kingston for an indefinite period of time.

The Rideau Canal, for those who don't know, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It's an economic driver for communities between Kingston and Ottawa. I know the Minister of Tourism heard this when he was in the riding, but the canal contributes \$309 million annually to the economy in eastern Ontario. It supports marinas, shops, restaurants and seasonal employment.

This is a very important petition. We're hoping to get some movement from the federal government very soon.

I'm pleased to affix my signature to the petition and send it with my local page Azaad. It's great to have somebody from the riding here today.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Tom Rakovec: There are three certainties in life: death, taxes, and our friend Dr. Sally Palmer waking up every morning and fighting for ODSP recipients, fighting for OW recipients, and telling us here, the members of this House, that what they're receiving is just not enough; in fact, it's far below the poverty line. You can't live on that amount of money. So, diligently, she circulates these petitions. She gets out there. She talks to people. She's advocating for them. She says something that we all know—raise the ODSP rates; raise the OW rates. People can't live on the amount of money they're receiving.

This government could do better. They've been here for eight years. It's time to do the right thing.

I support this petition. I am signing it right now, and I'm giving this to page Kaleigh.

RING OF FIRE

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled "Ring of Fire Petition from People of Ontario." It has to do with Bill 5 that was passed. They share some information about what happened when De Beers had a diamond mine in northern Ontario.

They talk about the Ring of Fire's estimated value of over \$40 billion.

In 2008, De Beers opened the only diamond mine, the Victor mine, near Attawapiskat, and they closed in 2019. A 2015 audit showed that the province only received 0.8% of royalties from the \$2.5 billion that the mining company made—less than 1%.

“notwithstanding” clause to overwrite the constitutional rights of the people of Ontario. It’s an important petition.

It’s unfortunate that people feel like they need to actually petition the government not to use the “notwithstanding” clause, because it is such an important right that we have as citizens—to have free, unfettered collective bargaining.

I support the petition. I’ll affix my signature, and I’ll provide it to Ashmi for the table

VISION CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Tracy Cardinal from Garson in my riding for this petition. It’s called “Ensuring Clear Vision for All Seniors.”

Speaker, vision is a fundamental part of our day-to-day life, our quality of life. Clear sight is essential for seniors to maintain their independence and to stay healthy and safe.

We also know that a significant number of seniors, particularly those on low incomes, struggle to afford the cost of prescription glasses.

Most seniors 65 and older require corrective eyewear to maintain a good quality of life, prevent injury or other health complications.

The Ontario health care system currently does not provide any financial support to low-income seniors to access necessary eyewear—we have it for other parts, through the Assistive Devices Program, but not for our eyes.

So they’re asking the government of Ontario to establish a rebate or a reimbursement program for low-income seniors who need access to prescription glasses but cannot afford them.

I fully support this petition. I will put my name to it and ask Kieran to bring it to the Clerk.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled “Declare Intimate Partner Violence an Epidemic in Ontario.”

We have talked about this so many times here—about how important it is for New Democrats to listen to the people of Ontario who have been victims of intimate partner violence and actually declare it an epidemic. The government, for some reason, has decided to use the word “endemic,” which none of the people in the gallery have ever asked for. There have been nearly 100 municipalities across the province that have already declared it an epidemic. We know that police forces are declaring it an epidemic.

We’re calling on—the petitioners, but I’m joining them as well—the Conservative government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic, as has been asked for for a very long time.

I support this petition, along with all of the people from Sudbury who have signed it. I’ll affix my signature, and I will give it to Devin for the table.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Candi Blais from Chelmsford in my riding for the petition. It’s called “Remove the HST from Massage Therapy Services.”

Massage therapy is a regulated profession in Ontario. They help people manage their pain, rehabilitate injury, and improve their mental and their physical health and well-being.

The services provided by regulated massage therapy are taxed in Ontario. The removal of the HST on massage therapy would improve the accessibility and affordability of massage therapy services to the people of Ontario.

People from all over Ontario want the government to direct the Minister of Health to take the HST off the services offered by massage therapists, like they do for services that are offered by other regulated health professions.

I fully support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask Maidah to bring it to the Clerk.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

MPP Jamie West: This petition is about raising social assistance rates. As my colleague mentioned earlier, Dr. Sally Palmer is dedicated to this cause, about raising awareness about the low amounts that people receive for OW and ODSP. Ontario Works is less than a grand—\$733; the Ontario Disability Support Program is slightly more, \$1,368.

We know that rent has gone through the roof under the Conservative government, with removing rent control on all new builds after 2018. It’s just becoming incredibly unaffordable.

We learned earlier today from Feed Ontario that one in three people going to the food bank are actually children who are being supported at the food bank. Record high numbers of people using the food bank—the number of food bank users has doubled, I believe, since 2018, when the Conservative government took office.

We need to help people make ends meet, to support themselves. If the government is committed that the best program is to get a job—you cannot get a job if you can’t cover your rent and your food. We really need to support people who are on social assistance to ensure they can move forward in life in a positive way.

I support this petition. I think that it will reflect on how we treat the most vulnerable people. It’s important to help people who are vulnerable and living in poverty and bring them at least to the poverty line. I’ll affix my signature and provide it to page Kaleigh for the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

HST RELIEF IMPLEMENTATION ACT (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY REBATES), 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LA MISE EN OEUVRE DE L'ALLÈGEMENT DE LA TVH (REMISES RELATIVES AUX BIENS RÉSIDENTIELS)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2026, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters / *Projet de loi 114, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail pour permettre l'octroi de crédits et le versement de paiements relativement à la taxe payée ou payable à l'égard de biens résidentiels et pour traiter d'autres questions connexes.*

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Bethlenfalvy has moved second reading of Bill 114, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."
All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."
In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.
Second reading agreed to.

HST RELIEF IMPLEMENTATION ACT (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY REBATES), 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LA MISE EN OEUVRE DE L'ALLÈGEMENT DE LA TVH (REMISES RELATIVES AUX BIENS RÉSIDENTIELS)

Mr. Downey, on behalf of Mr. Bethlenfalvy, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters / *Projet de loi 114, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail pour permettre l'octroi de crédits et le versement de paiements relativement à la taxe payée ou payable à l'égard de biens résidentiels et pour traiter d'autres questions connexes.*

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I return to the minister to start debate.

1520

Hon. Doug Downey: I'll be sharing my time with the Associate Minister of Small Business.

I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to Bill 114, the HST Relief Implementation Act (Residential Property Rebates), 2026. It's legislation that reflects our government's continued commitment to making life more affordable for Ontarians and ensuring the dream of home ownership remains alive for families across this province.

I want to begin by speaking about some simple and fundamental truths, and these affect all of Ontario, but in particular, young people in our province.

On that note, although I did introduce—but I see them now in the gallery. I want to introduce my interns, Sam Kinsella and Adam Pagnello, who are up here—the very people this government is trying to help; this very demographic.

People are doing everything they can. They're doing everything society told them to expect to do. They're getting an education, building a career, raising families, contributing to their communities and trying to plan for their future. Despite working hard and doing the right things, many people today feel like getting ahead has just become harder. They feel the squeeze of rising costs. They feel uncertain about whether they'll be able to afford a home. And many families are wondering how much further their paycheque can really stretch.

Mr. Speaker, affordability is not some abstract policy discussion; it's a daily reality for millions of Ontarians. It affects whether young people believe they can stay in the communities that they grew up in or return to those communities. It affects whether families can save for their child's future. It affects whether seniors can remain in their homes comfortably and securely. It affects whether workers can continue building a life here in Ontario.

That is why our government has made affordability a priority across every part of our plan to protect Ontario.

That is why this legislation matters. At its core, the proposed HST Relief Implementation Act is about lowering costs for Ontarians, supporting the construction of new homes and helping make home ownership a possibility.

Housing affordability remains one of the greatest challenges facing this province. People feel it everywhere—large cities, growing suburbs, and smaller communities right across Ontario. We hear from young professionals who have good-paying jobs but still cannot enter the housing market. We hear from families wanting to build or buy a new, larger home to raise their children. We hear from parents worried that their children may never be able to afford a home in the communities they love. We hear from workers spending hours commuting because housing close to work has become increasingly unaffordable.

These pressures are not abstract. These pressures are real. They're shaping the daily decisions of families right across the province—decisions that impact businesses and the wider economy—and they are exactly why action on affordability and new housing supply is important.

This legislation is an important step in helping make home ownership more attainable for families across Ontario. The proposed HST Relief Implementation Act would support the implementation of Ontario's

commitment to provide relief of the 13% HST from eligible new homes. Under this proposal, eligible homeowners could receive up to \$130,000 in HST relief on a newly built home. It's a significant support for families looking to enter the housing market. Buyers of eligible new homes valued at up to \$1 million would receive the full 13% relief, to a maximum value of \$130,000. For eligible homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million, that maximum relief of \$130,000 would still apply.

This legislation recognizes the realities facing many Ontario families. In many communities across the province, housing prices remain high. Families who are working hard and earning good incomes are still struggling to afford newly built homes close to where they work and where they want to raise their children. This legislation is designed to help lower those barriers.

One of the greatest challenges facing homebuyers today is the high cost associated with purchasing a newly built home. Families are not only saving for a downpayment; they're also managing closing costs, taxes, legal fees, moving expenses, and the increasing cost of living at the same time. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, I did real estate for 20 years as a lawyer—and it's not just these costs. When they buy a new home, they need to have the affordability to buy lawn mowers and rakes and all the things that you need to maintain that home. It is very expensive, and it is getting more expensive over time. These costs quickly become overwhelming, especially for first-time buyers. By providing HST relief on eligible new homes, our government is helping reduce those costs and helping more Ontarians move closer toward home ownership.

But this legislation is also about supporting the construction of new homes across Ontario, because affordability and housing supply must go hand in hand. Ontario needs more homes to meet the demands of a growing population. That means more homes for young families, more housing options for workers, and more opportunities for people to remain in the communities they love. It also means creating conditions for builders to move forward with confidence, to get projects under way, and to bring housing supply to market faster. When we increase certainty in the system, we increase supply. That's how we begin to ease long-term pressures on the prices of homes and help improve affordability, not just today, but for years ahead.

Supporting new housing construction is not only the right thing to do for families; it is also a powerful driver of economic growth across Ontario. When we talk about building, we are talking about more than bricks and mortar, lumber and fixtures. We are talking about an entire economic ecosystem that is activated when a single home gets under way. Every new housing project supports our skilled trade workers, who are the backbone of Ontario's construction sector. These are good, well-paying jobs that support families and strengthen local economies in every region of this province.

The impact and benefit doesn't stop there. New housing construction also supports small and medium-sized businesses across Ontario. From suppliers of building materi-

als to transportation and logistics companies, to local hardware stores and professional services, benefits of new builds ripple far and beyond the construction site.

When we increase housing construction, we increase economic activity. We support manufacturers and suppliers, and we strengthen domestic supply chains at a time when economic resilience matters more than ever.

At the same time, increased housing supply helps stabilize long-term affordability. When more homes are built, pressure on prices is reduced. That means more predictable and manageable housing costs for families and more stability and equilibrium in the broader economy. That means stronger communities and better services. When we support new housing construction, we are not just addressing today's demand; we are investing in Ontario's long-term economic strength, its competitiveness and its prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, housing must be part of something bigger. It must be part of complete communities, because people are not looking for a place to live; they are looking for a place to build a life. That is why the way we build matters just as much as what we build.

An example of this was presented in the 2026 budget, A Plan to Protect Ontario. A good example is the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund. Through our budget, Ontario is providing an additional \$300 million over six years to help meet the needs of growing communities by repairing, upgrading and constructing sport and recreation facilities, bringing the total funding for this initiative to \$500 million. These investments are not just about building infrastructure. They are about people. They are about creating spaces where communities come together, where children play sports, where families stay active, and where neighbours connect. From arenas and pools to community centres and local fields, these are the places where community life happens. They are where young people learn teamwork, discipline and leadership. They are where families spend time together outside the home and among friends and neighbours. And they are where communities build identity and they have pride and connection.

Complete communities also help make life more affordable in real and practical ways. When housing is built upon the backbone of state-of-the-art communities and municipal infrastructure, growth becomes more balanced, more sustainable and more livable. Housing policy and community investment must go hand in hand, because affordability is not only about the price of a home, nor does it exist in isolation from supply.

That is why our government has provided record investment in housing and housing-enabling infrastructure.

1530

For example, through the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program, our government is investing billions in roads, water and waste water systems that are making up to 800,000 new homes possible across Ontario. Combined with the Building Faster Fund, which rewarded municipalities for meeting and exceeding housing targets, these investments empower communities to continue delivering

results. HST relief would help lower the cost of buying new homes. Municipal infrastructure investment makes those homes possible in the first place. Both are necessary, and both are part of the broader strategy to support housing supply and affordability.

Since this critical HST measure was announced, we've heard strong support from industry leaders regarding the direction our government is taking.

Ontario Home Builders' Association CEO Scott Andison stated that the association welcomes "the Ontario government's 2026 budget, including the HST relief on new homes and its significant infrastructure commitment. Aligning these investments with housing-enabling infrastructure will be key to supporting new supply across the province."

Similarly, the Greater Ottawa Home Builders' Association's executive director Jason Burggraaf said, after the budget was released, "Along with the HST relief announced yesterday, the capital infrastructure plan will relieve cost pressures on housing-enabling infrastructure and growth. We're also heartened to see a desire by the province to again partner with the federal government to lower development charges for new housing, which is a critical step to further improve housing affordability."

These perspectives reinforce what we already know: that affordability and supply are directly connected and that coordinated action across government is essential to building confidence. Confidence matters in the housing market. Confidence matters for buyers. Confidence matters for workers. Confidence matters for builders and investors making long-term decisions. When governments provide clear direction and follow through on commitments, markets respond, investment decisions become easier, projects move forward, and economic activity increases.

For those who are familiar with the development of a subdivision or single home, they know that a lot of the work happens before you see any activity on the ground. The investors have to lend money into a project and see a potential return. The builder has to be able to put resources and time into the planning with planners and architects, line up the suppliers and figure out the trades. For one home, it can be a whole community—but they have to do all of this work.

I remember, as a much younger person in the back of my parents' car, driving past new developments, thinking, "That's really neat. I wonder how that gets started," and not actually appreciating until later in life that it starts years before, because the market has to have confidence. It has to have confidence in the ability to sell the product. No more would you stock shelves with something that nobody wants to buy than you would invest in putting up buildings that nobody is going to be able to afford to buy.

That's why it's so critical that we move right now, because there is the ability to build stock. There is the ability and the willingness and the desire to move forward, and that's exactly what we're unlocking. By investing \$130,000 as an HST rebate back to new home buyers and

to other homes that qualify, we are unlocking that potential.

That is one of the reasons this legislation is so important. It sends a clear message that Ontario is prepared to act decisively to support housing affordability and housing supply. It demonstrates that we understand the pressures families are facing. And it demonstrates that we are prepared to work collaboratively with partners across the housing sector to deliver practical solutions.

Meaningful progress requires meaningful action. That means reducing barriers, improving certainty, supporting investment, and creating the conditions necessary to put shovels in the ground faster. That is why our government continues to pursue a comprehensive approach.

We are investing in infrastructure—we have been, and we will continue to. We are supporting skilled trades and construction workers. We are supporting the training of those trades and construction workers. We are streamlining processes. We are encouraging innovation in housing construction. That's how we build communities that do not just grow, but thrive—not just places where people live, but places where people belong and where they eventually become from; places where people want to be.

That is what complete communities look like, and it's why this legislation must be understood not only as a housing measure, but as part of a broader effort to protect Ontario and to build affordability, opportunity and stability across Ontario. At the end of the day, this bill is about people. It is about families trying to get ahead. And it's about the future we are choosing to build together.

Mr. Speaker, as I bring my remarks to a close, I want to return to the core purpose of this legislation. The HST Relief Implementation Act is about making home ownership more attainable for Ontario families. It is about lowering costs on new homes. It is about supporting housing construction. It is about building the kinds of communities where people can put down roots and build their future. But more than that, it's about responding to the reality people are living every day. We hear it in our ridings. We hear it from family. We hear it from all those around us.

We know families are feeling pressure. We know young people are wondering if home ownership is still within reach. We know workers are commuting further than ever because housing near jobs has become too expensive. And we know community leaders across this province are asking for solutions to their local needs that are practical, responsible and focused on results.

This legislation delivers on that. It supports up to \$130,000 in relief for eligible buyers of new homes. It reduces one of the most significant barriers to entering the housing market: the cost. And it supports the construction of new homes that Ontario urgently needs. But we also know that housing affordability cannot be solved in isolation. It must be part of a broader approach—an approach that includes building more homes and building complete communities. That is exactly what this legislation supports. This is a responsible and forward-looking measure. It helps

families today. It strengthens supply for tomorrow. And it helps protect Ontario by supporting a stronger, more competitive province for the future. It is a meaningful step in the right direction. And in this moment, when affordability pressures are real and growing, taking that step matters.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that members opposite appear to have shown their support in this House for Bill 114, the HST Relief Implementation Act, (Residential Property Rebates), 2026. If we are serious about affordability, if we are serious about housing and if we are serious about ensuring the next generation can build a life in this province, then we must act. And this action is worth supporting.

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

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Speaker, today we are debating a subject that is so important. In fact, it is so important to this government that they forgot to put it in their own budget. We are discussing an HST cut—pilot project, we can call it—for a period of time for new home purchasers in the province of Ontario, and as the minister stated, this could be up to, on a million-dollar home, \$130,000. Can we in the opposition blame them for forgetting to put something so important to them in the budget? I don't know. What is that process like? It must be an absolute rigmarole to get all that stuff in—in some cases, so disjointed—to put into a budget and to pass it.

It's funny, the stuff that ends up here. One of the things that ended up in the budget that was supposed to be including this HST holiday was ticket sales—capping ticket resales to 0% above the face value. This is something that actually appeared in the budget—something that you would have imagined this government thought would have been communism to implement up until that point in time. We in the official opposition here have been talking about it even before the Raptors won the championship some years back. It was something that we talked about, that we did press conferences on. We introduced motions and legislation. And finally, unlike the HST holiday, that appeared in the budget itself. So some things appear; some things don't.

What this government needs to build in is some protections so that the savings get passed on. Certainly, if you buy a home and you don't have to pay the HST on a brand new home, you are going to be saving quite a bit of money—as I said, on a million-dollar home, \$130,000; on a \$500,000 home, \$65,000. What protections will this government put in place so that if the home builders get together and say, “Well, now I'm building this home. I'm going to be selling it for \$500,000, but without this HST savings, this would have been a \$565,000 home”—will they concurrently raise the price? Who knows? I mean, when you do cost savings for builders, they don't necessarily make it down to the actual home purchaser. In fact, I think they rarely do.

1540

One of the new practices for people purchasing new homes is the fact that they now get an HVAC system that

they don't even own. This is something that I'm hearing from new home purchasers across the province of Ontario now. You get a new home, and guess what? The builder says, “You know what? I don't have to pay for this HVAC system, so what we're going to do is we're just going to hook you into a contract.” Now, it's not like whatever the HVAC system costs, let's pretend it's \$5,000—they don't then take \$5,000 off the price of the home.

What home sellers, new home sellers and new home builders sell—the price of the home is what they think they can sell it for. The maximum amount they think they could sell the house for is what they charge, and that's how they treat it. This government, of course, is happy with that. I mean, really, when you look at the history and the track record of this government, they just let it rip when it comes to letting people charge people as much as they think they can get away with.

This is something that we've talked about supporting. Certainly, it is something that at the moment of sale, they're not having to pay this portion of tax, should this pass. But ultimately, will we see a reduction or even an increase in the cost of newly built homes as a result of this passing? I don't know. Time will tell. This is something that we're going to need to research and look into, but, certainly, this is something that we're going to support.

The cost of newly purchased homes is not the only challenge that people purchasing newly built homes are facing. In fact, there have been many challenges they've been facing, and that's build quality, warranties being honoured. This is something that new home purchasers have faced even before this government took office. And one of the first things that this government promised to do was fix the home warranty system, something that new home purchasers to this very day continue to face. Of course, we support building new homes. We also support those homes being built in a good fashion so that people don't end up inheriting a nightmare, because a newly purchased home is one of the largest purchases that anyone will ever face.

Of course, as the shadow minister for public and business service delivery and a long-time critic for consumer protection, I've heard horror stories across the province of people buying newly built homes. I've heard of homes with mushrooms growing in the walls because they were not adequately clad during bad weather, rain and other times; water seeping through basement walls, again, damage to the foundations of homes—and these are newly purchased homes—poorly pitched roofs, water accumulating there. The list goes on.

Luckily, we have hard-working consumer advocates like the Canadians for Properly Built Homes. I want to quote them in what they've said: “Founded in 2004, Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) is a national, not-for-profit ... corporation dedicated to healthy, safe, durable, energy-efficient residential housing for Canadians, and is the only organization of its kind in Canada. Working for consumer awareness and protection, CPBH is run by a volunteer board of directors and is supported by a volunteer advisory council of industry experts and

other key stakeholders”—CPBH in their 2024 report, *The LAT: The Place that Fairness Forgot*.

“Since 2006,” Canadians for Properly Built Homes “has conducted an annual analysis of the” Licence Appeal Tribunal’s “decisions concerning homeowners’ appeals of Tarion’s decisions.”

Why do I raise this? Because again, when prospective new home purchasers are going out there to buy a newly built home, of course they’re looking at the cost, but the quality of that build is absolutely important. So many of them face problems when they purchase these newly built homes, and some of them end at the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

During the period of 2006 to 2023, 84% of Ontario purchasers lost their cases at the LAT. It’s no wonder why many homeowners decide to not even try. In 2023, for example, only four new home purchasers ended up at the LAT to fight Tarion, and of those four, only one homeowner won. And that homeowner happened to be a lawyer—go figure. But guess what? Did you know that even if you win your case at the LAT, the LAT does not have the ability to enforce its own decisions?

Interestingly enough, when it comes to the issue of enforcement, I mentioned capping resale tickets in the budget—they forgot to enforce it. So now this is something we’ve brought and talked about. Just like they forgot to put the HST measure in the budget, in the ticket resale portion of the budget, they forgot enforcement and, just like that, the LAT does not have the ability to enforce. This is a theme the government has. There’s a complete lack of enforcement when it comes to getting things to function normally.

This is not news to them. Canadians for Properly Built Homes have reached out to the government several times asking for a review of the LAT, and their formal recommendations were that:

- the government of Ontario must immediately replace the LAT for these appeals—that this is a critical component of the consumer protection and justice system;

- the replacement organization must have adjudicators with specialized training related to new home construction as well as appropriate training related to working with self-represented litigants.

This is a challenge and concern I’ve heard with Tarion issues to this point. Sometimes the people who go out to inspect—when they even take the time to inspect—don’t have, often, the training necessary or the ability to determine whether this is even a warrantable claim. So, many times, people see their claims rejected because the inspectors don’t have the proper training or experience to determine that.

But going back to the LAT:

- operational processes that are fair, efficient, transparent, easy to navigate—that’s what the new system should need;

- the ability to enforce its own decisions;

- an independent review of whether Tarion’s construction performance guidelines are appropriate to be used by the LAT in adjudications, and if it is determined they are

not, another means of assessment that is fair and appropriate; and

- a substantial public relations campaign to help restore faith in Ontario’s legal system.

Speaking of home warranties, I started this bill by saying the procedure to put together budgets is an absolute rigmarole. But, again, when you actually look at navigating claims through Tarion, you also see a rigmarole there. In fact, to this very day, despite what the Auditor General—the Auditor General’s review of improving Tarion said to make the system easy, easier to actually issue warranty claims. No, no, when it comes to Tarion to this day, you know, it has got to be a full moon. It has got to be at, I don’t know, this time of day. You’ve got a five-second window on day 38. This is essentially what it’s like. You almost need a PhD to file a warranty under the Tarion system. This is an issue that new home purchasers are facing in addition to the cost of homes.

In fact, going back to the LAT, the Ontario trial lawyers called for an immediate review of the Licence Appeal Tribunal. This is a media release that they put out. They actually went and studied the LAT. What did they find? They found that the LAT has issued nearly 4,500 decisions regarding disputes between, in this case, injured accident victims and their insurance companies, but if you go down to it, only 217 decisions have involved self-represented individuals. In those cases, LAT adjudicators have ruled in favour of insurance companies.

The LAT is not working in so many ways, shapes or forms, especially when it comes to new home warranties. When new home purchasers end up there, they’re not seeing the outcomes they want, neither in that case nor for injured accident victims.

Now, another thing: Since they want to talk about bringing relief to new home purchasers, what about the 10-day cooling-off period? One of the things that this government has as a clear theme is a lack of enforcement when it comes to their laws that they implement. They forget sometimes to even put laws in bills that they had intended to, like we see with this HST relief, but sometimes they forget to enact laws that they put forward. When the Consumer Protection Act was debated some years ago and improved—this is something that we all agreed upon here in the official opposition and supported that move—what they forgot to enact is this 10-day cooling-off period after signing pre-construction contracts.

I want to read to you an article by Barbara Captijn, who has spoken many times about improving Tarion, improving the HCRA and fighting for new home purchasers:

Last May, “the Ontario government announced a consumer protection measure it had promised for some time: to give new freehold home buyers—meaning you own the house and the land—a 10-day cooling-off period after signing pre-construction contracts. This would enable consumers, the ministry said, to ‘review their agreement and make a more informed and confident purchasing decision.’”

“This was a welcome step forward for balance and fairness, giving consumers time to arrange financing, discuss the contract with legal advisers or family, and check the builder’s licensing and project enrolment status. A balanced contract which all parties understand and agree to is in everyone’s interest and may help avoid costly legal disputes down the road.

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“Condo and time share buyers already have a 10-day cooling-off period, and it’s mandatory. No such protection has ever existed for freehold buyers. This is a gap in the legislation which should have been addressed years ago. But we have no powerful consumer protection lobby groups in Ontario, and no consumer watchdog as in some other provinces, so it’s hard for consumers to get their perspectives fully heard and understood by policy-makers.”

She says more here. And guess what? A consumer watchdog is something that the official opposition has tabled multiple times for this government to stand up for consumers in so many different ways, and it continues to be ignored and voted down.

In the limited time that I have to speak on this, I want to say one quick thing. The minister in his speech talked about affordability and supply being linked when it comes to housing supply, but one of the housing supplies that this government doesn’t care about is rental or affordable housing.

Interestingly enough, when it comes to rental housing supply, you know what has motivated rental housing builders and those who want to create supply to actually go out there and put units on the market? It’s the fact that rent has become absolutely unaffordable. I mean, it’s thousands and thousands of dollars for rent in dilapidated buildings with roaches and mice and God knows what in the city of Toronto and beyond. Of course, if new home builders can rent units at a cost that nobody can afford or only the wealthiest of people, or maybe if you’re lucky to jam a lot of people to try to sublet an apartment to be able to afford the sky-high rent, that seems to be the only way. In fact, when it comes to rentals, it’s the opposite effect.

Look, we have a government that is basically run by developers and—in the time I have remaining—they’ve convinced this government to do what? To basically weaken conservation authorities, take away any green standards, take away any investment in the cities when they come and build. They’ve rolled the red carpet out for these developers, who also happen to be donors to this government in so many ways, shapes and forms. Look what they were willing to do to the greenbelt to make them happy—and, in the end, a target of 1.5 million homes—you remember that?—in 10 years. What have they built, like 17 units or something since they’ve taken office, maybe a few more, like 34?

It’s not working. This government continues to roll out policies that don’t seem to achieve the desired effect, and it seems to be a race to the bottom. We have said that this is something we support—removing that HST from new home purchases. In fact, we’d like to see them do it in different areas. In fact, I have tabled a bill that has passed

first reading that would take HST off all food purchases. It would be very interesting to see what they will do with that bill.

I’m going to say that this is supportable legislation. This government, if they’re serious about it, don’t forget to put it in your budget bills. You’ve put everything else there, including the kitchen sink. Just do better, because home prices are unaffordable in this province and this is one small step. But make sure that your home builder friends—and you’ve got lots of those friends; I mean, they’re paying your campaigns—actually pass savings on and don’t put the price of homes up, commensurate to the savings that new home purchasers would expect as a result of this legislation.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: I’m rising today to speak to third reading of the bill to remove HST from new homes for a period of up to one year. Once again, Mr. Speaker, of course, Ontario Liberals will support this legislation. We will support it because housing affordability is one of the defining challenges facing our province. We will support it because taxing new homes in the middle of a housing crisis never made much sense in the first place. We will support it because encouraging new home construction matters.

But at third reading, I think it’s very important to reflect on what this debate has revealed, because this debate has exposed three very different approaches to housing in Ontario.

First is the Liberal approach. We proposed removing HST from new homes last year. We believed then and we believe now that if we want more homes built, we need to reduce the cost of building and buying them. That is practical, that is pro-housing and that is pro-middle class.

Mr. Speaker, the second approach is the government’s approach. To their credit, they eventually adopted the Liberal principle, but they wrapped a good idea in a deeply unfair cut-off rule that leaves many Ontario families behind.

And then, Mr. Speaker, there is the third approach, the NDP approach. Frankly, after listening to this debate, I don’t think that they understand who is actually struggling to buy homes in Ontario. Because throughout this debate, we repeatedly heard the NDP say that this policy only helps the rich—that if someone can afford to buy a million-dollar home, they don’t need help. Well, in 2026 in Ontario, that is an astonishingly out-of-touch statement.

In many parts of Ontario, including my community of Orléans, a million-dollar home is not a mansion. It is not luxury living. It is not a private estate behind gates. It is often what most of us would consider to be a regular family home; a modest, detached single; sometimes even a townhouse. That is the reality of the market the people of Ontario are living in.

When the NDP dismisses those families as somehow wealthy elites, they’re dismissing teachers and nurses and public servants. They’re dismissing small business owners, tradespeople, young families and seniors trying to

rightsize into a new home. Those are the people we're talking about: middle class people trying to survive in an increasingly unaffordable Ontario.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also want to return to something I raised at second reading, because the government still has not addressed it: the cut-off date. The bill helps people who signed contracts after April 1, but many families who signed before April 1—families who have not even moved into their new homes yet—are excluded entirely, and that makes no sense.

The government structured this around the date someone signed the contract, not the date the contract actually closes on the home, they move into their house and actually start to pay taxes and actually pay the home builder for the house. That creates enormous unfairness.

During second reading, I shared stories from families in Orléans, families who did everything right, families who saved, families who bought a home in good faith, families who are now watching neighbours purchasing nearly identical homes receive tens of thousands of dollars more in assistance simply because they signed their contract a few weeks later.

I want all of us to think about that for a moment. Two families on the same street, buying a house from the same builder, perhaps even the same model, closing and moving in in the same year, but one family gets relief and the other family gets nothing because of the dates on the contract. That isn't fairness, Mr. Speaker; that is arbitrary.

I spoke about Hayley and her husband, a young family with two little girls. They bought a smaller home a few years ago, hoping someday to move up into a house that their family would grow up into. Like many Ontarians, they waited through COVID, through inflation, through economic uncertainty. Eventually, they made the difficult decision to purchase a new build this past February. Then the rebate was announced and they realize they would miss out entirely because they signed before April 1. For their family, the difference is more than \$100,000.

Speaker, that's not a small amount of money. That is life-changing. That's the difference between comfort and stress. That's the difference between security and anxiety. That's the difference between being able to handle rising costs and feeling crushed by them.

I also spoke about Omar, a hard-working resident who signed to buy a home in March, just one month too early. His family works multiple jobs. They saved every penny, made sacrifices for years, and now, they are excluded from over \$130,000 in relief—a relief that is available to buyers who signed their contracts a few weeks after him. He described this difference as between being house poor and being financially stable. And, Mr. Speaker, he is right.

Housing costs today are stretching families to the absolute limit. Mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance, utilities, groceries, child care—everything in this Conservative Ontario costs more, and yet the government designed a policy that creates winners and losers based entirely on timing, and, Mr. Speaker, now at third reading, I still believe the government should fix this. They could have based eligibility on a closing date. They could have

created a transition period. They could have grandfathered buyers who signed earlier in this year but close later in the year. There were many options on how to solve this—reasonable options, fair options—but unfortunately, the government chose not to pursue them.

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Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to address another theme that has come up repeatedly during this debate, and that is the demonization of home builders, because every time housing is discussed in this Legislature, there are some members who speak as though builders themselves are somehow the problem. But let's be honest: Homes don't build themselves. Communities don't appear by magic. Home builders employ tens of thousands of people across Ontario: tradespeople, labourers, engineers, architects, suppliers, truck drivers, manufacturers, project managers, small subcontractors.

Entire local economies depend on residential housing construction, and many of those companies also give back enormously to our communities. In Ottawa, the families that own the largest development and home building companies have given hundreds of millions of dollars to support local hospitals, Boys and Girls Clubs, affordable housing, soup kitchens, academic institutions, and the list goes on and on and on. These are not abstract, anonymous or theoretical organizations. These are employers, they are community partners, community builders, families investing back into the cities that they literally help build.

Now, that doesn't mean that government should never challenge developers—of course not. It doesn't mean that every development decision is perfect. But there is a difference between accountability and open hostility, and sometimes during this debate, what we heard was not only about accountability; it was hostility towards the people who actually build homes in this province, hostility because their crime is that they want to make a living doing it. Ontario cannot solve the housing crisis while simultaneously attacking the people who actually build housing. We need more homes. That means we need more construction, we need more skilled trades, more investment, more building, not less.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to clear up something else: Supporting housing construction doesn't mean ignoring infrastructure. I represent Orléans, one of the fastest-growing communities in Ontario, and I know what rapid growth looks like. I know what happens when roads lag behind development. I know what happens when transit fails to keep up. I know what happens when schools fill up too quickly. Growth must come with infrastructure, because yes, homes matter, but so do roads, so do rec centres, so do schools, so do paramedic buildings and police stations, so do parks, so do libraries, so do water systems, so does public transit.

Strong communities require both housing and infrastructure to be built at the same time. You cannot separate them, and that's why housing policy must be met with broader infrastructure policies, not just slogans. It must actually work in the real world. At the end of the day, this bill contains a good idea. Ontario Liberals believed in

removing the provincial HST from new homes long before this Conservative government saw the light. We are pleased that the government is finally adopting our Liberal view to remove HST from home construction, just like we are pleased that the government finally adopted the Liberal view for cutting small businesses taxes. Hopefully, the government will adopt the Liberal view that HST should come off of home heating and electricity. Hopefully, the government will adopt the Liberal view of giving parents a tax credit for putting their kids in extracurricular activities. Hopefully, the government will adopt the Liberal view of giving middle-class families an income tax cut, because people in Ontario need relief, young families need relief, middle-class families need relief, seniors need relief and Ontario Liberals are committed to delivering it.

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

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: Our party does support this bill, and I want to thank the PCs for doing something that will help stimulate supply. I am proud today to stand and rise and speak on behalf of people of Kitchener Centre, the best riding, but I do have to draw attention to the fact that this government isn't using all the tools in their tool box that they could use to help supply, and that's why we are in an affordability crisis. I know that it's not unique to Ontario, but housing prices are at all-time highs and the starts in Ontario are the worst in the country—all-time lows.

There's a whole generation of young people who have lost hope of owning their first home. Because rents are so high, people can't save up, young people can't save up, and we see a record number of seniors becoming homeless because we've eroded trust and pushed too many older adults onto the streets because of AGIs and bullying from bad-acting landlords. We need to do better so that everybody in Ontario has a place to live. In fact, people who work full-time minimum wage jobs can't afford to live anywhere in the province of Ontario. That's why we see 85,000 people homeless, and that is this government's legacy: a legacy of high housing costs, a legacy of extreme numbers of people facing homelessness. We can do better than that.

In fact, the government had an opportunity in the fall, when I put forward Bill 28, Homelessness Ends with Housing Act, to follow AMO's recommendation. They did a big in-depth study on how to end chronic homelessness, and it was in that bill. We had an opportunity, and every chance this government has an opportunity to end homelessness and do the right thing—I know there are many faith-based people in this place, and all of our faith communities say we need to help our most vulnerable. We should bring that spirit with us to work every day and do the caring thing, do what's right. But in fact, I hope that this bill will be used in a way that will help low- and middle-income people afford housing. My worry is it will be oversubscribed by the very wealthy.

In fact, this government needs to amend this bill. They missed the opportunity in committee to do so. I don't think we should be spending taxpayer dollars to subsidize houses that are worth \$1.85 million. Right now, if you're

on Ontario Works, you get about \$350, \$385 to pay for housing, so you can't afford to live anywhere, but we're going to spend \$24,000 helping people with three-car garages afford their home? That's a misuse of taxpayer dollars. And for people who are buying a home that's worth \$1.5 million—don't get me wrong, Toronto is different than the rest of the province, but that's why we need a flexible model that scales depending on where you live. If you can afford a \$1.5-million home, you do not need hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer subsidies—\$130,000 in rebate.

The problem as well with this bill is that if we build these big mansions, that's the same amount of labour, the same amount of cement and supplies that could be used to build a multiplex. Here in Ontario—in Toronto for a fact, you can tear down a single-family dwelling, build a big mansion. But in Ontario, you can't do that in most of the province. You can't take down a smaller home and build a multiplex that has the same footprint. That doesn't make any sense. This is a policy that could incentivize building less housing than more because there's a limited amount of labour, there's a limited amount of supply and so we'll be using it on McMansions instead of on gentle density.

We could be legalizing housing. I hear from small, medium builders all the time that they wish they could build a sixplex and that they wouldn't have to go through so much red tape in the municipal sector and go through zoning changes and bylaws and address all these things. We could legalize sixplexes all across the province of Ontario and address our housing crisis. We could build four-storeys across the province and address the housing crisis. In fact, operating multiplexes is cheaper on everybody's bill than a tall and sprawl, if you think about everybody's monthly bills. We could be building more affordable housing by getting rid of the zoning rules that are stuck in the past and aren't based in fact.

I have to go back to housing and homelessness, because for me it's a moral injury. On my walk to work every day, I pass the most famous encampment in Canada. I walk past the same encampment; it has been there for years. It's stuck in court because people have nowhere to live, and that is why the judges of these courts say there is nowhere for people to go. You can't move these people because they have nowhere to go. And yes, we have 85,000 homeless right now, but experts say that number will rise to 300,000 people by 2035. Imagine 300,000 people without anywhere to live, facing chronic homelessness. This bill will not help those people.

In fact, there are some parts of the money that's being spent on this that would be better used to ensure that people had transitional housing. This government is spending a measly \$53 million over three years on supportive housing. That is disrespectful and an affront to anybody who cares about the value of a human life. That \$53 million only gets us 141 supportive housing beds a year. We have 85,000 people who are homeless, said to be 300,000, and we're going to build 141 supportive housing beds.

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In fact, AMO says CMHC has money to build that supportive housing, but they won't build it in Ontario because we don't pay operating dollars for supportive housing. So Ontario is going to miss out on millions, if not billions, of dollars of money to spend on supportive housing because we won't fund the operating dollars. Money's there for capital, but this government says no. That's a way of punching down and ensuring that encampments will continue to be a reality all across the province.

So instead, we spend billions of dollars, a lot of which subsidizes people like Galen Weston's power. We are funding Galen Weston's power. That is the choice that we spend money on. Right now, this bill will fund people who are buying a house with a three-car garage, and we're spending billions of dollars on jail beds—\$4 billion dollars on a thousand jail beds. It means that we will spend \$3.5 million per jail bed instead of \$125,000 per supportive housing bed.

That's why we will continue to see homeless people be put in jail and then spat back out onto the street into homelessness, and we have done nothing to solve the problem. People get out of jail in the cold, in December, in a T-shirt without a bus ticket. Of course they're going to smash into a car to get back into jail to make sure they have a roof and food, because we haven't provided an alternative and jails are not rehabilitative spaces. We're missing out on opportunities.

What I would like to see in our province: I believe in a province where housing is a human right. As a faith-based person myself, I want to see that every person, especially our most vulnerable, has a place to sleep and they have food in their belly. A roof and food—that's the basics that we could afford people. And housing is a human right. Even Scotiabank says that we should be building 250,000 affordable housing units and that we could do a lot to improve our economy and improve our province.

So I ask this government to allow people to build, to legalize gentle density, four-storeys, sixplexes and even higher things on major roads. We should be legalizing housing if we really want housing to get built; it shouldn't be illegal.

I believe in making sure:

—that supportive housing meets the moment;

—that we have enough health care and housing to meet people's needs if they have addiction, mental health, if they're seniors, if they're folks with disabilities—folks just need a little bit of an extra hand; some of this policy is spending money in the wrong way;

—that we shouldn't be subsidizing the ultra-wealthy in Ontario. We should be making sure that we improve the lives of people on OW and ODSP.

We see a million people using our food banks, and we can do better than that. Let's make sure our taxpayer dollars are being used as a bit of an equalizer instead of being misspent on people who have enough.

But I will say that I appreciate all the home builders in K-W. I push for a countryside line. I want to do anything I can to get rid of red tape, municipally and beyond, to

make sure that people can build the housing we need in Ontario.

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

Hon. Nina Tangri: I'm proud to rise in the House today to speak in support of the third reading of Bill 114, the HST Relief Implementation Act (Residential Property Rebates), 2026.

I do want to begin by acknowledging the leadership of the Minister of Finance and all he has done to advance the work our government has been doing through budget 2026, our plan to protect Ontario. We want to strengthen our economy and support families right across this province.

Speaker, housing affordability and supply sit at the very centre of our government's plan. Housing affordability is one of the toughest challenges facing people across Ontario today. It affects young people trying to buy their first home. It affects families looking for more space as their needs grow. And it affects seniors who want to stay in their communities but are struggling to find suitable affordable housing options.

Speaker, these challenges are real and impact communities across our province. That is why our government's message is clear: Affordable housing remains a core priority and we are doing all we can by investing to support families, grow our businesses and the economy, and ensure our communities continue to thrive.

This proposed bill matters to the people of Ontario. The proposed HST Relief Implementation Act, if passed, will serve as a clear example of how our government is taking practical action to address today's housing affordability challenges. At its core, this bill is about making it easier for people to afford a home by lowering costs on new homes.

Earlier this year, as part of the 2026 budget, our government announced that Ontario was partnering with the federal government to provide relief equivalent to the full 13% HST on new homes valued up to \$1 million. This bill is the provincial-level next step needed to make that relief a reality for families in Ontario. If approved, families can see real savings when they purchase a new home.

For many buyers, costs like monthly mortgage payments and taxes on new homes are a significant barrier to home ownership. These high costs can have long-term consequences and contribute to people feeling prevented from moving forward, even when they are working full-time and planning responsibly for the future.

By providing HST relief on new homes, this bill can lower that barrier. It helps bridge the gap between what families can afford and the costs that they face. And for many people, including young people, families and seniors in my community, that difference is crucial. It can mean the difference between continuing to rent and buying a home. It can mean being able to stay in the community where they work, where their children go to school, and where their support systems exist.

Our government also knows that more homes bring more jobs and foster business growth and a stronger econ-

omy. In other words, when we build more homes, we are building a stronger economy. Home construction supports thousands of good-paying jobs across Ontario. It supports skilled trades. It supports suppliers. And it supports small businesses in communities across the province.

For Ontario's 500,000 small businesses, greater housing supply and affordability means access to a talented, reliable workforce, so they can focus on increasing productivity and growing.

Our government's housing-enabling policies and programs help create and protect jobs, and grow the economy at a time when global uncertainty continues to affect supply chains, markets and investment decisions. This is what protecting Ontario through building a stronger economy looks like. Our government is taking the actions necessary to support families and businesses while strengthening economic growth.

Our government has always valued productive and strategic partnerships, which is why we work with our colleagues at the federal level on several provincial initiatives.

The measures contained in the proposed HST Relief Implementation Act enable a co-operative and coordinated approach with the federal government to provide the full 13% HST relief on qualifying new homes. It also aligns with other provincial initiatives focused on increasing housing supply, reducing construction delays, and investing in the infrastructure that communities need to grow.

Our government recognizes the importance of having a sustained and coordinated solution to tackling housing affordability. We're doing what we do best, by taking action to lower costs and keep life affordable through tax cuts on new homes and small businesses, investing in infrastructure, and protecting the people of Ontario from tariffs and economic uncertainty through targeted affordability measures.

Speaker, growing communities are the backbone of our province. When we talk about housing, we are really talking about communities. Homes are where people build their lives, individuals put down roots and communities contribute locally. They're where families grow and connections are formed.

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I've had the pleasure of meeting with many people in the province and connecting with them, hearing their stories and voices that shape our community. I'm always inspired to be able to contribute and keep that strong community spirit going. This is to say, building homes is about more than supply numbers. It is about building communities where people can continue to share these stories, live, play, work and thrive.

Through this bill, our government is taking action to deliver on the promise of HST relief, which will strengthen communities and not just build houses across Ontario—urban and rural.

Speaker, our plan presents a balanced approach between affordability today and supply tomorrow. Some of the measures our government is taking provide immediate relief; others address long-term challenges—affordability

today and supply for tomorrow. Our government will protect Ontario by prioritizing and addressing both together, because they are necessary for the people now and in the future.

The HST Relief Implementation Act is also part of a broader housing plan. For example, our government introduced the Protecting Ontario's Workers and Economic Resilience Act, the POWER Act, which ensures less red tape, clearer timelines and faster decisions.

This is how we protect Ontario—through investing in housing-enabling infrastructure, supporting faster approvals, encouraging innovative construction methods, and working with municipalities and partners to get homes built sooner.

Our government's plan is guided by the same goal: to ensure more homes are built faster, at a cost the people of Ontario can afford.

Speaking of our government's plan to promote economic resiliency, protecting Ontario means building opportunity for the next generation. It means ensuring young people can build a future for themselves right here in Ontario. And it means supporting families and keeping Ontario strong, competitive and resilient.

If people cannot afford to live here in Ontario, we all pay the price. We risk losing talent and workers, weakening communities and slowing economic growth. This bill is a measure that would support our government on addressing that matter.

Speaker, our government's bill has clear benefits and direction. The purpose is to provide more certainty for homebuyers and builders in order to build more homes faster for people in Ontario. These benefits will yield stronger communities and, in turn, a stronger Ontario economy.

When we speak about affordability, we are not talking about something that is abstract. We are talking about everyday choices families are being forced to make. In communities across the province, we hear from people who are working. They are saving, and they are planning for their future. And yet, the cost of buying a new home keeps moving further out of reach.

For many homebuyers, affordability is often lost before the conversation even begins. Many young people today want to stay in the communities that they grew up in. They want to live close to their families and shape their communities. However, the cost of a new home can include tens of thousands of dollars in HST, making that goal feel impossible. This HST relief helps change that barrier by lowering costs on a new home. This bill helps turn planning into possibility and possibility into reality.

Affordability challenges are not limited to first-time homebuyers. Families growing out of their current homes are facing very similar challenges. They may need that extra bedroom. Some may need to move closer to work or schools, but rising prices and taxes can prevent that next step. When families are unable to move within their community, it creates barriers across the entire housing ecosystem. Relief like this, through our government's plan,

helps improve movement within the market, which benefits everyone.

I often think about seniors in our community who want to downsize, many of whom have spent decades contributing to their communities. They want to stay close to neighbours, their children and local services. When the cost of purchasing a smaller home includes significant taxes and development charges, downsizing becomes less feasible, and that means larger family-sized homes stay off the market longer than they probably should. Our government is helping to reduce those costs, to help seniors stay in their communities and help free up housing supply for families who need it.

Speaker, the reality is this: Housing affordability touches every stage of life. It affects where people live, it affects where they work, and it affects whether communities can grow in a balanced, sustainable way. That is why our government's measures, like the temporary enhancement of HST relief for new homes, really matter.

This bill is an important step in our government's plan to deliver on this measure and our plan to make housing more affordable. It matters to families, it matters to first-time homebuyers, it matters to seniors, and it matters to communities right across our province.

We know that the people of Ontario need a place to live that suits their needs and is affordable. Our government's approach is one that is practical, responsible and targeted to support the people of Ontario's needs.

The bill before us today, if passed, is about providing certainty and clarity, which will help individuals and families attain their dreams of home ownership. It's about helping families find space to grow. And it's about ensuring Ontario remains a place where opportunity is within reach.

For those reasons, I'm proud to support the HST Relief Implementation Act (Residential Property Rebates), 2026, and help continue the work of protecting Ontario and building a province where people can afford to live, grow and succeed.

I've spent a lot of time touring this province, speaking to many, many mayors, councillors, in this province; to would-be homebuyers; to those who want to downsize, and they all say this: "If you can help us make it more affordable, we can make it work."

Our municipalities are ecstatic about this. It helps them help their constituents make life more affordable. It helps them get shovels in the ground. It really does help support our builders to keep that workforce working and get those shovels in the ground to build the housing that we need today—but it also helps us build the housing for tomorrow. Together, we're all going to take this important step forward.

I want to thank everyone today. I see the opposition also contemplating—and I'm hoping they'll support this bill, because it will make a huge difference in getting housing built in this province. It will make a huge difference in making life much more affordable for young people, for seniors, and for everyone across this province.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm glad to be able to stand in my place and offer some comments as we're debating the government's Bill 114.

I want to say that housing matters. While that doesn't sound like a particularly political statement or a partisan statement, we seem to have very different approaches on how to solve the problems that we see across our community when it comes to housing.

People can't afford housing—and there isn't housing, even if they could afford it. This government's eight-year housing record is one of failure. Despite a long series of developer-friendly policies—fee cuts, greenbelt changes, zoning rewrites—home prices remain unaffordable, millennial home ownership rates are falling, and homelessness is at a crisis level across the province. Real people need real housing. And to have real housing, we need real housing solutions.

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Speaker, I want to tell you about Nancy, who came into my office. I had the occasion to meet her briefly the other day. Nancy brings in \$2,700 a month with various pensions, and Nancy has been renting a car so that she and her adorable little dog are not sleeping on the street. She has been sleeping in a rental car. She has been trying to find an apartment. She has \$2,700 that she can count on every month and cannot find an apartment in Oshawa. We have connected her with a shelter, and hopefully she can find her footing. But if Nancy, who has money coming in, can't find a place to afford, what do the rest of folks have to look forward to? Times are tough right now, and we need a government that's really committed to figuring this out.

I want to share a good-news story. It's about the Refuge in Oshawa. I'm a big fan of the Refuge outreach centre. Some folks across Durham region would be familiar with it. They have been supporting at-risk and street-involved youth for years. They are a very compassionate, community-centred organization, but they have not been able to connect young people with housing up until recently. They actually came up with a masterful plan to utilize an old school. All levels of government came together—and I will give credit where credit is due, to a former housing minister. When they went to that minister with the plan, it was able to be operationalized. Now we have a former school that is residential, and it's a whole whack of apartments that are just for one person, but it is for young people. It costs \$425 a month for them. That's what rent is, for them to live safely, with a roof over their head, a little kitchenette. I had done the walk-through as the building was taking shape. I saw the apartments—just a little place that is your own. What's different is that they don't get booted out or age out into a cruel world where there isn't affordable housing. They can stay there as long as it's the right fit. And that amount of money is basically what they bring in from social assistance—ODSP or OW. Maybe it gets them on their feet. Maybe it helps them to get connected with that job, when they have stability, when they have a place to sleep at night and a door to

close, a shower, community support. Then maybe they can find employment; they can bring in some more money. Maybe they'll meet a partner and want a bigger space—because it's just a single bed and one person only. But it allows them to make plans and have options.

I want to applaud the work of the Refuge outreach centre and all of their team. They are angels on earth. It is a fantastic organization. Now, with this housing component, it means that young people on the streets in Oshawa can have a way out, a way up.

So there are creative opportunities. There are solutions. And we need this government to show leadership. That's one example. We want to see projects like that happening across communities.

But here we are, and while we're talking about housing, the main point of this particular bill is that this government shouldn't skip committee, because this bill—this is not a new policy. This is government course-correction. The bill is a government correction. It's not a new policy. The HST rebate for new homes was announced with fanfare in the budget but accidentally was omitted from the budget bill. Oh, if only they had gone to committee, somebody might have said, "Hey, tell us more about that announcement. Why isn't it in the bill?" And then the government might have put it in the bill. But they were in such a hurry, and I'm pretty sure that hurry had something to do with the FOI focus. The government wanted to get that through so quickly that they skipped committee and left out a major piece from the budget bill.

But this bill enables enhanced HST rebates on new homes, as was announced in the 2026-27 budget. These HST rebate enhancements are temporary and they will be followed by the elimination of the long-standing rebate programs that are being enhanced.

This bill does not reflect a new philosophy that HST ought not to be charged on new homes, no. Instead, it mostly reflects the federal and provincial government's willingness to use temporary tax relief to bail out developers sitting on unsold condo inventory priced higher than what the market will pay.

But, as I had said, Speaker, instead of this bill going to committee and someone suggesting that the government actually put what they've announced into the budget bill, we're now here, adding it in after the fact. This government's FOI focus, instead of focus on priorities, is what got us here, and I would say that the PC priorities are wrong.

These PCs have a pattern when it comes to housing. FOI changes and fiscal decisions all show that consistent practice of picking winners among well-connected developers and insiders and wedding guests and donors, rather than addressing the needs of ordinary Ontarians. It's more like for their peeps instead of for the plebs.

But, anyway, again, back to the point: This government should not have missed committee. The rest of us measure twice and we cut once, but not this government; they cut twice and measure never.

The government's primary preoccupation with shielding records from public access and gutting FOI laws to

protect the Premier's phone records and his front bench from accountability means that the HST rebate omission happened and that is a symptom of misplaced priorities, not just simple carelessness.

In this bill, there is nothing for renters. Renters are being left behind entirely, and while developers receive a \$130,000 rebate, renters face annual rent increases, a backlogged Landlord and Tenant Board and no meaningful relief—all this while the NDP has been calling for a two-year rent freeze as an immediate remedy and has offered real solutions to address our housing crises.

Renters are bearing the full weight of the affordability crisis. No minimum-wage worker can afford average rent anywhere in Ontario. Average rents have risen over 50% in a decade and renters are skipping meals, medical care and retirement savings to stay housed. And that is in the province of Ontario.

Speaker, where is this coming from? Well, the PC government has a terrible track record of failure when it comes to housing. Ford promised 1.5 million new homes, but they have quietly abandoned that goal. Housing starts are projected to fall even further in 2026-27. The 8,000 new homes from this rebate won't come close to closing that gap.

While these rebates may help reduce home prices for some buyers, they will not do nearly enough to make homes more affordable for everyone. Without rent control, non-market housing investment and missing-middle zoning, many people will still be shut out.

HST rebates—there have been two of them and they've been around since as long as the HST, and now they will be enhanced, but only for a year.

Lost among the flurry of new home HST rebate announcements is the fact that the Ontario government has quietly revealed plans to eliminate the HST new housing rebate and new residential rental property rebate once the enhancement period ends on March 31, 2027. So the Premier is quietly eliminating the permanent HST rebate programs that new home buyers have relied on for years.

One more thing: It is very weird that this bill enables the province to administer a program to rebate the federal portion of the HST, which is the opposite of how every other federal HST rebate works. The provincial part of the enhanced HST rebate isn't in this bill. Anyway, it's just unusual. I guess we'll learn more as we learn more from the feds.

So who will this help? Well, developers will benefit. The rebate primarily benefits developers and investors, not homebuyers. Early data suggest roughly 78% of new home listing prices are unchanged or higher since the rebate was announced. There isn't any evidence that this will get housing built or benefit homebuyers.

When there's an oversupply of condos during a housing crisis, something is seriously broken. The private market cannot solve a problem it helped to create. The government needs to step up with direct investment in the affordable homes developers will not build. The \$130,000 rebate primarily benefits developers sitting on unsold inventory. Developers lobbied for relief on a glut of small, high-profit

units that buyers don't actually want, and the government is helping a buddy out with public money.

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This change is designed to help developers off-load condo inventory, with the cost borne by federal and provincial taxpayers rather than the builders. When HST is removed at the source rather than rebated to buyers, developers can quietly raise the prices, and there's no mechanism to prevent that, Speaker. I would bet dollars to doughnuts we won't see those developers offer their savings to buyers if they don't have to, which begs the question: Why don't you make them have to?

What are we hearing from people? Because I asked, who is this helping? Well, I have some letters from a few of my constituents.

I'll share this from Andrew, who wrote:

"I am writing to express my concern regarding the recently announced HST exemption on new home purchases and how its current structure excludes homeowners like myself.

"In December 2025, my wife and I entered into an agreement to purchase a newly built home. At the time, we accepted the financial terms based on the policies in place. However, construction on our home has not yet begun, and our closing date has now been delayed to February 2027.

"Despite this extended timeline, we are excluded from the new HST relief simply because our agreement was signed prior to the eligibility cut-off date. This creates what feels like an unfair outcome. Buyers who signed shortly after the cut-off will receive significant tax savings, even though they may take possession before us, while we wait longer and receive no benefit.

"We are in the same position as many other buyers—facing long construction delays, rising costs and uncertainty—yet we are treated differently based solely on the date of signing rather than the actual timing of construction or occupancy.

"A more equitable approach would be to extend eligibility to homes that have not yet been built or occupied, regardless of when the purchase agreement was signed. This would ensure fairness for buyers who, like us, are still waiting years to take possession."

That's from Andrew.

Huzaifa has written and said:

"I am a resident of Oshawa and a homebuyer impacted by the recent changes to the HST rebate in the 2026 Ontario budget.

"I signed my purchase agreement in early 2022 and am scheduled to close in 2026. Because the rebate is tied to the signing date rather than the closing date, I am facing a \$130,000 financial disadvantage compared to buyers who sign after April 1, 2026—despite closing in the same period.

"This creates a significant fairness issue for long-term purchasers who committed years in advance and have navigated delays and market uncertainty in good faith.

"Proposed solution: Apply the rebate to homes closing on or after April 1, 2026, regardless of signing date.

"This would:

—"align with how HST is applied at closing;

—"prevent potential buyer defaults;

—"support stability in Ontario's housing market."

That's from Huzaifa.

I also received a letter from Rari and Sreenath, and they have written to say:

"We are writing regarding the recently announced expansion of the Ontario HST rebate for new homes. I purchased a newly built home from a builder, with my agreement of purchase signed on September 12, 2025, and closing on March 12, 2026.

"We are proud residents of Oshawa ... and living and working in the community" the "past few years.

"At the time of my purchase, public statements indicated that Ontario would align its rebate approach with the federal GST rebate, including timing. Based on this, it was reasonable to expect that buyers in my position would be treated consistently with the federal program.

"However, the latest announcement appears to introduce eligibility criteria that may exclude buyers like myself who purchased shortly before implementation, despite acting in good faith based on prior government messaging.

"I respectfully request that the government consider transitional provisions or retroactive eligibility for buyers who entered into agreements during this period of policy transition."

Those are just three letters that we were able to pull quite quickly. I know the government has been hearing this. It's been part of the debate and conversation today. But my question to this government is, what about Andrew and Huzaifa and Rari and Sreenath and everyone else who's in this position? How will this government answer them?

What we've seen with this bill is no committee, no rebate for them, no fairness and, I would say, no plan. Had there been a plan, we wouldn't be here for this debate; it would have been put in the budget as they announced. But in all of the rush to get that FOI legislation changed, we left out major pieces.

Speaker, what should we do? Well, we need to provide housing, and we need this government to get back into the business of building housing. "Affordable" means not only affordable to rich PC donors, but affordable for real people, and that is a range. That is a range of options and price points. The NDP's Homes Ontario plan offers a concrete alternative. The proposal would create a public agency to partner with municipalities, non-profits and developers to build affordable, supportive and senior housing on public land. It is time that this provincial government got with the times and pulled its weight.

There's a rent freeze motion before this House from the MPP for University-Rosedale. Her motion would cap annual rent increases at 0% for two years, costing renters nothing to implement and providing \$1,200 in relief over that period. This is a practical strategy that we could implement today.

Marit Stiles and the Ontario NDP have a real plan to fix the housing crisis. That means building permanently af-

fordable public, non-profit and co-op homes that the private market has not been building. We have a plan to legalize missing-middle housing in every neighbourhood so that young families can afford a home in the communities that they love—

Interjection.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I don't know why that would be laughable to the members opposite. We want young people to have a future.

The government continues to ignore top recommendations from its very own Housing Affordability Task Force, which include legalizing more affordable starter home options like semis, townhouses, fourplexes in all neighbourhoods as of right. Young families who can't afford a single detached home continue to be unfairly excluded from the neighbourhoods where they want to live, where they want to work, where employers want them to be able to live. The government continues to refuse to fund new and permanently affordable non-market housing, like public, non-profit and co-op homes, as the NDP has called for in its Homes Ontario plan. And the government has weakened tenant rights and rent control provisions so that young families trying to save to buy a first home are forced to spend more time paying down their landlord's mortgage instead of their own.

This bill, Speaker, isn't the worst thing. Ford is quietly eliminating the permanent HST rebate programs new homebuyers have relied on for years. Buried in this bill is a plan to scrap the HST rebates, replace with these enhanced, and then get rid of that after a year. But I want to know why they won't do any real things to address the housing catastrophe that they are allowing to grow. And while the government has talked a good game about housing—although it's gotten quiet about their big lofty goals—what I would say is that tent encampments and visible homelessness are the true measure of this government's housing record. I would ask this government to stop making a mess and to start building homes for real people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Before I go to further debate, I will remind all members to please address all members of this House by their parliamentary titles.

I recognize the member from Don Valley West.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: It's an honour to rise on behalf of my constituents in Don Valley West for the third reading of Bill 114, the HST Relief Implementation Act. I certainly support the idea of removing HST off of all new homes, because it was Ontario Liberals who first introduced a motion calling for HST relief for homebuyers on October 29, 2025. But Speaker, I do believe that that motion was actually broader and it was a more responsible version of this tax relief. I'll just read it for the record again:

“Whereas the Ontario government has committed to building 1.5 million homes by 2031 and has repeatedly failed to meet its predetermined targets; and

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“Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada where housing starts are declining, and drastic measures are needed to spur our housing market; and

“Whereas 83% of new home sales are not first-time purchases, and an expanded rebate would help Ontario families grow, help seniors downsize, and help all Ontarians get closer to home ownership; and

“Whereas Ontario construction jobs support thousands of Ontario families, and increasing housing construction will help those affected by tariff job losses, including in steel and softwood lumber;

“Therefore, in the opinion of the House, the government of Ontario should rebate the provincial portion of the HST to all homebuyers purchasing their primary residence, saving them up to \$80,000 and stimulating an estimated 45,000 housing starts.”

As I said, Speaker, I certainly support the idea of removing HST off of all new homes, but sadly, this government has got, really, just a short-term measure for this.

It has also created some confusion. I talked about that in my last debate about this, that we've actually had a number of emails from constituents who are still confused about how all this is going to work.

I had one constituent who wrote, saying, “I am a first-time homebuyer who purchased a brand new home from a builder in early February 2026, a decision made in direct reliance on Premier Ford's October 2025 commitment to rebate the full 8% provincial HST for first-time homebuyers.

“Today's announcement expanding the HST rebate to all buyers, including real estate investors, effective April 1, 2026, has placed buyers like me in a deeply unfair position. I signed my agreement after the government's explicit promise to first-time buyers, yet I fall outside the window of the new expanded program. I now face paying the full HST that the Premier specifically promised to waive, while an investor signing a purchase agreement next week”—after the bill comes into effect—“pays nothing.”

I'm actually having to talk to constituents on a regular basis about this, Speaker, and sadly, it's hard to explain what exactly is going on. I mean, this bill is trying to implement the measures that the government says are necessary to make this program work, but we also know that regulations will still need to come, that they have to work with the federal government and the Canada Revenue Agency. That could take a number of months before the effect of this bill then comes into full force for these people who are waiting for that rebate, that money off.

Speaker, as I said, this relief is only for a single year, from April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027, for most buyers. After that date, the expanded rebate disappears. On April 1, 2027, only first-time homebuyers will continue to qualify, which means almost 90% of annual homebuyers in Ontario will once again be shut out—90%.

Affordability is not a one-year problem, and the housing crisis is not just a temporary inconvenience. Unlike the government's proposal, our plan recognizes that afford-

ability challenges will not go away in 12 months. Our proposal would have extended this relief over a five-year period.

Speaker, this government has had eight years to get homes built, to help get homes built, to create the conditions for homes to get built for the people of Ontario. Implementing a bill that will provide some relief does not mean that we can ignore the broader failures of this government's housing policy—bill after bill after bill with the word “housing” in the title, and yet Ontario housing starts were down for the fourth consecutive year in 2025. The level of home building, 65,376 units, was more than 30% below the 100,000 units built in 2021, and it's nowhere near the 150,000 homes that the government claimed that they would get built annually. Speaker, those are real numbers. Those are the facts, and this program will not solve that.

The dismal Ford Conservative government has done such a bad job with all of their new housing policies that the government, including the finance minister, who included the 1.5 million homes in his budget a few years ago—he now won't even talk about it, because this government's promise to build 1.5 million homes by 2031 is another broken promise. The numbers, as I say, speak for themselves. The government set ambitious targets, but they didn't have a plan, and they failed to achieve their targets. Ontario's rate of construction in 2025—four units per 1,000—was 35% below the national average. And Ontario had the second-lowest rate of construction in the country after Newfoundland and Labrador. All these other provinces face a similar economic landscape. They face inflation, and they have the same Bank of Canada interest rate, yet they have been able to find a way to build at a much faster rate than Ontario. Alberta is building 11 units per 1,000 residents; BC, eight units per 1,000; and Quebec, seven per 1,000. So there's no one to blame but this provincial Conservative government. They have no one to blame but themselves.

When the government tries to portray itself as leading on housing, Ontarians should really ask a very simple question: If what this government claims was true, why are our numbers so much worse than everyone else's?

Construction workers are increasingly looking elsewhere for employment opportunities because Ontario is not building at the pace it should be.

Even though we have ad after ad after ad from this government—they're spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to tell us how they're protecting Ontario, when the reality is that they're just pretending to protect Ontario. Again, the numbers show it.

Ontario is dragging the rest of the country down when it comes to housing starts.

Now we have a bill that's supposedly going to help, and people are saying, “Well, how exactly is this going to work?” People struggling to buy a home understandably welcome the idea of tax relief, and we welcome that on their behalf. But since this announcement, confusion has spread throughout Ontario's housing sector. Builders are confused. Homebuyers are confused. Real estate agents

are confused. As I mentioned, my office has had a number of emails asking about how this will work, and there's still a lack of clarity, even with this bill on the table. People are saying, “Will the builder apply the rebate directly and deduct it from the purchase price? Will the buyer have to apply later through the Canada Revenue Agency? Will purchasers have to front the entire amount themselves and then wait for reimbursement? What kind of documentation will be required? How long is all this going to take? What happens if approval from the federal government is delayed or implementation with the CRA is delayed?” These aren't just minor administrative questions; this can be the difference between whether a family can afford a home or qualify for the mortgage for the home that they want to buy.

According to reporting from Colin D'Mello of Global News, the implementation of this HST relief has already been plagued by uncertainty and confusion. He reports that Ottawa wanted Ontario to administer the rebate directly, and that the federal Liberal government transferred approximately \$875 million to the province to cover the federal government's portion of the program. But Ontario wants the rebate administered through the Canada Revenue Agency—hence this bill. That federal approval process is still pending, and even if this bill passes, as I say, there still will be a lot of work to do to get it implemented. In the reporting by Global, a representative from the home building industry said, “We need that regulatory certainty urgently, and I can't say that strongly enough.” This could mean that potential buyers are likely sitting on the sidelines, because no one knows exactly how this policy will function in practice. That could create a stall in the market—the exact opposite of what the bill intends to do.

And what was the government's response to this growing uncertainty? “Trust us, it's there.” But you can't purchase a home based on “trust me” politics, especially from this government, which is under RCMP criminal investigation over its attempts to let builders profit off the greenbelt.

Home builders and homebuyers need competent implementation. Unfortunately, competent implementation is not something that this government is known for.

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The headline-chasing Ford Conservative government has established a consistent track record of announcing programs before working through the details.

Look at the licence plates: “We're announcing new licence plates, but guess what? Oh, sorry; you can't see them in the dark.” I think that's kind of a basic requirement. Somehow, they couldn't get that right.

We hear talk about the Therme deal, which they announced, again, with great fanfare. They said, “Oh, yes; there was a thorough RFP process,” only to have the Auditor General point out significant major flaws in the process, including that Therme doesn't actually own a bunch of the spas it said it did. Therme said it had a local Ontario construction firm signed up. That firm said, “No, sorry. We've never signed on and committed.”

So it's hard for the people to trust the government when they say, "Trust us," when all of these things—they continue to pretend that those problems didn't exist.

Going back to the stakeholders who are worried about this bill and how it gets implemented: The Canadian private lenders' association has advised their members to approach this rebate with caution, writing on their website that brokers and lenders should treat changes as proposed until enacted to "avoid underwriting or advising clients on the assumption the full rebate will apply unless/until confirmed in binding legislation and reflected in closing statements." That's an important phrase—it's not just the legislation; it's when this gets into the closing documents that homebuyers are signing with their builder. That, again, is going to take some time as people work through how all of this will work.

As I said, this bill is only lasting for a year for most of the homebuyers. It's kind of consistent with what this government has done with many of its measures that are announced with great fanfare—kind of like tariff relief. Most of that expired last October. We're seeing the same approach here. Now it's a big deal—HST off of new homes. "Oh, sorry. It's only for a year." Again, that's a very short timeline, when you talk about getting into the market, getting approval for your mortgage, finding the home that you want, figuring out if you qualify, getting the documents signed. These things take a lot of time, and the uncertainty around this will not help many of those homebuyers.

That brings me to talking about the cost-of-living crisis. Many people in Ontario are now not able to buy their first home until they're 40; it used to be it was in your late twenties or your early thirties, and part of that is because of the growing difference between wages and the cost of living.

I was just meeting with FoodShare—the food banks that were here visiting Queen's Park today. I'm sure they met with many of the members on the government side, as well. I met with Sarah Watson from the North York Harvest Food Bank, Marg Korver from Trenton Care and Share Food Bank, as well as Craig Olivier from the Trenton Care and Share Food Bank. We were talking about the significant increase in the number of people using food banks, including those in my riding of Don Valley West. There's a food bank that opened up around the time of the pandemic, as people were struggling, and it has become a staple now. People in my community are relying on it on a regular basis, just to meet their basic needs. Sarah Watson said, "If we solve the housing crisis, we solve a big part of this."

As people struggle to afford their rent, as people struggle to afford to buy a home, they're not moving out of those rental units, and that means those rental prices—while they have come down a little bit—continue to be a challenge for many earners in our province.

Look at the average price of renting a condo in Toronto. It's in excess of many people's take-home pay. That's why so many young people are staying in the proverbial basement of their parents. They just can't afford to move

out. That's putting pressure on housing prices overall, which puts pressure on rent prices, and which means that people, especially those in lower-income households, are struggling to put food on the table.

The food banks are working tirelessly to try to meet the ever-growing need. One in 10 people in Toronto are using food banks; many of them have homes, and one in four are children and youth under the age of 18.

We know that solving the housing crisis is important. It's a big deal. This government needs to get serious about it. A one-year measure will not do it. When you think about why the government would choose to create such a narrow eligibility window—it's a tough question to answer. I know that the finance minister and the Premier apparently disagreed about whether or not they should do this at all—a question, maybe, because of the cost of doing this. But we know they had \$30 million to buy a jet. We know, apparently, they've got—we don't know how much—billions to expand the airport at Billy Bishop so the Premier can land his jet there. Yet we've got this very serious housing crisis and affordability crisis. It's not a one-year problem, and a one-year solution won't fix it.

To come to a close here, this government has consistently failed to meet the need around housing. They abandoned their lofty promise to build 1.5 million homes—the homes we need here in Ontario. They did not have a serious plan for that. They did not put infrastructure in place. So we continue to get announcement after announcement, followed by delays, confusion and missed targets.

The government needs to get this bill right. They need to get housing policy right. Buying a home is a big decision, and the confusion around how this will get rolled out—it's an urgent need to get that clarified. I hope they're already working on that so that as soon as this bill passes, they can immediately send out some communications that will help people get some clarity, so that we don't get further stalls. As we know, again, the uncertainty this will create is not good for the market. It's not good for the conditions for people buying. It doesn't create good conditions for the people who want to keep building homes.

This bill will not erase the four consecutive years of declining housing starts under this government. It does not erase the abandoned promise to build 1.5 million homes. It certainly does not erase the fact that this government continues to rely on short-term political fixes instead of long-term housing solutions.

Speaker, people don't want gimmicks. They don't just want announcements; they want homes. They want an affordable life, stability. They want to know that a government is with them as they're building their life and looking forward to buying a home. They want to know that their government is working hard for that future so that they can build it for themselves, because that benefits them and all Ontarians.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Today, I rise today to debate Bill 114, at a time when Ontario is facing the worst housing crisis in provincial history, and at a time when the province has the worst housing crisis of any province in the country. That is exactly why the Ontario Greens have been saying we need to utilize all tools to address this crisis—because it is the primary driver of the affordability crisis. That’s why I will be voting for this bill. But I want to be very clear: This is one tool. It’s not even the best tool. The government is applying it in a flawed way.

Let me tell you how they could better utilize this tool. If they would legalize multiplexes, mid-rises, as of right across this province, builders could actually take advantage of this one-year HST reduction. Legalizing housing as of right is the fastest way to build homes that people can afford in the communities they know and love and take advantage of this HST rebate. But the government says no. Over and over again, the Premier has said no.

1710

The other thing we have to be honest with people about is that this will lower the cost of market housing, but it will not solve the housing affordability crisis if the government doesn’t also use tools to bring in non-market housing. It just makes sense. I talk to so many private sector builders who say, “We can’t build homes at a loss.” That’s the only way you can build deeply affordable homes.

There was a time in Ontario’s history when we built deeply affordable homes, but that was before 1995. As a matter of fact, 93% of the deeply affordable homes built in Ontario were built before 1995. That’s when a Conservative government stopped funding non-profit, co-op, social and supportive housing. It has never been restored. We will not solve this problem, this crisis, until it is restored.

I’m a numbers guy. I want to put some numbers in perspective. This bill will cost about \$1.4 billion. If you look at the government’s budget, they’ve allocated \$53 million over three years for supportive housing. For the amount of money that is being spent in this bill, we could build 11,000 supportive houses in this province, making a huge dent in the 85,000 people experiencing homelessness in Ontario right now. I think that’s not only a housing crisis; it’s a moral crisis.

I believe people of faith need to step up, take care of their neighbours, and start investing more in supportive housing. I call on the government to do that.

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

MPP Tyler Watt: It’s good to be here talking about Bill 114. This is an important bill. It really should have been in the budget to begin with, and I’m glad that the government took the Ontario Liberals’ advice to finally put forward this legislation. We did call on the government to do this back in September 2025, to work with the feds on this. This will be a game-changer for a lot of people who are looking to buy their first homes, at a time when building homes is—we’re in a crisis. Homes are not affordable. Ontario is lagging behind majorly on building new homes. And this will be a band-aid, if you will, on

building homes. I’m glad that at least something is happening, but, like I said, this should have been in the budget. Something this important, you’d think, would be in a budget that’s entitled Protecting Ontario—yet we didn’t really have anything in there about homes and removing the HST off of new builds.

When you make a budget promise to Ontarians, when you tell them to go out and buy a home in this housing market on the assurance of a tax rebate, you are asking them to trust you with the single biggest financial decision of their lives. But trust is earned, and this government’s recent record has given Ontarians no reason to take its word at face value. Trust in how taxpayer dollars are used—when the Premier authorized the purchase of a \$29-million private luxury jet. Trust that this government acts in students’ best interests—when they have cut OSAP and saddled the next generation with deeper debt. Trust the integrity of our laws—when this government retroactively rewrote FOI rules in Bill 97, the very budget that this legislation should have been in, to shield the Premier’s own cellphone records. So the pattern here is clear. I’m glad that it’s happening now and not later.

But I would like to know, exactly how did this schedule slip through? The schedule that makes this entire federal-provincial rebate program legal, the schedule that is the crux of the rebate the Minister of Finance personally announced with such fanfare—how did it slip past his desk? How did it slip past cabinet? How did it slip past every official whose job it is to make sure a budget bill actually does what the budget says it’s supposed to do?

This wasn’t in the budget, but I’ll tell you what was in the budget:

- retroactively shielding the Premier’s cellphone records under FOI;
- authorizing \$35 billion in new borrowing under the Ontario Loan Act;
- rewriting Ontario’s pension rules and capping the Pension Benefits Guarantee Fund;
- merging conservation authorities; and
- repealing Victoria Day as a retail business holiday; it was quite a strange thing to see in the budget.

But this one didn’t make it in there.

I think, after eight long years, Ontarians expect and deserve better than this. It is hard to watch, and that’s what happens when a government just rams through legislation. We rarely see bills go to committee. We have seen more lately; I’ll give the government credit on that part. But if they don’t go to committee, they’re time-allocated, and when they do go to committee, like this budget—it was just yanked right back out and forced a vote on the floor. We had to pass it as soon as possible—couldn’t have any amendments or have people scrutinize it. Perhaps someone would have caught something like this, that was promised before to be in there.

So instead, they sit us until midnight in rare late-night sittings because the people of Ontario couldn’t be trusted to see what’s in their own budget. And now they are back before this House asking us to clean up their mess, which

their refusal to allow proper scrutiny created in the first place.

If Bill 97 had fully gone to committee, like every major budget in living memory, this error could have been caught. Stakeholders would have flagged it. Certainly, the Ontario Liberals would have flagged it and been pushing for it, as we've been calling on this to happen since September of 2025.

Let me be clear: I do support this. I support this bill, and Ontarians deserve affordability. Ontarians deserve relief in a housing market that has become unrecognizable to an entire generation of would-be buyers. This, in fact, was the policy that we called on a full six months before this government got around to it, so I'm glad that this government has decided to finally work across party lines and agree with us that Ontarians deserve better policy that will make the cost of living and affordability slightly more reasonable. But the thing is, this is just a very small first step.

When I talk to young people about this, sure, it helps a little bit. It helps people that are already saving up and planning. But, for many people, buying a house is completely a pipe dream, and when they see something like this, and this is the only thing being done for housing, it doesn't give them hope, right? We have this rigmarole process that this bill has come to, and Ontarians deserve better, young people deserve better and they need to see us doing more than just removing this HST.

So I'm glad the government got there in the end. However, if you had been willing to collaborate when the Ontario Liberals first put this forward, homebuyers across this province could have had an earlier start at getting this rebate. So that is what collaboration in the public interest looks like. It's not a press release; it is acting on a good idea when it is presented to you, no matter the party, not six months later when the political timing finally suits you.

Thank you.

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

Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Downey has moved third reading of Bill 114, An Act to Amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a nay.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1718 to 1723.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): On May 12, 2026, Mr. Downey moved third reading of Bill 114, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to enable credits and payments to be made respecting certain tax paid or payable in respect of residential property and to provide for other related matters.

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

Ayes

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Allsopp, Tyler | Gates, Wayne | Rae, Matthew |
| Anand, Deepak | Gélinas, France | Rakocevic, Tom |
| Armstrong, Teresa J. | Grewal, Hardeep Singh | Rickford, Greg |
| Babikian, Aris | Gualtieri, Silvia | Riddell, Brian |
| Blais, Stephen | Hamid, Zee | Rosenberg, Bill |
| Bouma, Will | Hardeman, Ernie | Sabawy, Sheref |
| Bowman, Stephanie | Hazell, Andrea | Sandhu, Amarjot |
| Calandra, Paul | Hsu, Ted | Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh |
| Cerjanec, Rob | Jones, Trevor | Sarrazin, Stéphane |
| Cho, Stan | Jordan, John | Saunderson, Brian |
| Clancy, Aislinn | Kanapathi, Logan | Schreiner, Mike |
| Clark, Steve | Kerzner, Michael S. | Scott, Laurie |
| Coe, Lorne | Leardi, Anthony | Shamji, Adil |
| Collard, Lucille | Lecce, Stephen | Smith, Dave |
| Cooper, Michelle | Lumsden, Neil | Smith, David |
| Crawford, Stephen | Mamakwa, Sol | Smith, Graydon |
| Darouze, George | McCrimmon, Karen | Smith, Laura |
| Denault, Billy | McGregor, Graham | Tangri, Nina |
| Dixon, Jess | McMahon, Mary-Margaret | Thanigasalam, Vijay |
| Dowie, Andrew | Mulroney, Caroline | Tibollo, Michael A. |
| Downey, Doug | Oosterhoff, Sam | Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. |
| Dunlop, Jill | Pang, Billy | Vanthof, John |
| Fedeli, Victor | Parsa, Michael | Vickers, Paul |
| Firin, Mohamed | Piccini, David | Watt, Tyler |
| Ford, Doug | Pierre, Natalie | West, Jamie |
| Fraser, John | Pinsonneault, Steve | Williams, Charmaine A. |
| French, Jennifer K. | Quinn, Nolan | |
| Gallagher Murphy, Dawn | Racinsky, Joseph | |

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): All those opposed to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 82; the nays are zero.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

KEEPING CRIMINALS BEHIND BARS ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 VISANT À MAINTENIR LES CRIMINELS DERRIÈRE LES BARREAUX

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 11, 2026, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 75, An Act to enact the Constable Joe MacDonald Public Safety Officers' Survivors Scholarship Fund Act, 2026 and to amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 75, Loi édictant la Loi de 2026 sur le Fonds Joe MacDonald de bourses d'études à l'intention des survivants d'agents de sécurité publique et modifiant diverses autres lois.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Before I move to further debate, I beg to inform the House that the late show scheduled for this evening, standing in the name of the member from Ottawa South, is cancelled.

Further debate?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Speaker, I'm happy to rise and talk about one of the most consequential justice and public safety omnibus bills introduced at Queen's Park in recent years, Ontario's Bill 75, the Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act.

While my colleague from Ottawa–Vanier has focused on bail reform, I want to set that issue aside and focus on other components of this legislation, the concerns I heard raised during the committee hearings, the voices that appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy and the political reality that every opposition amendment was ultimately defeated by the Progressive Conservative majority, because that matters.

It matters not only what legislation says, it matters who gets heard. It matters who gets ignored and it matters whether committee hearings are genuine opportunities to improve legislation or merely procedural exercises on the way to a predetermined outcome.

But, Speaker, before I begin, I would like to acknowledge that this week is Police Week in Ontario. Police Week in Ontario is an opportunity to recognize the dedication, professionalism and sacrifice of police officers and civilian members who work every day to keep our communities safe. It's also a time to acknowledge the partnerships between police services, first responders and community organizations that help build trust, prevent crime and support vulnerable people across the province. The week honours not only those serving today but also the officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It reminds us of the importance of public service, accountability and the shared responsibility of creating safe and healthy communities for everyone.

1730

Speaker, Bill 75 is an omnibus justice bill. That means it bundles together a wide range of changes under one legislative umbrella. It touches policing, highway safety, coroner's inquests, animal welfare laws, police record checks, scholarship funding for families of fallen officers and changes to provincial enforcement powers. The government framed the bill as a public safety package. The title itself, Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act, was clearly designed to communicate toughness, urgency and law-and-order politics.

Many of the most controversial parts of Bill 75 have less to do with ending violent crime and more to do with a public relations exercise. The reality is that the bill expands executive powers, reduces transparency, increases unaccountable provincial authority and uses emotionally charged rhetoric to discourage nuanced debate.

Today, I want to walk through four major areas of concern: first, the amendments to the Coroners Act; second, the police record checks reforms; third, the animal research provisions; and fourth, the broader democratic concerns raised during committee hearings and the amendment process.

Then I want to discuss who actually appeared before the committee and, finally, I want to address what it means when every good-faith amendment proposed by opposition members is defeated by a government majority.

To begin, I would like to discuss the changes to the Coroners Act. Perhaps the least publicly discussed but most constitutionally concerning portion of Bill 75 involves changes to the Coroners Act. Under the bill, restrictions are introduced around photographs, video recordings and the publication of material from coroners' inquests. The government argues that these changes would protect dignity, privacy and the integrity of proceedings. Certainly, there are legitimate concerns about the misuse of graphic or sensitive material, but, Speaker, coroners' inquests are not merely administrative exercises; they are among the few mechanisms available to scrutinize deaths involving public systems—deaths in custody, deaths involving policing, deaths involving institutional negligence, deaths connected to mental health systems, deaths involving vulnerable people and deaths at workplaces where negligence can be deadly, and workplace deaths are on the rise.

Historically, inquests have played a crucial role in exposing systemic failures. They have led to reforms in policing, reforms in corrections, reforms in health care and reforms in workplace safety, and I fear that restricting access to recordings and visual evidence could reduce media scrutiny and public accountability.

Several legal observers argue that transparency is not a side issue in democratic government. Transparency is accountability, and accountability is what builds public trust. My fear is that the language in the bill is too broad. Would it prevent legitimate reporting? Would it chill investigative journalism? Would it make it harder for families and advocates to expose systemic problems? Again, concerns were raised. Again, witnesses testified. Again, amendments were proposed and again, every amendment was defeated. Speaker, if we fail to take the opportunity to learn from past mistakes, we are damned to repeat them. More tragedy, more loss of life will ensue. The coroner's inquest interrupts this cycle.

Next I would like to discuss police record check reforms. At first glance, some of the changes appear positive. For example, there are efforts to limit the disclosure of older summary conviction offences after a certain period of time. Many civil liberties advocates have long argued that minor offences should not follow people forever. People deserve opportunities for rehabilitation. People deserve opportunity for employment and opportunity for second chances.

But again, as we have seen time and time again, the government has expanded ministerial regulatory authority, but these powers come with reduced guardrails, scrutiny or review. There are also concerns about legal immunity clauses and reduced accountability if service standards are not properly met.

I worry that the bill does not go far enough in protecting marginalized communities, who are disproportionately affected by police interactions and records checks. I also worry that we could be permitting forms of disclosure that create barriers to employment and reintegration. I would have liked to have seen some strengthening of privacy protections and accountability measures.

The next part of the bill speaks to animal research provisions. First, it's puzzling to me how in the world animal research provisions ended up in Bill 75 in the first place, but I guess it's equivalent to including the dismantling of freedom of information in the budget.

The government promotes animal research provisions as humane reforms. The bill does restrict invasive medical research on cats and dogs, except in narrow circumstances, and prohibits breeding cats or dogs for research purposes by suppliers.

Animal welfare organizations welcomed parts of this legislation, but researchers and scientific institutions expressed concerns about how the provisions were drafted. Some worried that the bill lacked clarity. Some worried it could unintentionally hinder legitimate scientific and medical research. Others questioned why such provisions were inserted into a broad omnibus public safety bill, rather than introduced through stand-alone legislation where scientific evidence could receive fuller scrutiny. But that is a hallmark of Bill 75 overall: too many related provisions, too many schedules, too little focused debate.

Omnibus legislation in general weakens democratic accountability because we are forced to vote on large bundles of unrelated policy changes all at once. That is the point the government keeps making about the opposition voting against the latest budget. Of course we're not against spending more money on schools and hospitals—we care about creating jobs and we support investing in our communities—but we are against the government trying to hide damaging emails from the public. We are against the government trying to protect the Premier and ministers from prosecution by hiding public information. We are against the Premier using his personal phone to conduct government business. That is why we voted against the budget bill.

You may support one section; you may oppose another, but the structure of omnibus legislation compresses debate and makes detailed scrutiny harder. I guess that is precisely why this government is increasingly using omnibus bills: hide unethical components in with populist ideals, not because it improves democracy, but because it accelerates political control.

1740

Lastly, I would like to discuss democratic concerns and the committee process. Committee hearings are where democracy is supposed to function at its best. Committee hearings are meant to provide expert testimony, public input, stakeholder engagement and detailed examination of legislation.

On Bill 75, a range of organizations and stakeholders appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. Among them were law enforcement representatives, legal organizations, criminal justice advocates and public policy experts.

The Canadian Criminal Justice Association submitted a legislative brief criticizing aspects of the bill, especially provisions related to cash deposits and bail-related financial enforcement powers. Civil liberties advocates raised concerns about procedural fairness. Legal experts raised

concerns about due process. We questioned whether the bill was evidence-based or primarily designed for political messaging. Others warned that many of the bill's measures would disproportionately affect marginalized Ontarians, low-income individuals, racialized communities and people already struggling with barriers to employment and housing.

Yet, despite the testimony, despite the hearings, despite the presentations, the outcome at committee was remarkably predictable: Every opposition amendment was defeated—every single one.

That point deserves emphasis, because committee work is often described as the place where legislation improves—where governments listen, where experts influence policy, where flaws are corrected and where unintended consequences are addressed. But increasingly, with this government, committees operate less as deliberative bodies and more as extensions of cabinet authority. Government members vote together, every single opposition amendment fails and the bill emerges unchanged.

We have proposed changes aimed at increasing oversight, narrowing ministerial powers, strengthening safeguards, clarifying language and improving accountability. None succeeded.

That raises a broader democratic question: If committee hearings do not materially influence legislation, then what are they becoming? Are they genuine consultations or are they political theatre? Because if witnesses appear, testify, submit expertise, raise constitutional concerns and suggest improvements and every amendment still fails along strict party lines, many Ontarians would understandably begin to question whether the process is even meaningful.

Don't forget the daughter of a firefighter who died as a result of his duties. She appeared and appealed to the committee to expand the education allowances for family members of first responders killed in the line of duty. The government said no.

Don't forget the first responders who thought the definition of those killed in the line of duty should include death as a result of PTSD and mental health struggles as well. The government said no.

First responders see things I hope none of us will ever have to see: violence, death, children killed, the bodies of fire victims—sights nobody should ever have to see. I've seen first-hand the effect of post-traumatic stress. Many of us have. The government members at committee didn't care and voted no.

They suggested that doing everything in regulation is the answer. But that answer just means more centralization and accumulation of executive power instead of empowering legislation and the experts.

The government keeps telling us the things they are doing are in the public good; they're meant for our protection. The Conservatives clearly believe that strong rhetoric around criminals, enforcement and punishment resonates politically. I have to ask, what's happening to the democracy in Ontario? I fear for the future of this province under this government.

Bill 5 expanded executive power and bypasses normal oversight.

The government used the “notwithstanding” clause when courts ruled against government third-party political advertising.

The latest budget—in the budget, a bill which should talk about spending and economic issues—is where the government tried to hide the removal of access to freedom of information. Why? Because the courts had ruled against the Premier.

The greenbelt scandal and the ongoing criminal investigation; the provincial government now ruling local school boards; the elimination of fixed election dates—I could go on and on.

But Speaker, I do find it a little ironic that the short title of this bill is Keeping Criminals Behind Bars, because you know, criminals were mistakenly released from custody, and five are still on the lam. Today, criminals mistakenly released from custody are roaming the streets of Ontario.

The Solicitor General tried to tell us that they were all instantaneously recaptured. Instantaneously recaptured? Maybe that’s just like the plane that was instantaneously resold. But we now know that both these statements are false.

So naming this bill Keeping Criminals Behind Bars has all kinds of pitfalls, all kinds of constitutional concerns, and this bill actually does very little. It’s messaging language. It creates an immediate emotional framing, and once legislation is framed in these terms, opposing portions of the bill seems out of place. Sound familiar, like the destruction of freedom of information in Ontario in the budget bill?

There are measures that this government could adapt that would help improve the criminal justice system, so we could probably have fewer fugitives avoiding justice.

Does anybody know what the real full name of Bill 75 actually is? The real name is, An Act to enact the Constable Joe MacDonald Public Safety Officers’ Survivors Scholarship Fund Act, 2025, and to amend various other Acts. So the government says, “If you oppose bail reform, if you vote no because you think this accelerates the dismissal of constitutional rights, if you think this bill overreaches into federal domain and centralizes decision-making power and allows ministry interference in individual cases, well then, you are voting against the scholarship fund.” And we keep on playing these political games.

I think responsible law-making requires honesty. Good legislation balances competing interests: public safety, civil liberties, transparency, procedural fairness, accountability, scientific evidence and constitutional rights. Those values are not mutually exclusive. A government can protect public safety while still respecting due process. A government can support police while still supporting oversight. A government can strengthen enforcement while still protecting transparency. That balance is the essence of democratic governance.

When governments package numerous, unrelated reforms into a single bill, legislative scrutiny becomes far more difficult. Members of provincial Parliament may support one schedule or oppose another, stakeholders may

only have expertise on one section, and committee review becomes broad and unfocused. But maybe that was the government’s goal all along.

1750

Bill 75 included provisions on highway enforcement, police record checks, animal research, coroners’ inquests, scholarship programs, animal welfare penalties and broader justice reforms. These issues deserve separate bills and separate debate. Emotional rhetoric around public safety is overshadowing technical legal concerns.

Finally, I want to talk about how badly I feel for those who took the time to appear before committee—those who thought their words meant something, those who thought they would be listened to, those who thought their opinion mattered. Because regardless of where one stands politically, the participation of outside organizations matters.

We heard from the Canadian Criminal Justice Association, who are concerned about expanding punitive financial mechanisms tied to the justice system. Legal experts and civil liberties advocates raised concerns about due process, oversight, transparency and proportionality. We heard about constitutional safeguards, rehabilitation oversight and procedural fairness. Healthy democracies require both perspectives. Public safety matters and civil liberties matter. We heard how the practice of charged screening speeds up the court process and can help to ensure that the most high-risk and repeat offenders are prioritized and incarcerated while less serious offenders can be safely released. Was this considered by the government? No. And we heard from many who thought Bill 75 tilted too heavily towards punitive symbolism or theatre and executive power.

Now let us speak plainly about what happened after listening to those experts, after listening to their stories, experiences and legal opinions. The Conservative majority used its numbers to defeat every single amendment—not some, every single amendment, all done in good faith. My fear is—and I suspect the reality is—that the Conservative members of the committee had their marching orders, and I fear the committee consultation was largely performative. “Let’s pretend to listen, but we’ve been told to defeat every amendment.” Government members defended their approach by arguing the legislation had already been carefully drafted and reflected a strong public mandate on community safety.

In Westminster parliamentary systems, majority governments possess enormous power. Committee votes often do follow party discipline, but there is a difference between winning votes and building consensus. There’s a difference between passing legislation and strengthening public trust, and there is a difference between hearing testimony and actually listening. That distinction matters, especially when legislation affects constitutional rights, policing powers, transparency and the relationship between citizens and the province.

Speaker, as I conclude, I would like to discuss where this leaves us. Bill 75 was presented as a public safety bill. Many Ontarians undoubtedly support portions of it, and so do I. Some provisions address legitimate concerns around

dangerous driving. Some provisions strengthen animal welfare protections. Some provisions modernized administrative processes. But this bill is not only about individuals. It's about process, it's about proportionality, it's about transparency, it's about democratic accountability and it is about whether committee hearings still function as meaningful legislative review mechanisms in an era of majority government dominance.

The hearings revealed serious concerns from legal organizations, civil liberties experts, criminal justice advocates and animal welfare experts. Yet every opposition amendment, which really could have made this bill so much better, so much more effective and appropriate to the challenges at hand—every single one of those amendments was defeated. That reality leaves many Ontarians asking a fundamental question: If committee hearings cannot change legislation, what exactly are they for? Democracy is not simply about counting votes. It's about listening; it's about scrutiny; it's about accountability; and it's about ensuring that legislation—especially sweeping omnibus legislation touching policing, enforcement, transparency and civil liberty—receives the deepest possible examination so that we know where the shortcomings are, we know where the likely problems are that may come up in the future that might have to be addressed. Why not do that kind of research at the committee when you have the experts there?

Because laws are passed in moments of political urgency, those laws, most often, outlast the governments that introduce them. Once powers are expanded, they are very rarely surrendered. That is why careful scrutiny matters. That is why committee hearings matter. And that is why the debate around Bill 75 deserves far more public attention than it has received.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I have a few moments left. I will allow for a few questions.

Questions?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I just want to let the member know that, in fact, the government did pass two amendments last week. They were their own amendments, and it was to fix grammar errors in the bill, so it happens. It happens.

This government is obsessed with turning Canada into the United States; there's no question. It's no surprise that they're introducing cash into the bail system. Instead of making it about risk—risk to the communities—it's now about money. But it's interesting, because they're not willing to inject cash into legal aid to help those that are dealing with issues actually get the justice they need in a country where, really, in many cases, justice is purchased.

Do you agree that this should be something that the government should be spending time and money on: actually restoring legal aid levels and helping those so that there's no financial barrier in achieving justice?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to the honourable member for his question. We all know that the criminal justice system in Ontario is almost at a standstill. It's clogged up; it's not proceeding. We're not getting the judgments and the processes through that need to get done.

We know that legal aid does help keep that process moving, so investing in legal aid will actually get us to a criminal justice system that's doing exactly what we need it to do. So supporting legal aid and supporting the idea of charge screening, and whoever mentioned the word "risk"—yes, look at the risk: Where are the risks? Use the powers that you have vested in you to address the riskiest criminals, the riskiest processes and the rest can be left for another day, but look at it as a risk-assessment exercise.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): It is now time for private members' public business.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

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| Collard, Lucille (LIB) | Ottawa—Vanier | Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu |
| Cooper, Michelle (PC) | Eglinton—Lawrence | |
| Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC) | Oakville | Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC) | Mississauga—Lakeshore | |
| Darouze, George (PC) | Carleton | |
| Denault, Billy (PC) | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | |
| Dixon, Jess (PC) | Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler | |
| Dowie, Andrew (PC) | Windsor—Tecumseh | |
| Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC) | Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte | Attorney General / Procureur général |
| Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC) | Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord | Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence |
| Fairclough, Lee (LIB) | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | |
| Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC) | Nipissing | Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|---|---|---|
| Fife, Catherine (NDP) | Waterloo | |
| Firin, Mohamed (PC) | York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston | |
| Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC) | Elgin—Middlesex—London | Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement |
| Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC) | Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord | Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario |
| Fraser, John (LIB) | Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud | Leader, Third Party / Chef du troisième parti |
| French, Jennifer K. (NDP) | Oshawa | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative |
| Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC) | Newmarket—Aurora | |
| Gates, Wayne (NDP) | Niagara Falls | |
| Gélinas, France (NDP) | Nickel Belt | |
| Gilmour, Alexa (NDP) | Parkdale—High Park | |
| Glover, Chris (NDP) | Spadina—Fort York | |
| Gretzky, Lisa (NDP) | Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest | |
| Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC) | Brampton East / Brampton-Est | |
| Gualtieri, Silvia (PC) | Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville | |
| Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC) | Milton | Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform / Solliciteur général associé responsable de la Lutte contre le vol d'automobiles et de la Réforme relative aux mises en liberté sous caution |
| Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC) | Oxford | |
| Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC) | Kitchener—Conestoga | Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles |
| Hazell, Andrea (LIB) | Scarborough—Guildwood | Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative |
| Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC) | Thunder Bay—Atikokan | Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers |
| Hsu, Ted (LIB) | Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles | |
| Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC) | Dufferin—Caledon | Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé |
| Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC) | Chatham-Kent—Leamington | Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise |
| Jordan, John (PC) | Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston | |
| Kanapathi, Logan (PC) | Markham—Thornhill | |
| Kernaghan, Terence (NDP) | London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord | |
| Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC) | York Centre / York-Centre | Solicitor General / Solliciteur général |
| Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC) | Barrie—Innisfil | Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives |
| Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC) | Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre | Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée |
| Leardi, Anthony (PC) | Essex | Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement |
| Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC) | King—Vaughan | Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines |
| Lennox, Robin (NDP) | Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre | |
| Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC) | Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek | Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport |
| Mamakwa, Sol (NDP) | Kiwiitinoong | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle |
| McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC) | Durham | Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs |
| McCrimmon, Karen (LIB) | Kanata—Carleton | |
| McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC) | Brampton North / Brampton-Nord | Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme |
| McKenney, Catherine (NDP) | Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre | |
| McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB) | Beaches—East York | |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|--|---|--|
| Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC) | York—Simcoe | President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones |
| Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC) | Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest | Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie |
| Pang, Billy (PC) | Markham—Unionville | |
| Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC) | Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill | Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires |
| Pasma, Chandra (NDP) | Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean | Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle |
| Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC) | Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud | Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences |
| Pierre, Natalie (PC) | Burlington | |
| Pinsonneault, Steve (PC) | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | |
| Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC) | Timmins | Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord |
| Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC) | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry | Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité |
| Racinsky, Joseph (PC) | Wellington—Halton Hills | |
| Rae, Matthew (PC) | Perth—Wellington | |
| Rakocevic, Tom (NDP) | Humber River—Black Creek | |
| Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC) | Kenora—Rainy River | Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu |
| Riddell, Brian (PC) | Cambridge | |
| Rosenberg, Bill (PC) | Algoma—Manitoulin | |
| Sabawy, Sheref (PC) | Mississauga—Erin Mills | |
| Sandhu, Amarjot (PC) | Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest | |
| Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC) | Brampton South / Brampton-Sud | Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports |
| Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC) | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | |
| Sattler, Peggy (NDP) | London West / London-Ouest | |
| Saunderson, Brian (PC) | Simcoe—Grey | |
| Schreiner, Mike (GRN) | Guelph | |
| Scott, Chris (IND) | Sault Ste. Marie | |
| Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC) | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock | |
| Shamji, Adil (LIB) | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est | |
| Shaw, Sandy (NDP) | Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas | |
| Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC) | Flamborough—Glanbrook | Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative |
| Smith, Dave (PC) | Peterborough—Kawartha | |
| Smith, David (PC) | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre | |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement |
| Smith, Laura (PC) | Thornhill | |
| Smyth, Stephanie (LIB) | Toronto—St. Paul's | |
| Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP) | St. Catharines | |
| Stiles, Marit (NDP) | Davenport | Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario |
| Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC) | Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre | Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure |
| Tabuns, Peter (NDP) | Toronto—Danforth | |
| Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC) | Mississauga—Streetsville | Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises |
| Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC) | Scarborough—Rouge Park | Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances |
| Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC) | Huron—Bruce | Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|--|--|---|
| Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC) | Vaughan—Woodbridge | Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé |
| Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC) | Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington | Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative |
| Tsao, Jonathan (LIB) | Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord | |
| Vanthof, John (NDP) | Timiskaming—Cochrane | Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle |
| Vaugeois, Lise (NDP) | Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord | |
| Vickers, Paul (PC) | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound | |
| Wai, Daisy (PC) | Richmond Hill | |
| Watt, Tyler (LIB) | Nepean | |
| West, Jamie (NDP) | Sudbury | |
| Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC) | Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre | Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes |
| Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP) | Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre | |
| Vacant | Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough- Sud-Ouest | |