

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 79

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 79

1st Session
44th Parliament

Thursday
28 May 2026

1^{re} session
44^e législature

Jeudi
28 mai 2026

Speaker: Honourable Donna Skelly
Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

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Hansard Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Journal des débats et services linguistiques
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 28 May 2026

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 28 mai 2026

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers / Prières.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): You may be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING BILLY BISHOP AIRPORT
ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LA CONSTRUCTION
DE L'AÉROPORT BILLY BISHOP

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 27, 2026, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 110, An Act to enact the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, 2026 / Projet de loi 110, Loi édictant la Loi de 2026 sur la construction de l'aéroport Billy Bishop.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'm always happy to rise in this House, of course, and represent the phenomenal people of beautiful Beaches–East York. I will now continue on my scintillating debate that I know you were all hanging on—

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Yesterday you were, so today is the sequel. Thank you very much for your support.

We're going to talk about the runway of Billy Bishop. First, the expansion is far beyond what is presented. As I mentioned, Billy Bishop airport would demand 900 metres of new land mass, a 600-metre runway and a 150-metre buffer zone on each end. Unfortunately, the extra 900 metres does not even scratch the surface of a waterfront disruption. The Billy Bishop expansion would need hundreds more metres of buoys and guide lights extending into the water, repair hangars, new customs facilities if flight paths are added, exclusionary zones and more.

Before I get into all the infrastructure—because there is a lot of infrastructure needed for this plan, dream, whatever you want to call it—let's just take a minute to touch on a pretty fundamental piece of infrastructure in any airport: the tarmac. The jets used at Billy Bishop were never meant to be there. The tarmac, which is asphalt topped on sand, gets too hot in the summer, and these Q400 jets actually sink in the heat. Consequently, they cannot be stored at Billy Bishop airport in the summer, and instead they reside in London. I'm not sure if you knew

that. So right off the bat, the airport cannot even house its critical equipment.

We've all seen the heavy layer of fog that can fall over Toronto, sometimes thick enough that all you can see is the road and that car or the bike headlights in front of you. Toronto's Billy Bishop airport, especially being on the waterfront, is susceptible to fog, low visibility and delays, so these lights are non-negotiable.

Now, this expansion is not just a matter of slapping some asphalt down; it's not just waving your magic wand like you seem to like to do. No—we are talking about building a runway off an island into the water, which requires making land where there is none. So for the underwater infrastructure, this would mean building down into the water not just to support the land of the runway, but it would require an underwater berm system so jets do not blast the peninsula into bits when they take off, and a retainer wall, just to name a few pieces of infrastructure necessary to operate a safe airport.

Moreover, building down into the water completely and irrevocably disrupts the whole underwater aquatic ecosystem. Toronto's waterfront is home to several endangered species: American eel, Jefferson salamander, redbreasted dace, piping plover, rusty-patched bumblebee, just to name a few. But we know how this government actually feels about endangered species, and I won't get into that.

When we build underwater infrastructure, like retaining walls and berms, as we would need to for the airport expansion, we not only change the ecosystem that lives in the water but the flow of the water itself. Disrupting or completely blocking off points of drainage from rivers means that where water may have previously been able to flow from rivers and disperse over a wide surface area, it may now be concentrated and stronger, leading to changing currents affecting water activities and leaving us at risk for greater floods. And with the amalgamation of conservation authorities, loss of local knowledge and responsibility for growing regions of watersheds, this is simply not the time to take the chance with floods.

While we're on the topic of water, stay tuned for my private member's motion on creating an all-party Great Lakes committee, which I know that you will be eager to support because you did it once before.

Time and time again—let's talk about the health impacts—studies show that airport cities experience poor air quality. And this can lead to adverse health effects like premature death, pre-term birth, decreased lung functions, cancers and more. This would only worsen with increased air travel in the core of the downtown, as the government is pushing for it and growing the traffic. Commercial jets

emit various pollutants, and all of these have adverse effects that this government has not reported on for the airport expansion. That needs to be incorporated in the plan that doesn't really exist.

We're talking infrastructure. We're talking health impacts. Let's get over to congestion, because I'm short on time. We talked about that. I know this government claims to be keen on mitigating traffic and looking for congestion mitigation measures, hence Bill 212, the ridiculous bill which involved removing bike lanes. Why would you touch this intersection? It's not even fully—it's an intersection, but it's really kind of like a cul-de-sac.

I know many of the government members and many members in this House have flown into Billy Bishop. We all love Billy Bishop. It's a great quaint, cozy boutique airport. That's what we like about it: two million passengers. When you blow it up to 10 million, a major airport, then you don't have that boutique feel. Everything you love about it will be gone.

We know there are 400 vehicles an hour—current city of Toronto transportation data, right now. And sometimes it's double that. I actually was down there on the weekend for a play at the beautiful new Irish Corleck building, and I could have crawled faster to get to the building, which is right beside Billy Bishop. It was that congested on a regular Saturday in the city, so why—

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'm sorry, I wasn't riding my bike that day. I was with my husband, if you have to know.

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: He likes to remain private.

Anyway, let's get back to the traffic. It's barely manageable now. You have the end of Bathurst; you have Queens Quay; you have Eireann Quay. You do have transit down there. You do have the bike lanes, Martin Goodman Trail, all that. But you have an immense amount of traffic already, so you would need to have a parking lot, and, gosh, where would you ever put a parking lot down there? There's a lot of green space; we know about the parks. You're not touching those for a parking lot. So I don't know what the thinking is about where the cars would park—but also all the idling and the danger of having that many vehicles.

0910

It's not alarmist. These are concerns we must consider thoughtfully when the government proposes this massive expansion in the heart of Toronto where homes and schools and other institutions and densely populated—I think the member from Kitchener Centre said it best yesterday: that the population down there is probably more than some of your ridings, actually, so think about that, and leaving people vulnerable to pollutants and the health impacts.

The expansion should require full studies to understand how this will affect species habitat, air quality, water quality, ecosystems and, of course, the traffic impacts and what that leads to. We've already talked about Bill 105 and

this government's plan to actually remove all environmental assessments. You would definitely need an environmental assessment down there. You're going to have to make an exemption to Bill 105 for that. It has to be done.

We have the exclusionary zones, which I'll touch on briefly. The exclusionary zones avoid damage from jet blowback at the ends of the runway and are along the runway, too. The jets need to taxi, and when they are given that all-clear to move from that spot, there will be blowback, and it will not be safe for all the boating that's done down there. There are the swimmers, canoers, kayakers. As we've heard at committee, the amount of tourists who come down to that area specifically when they come to Toronto is monumental.

Then you have your Therme. How is Therme going to feel about this proposal? I'd be curious to know about that. I'm going to skip a bit over that and get to the cost.

As we talked about yesterday, where is the business plan? Logically, you cannot possibly plan to do a massive, ginormous infrastructure project like this without having done your due diligence ahead of time. Bring in the experts, figure it out ahead of time and lay out the business plan. You don't start anything without a business plan.

So we don't know. We've heard numbers tossed around. I think the latest I heard was \$5 billion. We all know how far that would go for health care, for fixing our decrepit schools, for more transit, for housing. And when we're talking about housing, we have to talk about what you're doing to the Port Lands plan that Waterfront Toronto has developed on Oookwemin Minising. Those proposals that developers were told were viable are 19 storeys to 49 storeys. If you do this crazy dream of yours, to expand Billy Bishop to the full extent you want to, you are capping that housing in the Port Lands at 15 storeys.

We also heard from the Waterfront Secretariat that you're capping the housing and destroying the housing plan for south Etobicoke. So it's not just the east. I represent the east-end riding, so that's what I was focused on, but then I heard from the Waterfront Secretariat about the other areas of Toronto. That will destroy your plan for housing starts. That's something that should be considered.

There are a couple more things that I'll talk about in my last minute. I've spoken at length about Little Norway Park. We do not pave over historical monuments. We don't destroy history; we don't disrespect our veterans. I've heard you speak proudly of that, so why would you touch Little Norway Park? And that had a pin in it on your map, so you have some explaining to do with that.

In consultation at the committee, we heard—I can't even believe it. The city of Toronto is the fourth-largest city in North America, and this government does not think to give them the heads-up, maybe consult, maybe show a little bit of respect. We heard from the Waterfront Secretariat; they found out about it in the media—in the media. Are you kidding me? This is a massive proposal. It's a tripartite—three, tri—agreement. It doesn't show much respect.

One of the last things I will say is—we haven't heard anyone speak about this yet in the House: the curfew at

Lester B. Pearson. There's a curfew at that airport, so there darn well better be a curfew at Billy Bishop. This isn't a workaround for your economic benefit and your buddies.

This is an empty bill. It's not a plan; it's a misguided dream, and Ontario deserves better.

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

Mr. Matthew Rae: Good morning. Thank you to my colleague from Beaches–East York for her remarks yesterday and now this morning on this important piece of legislation. I know there has been lots of discussion around the city of Toronto, but the federal government actually has recognized the importance of Billy Bishop airport. They've invested in US pre-clearance, highlighting its role as a cross-border travel destination for tourism, business and economic opportunity with our largest trading partner south of the border.

I was just perplexed why the members opposite, the Liberals in particular at Queen's Park, are opposing an airport when the federal Liberal Prime Minister and his federal Liberal colleagues support this investment and economic transportation—they're going to buy airports, apparently, federally.

I was wondering why the member won't pick up the phone and ask her federal member why he supports the expansion of the Billy Bishop airport.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you to my second-favourite member across the chamber, who is going down lower today. Thank you for that question.

I have absolutely spoken to my federal colleagues—of course I would. I believe in communication, consultation, dialogue, unlike this government. And I think the quote from the Prime Minister was that this is interesting, but he is pretty darn shocked at the move that this government did, pulled a fast one by just grabbing onto the city's portion of that tripartite agreement without talking to anyone. It's actually outrageous.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch to the member from Beaches–East York. I'm her favourite colleague here. I thought I'd get up and—no.

When I first got elected in 2018, I remember specifically being in the dining room when we had the sessions in the summertime, and I remember the Minister of Transportation at that time said, "Sol, I just learned we run 29 airports in northern Ontario. I just got briefed. We need to meet." That's the first time that the Minister of Transportation knew that they actually ran airports.

This morning, I think at 4:55, I got this picture from a friend of mine who is a pilot for Ornge, and it was in Kingfisher Lake. It was an amazing picture, but a lot of people do not realize that there's such, such high need for a modernization of airports in northern Ontario.

How do you think this government—does this government really know the conditions of the northern gravel airstrips that are in northern Ontario?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to my fine member from Kiiwetinoong. I would say,

yes, up there, favourite—it's shared with the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. You have to share it.

0920

I love when that member from Kiiwetinoong stands up and speaks about his riding, because I represent a downtown riding in the city of Toronto, and I have not been to his riding, but I am scared when I hear him speak about, yesterday, the 27 gravel airstrips. I feel the north is disrespected by this government because they're obsessed with the downtown waterfront in the city of Toronto. It's wrong.

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

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Thank you for the speech from my colleague from Beaches–East York—always very entertaining, keeping everybody awake. I was a little bit worried to stand up and ask a question. I'm worried about the qualification I might get from my colleague, so maybe you want to abstain from that.

I know you had a lot more to say about the reasons why this airport is not a great idea—you said you had to put down some of your pages—so I'll offer you the opportunity to talk a little bit more about the aspect you might not have touched upon. Or, alternatively, you can also tell the government what they could do with this huge amount of money that they would spend on this disastrous development.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to the excellent member from Ottawa–Vanier and a great representative and a great friend.

Yes, I missed a bunch of my pages because I got on a rant about this government—which is so easy to do, actually.

What I didn't get to speak on: As far as spending that \$5 billion, I would share it amongst everyone else. I wouldn't hog it for beautiful Beaches–East York, but we do have a hospital, phase 2, and we do have schools and, the same as you, have to build.

But we did talk about how there's a \$3-billion expansion going on right now in Lester B. Pearson airport to increase the capacity up to about 68 million passengers. That's the major airport in Toronto, and Billy Bishop is the boutique airport—end of story.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I've been listening to the member from Beaches–East York, and I noticed the member pretty well every day rides her bike here into Queen's Park from Beaches–East York. I was wondering, wouldn't it be easier for her to go to the Billy Bishop airport by bike instead of driving, or whatever, to get to the Pearson international airport? As well, what about the 23,000 construction jobs that are being created by building this airport here, at Billy Bishop? Are you against unionized workers building and expanding our airport?

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

Response? Member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I biked in today, and I was debating about whether I should wear my bicycle helmet in the chamber to protect myself from this onslaught, but I wasn't sure that security would let me.

Last time I checked, you could bike to airports. I'm sure some people do. You would be wearing the same underwear, I think, for your trip, because you wouldn't be able to pack your suitcase. But I take the transit to Lester B. Pearson. I take the TTC: \$3 gets me there lickety-split. That's what I do. We also have the UP Express. Lester B. Pearson is accessible and easy to get to by transit. I wouldn't—

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you to the member from Beaches–East York for a very entertaining morning. But the topic is serious.

I fly all over northern Ontario. There are 29 airstrips that are gravel and are dangerous. We tell one another, “Be very careful if you land at the 400-metre mark. There's a big hole. There's a big washout.” And those are airports that are owned and operated by the government of Ontario. Don't tell me that the government of Ontario is willing to spend \$5 billion for an airport we don't need in Toronto but cannot spend \$100,000 to make the airstrips in northern Ontario safe.

Can you see a discrimination against northern Ontario in there?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to the member from Nickel Belt for that excellent question and for representing her riding so well.

I am appalled when I hear about the state of the airports in the north. The north is being ignored and disrespected by this government because this government is just solely obsessed—I'm trying to think of a bigger word than “obsessed.” I'm going to have to get my thesaurus out because they're just—

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Fixated.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: —fixated. It's this love affair with the Toronto waterfront—but it's kind of love-hate because you're destroying it.

I think this government should put their money where their mouth is and actually start investing in the north and in northern airports.

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

Hon. Steve Clark: Good morning, everyone. I'm pleased to join in the debate on Bill 110, the Building Billy Bishop Act. This is a very important project for our government. It's a bill that has had nine hours at second reading. We've gone into committee with the minister. I've been able to bring the bill back to committee.

I think this morning, I'd love to get your take on whether you're satisfied that we've had adequate debate. So with that, I'll move that the question now be put.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): There has been over six hours of debate, and 19 members have participated. Mr. Clark has moved that the question be

now put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

It is the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Vote deferred.

PROTECTING ONTARIO'S STREETS
AND COMMUNITIES ACT, 2026
LOI DE 2026 VISANT À PROTÉGER
LES RUES ET LES COLLECTIVITÉS
DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Kerzner moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 119, An Act to enact two new Acts and to amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 119, Loi édictant deux nouvelles lois et modifiant diverses autres lois.

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

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I'm very pleased to be sharing my time today with our great Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform, my friend the member from Milton; as well as our great member from Perth–Wellington. I look forward to their participation in this debate.

Madam Speaker, we're here again because public safety matters. Protecting Ontario matters. It's something that the Premier, our government and I treat with the highest degree of priority, and we have done so since the earliest days Premier Ford came to office in June of 2018.

In a few weeks, I will have contributed four years as the proud member from York Centre to this Legislature. I will have contributed almost four years and a few more weeks as Solicitor General of this province.

But I have not done it alone. I have done it with some incredible people in the Ministry of the Solicitor General who have helped me every day make sure that the priorities of our government, led by the Premier, are carried out ambitiously, with vigour and, I might add, with dispatch.

I'm pleased that one of our deputy ministers is here in the chamber today: Deputy Mario Di Tommaso, a person who had an entire career as a police officer and came back for a second act, and we're delighted, and I can say that there is no finer Deputy Solicitor General for community safety. We will never have a person—I welcome him and thank him so kindly. Thank you.

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I also want to welcome our incredible chief of staff, Nicolas Di Marco, who basically grew up around politics as a young person at city hall. He finds himself here, and what Nicolas brings is also a set of eyes with clarity, and

he has helped me every single day with an incredible team in the minister's office. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, we're here on Bill 119 as a reaffirmation that public safety will never take a back seat in the priorities of our government. I can point to so many incredible things that we have done in the last four years, but perhaps I'll start with a story that I think is meaningful.

This past Monday, I had the privilege of witnessing 85 new Toronto police officers receiving their badges—their commission. They took their oath of office. This class of 85 represents an incredible representation of diversity in our province unlike anything I have ever seen. When people around our province—and they are very few—do not understand the role that public safety plays in their lives, let me share my story of why I think it ties into Bill 119 so beautifully.

These 85 people, by the way, understand that our province is diverse; our city is diverse. I will, as minister, as an MPP, as a citizen of the province who loves my province, champion those men and women who put on the uniform every day, supported by incredible civilians with an objective of making sure that everything we should not worry about—I've said this before, about going about our lives, waking up our kids—such was the case today when I woke up our kids; although they're a little bit older, I still wake them up—and checking in on our seniors and loved ones. We go to work. We shop. We play in the park. We worship. And we do it because there is this safety net of people.

The member right here from Chatham-Kent-Leamington, the minister of agriculture and agri-food, was a police officer, and not just for a short time; I might say he had an exemplary career in the Essex detachment of the OPP. There are people who will come next who will bring the same background. Deputy Di Tommaso had over 30 years at the Toronto Police Service, rising to the rank of staff superintendent, which was at that time just a notch below deputy chief. He understands what it means to have safe communities.

Let me tell you something else that I learned. When we have safe communities, we have something else: We have an environment that encourages people to invest, to thrive; for entrepreneurs to feel that they can develop the ideas of tomorrow and see it through proof of concept and into production, because the climate that exists understands public safety matters.

When we ran as a government and we were re-elected in February 2025 on the clarion call of protecting Ontario—protecting Ontario means “protect us, strong economically.” The times that find us are uncertain and perhaps things we've never had to deal with, but the threats of tariffs have just helped us reinvent two things: the pride and love we have of our province, of our flag, of our identity, of our diversity, but also something else, that in our province of Ontario, there's nothing we can't do. We have the resources, we have the intellect, we have the expertise and we have the ability to do whatever we want to do, and control our destiny and make our identity as Canadians and as Ontarians our own. Bill 119 helps us talk about a

few things that will help ensure, from a public safety perspective, there's nothing more important than the welfare of those who live in our province.

We've said a few things in Bill 119 that are important. Some of it goes back to what Premier Mike Harris did so brilliantly. He turned tragedy into action and purpose when he came forward in understanding that the tragic death of Christopher Stephenson was not going to just exist with no action to prevent other children from being brutally murdered by sex offenders. And he came forward with Christopher's Law, 25 years ago plus. Christopher's Law was designed to create an Ontario registry that the police services would have that would allow caution to exist in communities where sex offenders may exist and may try to hide under the veil.

I have a lot of respect for Premier Harris. To this day, just to call him by his surtitle, “Premier,” reflects the time and leadership he gave to this place and to the province. And 25 years later, there's another Premier. It's Premier Doug Ford, who said that we have to strengthen Christopher's Law; we have to make sure that you can't hide behind an alias; you can't hide in social media luring people and extorting people. Because that's what's taking place today in the world of the Web, and it's not fair to young innocent children.

We've made changes, and we've strengthened it numerous times by going forward in this bill to allow the OPP, through the commissioner, to have a new Web page and vision that will help allow certain information to be released to the public in the communities. And to keep communities safe is another reaffirmation that we will always be with our community. We will always side with the victims.

Madam Speaker, my friends across the way—and some of them are real, real good friends too—understand that when it comes time to both have pride in our province and respect for those men and women who serve as police officers and firefighters and correctional, probation, and parole officers, animal welfare inspectors, the love and respect for our community should be universal.

I read in the papers, by the way, yesterday, that there were some members on the other side—although the good news is they're not in the chamber right now, although I shouldn't say that, so I'll retract that. But what I want to say is there is universal respect for those people that want to keep our province safe.

The changes that we're going to make to the public website for high-risk offenders will be very important because, most importantly, it will improve the public awareness, and that's very important.

I also wanted to address something else: that we want to crack down, as we have been, understanding that people who feel it's okay to produce illegal drugs with pill presses, another means in Ontario—it's not acceptable. And that's why, through the dramatic increased investments we've made year after year that have been cumulative, we've worked with our police services to ensure that they have resources, the technology and the wherewithal to go after crime and to fight it hard.

We also want to make sure that people who harbour those who make illegal drugs should not be absolved from their responsibility. That's why we've said commercial landlords who harbour, who are aware, who lease space to people in commercial buildings will be held accountable if they continue on in this way. I feel this is the right way to go.

I also want to talk about how we want to modernize our security guards. It was just maybe a month ago that we had a security guard at Fairview Mall who was shot right in front of the Michael Hill jewellery store. We want to make sure that as we go forward, we dust off legislation that hasn't been looked at again in almost 20 years. Who is a security guard? What type of training will they get? What standards of common training will they have? I really want to make sure that we address this, because that and retail theft are a major problem—\$9 billion-plus: That's what retail theft does to our province. It increases the cost of goods. One way we control the rate that we're paying, the rate of inflation on the goods that we're buying is stopping the people who are stealing the goods, that are making it more expensive for everyone.

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By the way, I travelled last summer in the riding of the member from Kiiwetinoong. I'll be honest; I was shocked when I went to two fly-in communities and I saw the price of goods. I took pictures of the prices, and when I showed it to my own family, they asked me whether that was in Canadian dollars, because the prices are unbelievable. We have to stop retail theft. It has a chain reaction everywhere, and it's not fair to the law-abiding citizens who want to buy their product and pay a fair price. So that's something we want to do.

My colleagues across the ministry, the Attorney General, the Associate Solicitor General will be talking about different things as well, but we want to have an all-of-government approach that will say that we have to go back to what is best for Ontario. I said a couple of days ago one of the things we want to do is encourage entrepreneurs to come forward with Ontario-made products. So the days of buying Chinese drones that absolutely have no more place in the future of our province when we can manufacture a better product here and keep all of the data and software right here in Canada—that's why my colleague Minister Crawford, from Oakville, his Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement has come forward to be part of this bill. I think this is very important.

By the way, we're not telling the OPP, "Don't use these drones that you might already have," but don't use it for certain things today. Secondly, we will see a day very soon when we will have a Canadian and Ontarian manufacturer helping with this.

I want to talk about a few other things that are very, very important. I want to talk about the fact that victims of human trafficking in some cases—I would say maybe in many cases—who were coerced into this find themselves with debt that actually should not be their responsibility. When we look at the human trafficking debt relief component of this bill, it will help survivors rebuild their lives,

remove financial barriers created by traffickers and support long-term recovery and independence. This is important. I think it's got a lot of bipartisanship across the way because this is something that nobody should ever face—and have been coerced to incur a debt that's not theirs. I'm very, very pleased that we've done this.

I also want to talk about the changes that we want to make in communicating our government's priorities to the police service boards. Now, the Leader of the Opposition, I think, needs to reread it, because I saw her comments, and they don't make any sense. We don't direct any police service, and the leader knows that. We don't. We don't direct the OPP, we don't direct municipal and we don't direct First Nations police services. But what we know is alongside the local municipal priorities are the provincial priorities. This legislation will allow for the conveyance, the clarity and the enunciation of the government's provincial priorities to the board.

And what are examples of provincial priorities? Fighting to get the guns out of our community: That's a priority. Stopping the illegal drugs from being produced in our communities and getting them out of our communities: That's a priority. Keeping our parks free of drugs and available for people to play in the park: That's a priority. To keep our transit safe—and one of the things I announced is looking into having special transit constables having additional authority, so if they see somebody engaging in inappropriate drug behaviour, that can be stopped, and they can arrest them if they have to or escort them out. Who wouldn't agree with things like that? Go on transit and experience something that you're not being threatened by or made uncomfortable by—that's important.

When we look at the things we have done—two seasons a year, Madam Speaker, in the fall and in the spring. We do it because we want to further strengthen the narrative. And whether it be in animal welfare—and there's a piece in this as well, because there were medically unnecessary procedures on dogs that don't need to be done, devocalization on cats, declawing on dogs, dog tailing. There are things that don't have to be done—or ear cropping. They don't need to be done. We want to take the information, the views and the concerns of our stakeholders moving forward.

A little later this evening, I will be in Windsor, participating again at the annual meeting of the Police Association of Ontario, led by my good friend Mark Baxter. Thousands of members of police services are part of the PAO. And the PAO—together with the Ontario Provincial Police Association, and in Toronto, the Toronto Police Association—represents the men and women that take the risk every day to keep us safe.

The firefighters take risks every day. The correctional officers are heroes beyond measure. The people that answer the 911 call—when we call 911, they pick up the phone. And thanks to the new technology we've adopted, the NG9-1-1—next generation—actually, they're picking up the phone across the province that much quicker.

When we look at the animal welfare inspectors, they're reminding Ontarians as to the standards we have set to care for our animals. When we look at the people in the centre of forensic science and at the coroner's office, we look at people that put service over self every day to find the next discoveries and, most importantly, take what we can learn from a tragedy and prevent that from reoccurring.

The purpose of legislation being introduced in the fall, or in the spring, or however the government has an opportunity to do it, is to send a message to Ontarians that they don't walk alone, that there's somebody with them every day: the brave men and women, yes, but also the government, also the Parliament of Ontario, because we all have an equal right to vote and support public safety legislation.

For me, as I mark—as many of us will do from the class of 2022 on all sides, just in a few days. These four years here have been remarkable, to say the least. I've listened, and at the end of the day, I realize the role that we have on all sides is not to say what people need to hear from us; it is to make sure that our commitment and that our love and our respect for the province and being elected here is transmitted in everything we do and everything we say.

It has been a privilege beyond a lifetime, and I know my colleagues feel the same way. And I hope that we will continue, both as a government and as a Parliament, to all say that there's nothing more important, sincere or valued than protecting our province and its future. Thank you, merci beaucoup, and meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The minister let us know he's sharing his time. I recognize the Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform.

Hon. Zee Hamid: In addition to the member from Perth–Wellington, I will also be sharing my time with the member from Whitby.

I'm pleased to rise for the second reading of Bill 119, the Ontario government's proposed Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, which we introduced in the House earlier this week.

Speaker, our government has a comprehensive strategy to safeguard our province and continue in our ongoing commitment to protect Ontario. We're protecting Ontario jobs and industry through smart investments and by taking steps to boost trade and unleash our economy.

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We're protecting Ontario families through strategic investments in health care, infrastructure, education and social services. And we're protecting Ontario families and communities by enhancing the justice and public safety systems which exist to serve them.

That's why we're making historic investments in front-line policing to make sure officers who protect us have the resources and tools they need to do their jobs effectively, and overhauling the adult correctional system by modernizing and expanding infrastructure, hiring more correctional staff—including mental health professionals and nurses—and enhancing safety in our institutions.

Along with these investments, we've advanced bold legislation in the name of justice and public safety. Bill 119 builds on the work our government has done to ensure

we have a legislative framework that supports and advances our public safety priorities.

We started in 2023 with the Strengthening Safety and Modernizing Justice Act, which advances the career of policing, strengthens protection for animals and increases access to courts by reducing backlogs.

Early in 2024, the Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act received royal assent. Changes in the act were designed to help protect children, support families and people struggling with addiction by restricting supervised consumption sites, and address road safety issues caused by careless commercial motor vehicle drivers. That was one of the first acts that I had the privilege of voting for when I came in through a by-election that year.

Later that year, the House passed the Enhancing Access to Justice Act, which took a number of steps to advance the province's public safety and justice systems.

The Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act passed last year is another clear example and demonstration of our commitment to public safety. This act addresses critical issues like intimate partner violence and human trafficking, while streamlining the justice appointment process, giving police additional tools to combat auto theft and other serious offences.

Speaker, I know that Milton families in my riding are hard-working families, and families across Ontario expect that when bail conditions are imposed in the administration of justice, they are followed and abided by, and when they are not, there are real and meaningful consequences. As Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform, I'm particularly proud of measures in the legislation that strengthen the bail system by making sureties more accountable for bail breaches.

We backed the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act with meaningful action, including a \$91-million investment in the Community Safety and Policing Grant program. This innovative and effective program funded 127 community-based policing service projects, addressing issues like gang violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, hate-motivated crime and retail theft.

Last week, I was with Peel police doing an announcement where we announced a bust of a retail theft ring that was funded through this grant program. Later today, I'll be with Barrie police doing another announcement that is also funded through grant programs like these. So these programs are making a meaningful impact in public safety.

And last year, Speaker, we took another bold step to safeguard our province and protect drivers on the road, families in their communities, front-line heroes on the job and victims from the lasting impact of crime. Bill 75, the Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act, built on our public safety and justice legacy by proposing changes that would crack down on dangerous driving, strengthen bail compliance by making sure offenders and sureties are held accountable for bail breaches, provide public safety personnel and their families additional tools and supports, and enhance support for victims of crime.

Which brings me to our latest set of actions: Bill 119, the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act. This bill is the foundation of a comprehensive public safety and justice package that has three clear objectives: make sure our communities are safer, give police and public safety personnel stronger enforcement tools, and enhance protections for victims of crime and other vulnerable Ontarians.

Speaker, I would like to take some time now to explore each of these three objectives in more detail.

The first objective is to make our communities safer. We promised an Ontario where everyone can feel safe and secure on the streets, in their homes and across their communities. Bill 119 includes amendments to support this commitment. We're looking to amend the Community Safety and Policing Act in ways that will strengthen the governance and transparency of municipal police service boards.

These changes include limiting the ability of police services, or police service boards, to hire current or former board members; establishing rules of attendance in closed board meetings; and enabling the Solicitor General to set policing priorities for police service boards.

We're also proposing changes that would streamline the Inspector General of Policing's operations. In addition to these strong governance measures, we're proposing amendments to modernize the Private Security and Investigative Services Act. Over the past decade, the private security sector has grown steadily. Today, more than 136,000 private security professionals are licensed in Ontario. That's more than all our police officers serving our communities combined.

As a government, we have a responsibility to ensure these people are doing their jobs safely, responsibly and in alignment with provincial priorities. Our government's proposed changes would enhance training resources for private security personnel and ensure the sector has effective public complaints processes in place to ensure that concerns are heard and acted upon.

Meanwhile, we're asking the House to consider steps aimed at improving the overall efficiency of the justice system. The Attorney General is proposing changes to the Provincial Offences Act that would enable parties to reach plea deals and plea agreements for specific provincial offences outside the courtroom. This is a practical and common-sense change that would help reduce a lot of court delays, actually.

Beyond legislation, we're advancing policy initiatives that reflect the complexity and changing dynamic of today's public safety landscape. For example, the RCMP recently restricted the use of Chinese-made drones after determining they posed risks in specific policing and national security situations.

The Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, under the direction of the member from Oakville, is taking a close look at the issue. With the best interests of Ontario in mind, we want to ensure that drones used to support provincial police work are secure, safe and reliable. And to keep up with the evolving and inter-

connected nature of crime, we're also developing a provincial strategy to combat money laundering, while looking at ways to improve oversight in areas like forensic care.

The next objective of this public safety and justice package is aimed at improving enforcement tools. We want to seal any holes in the net and make sure that legislation is not only intelligently considered but is effective and enforceable. As such, illegal and open drug use is an area of special concern.

Speaker, people are just fed up with illegal drug use in public spaces. Public transit is a case in point. Millions of Ontarians rely on public transit, and they want to feel safe while they're using public transit. They don't want their health compromised by exposure to toxic substances. They don't want to witness criminal behaviour. My daughter was 15 years old when she started taking transit to go to school. I do not want kids in her age group, or anyone, for that matter, relying on public transit to be exposed to drug use.

It shouldn't even be a question that Ontarians deserve the right to be safe. It shouldn't be a question that they deserve the right to travel in dignity. In my riding of Milton, I hear from my constituents all the time that our transit system needs to be more than just on time. It needs to be more than just modern. It needs to be more than just clean. It also needs to be safe.

The TTC has reported a significant uptick in security incidents since the pandemic, with many incidents involving intoxication and drug use. To tackle this, our government has made a regulation under the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act. With this new regulation, transit special constables will have greater authority to prevent illegal drug use on transit property. They can now confiscate illegal substances. They can direct drug users to leave a public space, and when there's a refusal to comply with lawful orders, constables have the authority to lay provincial charges.

Our government is also examining actions that will address meth labs and other facilities used in the production of illegal drugs. By bringing into force the Measures Respecting Premises with Illegal Drug Activity Act, it will be illegal for commercial landlords to knowingly permit illegal drug production on their property.

Our government is also looking at ways to assist our brave men and women in uniform to keep drugs out of our communities, including introducing legislation that will make it an offence to unlawfully possess precursor chemicals for the purpose of making illegal drugs and pill presses or other devices used in the production of illegal drugs.

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Beyond this, we are also addressing concerns in the towing industry. My colleague the Minister of Transportation will talk about this in more detail, but for now, here's a short summary, Speaker: Bill 119 includes amendments to the Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act to reduce dangerous driving by tow truck operators and ensure the industry is more effectively regulated. If

passed, these measures will make it easier for authorities to penalize tow truck companies that skirt the rules.

What's more, the minister from Elgin–Middlesex–London and his incredible team at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing are moving forward with changes to the Planning Act to allow municipalities to issue administrative monetary penalties, or AMPs, for specific types of unauthorized illegal land use. This would help municipalities punish unauthorized commercial operations such as illegal parking lots and storage yards.

It's an issue that impacts a lot of communities along the 401, including my own riding of Milton. I served 12 years as a municipal councillor, Speaker, and a large number of issues from the rural residents of Milton involve illegal truck parking, because this is not just illegal truck parking in inappropriate locations; they're also doing servicing, they're generating noise and pollution, they're doing oil changes and all sorts of things that should not be permitted in inappropriate areas. So in order to tackle that, municipalities have asked us for new tools, and we're doing just that.

At the same time, the Attorney General is moving amendments to simplify enforcement of restraining orders made in other Canadian jurisdictions.

The third aim of our package centres on granting more robust protection for victims of crime and other vulnerable Ontarians. By now, everyone in this House understands why it's critical that Ontarians have the information they need to safeguard against high-risk offenders, including sex offenders. We cannot have a system that places this information behind a bureaucratic firewall. Therefore, we're bringing forward changes to the Community Safety and Policing Act authorizing the Ontario Provincial Police, the OPP, to maintain a public website that provides updates about high-risk offenders who are subject to a community notification by a chief of police. Bill 119 also includes changes to Christopher's Law that would better align the reporting requirements for the Ontario sex offender and trafficker registry with those of the National Sex Offender Registry.

Another proposed change deals with an inefficiency in the current police criminal check system. Police services across Ontario process over a million police record checks every year, 70% of which are vulnerable sector checks. These are more detailed checks conducted for people working and volunteering with children, seniors and people with disabilities. These are detailed and time-consuming and often require extensive data analysis, stricter identity verification and manual review by police. Right now, federal rules limit vulnerable sector checks to the police service where an applicant resides or another authorized body.

If passed, Bill 119 would amend the Police Record Checks Reform Act to allow police services to process vulnerable sector checks for people living outside the jurisdiction. That will allow us to load balance and direct things where there's more capacity. It would eliminate pressure on local police and make vulnerable sector record checks significantly faster.

Meanwhile, the Attorney General's ministry is suggesting changes to the Victims' Bill of Rights that would create a new statutory tort of harassment. Currently, this behaviour is usually addressed in the Criminal Code. Bill 119 would give victims the right to sue their harassers in civil court even if there is no criminal conviction in place.

Our government is also examining methods to support the rules set out in the Protection from Coerced Debts Incurred in relation to Human Trafficking Act. All these underscore our government's commitment to public safety and protecting victims and standing with victims. Under the proposed amendments, victims of human trafficking will no longer have to pay off debt they were forced to take on by their exploiters.

We've also made regulations that prohibit the medically unnecessary and cruel declawing of cats, as well as outdated devocalization or ear cropping of dogs. I've had cats my whole life, and one of the cats we had rescued was declawed. I did not realize at the time—we didn't go through the process; we rescued the cat—that declawing the cat involves cutting off their toes, not just taking off the nails. So it's a process that a lot of well-meaning cat owners and pet owners have gone through, thinking they were doing the right thing, but it's medically unnecessary and it could be quite painful for the animal. It is about the time that these medically unnecessary processes are stopped.

The measures outlined today mark a major step forward for public safety and justice. They're rooted in experience, informed by evidence, and focused on measurable outcomes. Bill 119 builds on our record of bringing forth legislation that makes life better for people in this province, that makes our streets safer, that makes our communities safer and makes our families safer.

Our government is responding to these challenges and working to protect the province as we position Ontario to adapt to the challenges of the future and take advantage of the opportunities to come.

The proposed Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act also builds on our commitment to safer communities and a stronger justice system. I've heard time and time again, Speaker, as I'm sure you have, and I would imagine every member of this House has, that the public expects our streets to be safe, their families to be secure, and that when something happens, they expect justice to be served. And that is what this bill is doing.

I'll now share my time with the member from Perth–Wellington.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member for Perth–Wellington.

Interjections.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you, colleagues. It's great to be able to rise this morning to speak to a very important piece of legislation: Bill 119, Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, 2026. This legislation reflects our government's work and unwavering commitment, as the Solicitor General and the associate minister mentioned in their remarks this morning, to protect the people of this

great province, support victims, and strengthen public safety in communities across Ontario.

In reviewing this piece of legislation when it was tabled—there are five overall themes throughout this bill, whether it's safer communities, stronger enforcement, protecting victims and the vulnerable, strengthening private and intercountry adoptions, and, finally, improving safety and the supports, as well, under the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. This is the latest step in our government's efforts to crack down on illegal activity wherever it may be occurring, protect victims of crime, and strengthen public safety across this province.

In my remarks this morning, I will, obviously, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, speak to our proposed amendments to the AMP program—administrative monetary policy. We're going to talk about fines this morning, colleagues, at the municipal level. Hopefully you'll all stay with me, and awake. It was a very important piece of legislation—this component—and as parliamentary assistant, I was actually working, under the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Minister Calandra, on this through committee. So there has already been some committee work, colleagues, on this piece of legislation, specifically related to this illegal truck bylaw and the challenges around enforcement and compliance.

If passed, this piece of legislation would take meaningful action to protect transit users by expanding authority for special constables to address illegal drug use on transit systems—an issue of grave concern for municipal leaders with large and small transit services, and transit riders across our great province.

It would support survivors of human trafficking by providing up to \$50,000 in debt relief for those who are forced or coerced into debt by these human traffickers. It would also protect victims by allowing restraining orders issued in other provinces to be enforced in Ontario without additional court declarations or the need to obtain them from our law enforcement.

It would also improve transparency and public safety by allowing the Ontario Provincial Police to publish information about high-risk offenders on provincial public websites.

It would reduce wait times for police record checks for people working and volunteering with vulnerable populations and doing that important work.

It would also strengthen oversight and accountability in the towing and private security industries.

And it would help protect sensitive provincial information by restricting the use of Chinese-made drones across government operations.

Speaker, these measures build on important work our government has already advanced through the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act and Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act.

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But Speaker, today, I want to focus, as I mentioned, specifically on one part of this legislation that speaks

directly to the concerns we are hearing from our municipal partners, residents, farmers and rural communities across Ontario. We've been asked by municipal leaders at ROMA, AMO and at other municipal conferences and meetings—and we're delivering on our commitment to crack down on illegal truck yards and illegal land use practices through the stronger enforcement tools being proposed in this piece of legislation under the Planning Act.

The reality is, Speaker, illegal truck yards have become a growing problem for a number of Ontario communities, particularly in our fastest-growing rural and suburban municipalities in the greater Golden Horseshoe. Residents have raised serious concerns about trucks and the trailers being parked and stored on agricultural, rural and residential lands that were never intended to be zoned for those purposes.

These are not minor concerns. Illegal truck yards can create serious safety hazards. They can damage local roads that were never designed for heavy-duty commercial truck traffic. They create excessive noise, light, odour, drainage problems and environmental concerns for the surrounding residents and farm families. They threaten the integrity of farmland, which is something very important to this government, and undermine proper land use planning.

In communities like Caledon, Halton Hills, Vaughan and other communities in York region, local leaders have been sounding the alarm for years. Residents have watched as agricultural properties and rural lands were transformed into illegal truck depots operating outside of municipally zoned rules and other bylaws. Municipal bylaw officers have faced lengthy investigations, costly court proceedings and limited enforcement tools that often fail to stop repeat offenders quickly enough.

We're listening to local leadership to make changes to the Planning Act that will help municipalities address illegal land use within their jurisdictions. The proposed changes respond directly to calls from municipal leaders, such as Mayor Annette Groves from Caledon, and councils across Ontario that have asked for stronger enforcement tools to deal with illegal truck depots operating on lands not zoned for these purposes.

Speaker, what municipalities have told us is clear: The current system is simply too slow. Right now, municipalities can prosecute offenders who violate zoning bylaws, but those prosecutions often require significant staff time, which then leads to significant legal costs; obviously, time for investigations; and ultimately, years of court proceedings before any meaningful outcome is reached. In some cases, by the time enforcement is completed, the damage to communities is unfortunately already done.

The town of Caledon has investigated more than 100 files related to suspected illegal land use and trucking operations since 2024, colleagues. In Halton Hills, there have been more than 50 illegal truck depots and over 40 active investigations in 2025. The largest successful prosecution resulted in a fine of \$115,000, an amount that still did not cover the municipality's prosecution and enforcement costs.

This is not sustainable. Municipalities need practical tools that allow them to respond more quickly, more efficiently and more effectively when illegal land use does occur.

That's exactly what this piece of legislation would provide. If passed, Bill 119 would enable municipalities to impose administrative monetary penalties, commonly known as AMPs, in relation to illegal land uses, including illegal truck depots—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I apologize to the member. Sorry to interrupt the member. Seeing the time on the clock, it is now time for members' statements.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Lorne Coe: As part of our plan to protect Ontario, the province is investing \$9.6 million through the 2025-26 gas tax program to support public transit services across the region of Durham. This funding will help expand service hours, introduce new and improved routes, purchase new transit vehicles and enhance accessibility, ensuring more residents can move safely, reliably and efficiently through their communities.

Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is making historic investments in infrastructure and public transit: nearly \$70 billion province-wide to build a stronger, more resilient and self-reliant Ontario. Through programs like the gas tax, Connecting Links, and the Ontario Transit Investment Fund, we are providing Durham municipalities with the stable, predictable funding they need to plan for the future.

HARMONY HOUSE

MPP Catherine McKenney: I recently had the privilege of visiting Harmony House, a second-stage shelter in Ottawa that provides refuge to women and their children who are fleeing domestic violence. What I saw moved me deeply. I watched children playing in the shadow of a building, tucking themselves out of the sun and making the most out of a small patch of shade. These are children who have already survived so much. They are resilient and joyful and full of life, and they deserve so much more.

Harmony House does vital work. Second-stage shelters are a lifeline. They provide the time and stability that women and children need to begin to heal, to plan and to imagine a future.

But that future is being blocked. Right now, there is nowhere affordable to go. Without deeply affordable housing, women cannot move on. They stay longer in second-stage shelters, and other women in crisis shelters have nowhere to move to. The whole system seizes up, not because of a failure of courage or effort, but because this

government has failed to build the homes these families need.

Speaker, the children I saw playing in that shadow deserve a home of their own, a permanent, safe, affordable place to grow up and thrive. Every day this government delays the needed investment in deeply affordable housing is another day those children wait.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

MPP Stephanie Smyth: National AccessAbility Week is a time to celebrate the incredible people, advocates, caregivers and community leaders who continue to push Ontario forward every single day.

But it also has to be a moment where we are honest with ourselves about how much work is still left to do, because for a lot of Ontarians, accessibility barriers are not occasional inconveniences; they shape almost every part of daily life. It's the senior who misses a medical appointment because the Wheel-Trans booking never came. It's someone showing up to a subway station elevator only to see the familiar out-of-service sign again—or there isn't even an elevator at all. It's a parent trying to push a wheelchair down a sidewalk blocked by snowbanks in the winter. It's a young person with a disability applying for jobs and wondering if they're being overlooked before they even walk into the interview room. And it's families who are exhausted from constantly having to advocate, explain, fight and push just to access things many of us take for granted.

Speaker, Ontario promised to become fully accessible by 2025. That deadline has come and gone, and for many people, it doesn't feel like we are anywhere close. We have to remember accessibility is not just about infrastructure or legislation. It is about dignity. It is about independence. And it is about whether people feel included in their own communities.

PHỞ 90

MPP Mohamed Firin: I rise today to recognize and congratulate Phở 90 in York South–Weston on receiving the Toronto Star Readers' Choice for best Asian restaurant. This recognition is a significant achievement and reflects years of hard work, dedication and commitment to excellence by co-owners Sang Nguyen and Hung Ton, as well as their entire team.

Their story is one that reflects the opportunity and the promise Ontario offers to those willing to work hard and contribute to their communities. Arriving in Canada in the 1980s, Sang Nguyen and Hung Ton brought with them generations of family traditions and authentic Vietnamese recipes that have now become part of the rich culinary fabric of York South–Weston.

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Over the past seven years, Phở 90 has been more than just a restaurant. It has become a welcoming gathering place for residents and families across York South–

Weston, known for its hospitality and quality service. The restaurant's distinct recipes, inspired by four generations of culinary traditions from Saigon, have helped Phở 90 stand out within Ontario's vibrant food industry and earn numerous awards over the years.

During Asian Heritage Month, it is important to recognize businesses like Phở 90 that preserve the culture and traditions while also contributing to our local economy, creating jobs and strengthening our communities.

I would like to recognize co-owner Hung Ton, who's here today. He's a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 for his service and contributions to the community.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating Sang Nguyen, Hung Ton and the entire Phở 90 team on this well-deserved recognition, and I wish them continued success for the next generation.

GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARDS

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I want to say a huge congratulations and thank you to Ottawa West–Nepean residents who are receiving a Good Neighbour Award. These awards celebrate the people in our community who brighten and sustain the lives of their neighbours every day in ways big and small.

They are all nominated by members of our community. They are volunteers for community organizations, churches and community associations. They help welcome newcomers, ensure everyone in our community has access to food, clothing, books and bicycles. They welcome newcomers, support seniors and youth and deliver meals and cookies to neighbours. They organize celebrations and social events. They clear snow and promote cleaner, greener neighbourhoods. They solve problems and advocate for important causes.

Congratulations to Alicia Cuzner, April MacDonald, Dennis Bronson, Fatou Camara, Grant Gilliland, Harry Fischer, Janet Decoste, Jeannine Jennings, Judy Madhosingh, Larissa Law, Laurie McKnight, Michael Sims, Norma Lamont, Paul Dietz, Randy Taylor, Rick Sellick, Salim Jam, Sharon and Kirk Reid, Sharon Roy, Steve Wilson, Theresa Ramsay, Tyler Hull and William Myles.

In a time when there's so much in the world that can make us feel anxious, concerned or disconnected, you remind us that we are always surrounded by goodness and there is always someone to lend a helping hand.

Thank you so much to each one of you for being a good neighbour.

JERISHA GRANT-HALL

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I would like to recognize an outstanding community leader in Newmarket–Aurora, Jerisha Grant-Hall, who has recently been named one of the 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women, a national recognition celebrating the achievements and contributions of Black women across this great country.

Jerisha is the founder and executive director of the Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association, known as NACCA, which was founded in 2018. NACCA has become an important centre of support and empowerment for Black youth and families, not just in Newmarket but across York region. NACCA has launched initiatives that uplift youth, provide scholarships for Black students, expand access to culturally responsive mental health services, as well as advancing food security and community well-being.

Jerisha's work reflects a deep commitment to service, community care and the principle that when we invest in the success of our young people and families, we strengthen the future of our province. I am honoured to have known Jerisha for more than seven years and have closely watched and supported her work. She's a wonderful mother, wife, community leader and a true visionary.

Please, everyone, join me in congratulating and recognizing Jerisha Grant-Hall.

HOWARD MOSCOE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: It is my honour to rise today and remember the late city councillor, TTC chair and Toronto municipal icon, Howard Moscoe. He was a dear friend and mentor to me.

Speaker, Howard's childhood trips to Queen's Park helped spur his interest in politics. He was a proud, lifelong New Democrat. He was brilliant. He understood the rules better than the people who wrote them, and he knew how to use those very rules, often against their own makers, to protect the public and fight for what's right.

In true Howard fashion, he did so with principled mischief, cutting wit and an over-the-top antic to prove a point that always got the cameras rolling. He hated injustice and corruption, and he fought them fearlessly at every turn. He leaves behind a legacy of social justice and fairness that shaped our city and province in far more ways than we will ever know.

You can learn all about this larger-than-life political maverick in his autobiography, *Call Me Pisher: A Madcap Romp Through City Hall*. In it, he even wrote his own eulogy: "Instead of having some rabbi misrepresent me at my funeral, I've decided to do that myself." I promise you, it's an absolute page-turner.

Howard is an inspiration and proof that politics can be principled. He was the true political embodiment of David versus Goliath in his 32 unforgettable years at Toronto city hall. May he rest in power.

TORONTO PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Mr. David Smith: I rise today to highlight the continued progress of Toronto Paramedic Services' multi-function station currently under construction in my riding of Scarborough Centre.

I recently had an opportunity to visit this new facility spanning 90,000 square feet. This modern space will house

up to 40 ambulances and 16 emergency response vehicles, bringing together logistics, equipment, fleet services, administration, education and development units. The facility will support a transition to electric and hybrid vehicles for non-emergency operations and will include features such as solar panels and anti-idle technology in ambulances to help reduce emissions and support a clean future.

I would like to thank the members of paramedic services unit TCEU Local 416; Atif Sharif, the commander, policy, projects and process improvement; and Bikram Chawla, chief, paramedic services, for their leadership and dedication to this important project.

ÉCOLE ÉLÉMENTAIRE CATHOLIQUE DES DEUX-RIVIÈRES

MPP Billy Denault: I rise today to share in this House a substantial investment our government has provided to a community in my riding.

In Arnprior, the community is receiving \$13.6 million to expand education, specifically for—and pardon my French—L'école élémentaire catholique des Deux-Rivières. This school will be converted into a JK-to-grade-12 school by delivering 184 new secondary student spaces for local francophone communities through le Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est.

Speaker, as I said at this announcement, this investment will create opportunities for students to thrive in our community well into the future. For years, francophone families in Arnprior have had to send their children elsewhere for secondary schooling. Now students will be able to complete their entire French Catholic education right here in their own backyard.

It was great to tour the school following the announcement, to see all the big smiles and happy faces on the news. I can say it wasn't just the kids that were ecstatic.

I want to thank the Minister of Education for his tremendous work, and I also look forward to visiting the school once again when the expansion is completed.

I also want to give a shout-out to all who played a role: the parents, teachers, trustee Daniel Levasseur, the board and, of course, representatives of the town of Arnprior. And a special shout-out to Liane Gallant, a parent in my riding, for their advocacy on this file. They all played a role in it, and it's great news for the community.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MPP Mohamed Firin: I would like to welcome Hung Ton from my riding of York South–Weston.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is a great pleasure of mine to introduce a member of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan representing the riding of Regina Walsh Acres, Mr. Jared Clarke. Welcome to Queen's Park.

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Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'd like to welcome this morning to the House two incredible women: the first, Filomena Lofranco, the CEO of LDV & Co. and a creator

of many successful cultural and business events and exchanges between Canada and Italy; and Mercedes Tibollo, a poet, a bioethicist and, most importantly, my daughter. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Today, I want to welcome members of the OFL, members of the Period Purse, who have come in to be with us for the tabling of the Menstrual Health Day Act, which will happen today at 1 o'clock. Thank you, and welcome to your House.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I would like to warmly welcome students from the University of Toronto Scarborough campus, Scarborough Hub for Innovation in Public Policy. Please join me in welcoming them to the Legislative Assembly.

Welcome to your House.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to welcome Anthony Carella from the city of Vaughan. Anthony just completed the World's Toughest Row, crossing the Atlantic Ocean in 35 days—top five in the world. We welcome this young man inspiring our youth.

Thank you for your leadership for the people of Ontario.

Hon. Rob Flack: I'd like to welcome the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. I'd like to recognize Andria Leigh, chair; Beverley Hillier, chair-elect; Susan Wiggins, executive director, and all members of the OPPI. Have a great advocacy day. We'll see you at lunch.

Hon. Stephen Crawford: From my community of Oakville, I have Mr. Raymond Pace and Cindy Lowes. Welcome to Queens Park.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Madam Speaker, although he just recently had to leave for a meeting, I was pleased to welcome to the Ontario Legislature the Minister of Justice from the province of Alberta, the Honourable Mickey Amery.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I'd like to introduce my son, James Fobel; co-op student Kaeden; our friend George; and the one and only Sally Palmer, who has been advocating for doubling OW and ODSP for years.

Thank you for all you do.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I would like to welcome Maria Sardelis, Tina Economopoulos, Joy Seguin, Vic Seguin, Kathy Jolicoeur and Shelley Thorpe, who are here today in support of my bill, Andre's bill of rights. Welcome to your House. Thank you so much for coming.

Hon. Sam Oosterhoff: I'd like to welcome the new director of government and stakeholder relations for the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies of Ontario, Kelly Harris. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Laura Smith: I would like to introduce and welcome great Thornhill residents Howard Katz and Linda Saiet.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to welcome the family of page Mason Grisch, including his father, Michael Grisch; as well as Emmanuelle Richez and Vincent Georgie, who are here to receive the Ordre de la Pléiade today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Deepak Anand: I'd like to welcome my favourite niece, Nikita Thakkar, co-chair of the Period Purse, Can-

ada's first registered charity dedicated to menstrual equity. Welcome.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I want to welcome students from KMSchool, who are here visiting from Brampton. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Catherine Fife: My sister is watching. I'm marrying her and Kate Bell this weekend in a hot-air balloon. So I really hope to be here on Monday.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): This from a woman who is afraid of heights. And she's going to be in a hot-air balloon for five hours?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Three hours.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Three hours—think about it.

We look forward to seeing you again on Monday.

QUESTION PERIOD

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Marit Stiles: This question is for the Premier.

This Premier is throwing taxpayers to the wolves. And he's howling about it.

Yesterday, he chose to keep the tax on groceries.

Today, he's choosing to leave taxpayers with a \$5-billion bill to land luxury jets on Toronto's waterfront.

Premier, nobody wants this, especially the people who live in Toronto.

Why is this Premier taking \$5 billion from the taxpayers' pockets instead of making life more affordable for people?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: As we have made clear, there are no taxpayer dollars going towards this project.

The port authority will continue and move forward with this modernization project because it makes sense for this province at a time when political leaders across this country are talking about nation-building projects, when they are talking about making Ontario more competitive, Toronto more competitive.

Of course, you can count on the Leader of the Opposition to oppose progress and development in this province. There's not a single project—whether it's the Ontario Line, whether it's the Scarborough subway extension, whether it's Billy Bishop airport or building the roads to the Ring of Fire, that member has opposed every single one of those investments.

We are going to continue to build Ontario and develop Billy Bishop into a world-class airport.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Oh, man: \$5 billion. That is \$900 out of the pocket of every single household in Ontario. Imagine that.

But does the Premier care? Apparently not. He proved that when he spent \$30 million on a luxury private jet. Now, he wants private jets landing on the Toronto waterfront, and he is willing to spend \$5 billion of your hard-earned money to make it happen.

When is this Premier going to start putting money back in people's pockets instead of spending it on his lavish vanity projects?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, let me repeat one more time: Not a single dollar from that \$5 billion will be from the taxpayer or from Ontario taxpayers. But you know what? The truth is not something that that member, the Leader of the Opposition, wants to hear.

What we want to do is we want to build for the future. We want to build Billy Bishop. It's going to support over 23,000 construction jobs. It currently moves over two million passengers a year and supports 20 different cities. We want to connect more people to northern remote communities, which Billy Bishop will help let us do.

We have got a vision for this province, and that vision is to build the transportation infrastructure that we need to make Ontario more competitive, especially when we face threats south of the border with tariffs. Ontario has to be more competitive, self-reliant. That's exactly what we are building towards with historic investments into Billy Bishop and across this province.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Well, Speaker, we've heard this story a few times before, haven't we? And instead of investing in the things that could make a difference in people's lives, like health care or schools or housing or—my goodness—northern highways that are safe, this Premier is spending billions on luxury jets, filling in a lake so he can land right there in downtown Toronto. He is spending your money on a project that nobody asked for.

We could be opening hospital beds. We could be building housing. We could be hiring teachers, for goodness' sake. But no, the Premier wants to land more fancy jets for his buddies.

When will the Premier start respecting the taxpayers' dollar?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Once again, Madam Speaker, not a single one of those dollars will be funded through the taxpayer. It's a private sector investment—the private sector—because it makes sense: Toronto is a world-class city. When you look at other cities across the world, whether it's New York, whether it's Houston, whether it's London, they all have two airports because it makes them that more competitive. It allows more tourism, more business to be attracted into the city.

But let's look at the record of the official opposition on projects in Ontario: The Ontario Line, a public transit project that is going to move 400,000 people, is going to support the people in the Leader of the Opposition's riding. She opposes those investments. In fact, the NDP were holding funerals for trees to stop the Ontario Line project. That is unacceptable.

That is why we were elected on a mandate to build Ontario—transit, highways. Supporting the modernization of Billy Bishop is going to create thousands and thousands of jobs in this province, and that is exactly what we are going to continue to move—

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

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, nobody out there believes this government anymore. I have been out on the doors in Scarborough this week, and I want to tell the Premier what people there are talking about and what real working people are concerned about right now, because he doesn't seem to get it.

They have told me about their concerns about wait times in emergency rooms. They've been talking about finding a family doctor and how difficult that continues to be, the need to hire more health care workers, transit that would actually get people to work and family on time.

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What they are not worried about, Speaker, is whether the Premier can land luxury jets on Toronto's waterfront—not on the radar at all. So how can this Premier be so out of touch with everyday families?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, we have spent a lot of time in Scarborough, and guess what? That Leader of the Opposition lost her own deputy leader from Scarborough because she has ignored the residents of Scarborough.

Do you know why? Because we came forward with a historic investment for the people of Scarborough in the Scarborough subway extension, a project that will move 100,000 people every single day. That Leader of the Opposition forced her deputy leader to vote against that project every single time, even though the people of Scarborough were denied access to rapid transit for 15 years under the previous Liberal government. They were ignored, Madam Speaker.

Whether it's hospitals or transit, this government is delivering for the people of Scarborough, and that is what we're going to continue to do. We're making historic paces on the development of the Scarborough subway extension. The stations are moving forward in construction right now. We've got the tunnel boring machine—over 50% complete on that Scarborough subway extension because we are committed to the people of Scarborough, and we are going to build for Scarborough.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Well, Speaker, I'm going to go back to the Premier again, but my goodness, this subway extension, if it ever happens—it's been delayed again. The people of Scarborough aren't going to see that now until the 2030s. Give me a break.

Once again, we have a Premier who is just looking out for the wealthy: his wealthy friends who want to land their luxury jets at the Toronto waterfront. That's what this is all about. Maybe he's hoping to get a ride on one since he had to return his—maybe.

He seems to be more worried about his frequent flyer miles than he is about helping parents who are looking for more support for their kids in classrooms, Speaker.

So back to the Premier: Can the Premier explain why landing jets downtown is more important than the needs of the people of Ontario?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, we have an ambitious capital plan to build across this province. In fact, since 2018, we've invested over \$9 billion into the city of Toronto to ensure it becomes a world-class city.

Billy Bishop is a key cornerstone to that progress. It's not just an important asset for the city of Toronto and the province of Ontario; it's for the entire country. When we look across this country, when we look at other countries, they're trying to build a more competitive, more self-reliant economy. That is exactly what the Premier and our government have been focused on since the tariffs south of the border.

Here's a project: Billy Bishop, right now, supports over 4,900 direct jobs in this city, Madam Speaker. We're going to continue to build that asset so it can support not only 23,000 construction jobs that will occur because of the modernization and redevelopment, but because of the expansion of this project. These are common-sense projects that we need to move to continue to build Ontario, build this province—

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'll tell you one thing the people of Ontario know: It's that this government never spends \$5 billion on anything that doesn't directly benefit their friends, their family. The wealthiest Ontarians get anything they want, right? They get a luxury airport in downtown Toronto that nobody else needs or asked for.

Five billion dollars may not seem like a lot to this government, but for most people, it's unimaginable. It's unimaginable. People want hospitals. They want hospitals. They want smaller class sizes for their kids, right? It is a choice that this government is making, and it makes no sense. Five billion dollars could build 14,000 affordable homes for people in this province, but, instead, you're choosing to build a runway on a lake in downtown Toronto.

I want to ask the Premier one more time to stand up and explain to us why this government is so obsessed with jets landing on Lake Ontario that they aren't building housing in the province—

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, not a single one of those \$5 billion is going to be spent by the taxpayer. The Leader of the Opposition knows that. We've been very clear on that.

But guess what, Madam Speaker? The Leader of the Opposition has to appease a very small special interest group that she has to pander to. You know why? They are

the same ones that objected to the Ontario Place redevelopment. They are the same ones that objected to the Ontario Line development. They are the same ones that objected to the 413, the Bradford Bypass.

The Leader of the Opposition can't stand up and say she supports a single one of these projects because she doesn't believe in building Ontario. Some 400,000 people are going to move every single day on the Ontario Line, a public transit project that will support over 400,000 people moving across this city. Why would the Leader of the Opposition be opposed to that?

Here's a project at Billy Bishop that is going to support over 10,000 direct jobs—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria:—construction jobs. The Leader of the Opposition will be opposed to that, Madam Speaker.

The Highway 413: The member knows very well that they lost two of their own members—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier.

We have to get to the bottom of this air rights scandal. We need an answer as to why a company owned by Carmine Nigro, a close friend and associate of the Premier, got a multi-million-dollar settlement for air.

Engineers have asked, how does air have any value if you can't build on top of it? Lawyers are saying this settlement is unprecedented.

Giving money to your friends when Ontarians are working hard and struggling just to get by—well, that's an even worse look than the Premier's luxury private jet.

Speaker, will the Premier disclose just how much money Carmine Nigro's company got in this air rights scandal?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: The leader of the third party knows that we have nothing to do with matters that involve expropriation. They are independent legal matters that are handled by an independent agency at Metrolinx.

Now, if the leader of the third party—when they were in government for 15 years—built anything, they would know how the expropriation process works, but they don't because their record is building upside-down bridges. They've rejected building in this province, whether it was public transit, whether it was highways. They built nothing.

That is why we came into government with a mandate to build: the Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass, the largest expansion of public transit in this province's and country's history, Madam Speaker.

Last year alone, we reached a record: over 76 million people using transit on our lines. We're going to continue

to make sure we make those investments to deliver better and reliable service on our public transit.

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

Mr. John Fraser: So this minister is responsible for Metrolinx. He knows the number, but he's not saying it, right? Why is it so hard to disclose, Minister?

Mr. Nigro sat at the table at a family wedding. He's a fundraiser for the PC Party. He's a serial appointee of the Premier. It seems that the Premier can help his friends every day, but to heck with everybody else.

Speaker, one more time: Will the minister just release the number? He knows what it is, and Ontarians deserve to know.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Once again, Madam Speaker, that member knows that we do not get involved in expropriation matters. They are legal and they are handled by Metrolinx—not the Premier, nor myself, nor anyone in this government.

But what I can tell you is we are singularly focused on building transit. For 15 years that member, when he was a part of the governing Liberal Party, did absolutely nothing to build public transit—absolutely nothing.

When you look at downtown Toronto, for the first time in over 60 years we have tunnel-boring machines underneath the downtown core building the Ontario Line. When you look at our GO lines, whether that's the Lakeshore East line, the Lakeshore West line, we're seeing record individuals using it because we have invested in the service enhancements needed to get more people onto public transit.

That is what we are singularly focused on as we continue our mandate to build the largest expansion of public transit in this province's—

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

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, this payout stinks like a rotting fish. We can smell it over here, but maybe when you sit in the stench too long, you don't notice the smell anymore. But the smell is not going to go away, just like the Premier's luxury private jet.

1050

The Premier has no money for the two million people who don't have a family doctor, no money to fix hallway health care, but the Premier's close friend and associate gets millions of taxpayer dollars for something he couldn't build on and never actually owned.

Speaker, back to the minister: Will he just simply do the right thing and release the number so Ontarians will know?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Once again, Madam Speaker, there is no involvement by the Premier or any member of this government in that process. What we are involved with is continuing to deliver on our historic mandate to build public transit.

Let's look at the success we've had so far. The Finch West LRT, the Eglinton Crosstown: These are projects that are moving hundreds of thousands of people every single day, as we speak.

We're in the final phases of getting the Northlander project operational, a project that the Liberals cancelled in 2012, robbing the people of northern Ontario of options for public transit. That is a shame, Madam Speaker. As a part of their budget, they made sure that the Northlander did not exist. This government made a commitment to bring it back, and that is exactly what we are doing because we believe in building this province in every corner of this province.

That is why we were elected on a historic mandate for the third time. The people of this province recognize the vision the Premier has to build Ontario, and that is exactly what we are—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: Back to the Premier: I'm just simply asking for the minister to release the number that he knows. He knows the number. Ontarians deserve to know.

After eight long years, reasonable people are saying, "Why am I struggling? Why am I working so hard? And why are the Premier's friends doing so well?"

Carmine Nigro, a close personal friend of the Premier—chair of the LCBO, the Premier appointed him to it; chair of Ontario Place, the Premier appointed him as well; and on Invest Ontario, another Premier's appointment; a fundraiser for the Premier; a fundraiser for the PC Party—gets money for something he never actually owned and can't build on. Do you want to tell me that's reasonable? Stand up and say that's reasonable.

So it feels like a favour for a friend; that's what it feels like. I think it's reasonable for people to know how much this favour, or what looks like a favour, costs.

Speaker, it's their money. Will the minister simply release the number that he knows?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, what's unreasonable is the 15-year record of the previous Liberal government, where they bankrupted this province. Over 300,000 manufacturing jobs fled this province because of the disastrous policies that were put forth by that member and his government in the 15 years.

But we're reversing that, Madam Speaker. We're putting shovels in the ground, whether it's the Scarborough subway extension, the Yonge North subway extension, whether it's the Ontario Line or the Eglinton West extension. These are projects that have shovels in the ground and those that we are working on to build because we believe in building in this province, unlike the previous Liberal government.

Let's look at Scarborough, a place that was forgotten by the previous Liberal government for 15 years. We've got shovels in the ground on the Scarborough subway extension for the first time. They did all the talking. We're doing the building, and that's what we're going to continue to

move forward with and deliver real results for the people of this province.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Maybe everybody on that side is good with the Premier treating government like it's his personal piggy bank to reward his friends, but we're not good with it over here.

Mr. Nigro's company sued the government for \$500 million for something—I'm going to say this again—he couldn't actually build on and never really owned. It's literally air—air.

They offered him \$78 million for the air. Now, that's a whole other issue, why you wanted to give him \$78 million. But you know the settlement has got to be more than that, right? Because you don't settle for less.

So how is it that anybody over there can defend what has happened in this government, when you give a close friend and associate of the Premier millions of dollars for literally air? Will the minister just simply release the number that he knows?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, that member knows, and I'll repeat again, that we do not get involved in expropriation matters.

But what I can talk about is that for 15 years they built absolutely nothing in this province. Of course they don't know how expropriations work because they built nothing in this province. Whether you look at highways, whether you look at transit, their record is absolutely right: upside down bridges. They left our infrastructure in disrepair. We're fixing that. We're getting people to where they need to go, quicker and faster. That is why we invested over \$73 billion into the Gardiner Expressway to move it to 24-hour construction and to get it built almost 18 months ahead of schedule.

We're going to continue to work with municipalities across this province to deliver on the roads, bridges, highways and public infrastructure that they deserve. It's about moving people more efficiently and quickly. That's exactly what we're going to focus on, because that is what we were elected to do by the people of this province.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I can't believe that the minister doesn't know the number. And if he doesn't know the number, he shouldn't be doing the job. Metrolinx is his responsibility. They want to hide everything: the green-belt, skills development, the luxury private jet. No wonder the Premier doesn't want to divulge his cellphone records, right?

After eight long years, people are tired. They're working hard, and they see the Premier's friend and close personal associate get rich, while they can't afford groceries or gas or rent or kids' clothes—millions of dollars for air.

I am going to ask for the last time: Will the minister just simply release the number that he knows? Release the number. Just release the number.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Once again, for the hundredth time, we don't get involved in the expropriation

process. It's a legal matter, and Metrolinx is an independent agency that does them.

But what I will talk about is how many jobs we are supporting with our plan to build public transit. The Ontario Line: Over 4,700 jobs are supported by that project, which both the Liberals and NDP opposed. Let's talk about the Scarborough subway extension: Over 3,000 good-paying jobs are supported by that project, and once again, opposed by the Liberals and NDP. Now let's look at the Eglinton West and the Eglinton Crosstown, the extensions, the current transit line: Over 4,000 jobs were supported through the construction and the operation of that project.

Madam Speaker, we are investing in historic infrastructure in this province because it is good not only for today, not only for the next 10 years, but for generations to come. That is why we are also investing in a 401 tunnel to ensure that we can move people on one of the most congested expressways in all—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

HOSPITAL FUNDING

MPP Robin Lennox: We're nearing the end of this legislative session, and the Conservative government has chosen to prioritize a \$5-billion expansion of Billy Bishop airport. Our constituents aren't asking for an island runway to land their jets. They are asking for hospital beds, for family doctors and for care without delay. We haven't seen a single bill this session focused on addressing hallway health care or ER wait times.

To the Premier, are you really going to let this session close without a plan to address the crisis in our hospitals?

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you for asking a question related to the health of the people of Ontario. Our investments as a government since Premier Ford has formed government have been literally historic, whether it is \$60-billion-plus in hospital capital—I think it's really important to remember that we have already opened an additional 3,500 net new beds in the province of Ontario and we are on track to open an additional 3,000 net new hospital beds.

We have invested in emergency care. We have invested in our clinicians. We know, as we train more physicians, more nurses, more physician assistants, nurse practitioners—and we are doing it all here—we have more opportunities for individuals to practise in the province of Ontario: 100,000 new nurses licensed to practise—

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

MPP Robin Lennox: We know that privatization and health care don't mix. We have seen it in long-term care, with cataract surgery, and in home care. When we introduce profits into the equation, our patients always lose. The Ontario Health Coalition and others have been sounding the alarm because we have seen this before. This Conservative government likes to starve our public services to

the point of dysfunction and then move towards privatization. We cannot accept that for our hospitals.

To the Premier, will you commit to a plan to actually fix our hospitals that will not involve privatizing them?

1100

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm actually shocked that the member opposite would raise cataract surgery as an example. When we expanded cataract surgery in community in Ottawa, in Kitchener-Waterloo and in Windsor, we actually decreased surgery wait times. Why? Because we had existing community capacity, and we gave them OHIP-funded money to make sure that they could do that.

When I spoke to an individual, a woman from southwestern Ontario, she said, "Thank you. Thank you for expanding cataract surgery, because I'm reading to my grandchild again, I'm volunteering in my community again, I'm driving again," because she had access to cataract surgery faster.

Eliminating those wait times and wait-lists means we have opportunities for people across Ontario.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

MPP Andrea Hazell: My question is to the Premier. The people of Scarborough were promised a subway extension, but what they got from this government was a lack of transparency and accountability.

Since the dangerous derailment of the Scarborough RT, 632,000 residents have been stranded with painful transit connectivity in Scarborough, all while being told the subway would be open in 2030. That was fiction. We now know the opening date is now 2033, a three-year delay, with a budget that doubled to over \$10 billion, all hidden from the public. The people of Scarborough found this out not from this Premier but from an FOI request. This has all the warning signs of another Eglinton Crosstown LRT disaster.

Through you, Speaker, my question to the Premier: When will you stop misleading the gracious people of Scarborough and finally take accountability?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Withdraw.

MPP Andrea Hazell: Withdraw.

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Once again, when it comes to Scarborough, for 15 years, that previous Liberal government didn't deliver a single transit line for the people of Scarborough. They ignored the hard-working people of Scarborough. What have we done? We've got shovels in the ground on projects like the Scarborough subway extension, a 7.8-kilometre extension for rapid transit that the people of Scarborough deserve and need. It's going to board over 100,00 people every single day. That's what the residents of Scarborough want, that's what the residents of Scarborough need. They were neglected under the previous Liberal government for 15 years.

But that's not it; we're building a medical school, we're building a new hospital, because the Premier believes in the people of Scarborough. We're not going to ignore

Scarborough like the members opposite did for 15 years. We've got stations under construction as we speak. We're moving at a record and historic pace to continue to ensure that those residents get access to rapid transit and as quickly as possible.

We're going to continue to deliver for the people of Scarborough—

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

MPP Andrea Hazell: Madam Speaker, our Scarborough doesn't end at Kennedy station; that's just the beginning of Scarborough. Residents have to take three or four separate buses just to get to their jobs, doctors' appointments, schools and for their groceries. This is a physical and financial punishment.

Listen to these alarming stats: Since the RT derailment, Uber trips in Scarborough have skyrocketed by 72%; trips to and from the vital hub of Kennedy station have spiked by 29%; 43% of Scarborough residents are dependent on public transit.

On June 19, Scarborough doesn't need this government's free hot dogs, hamburgers and a can of pop; Scarborough needs a government that listens and takes actions.

Speaker, through you, I ask the Premier, when will you stop punishing Scarborough and deliver the transit they deserve now?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: This coming from the party that can't even run a nomination in Scarborough. They're covering up the results. They won't even release the results of that.

What the people of Scarborough and transit riders of Scarborough wanted was affordable and accessible transit. That's why we put forward the One Fare program. Now, how can those members look at the residents of Scarborough or anywhere in the GTA and say that they voted against a program that is going to put almost \$1,600 back into the pockets—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the minister. Members of the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order. Members of the third party will come to order. The members of the government side will come to order.

Back to the transportation minister.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Let's look at the record of the Liberal government when it comes to Scarborough. They voted against the medical school. They voted against the hospital. They voted against the community centre, and they voted against rapid transit for the members of Scarborough—a 7.8-kilometre extension that is going to move over 100,000 people. Shame on the Liberals for neglecting Scarborough.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I will start warning people.

HOUSING

Mr. Brian Riddell: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

In my riding of Cambridge, families, young professionals and seniors continue to tell me they want to see more homes built that are affordable and delivered efficiently. Over the course of this session, our government has remained focused on tackling Ontario housing challenges by creating the conditions to get more homes built faster, and we are beginning to see renewed momentum in housing starts across our province as confidence returns to the market.

Could the minister tell the House what actions our government is taking to help support new home construction in my community and throughout Ontario?

Hon. Rob Flack: Thank you to the member for Cambridge for that great question.

We've had a historic session, Speaker. Bill 98 was passed, reducing the time it takes and the cost it takes to get homes built, creating those conditions—very important legislation. We're rolling out a development charge reduction program next week that is going to benefit all municipalities across this province, including our small northern and rural communities. We have introduced the historic HST rebate that is going to affect all construction of new homes for one year, April 1 to next—a great initiative.

We have seen over 4,000 new starts to date, and we thank our federal friends for joining us in this great initiative. But I would ask them to get their legislation in place, to get the initiative in place so we can indeed recognize booming sales for the rest of the year. Speaker, to them, respectfully and thankfully: Slow help is no help. Let's get it done.

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

Mr. Brian Riddell: I'd like to thank the minister for that very encouraging update.

Our government recognizes that one of the major barriers to housing construction is the slow and inconsistent approvals process that builders face. Too often, unnecessary red tape, duplication and delays add costs and uncertainty that prevent homes from being built on time.

That is why we introduced Bill 98. This legislation helps address these challenges by creating a more predictable and standardized approval framework that supports municipalities while ensuring projects move faster.

Speaker, could the minister further explain how the measures in Bill 98 will help reduce municipal red tape, speed up approvals and continue to support increased housing construction across Ontario?

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

Ms. Laura Smith: A major focus this session has been ensuring approval processes are faster, more transparent and more consistent across municipalities. That's exactly why we introduced Bill 98.

This legislation contains practical reforms that would help streamline planning processes, reduce duplication and create greater certainty from builders to municipalities to families waiting for homes to be built. For far too long, housing projects have faced unnecessary delays, caused inconsistent local requirements, complex approvals and administrative bottlenecks. Bill 98 would help standardize processes.

Clearly, the timelines have to be very clear and improve coordination so projects can move from application to construction more quickly. We're also modernizing and simplifying planning systems to ensure municipalities can focus on resources, on getting homes approved and built instead of navigating unnecessary bureaucracies. Remember: Slow help is no help.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Chandra Pasma: The Auditor General has confirmed what parents have been saying: Special education is underfunded, and it is leaving children without access to a meaningful education and the supports and resources to be at school safely.

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Instead of investing to support our children, per-student funding for special education teachers, education workers, psychologists and other professionals is going down next year, not up.

How is it that the Premier has \$5 billion to land private jets on Toronto's waterfront, but when it comes to supporting our kids, it's another cut?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: Madam Speaker, of course that is not true. We've increased special education funding significantly in the province of Ontario by over \$3.85 billion. Each and every year, we've increased special education funding.

But as I've said—and I know the opposition doesn't want to hear it—what I'm focused on is outcomes. I want to make sure the money we're investing in special education is actually providing the outcomes that our parents and teachers are insisting upon. That is why we'll be taking a further look at special education and all of the models that are being delivered across the province of Ontario: to make sure that it is meeting the needs not only of parents but, more importantly, of students.

We're listening to teachers. We're listening to educators. We're looking at boards that are doing it better. Some boards are doing it better than other boards. Why is that, Madam Speaker? Some boards aren't spending their entire allocation on special education while some boards are spending more than that allocation. So we are going to look at that system, but ultimately it is going to be based on what the outcomes are so that we can ensure our kids get the best possible opportunity to succeed.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Let's talk about outcomes, Speaker, because the outcome of this government's repeated funding cuts is that education workers, teachers and principals are being laid off all across Ontario. Just this week, 171 EAs and admin assistants in York region were told they're losing their jobs, on top of the 78 custodial and skilled trades workers who already got pink slips. The TDSB is now up to 824 positions cut.

I don't think there's a family in this province that would say their priority is a runway in Lake Ontario. So why is the Premier throwing away \$5 billion on that when that money could hire 58,000 more teachers and education workers?

Hon. Paul Calandra: One of the challenges the NDP seems to always have is understanding that when you grow an economy, you have more money to spend in education, and you have more money to spend in health care.

We understand that the NDP doesn't get this. They don't like the private sector. The NDP have never liked the private sector. That's just their ideology. They think government should do everything, and the way that government does everything is by taking all of the money out of your pocket and letting them spend it.

We've been down this road before in the province of Ontario. It was called the Bob Rae government. They bankrupted the entire province, built nothing and laid off teachers. They closed schools. They closed hospitals. That is the record of when you allow socialists near anything to do with government. They're bankrupting the city of Toronto. Anywhere they have a role, whether it's in school boards, education, councils or opportunities to run provinces, they cause chaos.

Here's what we're going to do: We're going to continue to focus on building an economy that works so that we can continue to spend record amounts in education, record amounts in transportation and record amounts in health care to build a bigger, better, stronger and safer province—

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

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: One of the privileges of my work as an MPP is the ongoing consultation I get to do with the people of Kanata–Carleton. The number one issue of concern is the current state of health care in Ottawa. They are worried, in spite of the glowing words of this government, that things are only getting worse.

When people like Dinah, a retired nurse, Margaret or Jess ask what this government is doing about hallway medicine, emergency room wait times, nursing, doctor and specialist shortages, the government tells us how much money they are spending.

We know they really, really like spending money on luxury spas, taking care of rich insiders, record debt and a \$30-million luxury jet, while people across the province are hurting.

Speaker, when will this Premier realize that his out-of-control spending is doing nothing to improve the dismal state of health care in Ottawa and Ontario?

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Well, perhaps it would help the member opposite communicate to her constituents that, in fact, for matching primary care providers with patients, we have over-exceeded our target for this past fiscal year. We were hoping to be able to attach 300,000 people; in fact, we have attached 330,000 people across Ontario.

If we looked at, for example, elective surgeries in the province of Ontario: the highest number ever in the history of Ontario. Over 684,000 people received elective surgery in the province of Ontario from our world-class hospitals, provided by our world-class clinicians.

Those are the numbers that you should be sharing with your constituents.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Member for Kanata–Carleton.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Taxpayer costs for the Premier's top staff have gone from \$2.9 million in 2019 to over \$8.1 million in 2025. They're proud of that.

Ministers keep rising and proudly proclaiming that they are spending record amounts of money. The problem is that all of this spending is not producing any results, no improvement in outcomes.

Constituents like Ava, Pat and Kathy have seen firsthand that in Ottawa hospitals patients are waiting in hallways. People are spending hours in emergency rooms. Doctors and nurses are quitting because they can no longer survive the dreadful working conditions, and they're burning out. And this tired, out-of-touch, elitist government keeps spending money on luxury jets, insider friends and strip clubs.

When will this Premier start thinking about the state of health care in this province?

Interjections.

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

I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I know the member opposite understands that all politics is local. Perhaps she should be highlighting to her constituents that the Somerset West Community Health Centre is actually matching 7,500 people because of the investments of Premier Ford and our government.

Let's actually look at the data. Ontario leads the country in radiation therapy. In Canada and Ontario we have performed 2.95 million MRI and CT scans—the most ever and, in fact, a 7% increase. Why? Because we invest in not only hospital MRIs but also community MRIs. Ontario has the shortest wait times nationally for CT scans in comparison to Manitoba and Nova Scotia. Ontario has the shortest wait times for MRI scans.

Speaker, I could go on all day about how Ontario continues—

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

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: My question is to the Solicitor General.

Ontarians expect their streets and public spaces to be safe. They are concerned about the impact of repeat offenders, illegal activity and those who prey on vulnerable individuals for profit, including the criminals behind human trafficking. These individuals exploit and harass, putting communities at risk and victimizing some of the most vulnerable people in our province. Our government has been clear that victims deserve protection while those who commit these crimes must face real consequences.

Through you, Speaker: Can the Solicitor General tell the House how the newly introduced Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act will strengthen the public safety system?

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

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: To my friend from Brampton West: He knows there has never been a government ever in the history of Ontario that is more laser-focused, with a surgical approach, to keep Ontario safe.

Madam Speaker, when we introduced Bill 119, which we started to debate today, we did it in a way that specifically made sure that those who were victims of human trafficking will not be subjected to not having anybody on their side. Specifically, we want to ensure that up to \$50,000 in debt relief for victims of human trafficking who are coerced into debt will not have that burden on it. We want to help survivors rebuild their lives. We want to remove financial barriers created by the traffickers.

But it goes to everything that we're doing in Bill 119—strengthening the safety on our transit by empowering special constables to stop drug traffickers on it. What we also want to do, Madam Speaker, is that we want to fight retail crime, which is a \$9-billion threat to our economy.

Madam Speaker, we—

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

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Thank you to the Solicitor General for the encouraging response. I know families in my riding of Brampton West are reassured to hear about the strong measures we're taking to protect communities across our province.

Speaker, Ontarians expect leadership that will strengthen public safety and hold offenders accountable. Our government has been working hard to address these very important concerns, and that is why we're taking action through our recently introduced legislation to help Ontarians stay informed and protected in their communities.

Speaker, can the Solicitor General explain further how the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act will keep Ontario safe?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Many years ago, there was another Premier in this place, Premier Mike Harris, who brought in Christopher's Law as a way of ensuring that those vulnerable children who unfortunately lost their

lives at the hands of very bad people, sex traffickers and murderers—that communities would know that you can't hide behind another identity and that the threats to the communities would be something that a future government has to look at in the times that find us.

This government, led by the Premier, will move forward as part of this bill and create a public website for high-risk offenders and authorize the commissioner of the OPP to publish information about high-risk offenders, including high-risk sex offenders, when a police service issues a community notification.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to keeping Ontario safe, there is no equal: It is our government led by Premier Ford.

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

MPP Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. Last week, your minister got the same letter we did. Home care providers are warning there is a crisis. They welcome new funding, but they were clear: If it does not go to base funding, it will not fix the problem.

A coalition of home care providers says inadequate base funding means reduced hours and fewer seniors served. The OCSA warned that 36% of providers are planning service cuts and another 36% are considering ending services.

You keep announcing home care funding but won't say how much is going to base funding. Why is this government diverting billions of dollars to Billy Bishop while seniors can't get the care they need at home?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Before I acknowledge the Minister of Health, please keep the conversations to a minimum.

I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm almost speechless. I can't believe that the member opposite is suggesting that a \$1.1-billion increase to home and community care is a bad thing.

We've already seen the numbers increase as we invest in hospital-to-home programs, in home and community care programs, where people are able to continue their treatment and their recovery in their own home, in their own community.

I have to give a shout-out to the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board for, two years in a row, increasing funding by \$1.1 billion in our home and community care sector.

Listen, I visit a lot of hospitals over the course of the month, and when they tell me the difference—the true game-changer—that hospital-to-home programs make in patient care and their access and their recovery rates, I know that we are absolutely making the right focused efforts and investments to ensure that people—

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

MPP Wayne Gates: To the minister: They're talking about base funding, and it's the OCSA that's saying it's a crisis.

Back to the Premier: It gets worse. When seniors cannot get the care they need at home, long-term care is supposed to be there. But today, The Local reported that only 39% of Ontario long-term-care homes received proactive inspections in 2025. After COVID, this government promised annual proactive inspections in every home. They failed to keep that promise. Not every senior has a full-time caregiver who can visit every day and fight through the process.

Premier, why is this government diverting billions to Billy Bishop when seniors cannot count on the basic oversight in long-term-care facilities?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Long-Term Care.

Hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Thank you to the member for that question. I was very happy to join him in his riding just last week to open a brand new Radiant Care Pleasant Manor long-term-care home in his riding.

Madam Speaker, we have the best inspection standard, bar none, across the entire country. I'm happy to update this House that as of end of 2025, every single home in the province of Ontario has received a proactive inspection, which is promise made, promise kept. I'm also happy to update the House that for 2026, so far, we have completed 351 proactive inspections, which means about 57% of all long-term-care homes in the province of Ontario have received a proactive inspection this year. Last year alone, in total, we completed over 10,000 inspections in the province of Ontario. That means about 200 inspections per week, so I'm very proud of the work our inspection branch has done.

GOVERNMENT JET

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, the Premier says, "no one is more ticked off" than him about \$200,000 down the toilet for his private luxury jet that never took off. He put on a grand performance in front of the cameras this week about how frustrated he is about it all.

Can the Premier tell the House exactly who he is mad at? Who is he ticked off at? Is he mad at the cabinet ministers who approved the purchase? Is he mad at his own office for signing and then defending the deal? Or is he frustrated that Ontario taxpayers caught him trying to buy a gravy plane? Or, after eight long years in government, are they all just tired and feel entitled to luxury?

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

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Madam Speaker, you know what the member opposite should be ticked off with? That he didn't support the \$11.6-million investment to the Southeast Public Health unit to strengthen public health in Kingston. That's what he should—his constituents should be ticked off with him.

How about the efforts of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who delivered a \$3.2-million Building Faster Fund cheque to the city of Kingston?

That's big money. I mean, I don't know why you're not standing up and saying, "Thank you for supporting my riding of Kingston." That's what you should be focused on: getting the support to your community, because you're not doing it; we're doing it for you.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, I haven't heard this government thank Kingston for piloting the team-based health care action plan that is under way right now.

The Premier can feign all the outrage he wants, but the reality is that he has only himself to blame. The \$200,000 didn't go down the toilet by accident. Right now, families across Ontario are sitting around their kitchen table, making agonizing decisions about their household budgets. They're cutting back on groceries, watching every nickel, and wondering how they're going to make ends meet. The fake outrage directed at empty air—by the way, you should just release the numbers—does not help them.

Speaker, will the Premier look in the mirror, take responsibility, cut a cheque and relieve the taxpayer of paying for his mistake?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Don Valley North has been warned. The Minister of Education has been warned.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: While we're talking about health, of course, we hope to get the full support for the new HART hub that is planned for Kingston. Isn't that a noble thing? Will we have your support for that? I didn't get an answer there. How about the funding for the new TTC subway trains, which will create 15 jobs in Kingston through Alstom? Are you going to support that, the member from Kingston?

Interjections.

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Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: No. He's ignoring that because he knows what the answer is: The answer is no.

As this government is helping people, all 16.2 million people across the province, for health care, for education, for social services—\$220 billion of infrastructure spent to move people and goods, build hospitals, long-term care, build schools and, of course, cutting taxes: personal income tax cuts, HST tax cuts, gas tax cuts. That member opposite didn't vote for one of those measures, Madam Speaker.

PUBLIC SAFETY

MPP Paul Vickers: Speaker, my question is for the Associate Attorney General.

People across Ontario want and deserve to feel safe in their communities. They want to see strong measures that crack down on illegal activity, protect victims and vulnerable people, and hold offenders accountable. Speaker, our government is committed to keeping communities and streets safe. As part of our mandate to protect Ontario, we've already made great progress on this front. But we know there's more that needs to be done. With that in

mind, can the Associate Attorney General please inform the House about the latest steps our government is taking to build stronger and safer communities?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to my friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound for asking this important question, because not only does it highlight a critical issue, it also gives me a great opportunity to share with this House how our government is doing even more to protect Ontario's communities.

With Bill 119, the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, we're proposing serious and comprehensive measures that strengthen public safety and our justice system, including cracking down on crime by empowering special constables to punish those using illegal drugs on transit systems; protecting our most vulnerable citizens by helping survivors of human trafficking rebuild their lives, and provide up to \$50,000 in debt relief for victims who were forced into debt by their traffickers; and protecting victims by allowing restraining orders issued in other provinces to be enforced in Ontario without requiring an additional court declaration to make them—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

MPP Paul Vickers: Thank you to the Associate Attorney General for that strong response.

We know that Ontarians want to feel safe and secure in their communities. For far too long, a broken bail system has enabled dangerous, repeat offenders to be let out onto the streets. In some cases, these criminals go right back to committing violent acts only a day after being let out on bail. That is not how the system should work. It's not what the people of our province deserve. That is why our government has taken decisive action to keep people and communities safe.

Speaker, can the Associate Attorney General please inform the House about the steps our government is taking to build safer and stronger communities?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you again to the member for raising another important question. Let me be clear: Our government is firmly focused on holding offenders accountable and ensuring that bail becomes real and consequential for people accused of serious crimes.

Through Bill 75, the Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act, we're doing just that. The bill proposes needed and meaningful reforms, including tighter bail requirements, by making sure an accused person or their surety provides a full cash security deposit in the amount ordered by the court; tough new measures that will expand the collection tools available for us to collect bail debts; and enhanced digital tools and the creation of a surety database, which will make it easier for law enforcement to track down and weed out repeat offenders.

Madam Speaker, if passed, Bill 75 is going to be another resourceful tool at our disposal—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Didn't work.

I recognize the member for Thunder Bay-Superior North.

SERVICES FOR PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My question is to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

In Ontario, laws are being ignored and disabled persons living in group homes are being subjected to multiple forms of abuse.

No human being should be denied their right to see their family, and no one should be illegally evicted like Andre Seguin, who was dumped on his uncle's farm with three garbage bags containing his belongings.

Minister, Andre's parents are here today. Can you tell them that you will put an end to the abuses experienced by their son and support Andre's Residents' Bill of Rights?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: I do appreciate the question from the member across the way.

The safety and well-being of residents and staff is our top priority. It was our government that expanded the investment for increased regular inspections to ensure that those who need support are receiving high-quality care and services.

But let me also be clear: It is not acceptable for service agencies to use trespass notices to punish parents or family members for raising complaints or concerns about the services that they are provided.

Service agencies also know that they need to follow the laws and contracts and rules that require them to have clearly written policies to protect the health and safety of the people they support. They also need to have ways for people to share complaints and feedback, and they are expected to take these concerns seriously and deal with them.

We saw a system that was starved, and we wanted to make sure that people with developmental disabilities get the support, which is why we made those historic investments, doubling—increasing the budget by \$1.6 billion to ensure that families get the support. And the bill—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Thank you.

NOTICES OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Transportation regarding air rights. This matter will be debated Tuesday following private members' public business.

Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer given to the question given by the Minister of Transportation regarding air rights. This matter will be debated on Tuesday following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

LYDIA'S LAW (ACCOUNTABILITY
AND TRANSPARENCY
IN THE HANDLING
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES), 2026
LOI LYDIA DE 2026
(RESPONSABILITÉ ET TRANSPARENCE
DANS LE TRAITEMENT
DES CAS D'AGRESSION SEXUELLE)

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

Bill 112, An Act to enact Lydia's Law (Accountability and Transparency in the Handling of Sexual Assault Cases), 2026 / Projet de loi 112, Loi édictant la Loi Lydia de 2026 (responsabilité et transparence dans le traitement des cas d'agression sexuelle).

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

The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.

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

On May 27, 2026, Ms. Fife moved second reading of Bill 112, An Act to enact Lydia's Law (Accountability and Transparency in the Handling of Sexual Assault Cases), 2026.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Allsopp, Tyler	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Riddell, Brian
Anand, Deepak	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rosenberg, Bill
Babikian, Aris	Hardeman, Ernie	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Harris, Mike	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Jones, Sylvia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Stan	Kanapathi, Logan	Scott, Laurie
Ciriello, Monica	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, Dave
Clark, Steve	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Smith, David
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Graydon

Cooper, Michelle
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Denault, Billy
Dixon, Jess
Dowie, Andrew
Dunlop, Jill
Firin, Mohamed
Flack, Rob

Lumsden, Neil
McCarthy, Todd J.
Mulroney, Caroline
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pierre, Natalie
Pinsonneault, Steve
Quinn, Nolan
Racinsky, Joseph
Rae, Matthew

Smith, Laura
Tangri, Nina
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Vickers, Paul
Williams, Charmaine A.

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.
Bell, Jessica
Blais, Stephen
Bourgouin, Guy
Bowman, Stephanie
Brady, Bobbi Ann
Burch, Jeff
Cerjanec, Rob
Collard, Lucille
Fairclough, Lee
Fife, Catherine
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne

Gélinas, France
Gilmour, Alexa
Glover, Chris
Gretzky, Lisa
Hazell, Andrea
Hsu, Ted
Kernaghan, Terence
Lennox, Robin
Mamakwa, Sol
McCrimmon, Karen
McKenney, Catherine
McMahon, Mary-Margaret
Pasma, Chandra
Rakocevic, Tom

Sattler, Peggy
Schreiner, Mike
Shamji, Adil
Shaw, Sandy
Smyth, Stephanie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Stiles, Marit
Tabuns, Peter
Tsao, Jonathan
Vaugeois, Lise
Watt, Tyler
West, Jamie
Wong-Tam, Kristyn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 41; the nays are 58.

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

Second reading negatived.

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

Hon. Steve Clark: I just want to advise the House the night sitting for this evening is cancelled.

BUILDING BILLY BISHOP AIRPORT ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LA CONSTRUCTION DE L'AÉROPORT BILLY BISHOP

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 110, An Act to enact the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, 2026 / Projet de loi 110, Loi édictant la Loi de 2026 sur la construction de l'aéroport Billy Bishop.

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

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1147.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On May 26, 2026, Mr. Sarkaria moved third reading of Bill 110, An Act to enact the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, 2026.

On May 28, 2026, Mr. Clark moved that the question be now put.

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 58; the nays are 41.

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

Mr. Sarkaria has moved third reading of Bill 110, An Act to enact the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, 2026. 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.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Same vote?

Interjection: No.

The division bells rang from 1151 to 1152.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On May 26, 2026, Mr. Sarkaria moved third reading of Bill 110, an act to enact the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, 2026.

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

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler
Anand, Deepak
Babikian, Aris
Bethlenfalvy, Peter
Bouma, Will
Bresee, Ric
Calandra, Paul
Cho, Stan
Ciriello, Monica
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Cooper, Michelle
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Denault, Billy
Dixon, Jess
Dowie, Andrew
Dunlop, Jill
Firin, Mohamed
Flack, Rob

Gallagher Murphy, Dawn
Grewal, Hardeep Singh
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Mike
Jones, Sylvia
Jones, Trevor
Jordan, John
Kanapathi, Logan
Kerzner, Michael S.
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia
Lecce, Stephen
Lumsden, Neil
McCarthy, Todd J.
Mulroney, Caroline
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pierre, Natalie
Pinsonneault, Steve
Quinn, Nolan
Racinsky, Joseph
Rae, Matthew

Riddell, Brian
Rosenberg, Bill
Sabawy, Sheref
Sandhu, Amarjot
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Sarrazin, Stéphane
Saunderson, Brian
Scott, Laurie
Smith, Dave
Smith, David
Smith, Graydon
Smith, Laura
Tangri, Nina
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Vickers, Paul
Williams, Charmaine A.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler
Anand, Deepak
Babikian, Aris
Bethlenfalvy, Peter
Bouma, Will
Bresee, Ric
Calandra, Paul
Cho, Stan
Ciriello, Monica
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Cooper, Michelle
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Denault, Billy
Dixon, Jess
Dowie, Andrew
Dunlop, Jill
Firin, Mohamed
Flack, Rob

Gallagher Murphy, Dawn
Grewal, Hardeep Singh
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Mike
Jones, Sylvia
Jones, Trevor
Jordan, John
Kanapathi, Logan
Kerzner, Michael S.
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia
Lecce, Stephen
Lumsden, Neil
McCarthy, Todd J.
Mulroney, Caroline
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pierre, Natalie
Pinsonneault, Steve
Quinn, Nolan
Racinsky, Joseph
Rae, Matthew

Riddell, Brian
Rosenberg, Bill
Sabawy, Sheref
Sandhu, Amarjot
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Sarrazin, Stéphane
Saunderson, Brian
Scott, Laurie
Smith, Dave
Smith, David
Smith, Graydon
Smith, Laura
Tangri, Nina
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Vickers, Paul
Williams, Charmaine A.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the 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
Blais, Stephen	Glover, Chris	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Gretzky, Lisa	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Hazell, Andrea	Smyth, Stephanie
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Cerjanec, Rob	Lennox, Robin	Tabuns, Peter
Collard, Lucille	Mamakwa, Sol	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	McCrimmon, Karen	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	McKenney, Catherine	Watt, Tyler
Fraser, John	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Gates, Wayne	Rakocevic, Tom	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 58; the nays are 41.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

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

The House recessed from 1155 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Chris Glover: I'd like to welcome to the House some parents who have come here today to fight for the outdoor education centres and the programs that are being closed in the TDSBs. Thank you, and welcome to your House.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I want to welcome the following groups who are here to support my motion to make period products freely available in workplace bathrooms and my bill to declare Menstrual Health Day today. The Ontario Federation of Labour is here, Women's Health Coalition Ontario, OECTA, CEIU/PSAC and Humber River Health.

In particular, I want to thank the speakers that came to the press conference: Michaela Kargus, Nikita Thakkar of the Period Purse and Julie D'alroy from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Welcome to your House.

Mr. Deepak Anand: I'd like to recognize Nikita Thakkar, who just recently got married to Akash Gupta.

I want to wish both of you a journey filled with endless love, laughter and lifelong adventure.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated May 29, 2026, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. David Smith: I beg leave to present a report entitled Performance Audit: Implementation and Oversight of Ontario's Opioid Strategy, 2024 annual report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Mr. Smith, Scarborough Centre, presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a statement?

Mr. David Smith: As First Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I am pleased to table the committee's report entitled Performance Audit: Implementation and Oversight of Ontario's Opioid Strategy, 2024 annual report of the office of the Auditor General.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the committee and the subcommittee members who participated in the public hearing and report-writing process.

The committee extends its appreciation to the ministry officials who participated in the hearing. The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report writing deliberations by the office of the Auditor General, the Clerk of the Committee and legislative research.

I move to adjourn this debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Mr. Smith, Scarborough Centre, moves the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ADAPTING TO A HOTTER ONTARIO ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR L'ADAPTATION À UN ONTARIO PLUS CHAUD

Mr. Tabuns moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 130, An Act to enact the Ontario Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Act, 2026 and the Protecting

Ontario from Urban Wildfires Act, 2026 and to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to Heat Stress / Projet de loi 130, Loi visant à édicter la Loi de 2026 pour l'adaptation et la résilience aux changements climatiques en Ontario et la Loi de 2026 pour protéger l'Ontario contre les feux non maîtrisés en milieu urbain et à modifier la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail en ce qui concerne le stress dû à la chaleur.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The bill has three parts.

It is intended to set up a framework for Ontario to respond to increasingly hotter temperatures, which will put at risk people who are at work, who will have difficulty dealing with heat stress. Heat stress is already leading to illness and, in some cases, death.

It will set up a framework to deal with urban wildfires. Ontario faces the threat of urban wildfires. The World Bank has rated Toronto as having the same fire risk as Los Angeles, and people will remember the impact of fires in Los Angeles, when 200,000 people had to be evacuated.

It will also set up a framework for dealing with the problems we will encounter in agriculture, infrastructure and education.

MENSTRUAL HEALTH DAY ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 PROCLAMANT LA JOURNÉE DE LA SANTÉ MENSUELLE

MPP Gilmour moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 131, An Act to proclaim Menstrual Health Day /
Projet de loi 131, Loi proclamant la Journée de la santé
mensuelle.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Since 2014, May 28 has been recognized internationally as Menstrual Hygiene Day. It's a day to celebrate a natural process of menstruation, to advocate for menstrual equality, so that everyone has what they need to manage their periods with dignity.

First and foremost, this means being able to access period products, which we know is a challenge for many in Ontario today.

I want to thank the Speaker for ensuring that we have these products in our lobby here, but many, many, many workplaces do not have them.

Over the past five years, the cost of menstrual hygiene products has gone up 20%. One in six Canadians who menstruate say they're struggling to afford period products.

Speaker, it's a natural function. No one should go without it. This bill would proclaim May 28 in each year as Menstrual Health Day in Ontario to raise awareness of the

challenges faced by those who menstruate and the need for evidence-based solutions.

I hope to have the support of the House on this.

NANCY ROSE ACT (PAEDIATRIC HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE STRATEGY), 2026

LOI NANCY ROSE DE 2026 (STRATÉGIE DES SOINS PALLIATIFS PÉDIATRIQUES)

Ms. Shaw moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 132, An Act to provide for the development of a provincial paediatric hospice palliative care strategy /
Projet de loi 132, Loi prévoyant l'élaboration d'une
stratégie provinciale des soins palliatifs pédiatriques.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: This bill enacts the Nancy Rose Act, an act that would require the Ministry of Health to develop and implement a pediatric hospice palliative care strategy for Ontario.

This would ensure that children suffering from life-limiting or life-ending illnesses receive equal access to pediatric palliative care across the province. Right now, in Ontario, that is not the case.

In Hamilton, families are able to access high-quality care through McMaster Children's Hospital and the community-driven Paul Paletta Keaton's House Children's Hospice. However, families from other communities—remote or northern communities—have to travel long distances to receive care. Often, they have to leave their jobs, leave their homes, leave their other siblings behind—siblings that could use the support of their family members.

1310

So we are hoping, with this Nancy Rose Act, that we would change that—that children and families in Ontario receive the care and the support from this government when they are going through the most unimaginable times, when their children are facing life-limiting and life-ending illnesses.

I certainly hope that we will enact and pass this law here in Ontario.

PETITIONS

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I have in front of me hundreds of signatures from my own riding and across the province—thousands more online. This is to protect and save the Toronto District School Board's seven education centres—Warren Park, Toronto Islands, Toronto Urban Studies Centre, Forest Valley, Kearney, Sheldon, and Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre.

It's devastating to know that children won't receive that outdoor, natural education that so many of us learned from.

It is my honour, actually, to affix my signature to this, and I'll send it down with page Wren.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'm here to present a petition organized by the OSSTF to call on the government to not use the "notwithstanding" clause to override charter rights and violate workers' rights to free and fair collective bargaining. This petition has 124 signatures on it—many from my own riding, but also from across Ontario.

I'm pleased to add my name to the petition and give it to page Alex.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES

Mr. Chris Glover: I have before me here a petition signed by thousands of parents from across the city of Toronto, and it's entitled "Save TDSB Outdoor Education."

It's asking the government to reverse the decision made by the supervisor of the TDSB to close seven outdoor education centres: Warren Park, Toronto Urban Studies Centre, Forest Valley, Kearney, Sheldon, Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre, and Island Natural Science School. This program has already been cut. In the past, it was five days—every child in grade 5 in the TDSB got five days of outdoor education at an outdoor education centre; 25 years ago, when the Conservative government was last in, they reduced that to two and a half days. Now the government is looking at eliminating seven of those outdoor education centres, and it's an absolutely travesty for children.

When I was a teacher, many of the children I taught in Toronto had never been north of Finch Avenue. The outdoor education program, that two and a half days, was their only experience of nature, their only opportunity to learn about nature.

So it's absolutely incumbent upon this government to continue to provide this program for outdoor education at these outdoor education centres in the city of Toronto for the 240,000 TDSB students.

I hope the government will listen to this petition and act on the parents' recommendations.

I will pass the petition to page Ian to take to the table.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's always a pleasure to rise in this chamber. It's not a pleasure to rise when we have to fight to save outdoor education centres, but that's what I'm doing.

I'm submitting a petition—the start of one—from beautiful Beaches—East York to save TDSB outdoor education centres. As you'll recall from my question yesterday, asking the Minister of Education—there's concern all

around Ontario about the closure of these centres unnecessarily.

We know how spending time outdoors is so beneficial to everyone. We all could use a good hike or walk in the park, improving our mental health, our physical health and our spiritual health.

These are vital centres. They teach ecological literacy, experiential learning, life-saving skills.

My kids went to the Island school and loved it. Not everyone has a camp or a cottage.

Kids who come back from these schools learn resiliency, they learn independence, they learn confidence—and they are completely flourished when they come back.

I'm happy to sign my name to this. There will be a lot more coming because we need to save these schools.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Peter Tabuns: This is a petition for affordable renewable energy and a new climate plan to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

As you, Speaker, will be well aware, Ontario has been investing very heavily in expansion of gas-fired power plants. We are, in fact, well on our way to wiping out the greenhouse gas reduction that we were able to achieve by shutting down coal—effectively, all of that effort is being lost.

The undersigned have asked that the Legislature develop a new climate plan that triples wind and solar power, scales battery storage across the province, allows for the development of Great Lakes wind power, rapidly phases out reliance on fossil gas and upholds our obligations to ensure free, prior and informed consent over any projects happening on Indigenous lands.

I have signed this petition. I agree with it and I will give it to page Arshiya to hand over to the Clerks.

TENANT PROTECTION

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I would like to present today a petition on behalf of the people of Toronto—St. Paul's to protect tenants' rights from harmful Bill 60 changes.

We have hundreds of signatures for this petition calling for the government to preserve the automatic transition to a month-to-month lease at the conclusion of a fixed-term lease and to introduce measures to protect tenants from unfair, above-guideline rent increases.

I support this petition. I affix my signature to it and will give it to page Philip to take to the table.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

MPP Catherine McKenney: I'm tabling the following petition to save OSAP. It is not too late to do the right thing.

This petition calls on the Ontario government to reduce the cuts to OSAP grants and make post-secondary educa-

tion more affordable and accessible for students across the province.

Young people in Ontario are already facing rising rents, high tuition costs and increasing financial pressure, while many are graduating with significant student debt before they can even begin their careers.

I'm proud to support this petition because students do deserve the opportunity to pursue an education without being pushed into overwhelming debt or financial insecurity. I am going to attach my name to it and send it down with page Wren.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'm pleased to be tabling another petition today. This one has been organized by the Ontario Nurses' Association to stop the privatization in health care and to support staffing ratios.

I can say that as somebody who worked in health care before, many hospitals try to ensure a certain ratio of staffing in in-patient units, in emergency rooms, and it's for two reasons: It's to ensure that we deliver very high-quality care to people; secondly, we know that if we can actually staff properly, we reduce the incidents of violence and other things that can happen in some of these workplaces.

I'm pleased to see that the Ontario nursing association is raising this issue. I hear we've got 144 signatures from across Ontario that we'd like to table.

I will add my signature and send it with page Julia, who just happens to be from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I'm delighted and, actually, honoured to be able to put this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It is in regard to the majority of OSSTF/FEESO collective agreements. It does expire at the end of August 2026, and a number of university bargaining units are either already in bargaining and/or will begin bargaining very soon.

The use of the "notwithstanding" clause to impose settlements or undermine collective bargaining rights is a direct attack on fundamental, democratic and labour rights of workers. In Ontario, in 2022, the Ontario government used section 33 of the charter to impose contracts on education workers through Bill 28 and restricted political advocacy by unions.

In 2025, the Alberta government invoked section 33 of the charter to pass Bill 2, the Back to School Act, formally ending a teacher strike, imposing and rejecting contracts and stripping educators of their charter rights. The Alberta Teachers' Association has launched a constitutional challenge, calling this a gross abuse of power that threatens the rule of law.

1320

I fully support this petition that is labelled "End the Use of the Notwithstanding Clause in Labour Disputes." I'm going to affix my name, along with Kim Clifford from the city of St. Catharines.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

MPP Lise Vaugeois: This petition is entitled "Save OSAP and Stop the Cuts to Education." As we know, the government has changed the proportion of grants and loans significantly, which is going to result in quite a bit more student debt. We also know that the government is quite profligate in its spending on luxury items that are particular favourites of the Premier.

Students should not be forced to carry the burden of chronic underfunding in the post-secondary system. We also know that post-secondary is lowest per capita funding in the country, in Ontario. That should change and it should not fall on students to carry this weight.

I fully support this petition and will give it to page Wren.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: It's always an honour to rise and speak in this House, and today I'd like to present this petition on behalf of the Ontario Nurses' Association. It's entitled "Stop Privatization and Support Staffing Ratios" and it is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, recognizing that understaffing is negatively impacting the quality of our public health care system. Understaffing is causing burnouts for nurses and health care professionals, and we are seeing the staffing ratios be decimated. Therefore, the quality of care—including home care, long-term care, public health care, and hospitals—is starting to erode.

The undersigned are calling on this assembly to mandate staffing ratios for nurses and health care professionals across the Ontario health care system, to develop staffing ratios in consultation with the nurses and the health care professionals. They are calling on every single one of us to ensure that health care funding will be increased in the province and for us to stop the privatization of health care services by stopping the outsourcing of services.

I'm proud to sign this petition and send it to the centre table with page Kimberly.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I have a petition here on behalf of the Ontario Nurses' Association. Many of the signatures come from my own riding's St. Joseph's Health Centre, and this is to stop the privatization and support staffing ratios.

The amount of stories that I'm hearing these days about burnout, about moral injury—and at the centre of this, of course, Speaker, is patient care. We know that patient care is better when there are quality assurances, including the right staffing ratio.

Also, this petition is asking that we develop those staffing ratios in consultation with nurses, with health care professionals. We're also asking that this remains a public system, that the funding that goes into this is public, because again, the people who pay the price the most, after the staff, are the patients themselves at the centre of this.

It is my honour to affix my name to send it down with Arshiya.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Speaker, I have a petition entitled "End the Use of the Notwithstanding Clause in Labour Disputes." It reads, in part, "Whereas the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is entrenched in the Constitution ... and ensures rights and freedoms should not be limited unless 'demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.'"

The purpose of this petition is to make sure that the use of the "notwithstanding" clause to impose settlements or undermine collective bargaining rights does not take place in this province, because it is a direct attack on fundamental, democratic, charter-protected labour rights of workers.

We know that in Ontario, in 2022, the government used section 33 of the charter to try to impose contracts on education workers. This is a trend that we do not want to see increase. The majority of OSSTF/FEESO collective agreements expire at the end of this August, and so we want to make sure that as this bargaining continues, the bargaining takes place at the bargaining table, not having settlements being imposed by this government.

I fully agree with this petition. I had a young fellow by the name of Gabe from Hamilton who shared this with me, so I wanted to shout out to him and his family, and to let them know that I've done as I said, I've read this in this House and that you know that you have our support.

I will add my name to this signature, and I will pass it off to page Wren to take to the table.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I have a petition here that is called "End the Use of the Notwithstanding Clause in Labour Disputes." This is critical, as the majority of OSSTF/FEESO's collective agreements expire this summer, while the House is not in session.

This petition asks that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario call on the government not to use the "notwithstanding" clause in order to permit egregious violations of workforce rights and freedoms. Labour disputes should not be decided with the use of the "notwithstanding" clause because it violates employees' rights to a free and fair collective bargaining process that is entrenched in our Constitution. Moreover, the government should end the practice of introducing legislation that invokes things like section 33 to intervene in collective bargaining rights.

I am pleased to affix my signature and send it down with Kimberly to the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTING ONTARIO'S STREETS AND COMMUNITIES ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 VISANT À PROTÉGER LES RUES ET LES COLLECTIVITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 28, 2026, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 119, An Act to enact two new Acts and to amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 119, Loi édictant deux nouvelles lois et modifiant diverses autres lois.

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

Mr. Matthew Rae: It's great to be here. I'll be sharing the remainder of the government's time with the great member from Whitby.

As I was talking about this morning—around the municipal affairs component in Bill 119, around illegal truck parking lots, illegal AMP land use issues that we've been hearing from our municipal colleagues. And it's important to explain clearly what AMPs are and why they matter.

Administrative monetary penalties are a discretionary enforcement tool that already exists in certain aspects municipally, that can be issued directly by a municipal official without having to go through lengthy court proceedings. Unlike traditional prosecution methods, AMPs are intended to encourage compliance rather than simply punish offenders. They allow municipalities to deal with violations more efficiently and more immediately than formal court-based processes.

When a municipality identifies an illegal truck yard operating on agricultural or residential land, local officials need the ability to act quickly to discourage continued non-compliance and protect surrounding communities. AMPs provide that flexibility.

Under these proposed changes, municipalities would have the authority to establish penalty amounts, subject to legal constraints, and could increase those penalties in cases of continued non-compliance. Municipalities can also recover unpaid penalties through tax roll processes. These are practical, common-sense solutions.

Speaker, as I mentioned, AMPs are not new or untested. Administrative monetary penalties are already used widely across Ontario in other fields because they allow governments and municipalities to encourage compliance efficiently and effectively.

What we're doing here is extending a proven enforcement mechanism to help municipalities deal with a growing and very real problem. This is about giving local governments the tools that they have asked for.

Our government also recognizes that Ontario's trucking sector plays a vital role in our economy. Truck drivers and trucking companies help move goods across this province every single day. They support supply chains, businesses, farmers, manufacturers, and families.

The overwhelming majority of trucking operators follow the rules, operate responsibly, and contribute positive-

ly to our economy and their local communities. But illegal operations that disregard municipal zoning, ignore safety concerns and undermine responsible business practices cannot be allowed to continue unchecked.

We believe that communities deserve to feel safe, protected and respected. Rural communities deserve to know that agricultural lands will remain in agricultural production. Residents deserve confidence that the rules will be enforced fairly and consistently.

That's why we're giving municipalities the tools that allow them to respond effectively to illegal activity within their jurisdictions.

Our government believes we should listen when our local leaders come forward with practical solutions to real problems facing their communities, and this legislation gives communities stronger tools to crack down on illegal truck yards and illegal land uses that threaten neighbourhoods, farmland, infrastructure and quality of life.

1330

The Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, 2026, represents another important step in our government's plan to protect Ontario. It is a comprehensive piece of legislation that strengthens public safety, supports victims, modernizes enforcement tools and responds to the real concerns people are raising across this province. I encourage all members of this House to support Bill 119 and support these important measures that will keep Ontario's communities safe, strong and protected for generations to come.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: On behalf of Minister Parsa, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, I will discuss the new proposals which support women, children and hard-working families across Ontario.

There are three proposed legislative amendments in Bill 119. If enacted, it would strengthen oversight of private and international adoptions, broaden the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers' authority to make interim orders, and support safety in youth justice facilities. These changes are part of our continued and never-ending work to protect people and communities across Ontario.

From the outset, our government has prioritized enhancing safety, reinforcing accountability and strengthening oversight within Ontario's adoption system. The proposed measures in this bill represent another important step forward in our efforts to achieve better outcomes for every child and youth. To improve the supervision of private and inter-country adoptions, we're proposing legislative amendments designed to safeguard the best interests of children and to ensure Ontarians can have full confidence in the integrity of the system.

To further protect children and youth, we are expanding the criteria under which licences can be denied or revoked, ensuring that individuals who fail to meet standards are held accountable. We're also proposing the introduction of directives and compliance orders for adoption licensees.

These tools will enable us to act quickly and decisively when concerns arise, allowing for timely and concrete interventions to protect children.

This work includes strengthening accountability by increasing oversight of adoption practitioners and birth parent counsellors, ensuring they meet the expectations required of them. We will also increase the frequency of post-placement home visits to align with standards in the public adoption system. This will ensure that the initial visit takes place within seven days of placement, followed by visits every 30 days until the adoption is finalized.

Our government has been clear—absolutely clear—in its commitment: Every child and youth in Ontario deserves to feel safe, to have the opportunity to succeed and thrive. To support this goal, we're ensuring that those who work with and support children and youth possess the appropriate qualifications—qualifications that reflect and uphold our high standards.

Speaker, across Ontario, more than 31,000 social workers and social service workers contribute meaningfully to the well-being of individuals and families every day. We are proposing amendments that would expand the authority of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers to issue interim orders at an earlier stage.

These changes would include the ability to suspend a member's registration where there is a risk that the member has exposed or may expose a client to harm or injury. This would allow the college to issue interim orders for serious concerns at any point following the receipt of a complaint or the appointment of an investigator. This approach would align with the practices of other regulated professions and jurisdictions, enhancing the college's ability to protect clients and maintain public confidence.

This bill also addresses our responsibility to ensure the safe custody, supervision and detention of young people who are in conflict with the law. I am proud of our government's ongoing work to support youth through justice programs that help guide them towards more positive paths.

The proposed changes in this legislation are also intended to strengthen safety for both youth and staff within Ontario's youth justice facilities. Each year, approximately 1,000 dedicated staff work with around 1,300 young people in custody, as well as more than 1,800 youth under community supervision. These front-line professionals perform essential work every day and play a critical role in maintaining safe environments.

Our government remains committed to supporting these staff, including in situations where it's necessary to place young people in secure settings to manage high-risk circumstances safely and effectively. With these proposed changes, the temporary placement of young people in secure areas will be permitted only in limited and clearly defined circumstances as set out in regulation. These measures would include appropriate safeguards and procedures to ensure the protection of the young person's well-being, while equipping staff with the tools they need to respond to complex situations.

These legislative measures are reinforced by our government's financial commitment to the youth justice system. Beginning this fiscal year, we're investing more than \$38 million over three years to expand capacity in youth justice facilities and to support their longer-term sustainability. With this strong foundation, staff will be better positioned to focus on rehabilitation and help young people successfully reintegrate into their communities.

Speaker, we're also taking further action to address the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls by renewing the Pathways to Safety strategy for an additional five-year term. This strategy represents Ontario's response to the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and it's focused on delivering meaningful, practical solutions so that future generations of Indigenous women and their families can live free from violence.

Our government recognizes and appreciates the Indigenous women organizations, families and survivors whose lived experiences and recommendations have shaped this work. We're especially grateful to the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council for their guidance in the development and ongoing implementation of the strategy. Their leadership ensures that the voices of Indigenous women remain at the forefront of this work. As we look ahead to the next five years of the Pathways to Safety strategy, we remain committed to continued collaboration with Indigenous partners in all levels of government.

In the past year, we've invested \$125 million in the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy, which supports programs that address family violence and violence against Indigenous women and children. Additionally, our annual investment of \$35 million in the Family Well-Being Program supports children, youth and families in healing from the impacts of intergenerational violence and trauma.

We've also renewed our anti-human trafficking strategy with a \$345 million investment over five years aimed at raising awareness, protecting children and youth, supporting survivors and holding offenders accountable.

Together, we're working towards a province where every individual can live in safety, free from intimidation, harm and the threat of violence. This proposed legislation reflects our ongoing commitment to strengthen standards and safeguards, enhance accountability and ensure that the systems Ontarians rely on can continue to serve them effectively. Underpinning the three proposals that are found in this legislation is a wide consultation process that was undertaken by ministry officials going forward.

Speaker, I know I'm running out of time, so I'll urge all members of this House to support this bill, as its passage will contribute meaningfully to safer communities, something that we all aspire to—particularly, I know, in the region of Durham, the fastest growing region in the province—and a stronger Ontario for generations to come.

1340

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: My question to the minister is: You've talked a lot about protecting women. We just had Lydia's Law in this House and the government voted against that. Lydia's Law was a bill that would have enacted the Auditor General's recommendations on how to make sure that women who are experiencing sexual assaults or violence would see their day in court, but this government voted against that, and so I find it ironic that you're talking about protecting women in this bill.

We have also been asking in this House many, many times for this government to declare intimate partner violence as an epidemic, but this government refuses to do so. Even Newfoundland, under a Conservative government, has just declared intimate partner violence an epidemic.

Why, in this bill, have you not brought forward concrete steps like were identified in Lydia's Law and why, for heaven's sake, did you vote down Lydia's Law?

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thanks to my colleague for her question—not necessarily related to the bill before us this afternoon, Speaker.

I know our government has alluded to and explained multiple times from the Attorney General and the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General the significant investments we are making in organizations that are supporting those individuals, victims of crime in this province, approaching half a billion dollars in the provincial budget for those supports in organizations across Ontario, not just in Toronto or our large urban centres but in our rural and northern communities as well.

I know the standing committee on justice did important work, prior to the last provincial election, on intimate partner violence, ensuring that we brought forward concrete recommendations. Our government is implementing those recommendations and funding those recommendations.

We bring forward budgets that have these resources for those support organizations, and members of the opposition continue to vote against those budgets.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: My question is to the member from Whitby. The Solicitor General, in his lead-off, spoke about Chinese drones and special constables, neither of which, as far as I can see, are mentioned in the bill, and I'm wondering if this is just another case, like removing the HST from new homes, that simply was forgotten to put in the bill. Can the member please tell me where specifically in the bill are Chinese drones and special constables mentioned?

Mr. Lorne Coe: Speaker, you'll know that I spoke to three specific aspects related to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, but I have this to say to the question: This particular bill is laser-focused on protecting and keeping our communities safe. This legislation builds on decisive action that this government has already taken to strengthen public safety by giving, particularly, law enforcement agencies, like the Durham Regional Police Service, stronger tools to crack down on

illegal activity, protect victims and vulnerable people and hold offenders accountable.

Again, Speaker, I spoke to three specific features in the legislation that relate to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

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

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: My question is for the member for Perth–Wellington. I thank the member for his leadership with municipal affairs and housing. He's doing a fantastic work there.

As he mentioned in his remarks, illegal truck parking is a tremendous issue in the municipality of Halton Hills. I was a municipal councillor there and had many backyard conversations with residents on Hornby Road, 15 Side Road and other places dealing with this change.

Our government was elected on a mandate to protect Ontario, and the title of this bill is Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act. Can the member please explain how the changes to the Planning Act will help protect our communities like Halton Hills?

Mr. Matthew Rae: Speaker, through you, thank you to the great member from Wellington–Halton Hills for that very important question. I know we've had a lot of conversations on illegal truck parking on agricultural land or residential land in Halton Hills and across Ontario.

As I mentioned in my remarks this morning, the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy, prior to the last election, did do some work on consulting with local municipal councils on how we could better support them to prevent these illegal truck parking lots really destroying the fabric of some of these rural communities.

This bill, if passed, will give our municipalities the tools they need around the AMPs to levy those fines, again, as a deterrent and as a punishment for those individuals.

I know the member opposite knows the vast majority of trucking companies that operate, obviously, have good business practices, but we're going to be there to work with our municipal leaders to protect the communities that we all represent.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to ask the members: The opioid epidemic has reached every corner of our province but is especially bad in northern Ontario. The Ontario police association was at Queen's Park a couple of weeks ago and this is what they focused on. They told us that 10% of the workforce of police officers in Ontario are off on long-term leave—sick leave; most of them PTSD—because of the opioid epidemic. They are not social workers, they are not health care workers, but they spend many, many hours on every shift dealing with people who need access to mental health, who need access to substance use care, who need access to care. In my riding, it's an 18-month wait-list for an adult and 12 months for a child.

If you want to protect Ontario streets and communities, how are you handling the opioid crisis and why won't you call it an epidemic?

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you to my colleague for her question, a very broad question. I'll do my best to answer at least components of it in one minute. It's a larger discussion, I know, Speaker, on a very important topic.

She mentioned our police forces. They do great work municipally, and the OPP, across our province to protect our communities. I know I've heard from my municipal police forces and paramedics as well around the mobile crisis response teams that our government has brought forward and is funding through consecutive provincial budgets to help those individuals. Our police forces go out into our communities with mental health support workers to help support those who may have challenges with opioids.

As well, some of the significant investments our government is making across Ontario—again, not just in our large urban centres—around HART hubs and providing those supports around housing, wraparound supports, in communities across Ontario to address those needs in those communities where they're at, bringing more services to those people: As the Minister of Health likes to say, care closer to home is something our government believes in and continues to invest in.

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: Madam Speaker, I know that you're proud of your riding. In the same way, I'm proud of Mississauga–Malton, especially because we have the Toronto airport. It helps the local community, but it comes at a cost, because we welcome people from across the world and from other provinces.

My constituents have raised the issue with me: Restraining orders made in other provinces and territories are not automatically enforceable in Ontario. When at-risk people move to Ontario, they must ask the court for a declaration to make these restraining orders enforceable, leading to gaps in protection. Of course, this is a serious matter to the constituents who reached out to me.

My question to the member is very simple: How will the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act address this important issue?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Response? I recognize the member from Wellington–Halton—no, Perth–Wellington. I apologize.

Mr. Matthew Rae: We're both young members in this place. He's a little more young than me. Thank you, Speaker; that's okay. We share the great county of Wellington.

Thank you to the member from Mississauga–Malton for that very important question. It's something I was glad to see in this piece of legislation. If passed, it would make it easier for our police forces to enforce restraining orders from other provinces and territories. We are one country, and so when those orders come from other parts of the country—being able to do that if those individuals are in this province. It really does also clear up some of the court

backlog. We no longer have to go to court, which is the current process, to get these restraining orders and to be able to be enforced in Ontario.

1350

So this will be streamlining justice as well and really, again, protecting victims in Ontario from those who may be from other parts of our country.

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I rise today to speak to Bill 119. It's a great honour and a privilege to be able to be the voice of the residents of St. Catharines. I know that they're tuning in today to really hear about Bill 119 and all the good and bad things that are in this bill.

The Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act is what the title of this bill is, and it is always, again, a distinct honour to be able to rise.

After reviewing this legislation carefully, I think there are two truths that can exist at the same time. The first is that many of the amendments in this bill are supportable—several are overdue, some are practical administrative fixes and some modernize legislation to reflect current realities. There are parts of this bill that deserve support from the entire House.

But the second truth is equally important: Bill 119 is also a missed opportunity because, for all of the government's rhetoric about public safety, organized crime, transit safety and protecting communities, many of the headline-grabbing promises Ontarians have heard about are not actually in this legislation itself. Instead, they are left to future regulations, future directives and future announcements that may or may not ever materialize.

After eight years of this government, people are justified in asking whether those promises will actually happen, especially in a bill being promoted as tough on crime and as the solution to community safety concerns.

Public safety is of the utmost importance. Communities want results. They want safer transit systems that they feel comfortable using. They want functioning courts, where trials and bail hearings happen in a timely manner. They want properly supported victims, dangerous offenders monitored responsibly and organized crime addressed seriously and immediately.

Right now, Ontario's justice system is under enormous strain. Court backlogs remain severe across the whole province of Ontario. Statistics Canada data showed that more than 58,000 criminal cases in Ontario were withdrawn, stayed, or dismissed in 2022-23—a dramatic increase from the pandemic levels. More and more criminal matters are ending before charges are even being tested at trial.

At the same time, provincial correctional facilities are reaching a crisis level of overcrowding. Recent reports showed Ontario jails operating at roughly 130% capacity. I'll repeat that: roughly 130% capacity, with nearly 80% of inmates being held on remand while awaiting trial, meaning they have not been convicted of a crime.

The Ontario Ombudsman has described the conditions inside provincial jails as a growing crisis that can no longer be ignored.

So when the government introduces another omnibus law and order bill, we have to ask whether the legislation actually addresses the root causes of the pressures facing the system, because tougher rhetoric alone does not reduce crime—we know that. Overcrowded jails do not improve public safety. Backlogged courts do not improve public safety. Underfunded mental health systems do not improve public safety, and under-resourced victim support certainly does not improve public safety.

One of the clearest examples of the gap between the government's rhetoric and the actual bill is transit safety. Ontario has heard repeated announcements about stronger powers for transit special constables and stronger enforcement tools on public transit systems, but when you actually read Bill 119, those powers are not clearly laid out in this legislation. The government's own background material acknowledged that many of these proposed enforcement changes would instead come through future regulations. That matters because regulations can be delayed, quietly changed and never proclaimed at all. If the government truly believes these measures are necessary for public safety, then Ontarians deserve to see them debated transparently in legislation.

The same issues apply with retail theft. The government has repeatedly spoken about organized retail crime and stronger enforcement, yet this bill contains no actual retail theft task force, no clearly established new enforcement powers and no concrete measures to address rising extortion cases targeting specific communities. Speaker, once again, much of what was publicly advertised appears deferred to future regulations.

The same pattern exists with animal welfare provisions. The government announced stronger protections around cosmetic procedures such as ear cropping and tail docking. But when the advocates reviewed this legislation, they found the actual amendments they were looking for were not even in the bill itself. Instead, Bill 119 largely creates documentation requirements while broader bans are again left for future regulations.

This becomes a central frustration with Bill 119. Much of it is technically fine—supportable because it works, but not because it is transformative legislation. It's okay, but not great. Believe me, it is not great. Much of what the government marketed publicly is either incomplete or absent from the legislation itself. Ontarians are tired of symbolic politics when communities are dealing with very real public safety challenges.

I do want to acknowledge areas where this legislation does move in the right direction.

Speaker, I want to interrupt. I forgot to say that I was going to share my time with the member from Toronto Centre. Sorry, Speaker.

Let me go back to where I was: no clearly established new enforcement powers and no concrete measures to address the rising extortion cases targeting specific communities. Once again, much of what was publicly adver-

tised appears deferred for future regulations. The same pattern exists with the animal welfare provisions. The government announced stronger protections around cosmetic procedures of ear cropping and tail docking. All of these within this bill become the central frustration with Bill 119.

Much of it is technically fine, as I said, supportable because it works. However, Ontarians, as I said, are tired of symbolic politics when communities are dealing with very real public safety challenges.

I do want to acknowledge areas where this legislation moves in the right direction. One of the strongest schedules in this bill is schedule 9, dealing with coerced debt for human trafficking survivors. This is important legislation and addresses a very real issue affecting communities all across Ontario, including my own community in Niagara.

Niagara is uniquely vulnerable to human trafficking because of its geography. We are a cross-border region situated near major transportation corridors, tourism infrastructure, highways and an international border crossing. Unfortunately, traffickers exploit exactly those conditions. Niagara regional police have reportedly identified human trafficking as a growing threat in our region. Recent reporting showed Niagara regional police identifying a 700% increase in victims and survivors between 2023 and 2024 alone. Ontario also continues to record human trafficking rates above the national average.

This bill finally implements protections related to coerced debt for trafficking survivors, something that should have happened years and years ago. The legislation would prohibit coerced debt from appearing on credit reports, prohibit knowingly attempting to collect coerced debt, and create a process for survivors to challenge debt created through trafficking and exploitation.

1400

Those are meaningful changes because traffickers often use debt as a weapon of control. Helping survivors rebuild their financial stability really does matter. Survivors should not spend years trying to repair financial damage that was inflicted on them through exploitation and abuse.

However, even here, we need to be honest: Similar legislation, Bill 41, already received royal assent in 2023 and this very same Conservative government simply never brought it into force. Survivors waited while the government delayed. So yes, this schedule is supportable, but survivors deserved action a heck of a lot sooner.

Speaker, another provision likely to generate debate is the proposed public high-risk offender registry. This legislation would permit the creation of a publicly accessible high-risk offender list beginning in 2027. Communities like mine, St. Catharines, understand very deeply the importance of transparency around dangerous offenders. Our community still carries the trauma of Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka. Those names are forever connected to a horrifying violence that devastated families, devastated communities, scared our communities across Ontario.

When discussions happen around dangerous offenders being released or relocated into communities, those fears

are not abstract for the residents in Niagara. Victims' families deserve transparency. Communities deserve information. People deserve to know when truly high-risk offenders are living nearby. Just last year, the Niagara community, and more specifically the community of Welland that my colleague the member from Niagara Centre represents, experienced a horrifying incident involving a registered sex offender out on probation who assaulted a three-year-old child.

Interjection.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Yes. The predator was known to the family, but had they known he was a previously convicted sex offender, perhaps that situation may never have occurred.

That case shook the entire region once again. It also exposed serious concerns about gaps in our Ontario justice system, court delays, bail oversights, offender monitoring and information available to families trying to protect their children.

Following that horrifying incident, my colleague from Niagara Centre formally wrote the Premier calling for urgent reforms to the Ontario's court, justice and correctional systems. The letter outlined several immediate actions that communities across Ontario have been demanding for years: ending severe court delays; hiring more prosecutors and court staff; strengthening bail compliance monitoring; addressing overcrowding and staffing shortages in correctional facilities; and strengthening Ontario's sex offender registry and offender notification systems.

Those are not unreasonable requests. They are practical public safety measures rooted in the lived experience of communities that are tired of watching systems fail victims and fail families.

And, Speaker, this is where the frustration becomes very difficult to ignore. This government frequently speaks about standing with victims and protecting vulnerable people, but time and time again, when constructive proposals are brought forward in this House, they vote them down. This government voted down Clare's Law, legislation that I brought forward that would have helped provide greater transparency and protection for individuals at risk of intimate partner violence.

And today, this very same government voted down Lydia's Law, brought forward by my colleague the member from Waterloo—legislation aimed at strengthening protections for victims and improving accountability within the justice system. Municipalities and police services across Ontario have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic. Shelters are operating under enormous pressure. Survivors continue to face long waits for counselling and support services. Families are asking for stronger safeguards and better information tools.

So when the government speaks publicly about protecting victims while simultaneously rejecting reasonable legislative proposals designed to improve safety and transparency, people are justified in asking whether the rhetoric is truly being matched by action. If this government truly wants to build safer communities, then support-

ing victims cannot simply be something that appears in a press conference or a backgrounder. It requires consistent investment, meaningful legislative actions and willingness to work collaboratively on reforms that communities are actively calling for.

The implementation of this registry must be done carefully and consistently. Poorly designed systems can create legal chaos and charter challenges. The government must ensure the system is evidence-based, legally sound and genuinely focused on public safety, rather than political objects.

Speaker, I'm moving to schedule 15. We see towing enforcement reforms that respond to long-standing concerns about collision chasing, unsafe tow truck practices and organized criminal activity connected to parts of the towing industry. Strengthening enforcement powers around collision scenes and tightening licence standards are reasonable measures. Similarly, allowing municipalities stronger powers to deal with illegal land uses, such as unauthorized truck yards operating on agricultural lands, is long overdue. Municipalities like Caledon have spent years struggling with the illegal truck yards and have described this issue as a complete crisis. These are practical reforms to address identifiable problems.

But the larger issue with Bill 119 remains what it does not do. This government continues to approach public safety primarily through enforcement announcements while neglecting the system that's completely underneath. Ontario's mental health and addiction systems remain severely strained. Emergency departments continue experiencing mental health crises daily. Families struggle to access addiction treatments, and our consumption site in St. Catharines is shuttering in June. Supportive housing remains inadequate as well, and police services themselves have repeatedly acknowledged that officers are increasingly being asked to respond to social crises that should have health care solutions.

Meanwhile, courts continue struggling with delays despite government announcements about new judges and prosecutors. Those investments are necessary, but they have not solved the scale of the problem. When criminal cases collapse because of delay, public confidence suffers. When victims wait years for justice, confidence suffers. When accused persons wait endlessly in overcrowded remand facilities before trial, confidence suffers.

Public safety cannot simply mean adding more offences or making more announcements; it must also mean functioning institutions. It must mean timely courts, adequate legal aid, stable housing, addiction treatments, mental health supports and meaningful victim services.

I also want to spend some time now talking about victim services, because this is another area where the gap between rhetoric and reality becomes very, very clear. This government frequently speaks about standing with victims, supporting survivors and protecting vulnerable people, but organizations on the ground continue to say they are struggling to keep up because funding remains unstable and inconsistent.

Across Ontario, many victim support organizations still operate through short-term grants rather than predictable annual operational funding. That matters, because these organizations are not optional services; they are often the first place survivors turn to after experiencing violence, harassment, trafficking, assault or abuse. They provide counselling, referrals, court-navigation supports, emergency assistance and trauma-informed services that can make the difference between someone getting help or falling through the cracks entirely. When organizations are forced to spend months applying for grants just to keep their doors open, that is time and energy that can be taken away from the front-line support.

We know demand for those services is growing. Intimate partner violence rates have risen significantly across Ontario in recent years. Municipalities and police services across the province have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic. However, shelters continue reporting capacity pressures and survivors continue facing long wait-lists for counselling and support services.

1410

Yet Bill 119 does little to address the operational realities facing these organizations. Similarly, Ontario's Victim Quick Response Program+ remains far too restrictive for many survivors. The six-month deadline to apply can be very unrealistic for people navigating trauma, housing instability, family destructions and ongoing safety concerns. And because the program operates as a last resort support system, many survivors are denied assistance if any other theoretical supports programs exist, even when access to that support may involve enormous delays. If this government truly wants to build safer communities, then strengthening victim supports should not be treated as an afterthought.

I also want to touch briefly on recent reports by The Pointer regarding Ontario's firearms licensing training systems. The article detailed allegations on conflicts of interest and nepotism within the organization responsible for certifying firearms instructors in Ontario, including concerns that individuals responsible for approvals may themselves benefit financially by limiting competition.

Those allegations are concerning on their own, but they also point out the broader issue relevant to Bill 119: Public safety systems require public trust. Whether we are talking about firearms training, offender registries, transit enforcement or policing oversight, people need confidence that these systems are transparent, accountable, and genuinely designed around safety rather than private interest or political optics.

Speaker, governments undermine that trust when they over promise publicly while leaving major details unresolved privately. This legislation still feels like a collective of disconnected amendments, rather than a coherent public safety strategy that Ontario desperately needs.

We believe public safety means more than punishment after harm occurs. It means building the conditions that prevent harm in the first place. That means investing in mental health care, addiction treatments, properly funded

courts, evidence-based policing, stable housing and meaningful support for survivors and victims.

While this bill contains several measures we can support, it also leaves many important issues that are very much unresolved. And it leaves Ontarians once again waiting for regulation, future announcements and future promises. Communities deserve more than more than that. They deserve legislation that fully matches the seriousness of the challenge we are facing day to day.

Speaker, another issue this bill fails to adequately grapple with is the connection between public safety and mental health across Ontario. Police services are increasingly becoming the front-line response for mental health crises because the health care system is unable to keep up with the demands. Emergency rooms are completely overwhelmed, community-based mental health supports are stressed to the thin, and families are often left with nowhere to turn until the situation has escalated into a crisis.

In Niagara, we have seen first-hand the pressures this places not only on families, but on front-line workers as well: paramedics, emergency departments, and police officers, themselves. The Canadian Mental Health Association has repeatedly warned that Ontarians are struggling to access timely care, particularly for addictions and acute mental health supports. Yet this government continues to frame public safety almost exclusively through an enforcement lens instead of recognizing that prevention is one of the strongest public safety tools you have available. When someone is experiencing a mental health crisis and ends up in an interaction with police or in an overcrowded provincial jail, awaiting trial, that is often a sign that the system failed long before that moment occurred. And nowhere is that more obvious than with Ontario's overdose crisis.

Public health units across the province continue to report alarming overdose numbers linked to fentanyl and increasingly toxic drug supplies. Communities are seeing the impact every day: encampments growing, emergency services stretched, families devastated, and health care workers burnt out.

Yet, despite the government's repeated use of "community safety" language, there is very little in Bill 119 that addresses the addiction crisis directly. There is no major investment in treatment capacity in this legislation, no significant expansion of mental health supports, no large-scale prevention strategy, and no recognition that addiction and homelessness are deeply connected to the pressures that communities are experiencing.

The reality is this: If Ontario wants safer communities, we cannot simply build policy around what happens after harm occurs; we also have to invest in preventing harm in the first place. That means stable housing. That means mental health supports. That means addictions treatment. That means youth programs. That means early intervention. And those investments are not "soft on crime." They are evidence-based public safety measures.

Speaker, I want to quickly touch on schedule 8, involving police record checks and the government's proposal to potentially contract portions of that system out to third

parties. On paper, improving the speed of vulnerable sector checks is reasonable. Delays in obtaining record checks can create significant barriers for people seeking employment, volunteer opportunities, or placements in health care and education settings. But when governments begin outsourcing sensitive public safety processes, accountability matters enormously. Vulnerable sector checks involve highly sensitive personal information. Ontarians deserve confidence that privacy protections, oversight mechanisms, and consistency standards will remain strong regardless of who administers those systems. Again, this comes back to public trust. Public safety systems only work when the public believes they are transparent, fair and accountable.

That same principle applies to policing oversight measures included in the legislation. Bill 119 gives the Solicitor General additional powers to direct police boards regarding priorities and strategic plans. While some of these changes may appear administrative, there are legitimate concerns about political overreach into local policing governance. Police boards exist for a reason. Their purpose is to provide civilian oversight and community accountability. Any expansion of ministerial control over local policing priorities must be approached carefully to avoid undermining independent governance structures or politicizing operational priorities.

At the same time, this legislation also expands the role of the Special Investigations Unit in anticipation of special constables potentially carrying firearms in the future. That oversight component is supportable. If governments are going to expand enforcement powers or arm additional personnel, then independent accountability mechanisms must expand alongside those powers. That balance matters. Communities deserve both effective public safety systems and meaningful oversight of those systems.

Speaker, I want to briefly touch on the sections of the bill dealing with adoption and child welfare. Some of the proposed amendments appear largely administrative, including changes around intercountry adoption approvals and licensing processes. But whenever legislation expands government discretion in child welfare systems, particularly around adoption or secure custody settings, we have a responsibility to scrutinize those changes carefully. Ontario has seen too many examples where vulnerable young people have fallen through cracks in systems that were supposed to protect them. Families deserve transparency around how these new powers will operate, what safeguards will exist and what criteria will ultimately be established through the regulation.

1420

Again, that brings us back to one of the reoccurring issues throughout Bill 119: Too many key details are deferred to regulations that are not yet available for public scrutiny. Members are effectively being asked to approve a framework without fully knowing how some of the most significant operational details will ultimately function. Instead, this bill repeatedly asks people to trust that the details will come later.

Speaker, public confidence in institutions is fragile right now. Whether it's concerns around policing, courts, health care access, housing affordability or public safety, many Ontarians feel the systems are no longer the way they should be.

Wrapping up, Speaker, I just want to say, people want a justice system that works. They want dangerous offenders monitored responsibly. They want trafficking survivors protected. They want transparency and accountability from public institutions. But they also want a government willing to invest in social foundations that actually make communities safer over the long term.

I believe we can support reasonable legislative improvements while still demanding something better and more comprehensive for this government. We can acknowledge the useful parts of Bill 119 while pointing out the enormous gaps that remain. We can continue pushing for public safety strategies rooted not just in enforcement, but in prevention, accountability, investment and evidence.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member indicated she was sharing her time. Further debate? I recognize the member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I just want to begin my remarks by thanking the honourable member from St. Catharines for her wonderful presentation today. It is not easy, Speaker, going through 16 schedules in a short period of time, nor is it easy to review a bill with 16 schedules that was literally just introduced two days ago.

Bill 19, entitled the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, is another government omnibus bill, one that is probably going to be fairly difficult for the general public to understand. The bills are disparate and not easy to comprehend because they have to be woven together to try to string a sense of coherence.

The bill ranges from so many different topics, from private international adoptions to technical police oversight to imposing administrative penalties for land use violations and so many other things. There is just really so much in here. But this is just another bill that does very little on paper but allows for significant changes to be made in regulations that are to follow, oftentimes without fanfare or consultation, and certainly without timeline.

This is a classic play by the government to pass the vaguest possible legislation and give themselves the power to change those laws in a wide variety of ways later, when the public is no longer looking. The clarity of this bill hasn't stopped the government from speaking so confidently, and in detail, about all the things that they wish to accomplish with this bill in regulation, and this is something that they're planning to do afterwards. So we're not really debating the bill, per se, without having the context of what the government is saying publicly about the bill but it is not in the bill.

I want to note, Speaker, that we are debating Bill 119 literally just two and a half hours after the government voted down Lydia's Law, a piece of NDP legislation that would have enacted changes in the court system on how it would treat and address survivors of sexual assault, how

the courts would be resourced and reformed to ensure that survivors of sexual assault are going to be heard and not revictimized by the court system.

So, forgive me, Speaker, if I take a tone that is going to be a little bit cynical based on the fact that, literally, we're talking about community safety when you really can't have community safety without a truly functional, well-resourced court system.

The bill does have some positive pieces, and you've heard that from our shadow Solicitor General, who has actually quite generously noted the things that we can easily support about the bill.

I'm going to start from a place where we have all agreed upon in this House before: that the bill is going to take action on coerced debt for human trafficking survivors. This is, of course, the long-term advocacy of victim services advocates and anti-human trafficking activists, who should be very proud because it is because of their work and advocacy that we're seeing this change in the bill.

It should be noted that it's taking place three years after Bill 41, which aimed to achieve the same goal. It had received royal assent in December 2023, but then it was never brought into force and effect. Survivors then waited until the government did some consultation, but it was then delayed and repackaged again.

But I'm going to take it for what it is and say, "Better late than never," and I want to thank the government for finally bringing this forward.

I want to be clear on where things stand in the province, because it's really important for us to paint this landscape in order for us to really take a look at what true community safety does mean. Our communities in Ontario are less safe today than when the Premier took office. Our courts are backlogged, we have the worst court wait times in the country, and 1,639 cases alone in 2025 were either stayed or withdrawn before they were able to reach trial. That means those survivors never got to see their day in court. The opioid crisis has now reached every single corner of the province, and prisoners are literally being accidentally released by this government—and you don't always know where they are.

This bill can be read by many as simply damage control for a government that has lost the plot.

The government has been leaving survivors behind, and although Bill 119 adds some new rights for harassment victims on paper, what is important for us to know is that it doesn't add a single dollar to what survivors actually need. Victim services support organizations rely on grants, and they have been stitching it together year after year. They need sustainable funding. They need this government to ensure that victim services supports and programs that support them are properly funded as opposed to being dismantled, which is what happened with the victims compensation fund. There has never been a proper replacement.

There is much that this bill does not speak about, despite the fact that it has 16 schedules attached to it. The government had promised action on transit safety. We

don't see it here. They promised action on retail theft. Again, we don't see it here. And we were certainly promised more on animal welfare, and none of that is appearing in the legislation.

There are new powers that were needed for transit special constables. We needed to see the retail theft task force and a ban on ear cropping and tail docking for pets. All of that has been left, again, to regulations that may or may not happen in the future.

Real community safety means being smart and not just tough talk. That requires actual funding and reform of the system. Ontario courts are overwhelmed and under-resourced. Bail supervision and verification programs are horribly underfunded, despite the well-documented research that it is the most effective way of making sure that we can have those who have committed harm, who are released on bail, even though they're not found guilty, even though they haven't reached trial—but at least they have a path to rehabilitation. That has been cut.

The NDP has been pushing for court backlogs since I've been here in 2022. I know that the system was not perfect under the Liberals, but certainly this Conservative government has made it dramatically worse.

We need to see this government restore meaningful compensation to victims of crime. Safer communities will be built on investments in justice, mental health and social supports to stop harm before it happens.

1430

I'm going to speak very briefly on schedule 1, which is the portion that touches the Child, Youth and Family Services Act. It gives new powers to directors to approve individuals for adoption, if a person meets certain criteria that is not set out, presumably, in future regulations. Other provisions will allow the directors to grant licences to place children for adoption from foreign jurisdictions as well as to refuse the same.

Other changes planned here are set out in the conditions, whereas children and youth can be placed in locked rooms while in secure custody situations. We'll need to evaluate on further details as it becomes known what the government is trying to do. I know that, certainly, caucus members on this side of the House have advocated for greater regulations around the use of locked rooms or isolation for youth in schools, as noted in the Landyn Ferris case.

Schedule 2 speaks about Christopher's Law, the sex offender registry from 2000.

We are always happy to see legislation that comes forward to protect communities, especially when it comes to children. I know that it's very important to align the provincial laws with what has changed federally—that took place in 2023. This was done in light of a Supreme Court ruling, so I am glad that this is now being cleared up in the bill.

But what's not in the bill and should be in the bill is Lydia's Law, which you voted down just two and a half hours ago. I don't know why this government is so stubbornly defensive when it comes to the member from Waterloo and her efforts to bring the 2019 Auditor General

recommendations to operational action here, because the Auditor General had really stated that the courts are highly dysfunctional when it comes to how it deals with survivors and cases of sexual assault.

The Auditor General recommended that this government “proactively manage the progress of these criminal cases through the court system and to resolve them in a timely manner.” The Auditor General called on the government to “monitor all criminal cases that have been pending disposition for more than eight months” by the court. And I would say that there are many who would argue that even eight months is too long, but the Auditor General was working with what was before her.

She was asking the government to “analyze the reasons for the delays,” to “capture all reasons for cases being stayed by judges” and to ensure all that information was available so we can take an actual look, be transparent and open about what's actually happening in the courts, understand where the failures are and then proceed to fix them.

And the fix, really, also included how the courtrooms were to be scheduled, what timely actions were to be taken—where are those allocations of resources? Are they going to where it's most needed? Working with the judiciary to actually improve the court scheduling process—all of that was in Lydia's Law, which would have, of course, provided greater mechanisms for safety for survivors.

Of course, the Auditor General also was recommending that, in order for survivors to be truly supported, this government must do everything they can to reduce the costs that would result from further delays and charges being withdrawn, especially if there is no reasonable prospect of conviction so, therefore, we can move everything along faster.

In Bill 119, we don't see any additional funding or support for independent legal advice programs, which certainly would go a long way in helping survivors. We don't see long-term and sustained funding for the Victim Quick Response Program, which many have already identified to the government as being far too restrictive.

Schedule 3 brings us to the Community Safety and Policing Act that the government is now proposing to reform. This schedule gives the minister further powers to direct the police service boards when “establishing priorities that the boards” should then “reflect in their strategic plan.”

What concerns me about the wording of this amendment is that it gives the Solicitor General not just the power to issue directives on specific issues—it doesn't just say that he can advise the service boards on their goals—but it specifically allows the Solicitor General to make binding directives to whatever service board that he chooses.

This government should not be allowed to force local oversight boards to do their bidding. The purpose of police service boards is to act as a voice for community members and organizations to ensure that people who live in those communities get the policing that is appropriate for them.

I know that this minister has, in the past, tried to direct the police because there have been things that have appeared in the community that have upset him. But really, what we have always said, especially at the city of Toronto, is that the politicians should never direct the police.

There's a long history of police service boards that are comprised of citizens as well as elected officials, where they all work together to provide oversight and there are members of the public that come forward and give their best advice. That system has worked for so many years. Of course, there are oftentimes tensions, but I think that in the tension is where you get the balance. This is why, when a minister is giving themselves this unilateral power to direct the police, it can be quite troubling.

The question is, why is the government bent on pushing their way into the systems of discussion when those systems of discussion and collaboration already work?

The Solicitor General told reporters on Monday that he doesn't want to just use powers to direct the police; he wants to use his new powers to coordinate priorities. Firstly, let's just identify it for what it is—and that is ludicrous—to suggest that there isn't a link between police service boards and what the police do. Police service boards set strategic objectives, approve budgets, hire the chief of police. And of course, police service boards are also very much mandated to deliver effective policing.

Having directives sent to the police service board could be problematic. I want to flag that. I want to put an underline to that, because if the Solicitor General's true intention was to only coordinate the priorities of local police service boards, then this amendment in the schedule is simply not necessary.

The government has set up some false dichotomies. They would like to convince us that this is the only way for the province to provide advice and input to local policing priorities, but they already have the ability to provide input.

Here is the previous text of the bill that the minister is proposing to amend. Under section 3(1), it states:

“The minister shall...

“consult with and advise police service boards, chiefs of police, municipalities and First Nations regarding the ... implementation of community safety and well-being plans;

“conduct research and analysis to inform policy and program development, system planning...”

So there you have it. The minister can already coordinate priorities by collaborating with the police service boards, and he would be advised to do so, providing research to support his recommendations. So then why is he seizing and giving himself these additional powers? Perhaps it's because the ministry was unable to convince the police service boards to implement their ideas through research and reasoning. Usually, when you can't convince local representatives who experience the realities of local policing that you have a good idea, that means it's a bad idea.

People are appointed to these boards specifically because they understand the needs of the community. It is essential that civilian oversight bodies have the power to say, “No, that won't work for my community.” Based on the people that I've been speaking to and what I've seen, this doesn't seem to be a good idea. The Solicitor General can't win through reason, so he is turning to legislative force.

1440

Last December, the Solicitor General demanded that the Toronto police and the Toronto Police Service Board shut down demonstrations and take “strong action” against protesters against the genocide in Gaza. When the Toronto police and the police service board didn't want to deny people their constitutional right to protest, the Premier demanded an injunction from the courts and then was slapped down by Justice Robert Centa.

The justice said, “There was insufficient evidence that the protest would lead to significant criminal activity or that police could not maintain the peace.” This is exactly what the Toronto Police Service said in court. They felt, based on their decades of experience, that they had the tools to manage safety, and the government disagreed based on insufficient evidence. “Insufficient evidence” basically summarizes all this government's legislation, and now the government wants to silence local representatives who point out the gaps in their logic by overriding them with mandatory directives.

What is to stop the Solicitor General now from issuing directives to crack down on protesters for causes the government disagrees with? Will the Solicitor General be directing the police service boards to create plans for policing that criminalize poverty, people struggling with addictions and homelessness, under the guise of being tough on crime? Will the government be going after nurses and child care workers who are fighting for fair wages and better working conditions? What about environmental protesters? What about Indigenous rights activists? What about students who are protesting student cuts? What about parents fighting for autism services? Where will this go? Have the government members asked themselves this question? Have you even read the bill?

The Solicitor General and this government love to tell Toronto what to do. Of course, as a Torontonian, I take great offence to that.

Interjection.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you to my good friend Triple M.

As I have just mentioned, they have historically tried to take control of the Toronto Police Service Board. But the Toronto Police Service Board is a good example of the importance of balance between civilian and government options and opinions when it comes to the police service board. Toronto balances the opinions of civilians and city councillors. Crucially, the power of those councillors is not greater than civilian members. Imagine that: Politicians don't rule at that board. They come to decisions through careful discussion and public deputation about what would be in the best interest of Toronto residents.

That is how good decisions are made: by talking with people affected to assess all the points between the pros and the cons. Not everybody gets what they want, but I think they have always struck a fairly decent balance.

So I decided to reach out to the Toronto Police Service Board and ask if they are still reviewing the legislation and if they have some advice, because I would like to hear how would they like to proceed, and whether or not the Solicitor General had even contacted the police service board—or any police service board—before making this change. I will get that answer. I have a sense of what that answer will be.

But I can tell you that there are other very important organizations out there that were not consulted, such as the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, nor did the Solicitor General consult with the Canadian Criminal Justice Association. So you didn't talk to the police service board—or at least mine—and maybe you haven't talked to any police service board, but here you are making some very big changes about how they operate.

Let me tell you what the Canadian Civil Liberties Association had to say. They're still reviewing the bill—everybody's still reviewing the bill—but what I know is that this government hasn't talked to anybody.

CCLA says, “This new power has been proposed without meaningful consultation. There is no clarity about what policy concern it responds to and there are inadequate procedural safeguards to ensure transparency in decision-making and prevent inappropriate political interference.” No transparency, no justification on why this overreach is necessary. This opinion was then shared by leading experts on justice policy.

I want to share the remarks of Professor Kent Roach. He is one of this country's leading criminologists, and he is deeply respected as a professor at the Jackman Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto. Professor Roach was a former law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Bertha Wilson, and he says—

Interjection.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'll tell you what he said:

“The proposed amendments are concerning. We have had local control over local policing since before Confederation and municipal appointees are the majority of the police boards. Under the proposal, the minister would have unfettered discretion to issue directives to local boards. Even if these directives go to the Inspector General of Policing, there are no guarantees that they would even be made public.

“While ministers can play an important role in providing guidance and support for boards, who are part-timers who need some support, there is an important distinction between advice and mandatory directives. This government has not made the case about why such a radical change and departure from the local policing governance is necessary.”

What we see is a government that once again is meddling in local affairs when they have consulted no one and talked to no one. I will be very interested in hearing what comes out of the public deputations because I suspect

we'll be hearing more from legal experts, including those who have spent quite a bit of time in their professional careers in policing.

Speaker, I'm going to take my final few minutes to talk about two things that are not in the bill but should be in the bill and should be considered because we are talking about public safety. I would suggest that the Solicitor General look into these two additional avenues that I'm going to bring up, because it really could use his attention:

(1) The Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario, or FSESO, is now facing some very serious whistleblower allegations about nepotism and conflicts of interest, which are compromising public safety. The FSESO reports directly to the Ontario chief firearms officer—the CFO—and the Solicitor General.

In an investigative article from *The Pointer* dated in March, they have said that board members are alleged to be participating in decisions that financially benefit themselves while raising questions about governance oversight and accountability.

This is a core issue that compromises the integrity of the firearms system in Ontario. The evidence outlined shows us that individuals responsible for the oversight, the training, the auditing, the investigation and the governance of firearms in Ontario are benefiting from the same organization that they're supposed to be regulating.

I want to flag this because it is a very serious allegation, and I really hope—and I know that the Solicitor General has been advised of this, but I really hope that the Solicitor General will speak about this issue publicly very soon. He was not quoted in the article, but when I read the article, as someone who cares about public safety, I was quite concerned that no one was watching how firearms were being regulated in Ontario, when that is his job.

(2) Many voters and even elected officials are unaware that non-citizens, including international students and refugees, may legally obtain firearm licences in Ontario. This issue has started to garner some very public attention, including criticism from the former Solicitor General of British Columbia, who recently called the policy “absolutely ridiculous,” highlighting the risk of allowing individuals in Canada on a temporary basis to obtain firearms.

These same concerns have been raised by the former RCMP weapons enforcement expert Frank Grosspietsch, who argues that Canada's framework, including what Ontario does through delegated authority, is comparatively weaker than other jurisdictions like the US in some key aspects.

1450

Can you imagine? We have a 16-schedule justice bill talking about community safety, and there are some big issues on how firearm licences are issued, who becomes an instructor, where the governance is, huge allegations of nepotism. The Solicitor General has been notified, asked for a public opinion and has offered us nothing. Yes, there is much to be said about a bill that is leaving things to regulation when the essence of the bill doesn't necessarily make Ontario safer.

With that, Madam Speaker, I conclude my remarks.

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

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I'd like to ask either of my colleagues: This government voted down Lydia's Law just yesterday. This government is a big, tough-on-crime kind of government, but what does that tell you about this government's approach to crimes against women?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Thank you for the question. This bill says they're tough on crime, and through their rhetoric, this government continues to say they're tough on crime, but we're experiencing, on this side of the House, that when they turn down important votes—when bills are on this side of the House, they turn them down, they vote them down and they continue to say that women aren't experiencing violence, but they are. They're often faced with violence and they're faced with gaps within our police, within our courts, within probation systems. Lydia's Law was an attempt to close some of those gaps.

I, personally, brought forward, about three years ago, Clare's Law in a bill and it was voted down by this government too. These are bills that were to protect women against horrific crimes that have been perpetrated upon them. Clare's Law was brought back by this government as a motion. Well, a motion doesn't have any teeth in it, and it doesn't protect women. They don't—

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: Madam Speaker, as you know, the safety of our community must always come first and access to clear, reliable information is essential in helping families make informed decisions about their surroundings. People already issue community notifications in serious cases, yet this information can be fragmented and difficult for the public to access.

Our proposed amendment would establish a centralized, province-wide website similar to other jurisdictions that would enhance transparency, support law enforcement and strengthen public awareness without compromising judicial oversight.

My question is very simple. To the member opposite: What is your comment? Do you agree with this change, and would you support this bill to protect Ontarians, themselves, and their communities?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you very much to the wonderful member across from Mississauga–Malton. Thank you for your important question.

This party will always stand for greater accountability and transparency. This is what we've been fighting for when it comes to making sure that people in our communities have access to the information they need. This is why we have been very much supportive in advocating for the Red Dress Alert and the Amber Alert, making sure that communities always have information in the timely fashion that they need to keep themselves safe.

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Thank you to the member from Toronto Centre. Thank you very much for really eluci-

dating some of the serious concerns that we have with this bill, particularly when it comes to the Solicitor General and expanding the power of the Solicitor General, community safety and policing.

While you were speaking, I found it quite concerning and quite shocking, in fact. I looked up what the hallmarks of an authoritarian government are. Some of the things that are listed are leaders who bypass or stack independent institutions, such as the Legislature, judiciary or commissions. It also says that they suppress dissent, activists and protests; political opponents are harassed, jailed or delegitimized. And finally, it talks about politicizing a state apparatus, like law enforcement. While we're not quite there yet, I would feel like we're on the path towards this. So what you've raised is a serious concern.

Can you tell us a little bit more about why people need to understand how important the independence of not just only the Toronto Police Service Board, but all police service boards operating in communities across Ontario—why their independence is so important.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you to the honourable member for that question. I think that we have seen a government that has been acting and ruling under fiat, and I don't think that it should be lost on anybody when you have the erosion of democratic tools and the pillars of our democracy, whether it's the stripping of the FOI laws, or the attack on the judiciary, which should remain independent. I think that what we do need to recognize in this bill is that the Solicitor General is rolling back what has been a decade-long movement for greater police accountability with civilian oversight. There has been many reasons and decades of research put forward that brought us here, and this government has given us no reason why it is pulling it back.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: My question is for the member from Toronto Centre. What do you think the obsession is? Yet again this government is meddling in Toronto affairs, and I'm just wondering if you can pinpoint any reason for this obsession with Toronto.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you for that question. I think you and I both share a very unique perspective, having served with the Premier at city council, where he floated a lot of these sorts of hare-brained ideas, and he sort of sat on the floor of council as this odd little outlier. Nobody paid any attention to him as he talked about Ferris wheels, monorails and mega malls on our waterfront.

But then we get here in this Parliament, and he leads his very large caucus full of very well-educated and well-read people. And somehow, he leads them—

Interjection: By the nose.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: By the nose. I don't know what has transpired. Perhaps it's the party caucus and the fact that he's the Premier who's able to hand out lofty cabinet posts. But quite honestly, this would have never, ever been possible at city council.

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

Mr. David Smith: I want to thank both members from St. Catharines and from Toronto Centre. I heard some very interesting comments. I strongly believe that Bill 119 is closing some of the gaps that are out there that are not on the books right now.

I personally heard, today, both members that spoke about supporting the bill, and that the bill is fine in many aspects. Could we speak about those positive pieces that you believe is acceptable? I want to hear some comments on that. Not the parts that we are talking about, but what are the important parts of the bill that you feel you can support?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I spoke for half an hour on some of the good things that were in this bill. But I want to say that we did say there are supportable schedules in this bill—of all 16 schedules in this omnibus bill, that some are supportable.

But what I really find difficult—and I spoke at great length about it—is that a lot of these schedules are going to be—

Interjection: Go to regulation.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Go to regulation. And my fear of that is that it's not transparent. There's no transparency when you go to regulation. Some of your bills that you've put forward are done on the back of a napkin, for crying out loud.

But this one here does have some things that we can support, but I do want to know why it's not in here. The teeth are not in here.

1500

Future regulations and future directives and future announcements that maybe might not materialize are what the scary part is. That's what we're worried about. That's why we say, yes, we can support it, but a lot of the schedules don't have a lot of teeth in them. And when you don't have anything—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. We do not have time for another round of questions and responses.

Further debate?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: As always, it's a privilege to stand and speak on behalf of the constituents of Kanata-Carleton.

I must say that omnibus Bill 119 is a tough read. It brings together policing, adoption, animal welfare, towing, harassment, human trafficking, municipal enforcement, provincial offences and more. If the government's goal was to provide a confusing collection of totally unrelated items, then they have succeeded. Let's challenge these omnibus bill tendencies by unpacking this bill.

One other thing: Today, the Solicitor General stood up in his one-hour introduction and talked about Chinese drones and special constables. I can't find those items in the bill. I don't know how this government can actually organize a bill and not know what's in it. Did they just forget them? They meant to put them in the bill and they didn't? I don't know.

I think that when we talk about omnibus bills—I think there are 16 schedules. We're going to unpack them one

by one so everybody understands exactly what's in this bill.

Schedule 1 deals with the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017. It creates a new approval system for adoption practitioners who can prepare adoption home studies and child adjustment reports for adoptions. It gives directors authority to approve practitioners, issue compliance directions and suspend permissions in some cases. It creates a framework allowing licensed agencies to bring children from specific foreign countries into Ontario for adoption. It expands the government's authority to deny or revoke adoption licences if they are not in the public interest. And it allows secure custody facilities to place youth in locked rooms under prescribed rules and standards.

Some of these changes might be good. It might be that there's stronger provincial oversight of adoption. There will be more control over international adoption pathways, new operational powers for youth detention facilities.

But of particular concern with schedule 1 is that it allows youth in secure custody to be placed in locked rooms under prescribed conditions. I really worry that this is actually solitary confinement, because there are no details. I hope that the government will consult with youth mental health professionals about how best to proceed. There certainly isn't enough detail in the bill, and I worry about the interpretation of what "under prescribed conditions" really means.

Let's go on to schedule 2. It deals with Christopher's Law. The schedule expands Ontario's registry rules to include anyone subject to federal sex offender registration obligations. It aligns Ontario reporting periods with federal registration timelines. It removes automatic deletion provisions tied to pardons or overturned findings. It gives the minister authority to regulate how registry information is destroyed or removed.

In effect, this results in closer integration between Ontario and federal sex offender registry systems and potentially longer retention and monitoring of offender information. Those could be good things, but I also worry that we will be creating reduced pathways for removal after pardons and expanded government discretion over data destruction. There certainly will be a need to protect the public while simultaneously protecting human rights. Again, the data, the information, the details aren't there.

Schedule 3 makes changes to the Community Safety and Policing Act. The main changes are that the bill:

- expands misconduct and complaint rules to additional prescribed persons;
- gives the minister more authority over policing priorities and board governance at the municipal level;
- allows the minister to issue strategic police board information, and those police boards must reflect that information in their strategic plans;
- expands inspector general powers for investigations, complaint consolidation, disclosure authority, board oversight;
- requires public disclosure of certain safety-related information online;

—allows RCMP and certain out-of-province peace officers to exercise prescribed powers in Ontario.

The result of these changes is that the bill significantly increases the tendency for provincial influence in policing.

Included in schedule 3 is something that should frighten us all: “The minister may issue a directive to a police service board to establish priorities for the board that must be reflected in the board’s strategic plan.” What does that really mean? It means that the minister will direct police operations and priorities.

Additionally, the ministry’s own briefing note says, “Ontario is introducing a new regulation under” the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act “that extends officer powers under the act to ... authorized transit special constable employers (currently TTC, Metro-linx, and OC Transpo). These powers include allowing them to request individuals to stop consuming the illegal drug, direct them to leave, confiscate the drugs, arrest if they fail to comply as well as powers to lay a provincial offence charge.” That’s what it said in their briefing note, but for the life of me, I can’t find it anywhere in the bill. So did they forget it?

My concern with schedule 3 is that I fear that the bill centralizes too much authority in the Solicitor General and takes the authority and the power away from the municipal level and the police services boards. The concerns include the minister gaining power to direct police board priorities—that’s municipal level; expanded inspector general authority; broader disclosure and publication powers; expanded categories of “officials” under SIU oversight; and the fact that RCMP and out-of-province officers will be exercising powers in Ontario. I worry that disclosure thresholds are unclear, reputational harm could occur without due process, and privacy protections may prove to be insufficient.

Schedule 4 deals with the Enforcement of Canadian Restraining Orders Act. The bill makes restraining orders issued elsewhere in Canada automatically enforceable in Ontario. That sounds like a reasonable idea to me. It allows these orders to be registered in Ontario courts. It permits parties to apply to vary or set aside non-Ontario restraining orders in Ontario courts under certain conditions. This, in fact, results in easier enforcement of protection orders across provinces and, also, better continuity for victims relocating to Ontario. That’s not a bad thing.

1510

Schedule 5 deals with the Intercountry Adoption Act. This schedule requires intercountry adoption applications to go through licensed agencies only. That makes sense to me. It creates a formal approval system for adoption practitioners—makes sense. It allows directors to approve country-specific intercountry adoption permissions. It allows them to suspend permissions. It allows them to issue binding directives and to issue compliance orders and expands public interest grounds for license refusal or revocation. In effect, the bill results in more centralized control of international adoptions, increased compliance and oversight powers.

Schedule 5 significantly expands director powers over adoption practitioners, intercountry adoptions, licensing, suspensions and public-interest refusals. It will be interesting to hear from adoption experts to see if they feel that approval systems in this bill are overly centralized, whether the government’s discretion is too broad, whether public interest criteria have not been specific enough and whether this will result in smaller agencies being squeezed out.

Schedule 6 creates the Pill Presses and Precursors Act. It creates a new law: regulating pill presses—makes sense—and precursor chemicals; prohibits possession, use or sale in specified circumstances; requires reporting of stolen pill presses; and creates police enforcement powers, including identification demands, searches and seizures, offences and penalties.

In effect, the schedule does target illegal drug manufacturing and fentanyl production. It expands enforcement tools against organized crime and trafficking. This is a good thing.

Schedule 7 deals with allowing municipalities to issue administrative penalties for zoning bylaw violations involving prohibited land uses, allowing unpaid penalties to be added to property tax bills and extending powers to lower-tier municipalities—in Oxford county, specifically. The bill gives municipalities stronger and faster zoning-enforcement tools and reduces reliance on lengthy court prosecutions. The Planning Act amendments allow municipalities to impose administrative penalties and add unpaid penalties to tax rolls.

It will be interesting to hear from property rights advocates who may argue that municipalities are getting quasi-judicial powers without court oversight. They might argue that administrative penalties can bypass due process and that property owners may face aggressive enforcement. Additionally, municipalities themselves may worry that enforcement costs will rise, appeals processes may become more complex and the implementation guidance may be unclear. This is one of those situations where the details are sorely needed and they are missing. The potential to be a good bill, to be a good schedule, is there, but the potential for its misuse is also in existence.

Schedule 8 deals with the Police Record Checks Reform Act. It adds section 8.1, allowing a chief of police or a police service member designated by a chief of police to apply to the minister to process vulnerable sector checks. Vulnerable sector checks are for people seeking employment or volunteer opportunities with vulnerable persons: Teachers, daycare, nurses and elder care employees typically apply for vulnerable sector checks.

What are the effects of this change? This allows non-local police services to process the vulnerable sector checks to improve flexibility and reduce delays. Vulnerable sector checks take longer than other police record checks, which leads to longer processing time. This amendment would allow other police services to provide support in times of high demand. Why not?

The schedule allows police chiefs to apply for organizations to become authorized bodies under the federal

Criminal Records Act and gives the minister regulation-making authority over designations.

Again, how is this going to be done? How transparent will it be? How accountable will it be? We don't know because we don't have the details.

Schedule 9 deals with the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017. The schedule adds a definition for human trafficking rather than using the Criminal Code definition. The Criminal Code differs slightly, including behaviour like the destruction of travel documents. It allows courts to make restraining orders using either the provincial or the criminal definition.

The schedule in effect adopts my colleague's PMB 41, introduced by the member from Ottawa–Vanier, called the Protection from Coerced Debts Incurred in relation to Human Trafficking Act, which received royal assent in December 2023. In the new part IV, coerced debts incurred as a result of human trafficking, the government makes the following changes:

It establishes that a debt that is coerced can be done through an agreement with the debtor and creditor, or by the debtor applying to designated organizations after being referred by provincially funded human trafficking organizations. The organization will then notify the creditor.

Designated organizations must have experience working with victims of human trafficking and the ability to identify coerced debts, and receive provincial funding. The ministry will list them online. These are smart provisions.

If the creditor fails to respond or disagrees that the debt is coerced, the amount of the debt determines the resolution path. For debts less than the small claims court limit of \$50,000, an adjudicator, designated by the minister, will make a determination using written submissions only, determining the amount of the coerced debt, giving a copy of the decision to the parties and the ministry.

For those debts larger than \$50,000, unless both parties agree, the debtor or creditor may apply to the Superior Court of Justice. A police report or investigation is not needed to establish coerced debt. Debts include all or part of a debt and applies to debts incurred before the bill comes into force, which is a good thing.

The bill does not necessarily apply retroactively to coercive debts already paid. It doesn't apply to collection of security interests, mortgages, charges or liens.

It establishes that it is a provincial offence to contravene this act, with penalties of \$50,000 or two years imprisonment for an individual and \$250,000 for a corporation. It creates a pathway to return drivers' licences that were confiscated as a result of a coerced debt. It makes consequential changes to the Consumer Reporting Act to ensure that coerced debts are not included on any credit report. It makes consequential changes to the Personal Property Security Act clarifying that this part of the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act prevails over the act.

This schedule achieves the same purpose as the member from Ottawa–Vanier's private member's bill. We should

be proud of her for that, and we thank the government for implementing it.

Schedule 10 deals with private security and investigative services. The schedule broadens the definition of security guard duties. It transfers appointment authority for registrars to the minister. It requires fees before licence issuance or renewal. It modernizes rules for digital licences. It removes informal complaint facilitation and strengthens investigative processes. It allows production orders for investigators and requires destruction rather than return of licences in some cases. And, in effect, this schedule modernizes Ontario's private security regulatory system, and it strengthens enforcement and investigation—a good thing.

1520

In schedule 11, the government expands animal record-keeping requirements beyond dogs to include cats and other prescribed animals. That allows for broader traceability and oversight for animal welfare enforcement, and I think that is something that certainly we all can support.

Schedule 12 deals with elements of the Provincial Offences Act. The schedule creates a streamlined process for negotiated guilty pleas in early resolution meetings. It allows court clerks to enter convictions and fines based on those agreements. It adds related regulation-making powers. It updates and modernizes court definitions and housekeeping provisions.

In effect, the schedule removes the requirement that plea deals, which usually are reduced penalties for entering a guilty plea—in the past, they must be approved by a justice. Instead, the prosecutor will inform the court through a prescribed method where it shall be approved by the clerk.

It is true that removing judicial oversight of plea deals will reduce pressure on judicial resources. While there may be some concern about defendants without legal familiarity accepting unduly harsh agreements, this is mitigated by the application of this change to only provincial offences and not federal criminal charges. Consequently, plea deals are unlikely to have significant penalties and would not impose a permanent status as guilty of an indictable offence—i.e., a felony equivalent. Some have raised concerns regarding the state of provincial offences and how they still create a guilty status rather than just an administrative penalty.

This is truly groundbreaking as plea deals must be approved by a justice in every other province in Canada. It will be interesting to hear from constitutional experts as to the legality of this change.

Schedule 13 deals with the Social Work and Social Service Work Act. Currently, the act allows the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers to make interim orders suspending the certificate of registration of a member of the college after allegations against the member have been referred for a hearing before the discipline committee or the fitness-to-practice committee. This schedule amends the act to allow the college to make such interim orders at any point after a complaint regarding the conduct or actions of a member has been

filed with the registrar of the college, or the registrar has appointed one or more investigators to conduct an investigation in respect of a member.

The change increases the college's power to quickly suspend members with allegations against them. This will improve the speed with which the college can act to protect clients from members who may further harm or injure them. The regulatory boards of other professions like health professionals and teachers have the power to grant interim orders before investigations are concluded if they believe a member has exposed or is likely to expose patients or students to harm or injury. That additional power works.

Schedule 14 speaks to the Special Investigations Unit Act, 2019. The schedule expands who can be prescribed as an official under SIU jurisdiction. It allows SIU matters involving non-police officials to be referred to as "prescribed persons" and adds regulation-making authority to modify or exempt application of the act. In effect, the schedule could broaden SIU oversight, flexibility and scope—details TBA.

Schedule 15 deals with the Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act. The schedule prevents appeals from automatically delaying enforcement decisions unless the Divisional Court grants a stay. It clarifies towing rate rules. It expands anti-solicitation rules around collision scenes beyond highways. It makes offence notices to drivers deemed served on tow operators.

I support the stronger crackdown on predatory towing practices. I've heard stories of survivors of car crashes spending thousands of dollars to tow truck owners who are taking advantage of their confusion and vulnerability during such traumatic times.

Finally, schedule 16 deals with the Victims' Bill of Rights. It makes changes, adding gender-neutral language when referring to victims. It adds criminal harassment to the list of crimes where a victim is presumed to have suffered emotional distress for the purpose of the convicted person's civil liability. Victims include those who are the subject of harassment, as well as those whose property is damaged and adds the families of any person who dies as a result of harassment. Civil cases can be brought under this statute even if the person is not charged or convicted of harassment.

This amendment gives victims of harassment civil options for seeking justice. Civil cases have a lower bar for judgments on the balance of probabilities or just which side's case is more likely to be true than the criminal requirement of beyond all reasonable doubt. This increases the likelihood that victims are able to receive some measure of justice even if the evidence for a criminal harassment conviction is not available. This is a good thing.

As I've said previously, this bill is a broad public safety and justice omnibus bill focusing on policing oversight, sex offender monitoring, human trafficking protections, adoption oversight, drug manufacturing enforcement, predatory towing practices, harassment remedies and municipal enforcement modernization. Generally, it increases

provincial enforcement powers, strengthens regulatory oversight, expands information-sharing and creates faster enforcement mechanisms across multiple sectors.

Many schedules defer critical details to future regulations. Examples include details about youth locked-room standards, public disclosure rules, authorized police records check bodies, coerced debt procedures, SIU exemptions and bill press enforcement details. Like the government has done with so many of their previous bills, too much policy is being left undefined, ministries are gaining excessive discretion and the Legislature is approving frameworks without specifics.

I have expressed my concern with omnibus bills previously. It's like the government forgot a bunch of things they were going to do and then decided just to smash them altogether in one document. Because there are so many different subjects, omnibus bills tend to reduce scrutiny, limit focused debate, make public consultation harder, force unrelated issues through together. I can understand why this government wants to avoid that kind of scrutiny. They don't exactly have the best track record: a \$400-million luxury spa deal with rich insiders; a \$30-million luxury jet; up to 60 prisoners who were mistakenly released from custody and some have not been returned to custody.

1530

The decision to expand the Billy Bishop airport—at what cost? They don't know. Where's the money coming from? They say it's not coming from the taxpayers of Ontario, but if it's not coming from them, who is it coming from? We should know. What's the design? What are the engineering criteria? What are the economic benefits and what kind of information, data, evidence, science, statistics are you using to come up with them? Because right now, there is so little evidence in talking about Billy Bishop that anything the government says, they don't have anything that can prove their numbers. That's worrisome.

The greenbelt scandal, again; the creeping privatization of health care, the health care crisis, hallway medicine, closing emergency rooms; underfunding schools and teachers; removing freedom-of-information requests to hide government actions—this is why we don't like it when the details are not there. People deserve transparency. They deserve accountability for their government.

And what are the common themes behind all of these different pet projects of this government? It's fast-tracking approvals, rewarding rich insiders and friends, no committee review, reduced environmental oversight, centralization of provincial power, conflicts with the municipalities and transparency and accountability questions left unanswered.

As I've said before, all of this amounts to a threat to the very heart of our democracy. And with regard to the bill before us, I want to say something that is increasingly rare in public life: Legislation does not have to be either entirely good or entirely bad. Too often, our political conversations become polarized into absolute. One side claims a bill is the complete solution to every problem, and the other side claims it's a disaster in every possible way.

But a responsible civic discussion requires something more thoughtful than that, and that is why consultation is so critical.

Ontario Bill 119, the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, deserves that kind of thoughtful discussion. There are elements of this legislation that are well-intentioned. There are areas where the government is clearly responding to real concerns from the public. There are measures that attempt to improve public safety, strengthen enforcement tools and modernize oversight, and those goals matter.

Communities across Ontario want safer streets. Families want confidence that government institutions are functioning properly. Municipalities want clearer rules. Police services, first responders, transit workers, retailers and local residents all want solutions to rising concerns about crime, disorder, repeat offending and public safety. Those are legitimate priorities, but good intentions alone are not enough.

Tonight, I want to talk about why legislation like Bill 119 raises important concerns, not just because every idea inside the bill is wrong, but because the structure, scope and legislative approach reveal larger problems with omnibus legislation in Ontario.

I want to discuss why omnibus bills can weaken democratic scrutiny, why combining many unrelated policy measures into one large legislative package creates accountability problems, why rushed legislation often produces unintended consequences and substandard outcomes, why implementation matters just as much as political messaging and why Ontarians should always demand careful oversight, transparency and balance, even when legislation is presented under the banner of public safety. Because democracy is healthiest when citizens are capable of supporting the goals of legislation while still asking difficult questions about how those goals are pursued. That is the spirit in which I offer these remarks today.

Bill 119 is a broad and wide-ranging piece of legislation. It touches multiple areas of public policy. It amends several statutes. It creates new powers in some areas while restructuring responsibilities in others. And importantly, it follows a pattern we have seen repeatedly in Ontario: that omnibus bill. An omnibus bill is legislation that bundles together multiple policy changes—sometimes related, sometimes only loosely connected—into one large package.

Governments often defend omnibus bills by saying they improve efficiency, and there might be some argument for that. Instead of debating 10 separate bills, legislators debate one. Instead of multiple committee processes, there is one legislative process. Instead of fragmented reforms, governments can present a unified policy agenda. As I said, there is some truth to that argument.

Modern government—it's true—is complicated. Public policy overlaps. Issues like public safety, justice, housing, mental health, infrastructure, transit, municipal governance and enforcement often intersect. No serious person can deny that. But efficiency can come at a democratic cost, and that cost becomes significant when legislation

grows so large, so broad and so politically packaged that meaningful scrutiny becomes difficult. That is one of the central concerns around Bill 119.

Let us begin with the most fundamental issue: Omnibus bills can reduce transparency. When legislation contains many distinct policy changes, it becomes harder for the public to understand exactly what is being proposed. It becomes harder for journalists to cover every section thoroughly. It becomes harder for opposition parties to examine every implication. It becomes harder for stakeholders to testify meaningfully during committee hearings. And, perhaps most importantly, it becomes harder for ordinary citizens to hold their government accountable.

Think about the practical reality: A large omnibus bill can contain dozens or even hundreds of pages. Technical amendments are buried beside major policy reforms. Administrative changes sit beside sweeping enforcement powers. Complex regulatory language is inserted into legislation that receives limited public attention. The result is that debate often focuses only on the headline messaging. The political branding becomes the story. The actual legislative details become secondary. That is not healthy for democracy.

Good legislation should survive detailed scrutiny. Good legislation should welcome examination. Good legislation should not depend on complexity to avoid accountability. Unfortunately, omnibus bills sometimes create exactly that environment.

To be fair, this is not unique to one political party. Governments of different political stripes have used omnibus legislation. Federal governments have done it. Provincial governments have done it. Conservative governments, Liberal governments and all have relied on omnibus approaches at various times. It's not a partisan criticism; it's a structural criticism. It's a democratic criticism, and it matters regardless of who happens to be in power.

Another concern with Bill 119 is that legislation framed around public safety often receives less critical examination, because opposing it can be politically risky, even for government MPPs. Nobody wants to appear soft on crime. Nobody wants to appear indifferent to community safety. Nobody wants to dismiss the real frustrations Ontarians feel when they see rising disorder, violence, theft, addiction crises, vandalism or repeat offending. Those frustrations are real and communities have every right to demand action.

1540

But precisely because public safety issues are emotionally charged, governments have a special responsibility to ensure legislation is balanced, evidence-based and proportionate. Public fear should never become a shortcut around proper scrutiny. We must remember the laws introduced during moments of public anxiety often outlive the political climate that created them. Powers granted to government rarely disappear easily. Enforcement mechanisms, once expanded, tend to remain. Regulatory authority, once centralized, is seldom reduced. That means Legislatures must consider not only how laws will be used today but how they might be used years from now under

different governments and under different circumstances. That is why oversight matters. That is why clarity matters. That is why narrowly tailored legislation is often preferable to broad, omnibus approaches.

The issue with Bill 119 is that its scope risks becoming too broad. When legislation attempts to solve so many different problems at once, the government sometimes creates the appearance of action without ensuring adequate implementation capacity. This is a recurring challenge with this government. Announcements are made, press conferences are had, new authorities are granted, but the underlying systems responsible for carrying out those changes may already be strained.

Consider the realities facing Ontario today. Police services face staffing pressures. Courts continue dealing with backlogs. Municipal governments struggle with funding constraints. Mental health systems remain overburdened. Addiction treatment access is uneven. Shelters and supportive housing programs are stretched thin. Emergency rooms face capacity challenges. Transit systems struggle with safety and staffing concerns. Social services often operate beyond sustainable limits.

So the question is not simply whether legislation creates new powers; the question is whether the province has invested adequately in the systems required to make those powers effective and fair. Laws alone do not solve complex social problems. Implementation matters. Resources matter. Training matters. Interagency coordination matters. Community trust matters. If those supporting systems are weak, even well-intentioned legislation can fall short.

Another concern raised about omnibus legislation is the tendency toward centralization. Large bills often shift authority upward, toward provincial ministries. That can sometimes improve consistency, but it can also reduce local flexibility. Ontario is a diverse province. What works in downtown Toronto may not work in Thunder Bay. What works in Ottawa may not work in Windsor. Different municipalities face different realities. Different police services face different pressures. Different transit systems face different challenges. Different social conditions require different responses. One-size-fits-all governance can create unintended consequence, and when omnibus bills restructure authority quickly, local stakeholders may not have sufficient opportunity to shape implementation.

Municipal leaders, advocacy organizations, legal experts, civil liberties groups, front-line workers, Indigenous communities and service providers: They all deserve meaningful consultation—not symbolic consultation, meaningful consultation—because legislation imposed without broad buy-in often creates long-term operational friction.

One of the most important questions we should ask about any major bill is simple: What evidence supports these measures? That shouldn't be a controversial question. Evidence-based policy-making is not an ideological position; it's basic good governance.

If a policy expands enforcement powers, we should ask whether similar policies elsewhere have produced measurable improvements. If regulations increase penalties, we

should ask whether harsher penalties actually reduce offending. If oversight structures are reformed, we should ask whether those reforms improve accountability. If governments claim communities will be safer, we should ask how that success will be measured.

Will there be public reporting? Will there be independent review? Will data be released transparently? Will unintended consequences be tracked? Will marginalized communities experience disproportionate impact? Will municipalities face new financial burdens? Will courts face additional strain? Will civil liberties concerns emerge? These are not anti-government questions; they are responsible democratic questions. Strong governments should welcome them.

One of the most delicate responsibilities of any democratic government is balancing public safety with civil liberties. That balance is never simple. Reasonable people can disagree about where the line should be drawn, but history teaches us something very important. Governments who expand powers during periods of public concern fail to evaluate the longer-term implication of those powers. Short-term gain, long-term pain happens regularly, and that is why oversight mechanisms are essential.

Whenever legislation increases enforcement authority, there should also be clear accountability structures. There should be transparency. There should be review mechanisms. There should be appeal processes. There should be independent oversight. There should be protections against misuse and there should be periodic reassessment.

A law that cannot withstand review is usually not a strong law. Now, again, this does not mean the government should avoid taking action. Public safety is a legitimate role of government. Citizens expect safe transit systems, safe neighbourhoods, safe public spaces, safe schools, safe workplaces, safe communities, and that expectation is entirely reasonable, but safety and rights are not opposing values. The strongest democracies protect both.

So, under an omnibus framework, that legislator may effectively be forced into an all-or-nothing decision. I like to think that there are members of the government who did not agree with hiding the Premier's phone records after the court ruled against him or taking away access to freedom-of-information requests. I would like to think that there are members of the government who did not agree with buying the Premier a luxury jet. That weakens meaningful legislative accountability.

Ideally, major reforms should stand on their own merits. If a proposal is strong, it should survive independent debate and scrutiny. If a proposal is controversial, it deserves focused attention. If a proposal affects civil liberties, municipal powers, enforcement authority or regulatory oversight, it should receive dedicated committee study. The public deserves that level of seriousness.

One issue governments sometimes underestimate is the importance of public trust. Even effective policies can lose legitimacy if citizens believe that legislation was rushed, politically packaged, or insufficiently debated or scrutinized. Trust matters. People comply more willingly with

laws when they believe the process behind those laws was fair and transparent. That means government should avoid treating legislative speed as the primary measure of success.

1550

Passing legislation quickly is not necessarily governing well. In fact, some of the most problematic policies in history were passed quickly. Careful government takes time, takes consultation, takes committee review, takes amendments, takes independent analysis. And while governments, understandably, want to demonstrate action, durable policy usually emerges from a thorough process rather than political urgency.

Another concern surrounding large legislative reforms is cost. Whenever governments introduce major enforcement oversight or regulatory changes, there are operational implications: training costs, administrative costs, compliance costs, technology costs, legal costs, court costs, municipal implementation costs, enforcement staffing costs, oversight infrastructure costs. Those costs don't disappear simply because legislation has been passed.

If governments underestimate implementation expenses, then the municipalities and the front-line agencies often have to absorb the pressure. Ontario municipalities are already under considerable financial strain. Property taxpayers are carrying increasing burdens. Transit systems need investment. Housing pressures continue. Infrastructure deficits remain significant. Health care systems require support.

Whenever the province expands responsibilities or expectations through legislation, it should also provide clarity about funding. Otherwise, local governments may be left implementing provincial priorities without sufficient resources. That creates frustration at every level.

Governments increasingly favour large, headline-driven legislation with a snappy title, partly because modern media environments reward simplicity, partly because governments want to project decisiveness, partly because voters are frustrated and impatient with institutional paralysis. And frankly, many citizens do want governments to act more quickly. That frustration is understandable. People see rising costs, housing challenges, health care pressures, crime concerns, transit safety issues, economic uncertainty and they want visible action. Governments respond to that demand.

But speed and effectiveness are not always the same thing. Complex problems rarely have single legislative solutions. For example, community safety is not just a policing issue. It's also connected to mental health, addiction treatment, housing stability, youth opportunity, economic conditions, education, family support systems, community infrastructure, social cohesion, long-term prevention. Legislation can be part of the solution, but legislation alone cannot substitute for comprehensive policy investment.

I want to pause here because I do not believe cynicism is useful. I fall victim to it myself on occasion, but I try and rise above it. Criticism without constructive perspective accomplishes very little.

Despite the concerns I have outlined, I do believe there are positive elements worth acknowledging. The government is responding to real public concern. That matters. Citizens expect governments to address safety issues. Ignoring those concerns would also be irresponsible. There is legitimate public frustration regarding disorder, violence, transit safety, organized criminal activity and the gaps that exist in oversight.

Government action in those areas is appropriate. The desire to modernize outdated systems is appropriate. The desire to create province-wide consistency in some regulatory areas can have benefits. The desire to strengthen accountability in industries or sectors that have faced criticism can also be legitimate.

This conversation should not become one of reflexive opposition. The question is not whether the government should act. The question is whether the government is acting carefully, transparently, proportionately and effectively. That distinction is important.

So what would a better approach look like? First, governments should narrow the scope of major legislation whenever possible. Separate major policy reforms into separate bills. Allow each proposal to receive focused debate. Allow committees to study issues independently. Allow stakeholders to engage meaningfully. Allow legislators to vote based on the merits of individual measures.

Second, governments should strengthen committee review processes. Committees should have sufficient time to hear witnesses. Experts should be consulted. Municipal leaders should be heard. Civil liberties organizations should be heard. Front-line workers should be heard. Police leadership, transit workers, community organizations should all be heard. Public policy improves when diverse perspectives are included.

Third, governments should commit to measurable accountability. If legislation promises improved safety outcomes, publish the data. Give us the numbers. If reforms reduce crime, demonstrate it. If enforcement powers are expanded, report how they're being used. If unintended consequences emerge, acknowledge them honestly. Strong governments don't fear transparency.

Governments should also invest in prevention alongside enforcement. Public safety is stronger when communities are stable, when young people have opportunities, when mental health services are accessible, when addiction treatment is available, when housing instability is reduced, when social systems function properly. Enforcement matters, but prevention matters too—maybe more—and lasting public safety requires both.

Finally, I want to say something about civic responsibility. Democracy does not end at the ballot box. Citizens have a responsibility to remain informed, to read beyond headlines, to ask questions, to examine legislation carefully, to participate respectfully in public debate, to reject both blind cynicism and blind partisanship, and perhaps most importantly, to resist the temptation to reduce every issue into simplistic political tribes. Because once we stop asking difficult questions, democratic accountability weakens.

When governments know legislation will receive only superficial examination, the quality of policy-making suffers. Healthy democracies require engaged citizens; not angry citizens, not cynical citizens—engaged citizens, thoughtful citizens. Citizens willing to support good policy, while still demanding accountability.

As we reflect on Ontario Bill 119, I think we should approach it with balance. There are understandable motivations behind this legislation. There are legitimate public concerns the government is trying to address. There are areas where modernization and reform may well be necessary. And there are aspects of public safety policy that deserve serious action.

But we should also recognize the broader concerns: Omnibus legislation can weaken security. Large bills can reduce transparency. Broad legislative packages can centralize authority too quickly. Public safety legislation requires especially careful oversight. Implementation challenges are real. Costs matter. Civil liberties matter. Local consultation matters. Democratic accountability matters.

The strength of a democracy is not measured by how quickly government passes laws; it is measured by whether those laws are carefully designed, transparently debated, fairly implemented and responsibly reviewed.

Ontario deserves legislation that is not only ambitious but accountable, not only forceful but thoughtful, not only politically effective but institutionally sound.

Regardless of our political affiliations, I believe most Ontarians would agree on at least this: We all want safer communities. We all want effective government. We all want fairness. We all want accountability. And we all benefit when legislation is approached with seriousness, balance and respect for democratic process.

1600

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Questions?

Mr. Ric Bresee: Speaker, through you to the member opposite: You've expressed the idea that there are pieces of this legislation that are potentially supportable and pieces that you had more challenge with.

One that I've been a little bit focused on, certainly, is the towing and vehicle storage sector. We know it plays a critical role in keeping our streets and our roads safe. We also know that the police and many of the involved agencies have let us know there are significant challenges, even deficits, within the current standing rules that this bill attempts to address. We want people to have confidence that it's safe and usable when they have the need for the tow system.

If I may, could I ask the member for her thoughts on that section of the bill? Will she be supporting at least that part of it?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to the honourable member for his question. I think that is something about the towing and the predatory pricing and taking advantage of people who have just recently been in an accident—it's unconscionable. I'm really glad that the government is stepping in to actually expand the windows

where that kind of behaviour can't happen. We've all heard the stories, and it needs to be addressed. I thank the government for that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Question?

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague from Kanata—Carleton. A couple of times during her debate she talked about the importance of planning and having feedback. I know with her background in the military she knows how important that is.

This bill, an omnibus bill with a variety of different topics, is a relatively thick bill tabled two days ago; we're debating it today. I'm just looking at some feedback in my emails from people who, for previous bills, where the bill had already passed, didn't know it was out and they didn't have the opportunity to provide feedback.

Maybe the member wouldn't mind talking about how it's important to hear from others when you are making a plan to ensure the plan is effective so you're not trying to fix it afterwards.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to my honourable colleague. Absolutely. I think one of the things I learned in the military is how important planning was. If you don't plan—failure to plan is planning to fail. There is a military saying for you.

The reason why you want to plan is, you want to reduce the amount of risk to any kind of operation, including making a piece of legislation. If you plan it and you consult well and you get input from everybody who has a particular perspective, there's a better chance that that piece of legislation is going to do exactly what you want it to do and there will be fewer unintended consequences.

Thank you very much for the question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Question?

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: I want to thank my colleague for her remarks today. I think they were very insightful—especially for a Thursday afternoon—and very thorough.

I wanted to ask about her thoughts on schedule 16 and the removal of judicial oversight on provincial offence plea deals, and if she had any particular thoughts she'd like to share with the House on that.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to my colleague for the question. Again, yes, I do have concerns. But what actually takes some of that concern away is that we're talking about provincial offences only—two years less a day, those kinds.

If we were talking about criminal offences and the plea deals related to more serious crimes, then I would be very uncomfortable. But I think with this, because we're talking strictly about provincial offences, the workaround that they came up with and the notifications so that it's published and people can see that it happened, I think that there will probably be enough protections there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Question?

Mr. David Smith: I could not agree more with the member on the statement that the government should not

avoid taking action. That is exactly what this government is doing.

A little concern I didn't hear this afternoon relates to beyond our borders, where there are growing concerns, globally, about potential vulnerability associated with China-manufactured technology, including drones used in public-sector operation.

By exploring measures to strengthen procedures, rules and restrict the use of high-risk equipment, while ensuring continued public service, our government is taking the prudent and proactive measures to safeguard Ontario's system.

Can the member opposite explain why you would not want to support something like that?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to my honourable colleague for the question.

My riding is Kanata–Carleton. We have drone manufacturers in Kanata–Carleton.

Interjections.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Oh, yes. Why not? I mean, we should.

Made-in-Canada solutions: We've got the smarts. We've got the people. We've got the talent. We've got everything we need to do that. I think, from a security perspective, having a Canadian-made product is absolutely the right way to go. Unfortunately, I don't see it in this bill anywhere.

I mean, I'm fully onside. I think we can have more high technology made in Canada and we have the companies who can do that work right away.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I appreciated the remarks from the member for Kanata–Carleton. As she points out, this is very much an omnibus bill that brings together many different schedules across a variety of issues.

Schedule 4 deals with restraining orders, for example. It allows restraining orders that are issued in other provinces to be enforced in Ontario. But I think, as the member will agree, a restraining order is only effective if it is properly enforced, and the legislation says nothing about strengthening and improving enforcement of restraining orders.

Does the member think that this was a missed opportunity for a very important community safety issue that could have been addressed in this bill?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to my honourable colleague for the question.

That's what I talked about: You can't do these things and only look at the legislative piece of it. If you don't have the economic piece of it, if you don't have the funding, if you don't have the training, if you don't have the resources, if you don't have the manpower, you're not going to be able to make it work.

I think that funding that enforcement piece—I mean, it's a good idea, but now you have to put your money where your mouth is. You have to make sure all the pieces you need to actually enforce it and implement it are actually in place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Questions?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I want to thank and commend my colleague from Kanata–Carleton for her great debate on this bill this afternoon. It was certainly very thorough and educational.

She talked about putting your money where your mouth is, and I wonder if she could comment about the government's plans to cut the spending in the justice sector in real dollars over the next three years and what that might mean in terms of being able to keep criminals behind bars or—as they extend the need for people to be put in prison via plea deals or other things—what kind of consequences that could have.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you to my honourable colleague for her question.

She's absolutely right. Then, this is exactly the same question as when we're talking about restraining orders. You can put a piece of legislation in place, but if you don't put all the other implementing pieces there as well—the training, the resources, the people, the support—it's not going to work. You're not going to be able to implement what you want.

We know it right now, with the court system and the backlogs and the problems that has caused in communities. They want a better opportunity to deal with crime, but the court backlog is making that really difficult. So funding the courts, I think, would probably be my number one priority.

1610

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Further debate? I recognize the member from Scarborough–Agincourt.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brian Saunderson): Understanding there was confusion there, we're on to further debate here, and I now recognize the Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: It's an honour to be in this House to debate today Bill 119, a very critical piece of legislation. The members opposite shouldn't be confounded by the fact that the member from Scarborough–Agincourt is excited to defend strong public policy that's tough on crime. We are all prepared to stand up for victims and law-abiding citizens. The question for the former Liberals who weakened our laws, who reduced jail capacity, who undermined police officers, the men and women in blue, is if they will do the same today in the rebuttal.

Madam Speaker, this bill, at its core, is a reaction to what we're seeing not just in Ontario. We're seeing a national phenomenon because Criminal Code offences are governed by the federal government, and the federal Prime Minister of the day, Justin Trudeau, over successive campaigns—

Interjection.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I mean, this is a matter of objective truth. The Harper government imposed mandatory sentences on criminals, and the former federal member of Parliament actually voted for—the Liberal Party cam-

paigned and implemented the weakening of every tough-on-crime law that exists on the books, and now they're confounded by the rise in crime, as if there's not causation to the weakness in the effect and the enforcement of law and how criminals have increased the level of recidivism because they've never felt more emboldened in this country to commit crime, knowing that the system is on their side instead of the side of law-abiding people.

Madam Speaker, they may dismiss their horrendous record, but it's actually interesting because—now that the member from Kanata has got me going, I guess I'll go on a tangent. Yesterday, an aspiring Liberal, which seems oxymoronical, but an aspiring Liberal, a gentleman who was a former cabinet minister who served with the member from Kanata in the Parliament of Canada, is running on a campaign to re-embrace and reimpose the Justin Trudeau legacy of crime in the province.

I must say, there are not many Canadians who, in good conscience, want to bring back the Trudeau 2.0 legacy to this province. We believe—I would argue, all Canadians increasingly believe that balance needs to be positioned on the side of law-abiding people, and Bill 119—the Solicitor General of Ontario, the Attorney General of Ontario, the associate ministers, the parliamentary assistants have built out a thorough, comprehensive solution to the problems we see in cities and small towns and villages from coast to coast to coast. The solution to the rise in crime is an increase of enforcement, is a strengthening of penalties, is a message of zero tolerance.

Madam Speaker, the most consequential element of this bill, in my opinion, is the fact that we will require the publication of individuals who have committed a heinous sex offence, a crime that could be no more destructive to a soul, to a person, to the conscience and the integrity of an individual than an act of sexual crime. These are high-risk offenders. These are people who have a propensity to reoffend. So the question for legislators is, do we believe today that the publication of those names is in the provincial interest, in the interest of Ontario?

I am proud—proud of our Premier that, notwithstanding the opposition of some in the Liberal Party when they had the chance to implement the policy provincially or nationally, notwithstanding that aversion to this change, I'm proud that this government is going to amend the Community Safety and Policing Act to authorize the OPP commissioner to publish those names of individuals who are high-risk sex offenders.

Madam Speaker, it must be said, my sense of pride is not just in this piece of legislation, but to share my time with the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. I want to thank the government House leader for his continuous leadership in this space.

But going back to the point: The sex offender registry matters. I actually believe this matters for any one of us who have been afflicted by violence, sexual crimes, human trafficking. These are amongst the worst of them all. I believe it's in the interest of the parents, in the interest of a family, to have access to that knowledge. We need to democratize those among us who have committed the

most heinous crimes, particularly for our children and vulnerable sects of the population.

I support amending, when it comes to record checks, allowing eligible bodies—it could be a local police station, for example—to be able to process record checks so that anyone can go to a police station and find the information where it is required. Of course, the feds need to accept this change, and we hope that they will listen to the people of Ontario—but making it easier and faster for record checks.

I think of coaches. I think of those that work with our children and vulnerable segments—those with intellectual or developmental disabilities, those within congregate care homes. I mean, my goodness, this is for every one of us who's had a child or a grandparent in the care of someone, and it is for them that we believe this policy is foundational to send a signal of zero tolerance.

I want to give an acknowledgement to the minister responsible for women's social and economic opportunities, because she has been a leading voice in toughening the laws against those who commit acts of violence against children and women, particularly when it comes to sexual crimes. I'm grateful to you. It could be on announcing a child care program that cut the fees by 50% to support more women in the economy, or tougher sentences to protect them in our society. Either way, you're making a difference, and I'm grateful for that.

I also want to acknowledge human trafficking. We know this too well. I do believe this is an issue that can bring all members together in this House. The esteemed member from the riding of Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock has done good work—frankly, landmark work in the nation—when it comes to establishing a plan, a credible plan, to confront the rise of human trafficking.

It was deeply unsettling to know that the 400-series highways have a disproportionate number. In fact, the overwhelming majority of trafficking takes place in this province off those series of highways. I represent a community with the 400 that splits my riding and the 401 in the parliamentary assistant's—we all live through these exchanges. And to think that every day, you're driving on the road, you're going to work, over course of your day, and someone beside you—could be a young child, a young woman or boy—could be trafficked. It's disturbing when you understand the numbers are rising.

I believe Bill 119 sets in motion the increase of debt relief for victims who are forced or coerced into debt from trafficking, up to \$50,000. That helps these victims rebuild their lives. It goes back to the thesis of our Premier and as Progressive Conservatives: We need to bring the balance—the pendulum that has swung so radically in the favour of criminals instead of on the side of law-abiding citizens and the victims of crime.

Public sentiment, public confidence in our criminal system is at an all-time low. I wonder why, Madam Speaker. I just wonder why—because people have seen the effects. An individual breaks into your home. You respond using some lethality to defend your children, and the defender is charged under our system. I appreciate—in the most infamous example—that was thrown out of the courts. But

just the thought that the father or mother defending their children—unbeknownst, at 3 in the morning—from an intruder in their home, and the system's first instinct was, "Disproportionate use of force by the parent defending their elementary school children." That's insanity. It undermines confidence and, frankly, it bewilders all of us who actually have a modicum of common sense left within us. We need to do better.

I believe in sending a signal that if you are going to be part of the heinous elements—this dark element of trafficking—then you're going to pay the price, both in the time you should spend in jail as well as the financial cost for the victims of crime.

1620

We also believe adding victims of criminal harassment to the Victims' Bill of Rights ensures that we have access to protections and supports and greater recognition in the justice system. That is important to me; I think it is important to you, that we actually codify that victims of criminal harassment. They too deserve to have fundamental rights protected.

It strengthens the support for vulnerable individuals who are facing intimidation, repeat harassment, an issue that I know we have talked about often with women who are forced into marriages against their will or to stay with violent partners. We heard this through the IPV discussions and debate at committee. This is a response to that sad reality that I think certainly Canadians and Western citizens and families face.

I think about transit. We've got a subway in Vaughan; we're very excited—the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre—it's operational. We're building another one, as you know: more stops through Thornhill and the city of Vaughan. We're proud of this investment. Moving the subway station out of Toronto into the GTHA is foundational to moving people, reducing gridlock, reducing emissions, improving the productivity of our economy. It's a win win win win win, and we're in favour of doing that.

But look, it's not as prevalent in Vaughan, but we see it in Toronto, we see it everywhere, where you go to the subway—and I have friends of mine, men and women, who believe that it is not a safe space for a woman or a man late at night to go on the subway any longer, because we have allowed a lawless society to be normalized. It's terrible, because the signal it sends is that society is comfortable with this type of disruption to a long-standing sort of bargain in this province: We build the infrastructure; it should be accessible to all—universal access, be it to health care, education or transit. I mean, we've got to remove the barriers. I never thought that a psychological barrier to a potential transit user would be related to an individual not wanting to take a subway or a GO station or a bus on the basis that they may be harmed.

How many incidents have we seen on the TTC just in the last six months, Madam Speaker? It's worrying. It's troubling, and because of this government, we're actually seeing municipalities and councils and transit authorities finally, as we saw in the city of Toronto, I believe, yesterday, as I observed in the news and in the broadcast last

night, that they are taking some action in this respect, because this law enables and fundamentally gives special constables the authority to stop individuals from using illegal drugs.

Madam Speaker, I will tell you, as a nephew who saw my uncle live with addictions his entire life—a good man, a smart man, a creative man, but he lived with this ailment. So I don't come at this with a—you know, I come at this with compassion. I've seen it, I've felt it, I've seen the pain and I've seen the glory of redemption and of the ability of someone to get back on their feet through recovery. So I look at these circumstances with a humanitarian lens, but at the end of the day, if you're casually using illicit drugs in the presence of families and children, that cannot be normalized, first of all, as a society. We need to stop this and abruptly end it, but more importantly, we need to find a path for those individuals for better addiction treatment. And the province has adopted this model, where we put more funding and more resources on a path to recovery instead of just enablement. But that's not what this bill does, and I don't want to relitigate that debate.

My point simply is we need the authority of special constables to, in a humane and responsible manner, remove individuals who may cause harm to others from our transit system so that individuals and young people and a student going to college or university or a parent or a worker or senior going to medical appointment on university row feel confident that they can return home safe. It's a basic, fundamental responsibility of all governments—municipal, provincial, federal—and I'm grateful that the government has made this a priority.

I also recognize retail theft. We have malls: Vaughan Mills. We've got Yorkdale. Think of the big ones across—the Promenade—just so many malls across the GTA and, I'm sure, many in your own communities. This is a \$9-billion cost to the economy on an annualized basis because retailers are facing an increasing level of crime. Again, I don't want to normalize that you're in a store and you're in a hold pattern, with alarms going off. I feel like we are normalizing elements of—it almost feels like Gotham City sometimes. This is not normal, and we need to say it out loud—that we are going to work to confront that upending of decency within our society.

The retail theft is real—and many of these are small businesses; these aren't just the big guys. I'm thinking about the small and medium-sized enterprises that are already facing a disproportionate challenge in this economy, with the tariffs and the broader economic uncertainty. They don't need billions of dollars—\$9.1 billion, to be specific—this year alone of lost and stolen goods because the system doesn't have sufficient powers and authorities when it comes to resolving cases faster.

What I appreciate about the bill—I am grateful to the Solicitor General, Attorney General and Premier—is that this bill will allow speed for prosecutors and defendants to enter plea agreements without judicial oversight. So it allows the parties to get to a deal faster. It reduces the court backlog—we often hear as the principal reason why they're going to vote against this bill. But we're dealing

with that. We accept it. We understand that it's a challenge. We're resolving it by creating speed, authority and a sort of autonomy amongst those bodies to get on with getting deals, improve the efficiency of our court system, send a message of zero tolerance.

Madam Speaker, I want to recognize something that is not perhaps specifically germane to the issue of safety, but it is relevant to the issue of the security of our country. I believe I have a very strong, perhaps well-articulated position when it comes to the level of awareness—the awakening Canadians must make—of intersecting economic interests and national security interests. These aren't just an issue for the federal Parliament anymore. Municipal and provincial governments must be seized with the rise of nefarious regimes abroad that are working to undermine our economy, undermine our industrial policy, undermine our cyber security. Every day, these threats manifest through attacks, and both economic—it could be the espionage, or it could be stealing IP of our country and our industry. There are just so many case studies of this.

We were the only party to campaign on an intentional decoupling of Chinese procurement in the energy sector, wherever it is possible, in the national interests of Canada.

This bill includes restrictions on the future context of the purchase of Chinese-made drones. The RCMP recently restricted the use of Chinese-made drones after they determined the risk posed in policing and for national security purposes. We're all aware of the CSIS reports on interference and on very real threats to our infrastructure, cyber and otherwise. So we brought forth this bill. And it's the minister of government and consumer services, the member from Oakville, who pioneered this provision of the bill, specifically to send a signal that we're going to be purchasing from allied authorities.

It is not coincidental that today the Premier announced a strategy to double down on a made-in-Ontario industrial defence strategy, where we're calling on the federal government to invest more in this province to build the ships and the aircraft and the hardware to defend democratic states abroad, as we increase our GDP—our NATO defence spending and hitting 5%. Ontario needs to be at the centre of that action, and we will build more made-in-Canada. As you all know, the federal government announced a plan for aircraft yesterday with a European supplier. These are elements of momentum that are going to create jobs and growth for the people of Ontario.

Madam Speaker, I believe Bill 119 is comprehensive because it responds to a multitude of issues.

Dealing with tow trucks—it may seem niche to some, but for those who consume the news, every few weeks you hear of another example of, frankly, low standards of qualification, and sometimes of criminality and other issues. I'm grateful that we now have clear rules of conduct for tow truck drivers at collision scenes. It reduces pressure on those who have been involved in an incident, and it increases the responsibility on all parties, I think, more importantly, to work together and ultimately to improve the integrity of the system.

1630

From tow trucks to illicit drugs, to record checks and retail theft, to countering the brutal rise of human trafficking and publicizing the names of heinous sexual offenders, I am very proud and very grateful for the government's leadership in this space.

I want to thank you and affirm to you that I look forward to splitting time with the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It is now time for questions and comments.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I was listening to the comments of the Minister of Energy, particularly his comments about the government's concern for victims of sexual assault and other crimes. I find it quite extraordinary that a government that, in 2019, dramatically cut back support for victims of sexual assault—victims of trafficking, victims of rape and domestic abuse were subject to substantial cuts in the support they needed.

Victims advocates at the time called on the government to restore the funding so that these women who had been sexually assaulted would get the support that they needed. The government did not do that. All this talk about support for victims, and there is not a single sentence in this bill about it.

Why is the government not restoring the aid to victims of sexual assault that they cut in 2019?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: First off, the government of Ontario, through this proposal that is germane to the question, specifically deals with enhancements of support for victims on human trafficking.

If the member is concerned about supports for victims, then he will affirm support for \$50,000 in debt collection for relief for victims. That means we are literally helping to rebuild the lives of victims by imposing monetary penalties on those who commit a heinous act.

I accept the premise victims need support. It's why this bill codifies and elevates the financial penalty imposed on the criminal. That sounds like a sensible response to the problem the member opposite defined today.

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

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the minister for his comments on all the elements of the bill and many of the elements working to keep our community safer.

One of the elements he didn't get a chance to speak on that I wanted to hear his thoughts on was about giving administrative monetary penalty system powers to municipalities such as King township in his riding. As a rural area, it has a lot of illegal truck parking lots growing in that area, just like in Halton Hills, the area I represent. I wanted to know what that element of this bill will mean for his community.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member for the question and for his concern. Indeed, Madam Speaker, we would agree; the misuse of land is very important to a lot of us. I represent the community of King and Vaughan. Caledon—I don't represent Caledon, but on the periphery.

These are the communities—Halton Hills—that effectively have become the unofficial hot spots for illegal land use.

We believe in maintaining the integrity of land use. A farm should be for production of a crop or some sort of value-add to the agri-food industry. You cannot allow the increasing number of truck depots and illegal truck parking lots to take hold of municipal and rural communities. In King, we have at least nine.

The municipalities of Vaughan and King have written to the province asking us for tougher—a capacity law. That's exactly what we've done and codified through that bill, and I believe it's going to make a difference.

In the words of the AMO president who expressed gratitude to the province, they said that will give them the enforcement regime that will actually get these folks out of our communities.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I heard the member talk about improving safety. They talked about how, under this government, people no longer feel safe riding the subway home. And the reason people don't feel safe riding the subway home is because there are 85,000 people homeless in this province. Many of them have to use the subway as their abode—as their place to sleep—because there's no other place. This government refuses to build affordable housing, while allowing landlords to actually kick people out of affordable housing.

So would you not say that the best way to make the subway safe would be to eliminate homelessness, to actually provide housing for everyone, so that no one is being forced to sleep on the subway?

I just want to clarify that I'm not saying the homeless are criminals. The homeless are the most common victims of criminals. So why would you put so many people in that vulnerable position? Why not make our province safer and eliminate the 85,000 homeless and provide housing for the 85,000 homeless that you've made—

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: There is, no doubt, a multitude—a layered approach that has to be taken dealing with homelessness. Not one policy alone will fix that. I think the member would acknowledge that.

Social housing is important, which is why the province increased funding in successive budgets to build more social housing, working with CMHC and other authorities to build more in your community alone—in the city of Toronto, in many municipalities of the province of Ontario.

But the answer to the question—I'll bring it back to the bill, which is the point of this discussion; I am not the minister responsible for all those things. What I can say is, I can speak in relevance to the bill. The bill provides authority for enforcement, the capacity of officers to be on the ground and to provide some sense of support for law-abiding transit users. I believe that is a sensible policy.

Olivia Chow of Toronto announced yesterday a policy of enforcement aligned with this principle.

I guess the question fundamentally for the member from Toronto is: Do you agree with the mayor of Toronto?

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

Mr. Aris Babikian: Thank you to the member for King–Vaughan for his passionate defence of public safety and passionate commitment to serving the public.

I would like to touch upon an issue which is very important, and that is the private security sector issue.

Today, as we stand, many retail store owners don't want to hire private security people because they know that they don't have the power to interfere. I know many of them are willing to hire public security people so that they can relieve the police force to address more important criminal issues.

By empowering the private sector police security and bringing them under strict control, training and the accountability—

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I think the member for Scarborough–Agincourt outlines a very legitimate concern with respect to private security.

Look, I think about the faith communities in my own riding, and I can only imagine Scarborough, which is—you've got the United Nations, proudly, for yourself and the member from Scarborough Centre. You want to defend faith communities—mosques and temples and gurdwaras and churches and synagogues that may exist there. They ought to be safe, and they've had to, regrettably, turn to private security.

But this is where we're at as a country. When we talk to the normalization of crime across Canada—we've never seen more churches burned in this country. We've never seen more hate inflicted, more hate crimes on synagogues and mosques. That's such an un-Canadian response, and yet the challenge we face is a lack of standardization and training.

This bill resolves that problem. It increases the training, it increases the oversight, it keeps up with the rate of change within the industry, and that's a good thing for everyone who uses, regrettably, or has to rely on private security.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I'm going to ask the member: Do you not agree that the best way to make our communities safer is to actually prevent crime? Because everything this government talks about is punishing people who have committed crimes. Would we rather not be never a victim of crime than to have somebody victimize us and then punish them?

I've talked to police in Toronto, in Durham region, in Peterborough, and all of them say that 50% of the calls they get go to homeless encampments. Because if people think they are not safe in their cars or in their homes, can you imagine if the only home that you have, the only protection you have from the outside, from criminals, is a tent? So why not provide housing for the 85,000 that this

government has made homeless and reduce, eliminate the—

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

We have time for a very quick response from the Minister of Energy and Mines.

1640

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, this piece of legislation responds to the fundamental issues afflicting Canadians. Those who are involved in the most heinous sexual crimes, their names should be publicly disclosed to families. Private security should have better regulation and oversight. We need to have transit that is safe for families, students and for seniors who use it every day. We need to get rid of illegal drugs and make it more difficult for the equipment, for bad actors in our communities—getting them in jail or some form of penalty for distributing illicit drugs that lead to tens of thousands of people dying including through fentanyl each and every—

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

Further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'd like to start off by reading, if you'll indulge me, a missing person of Canada announcement. This is a missing boy in Sudbury. His name is Dominic Rovinelli. He's 13, and he was last seen on May 16, 2026. The Sudbury OPP is seeking the public's assistance in locating this individual. He was last seen daytime, May 16. He's known to frequent the New Sudbury and Birkdale areas. He's 5 foot 6, large build, short blond hair and brown eyes. If anybody has any information regarding Dominic's whereabouts, please call OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Thank you.

MPP Jamie West: Thanks, Jess.

Ms. Jessica Bell: And it is appropriate, given the bill that we are talking about today. This bill is entitled Bill 119, Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act. It's a big bill. It came out, I believe, yesterday. Was it yesterday? It was yesterday.

MPP Jamie West: Two days ago.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Two days ago.

Is this bill terrible? No, there are some things in this bill that are certainly supportable.

One of the challenges we have with a bill coming out and us having just two days to begin debate on it is that it is difficult to gather information from stakeholders, experts, victims, the legal community, social service agencies, the trucking authority, adoption agencies, CAS—the many stakeholders that are affected by this bill. It's very difficult to get information for us to critically assess this bill with the goal of improving it with the truncated timelines that we're dealing with here. And what happens is that it results in a bill that isn't to the standard that it should be. It means that the quality of the legislation and its impact on people could have unintended consequences. So I have some concerns about that, and I just want to state that from the outset.

And my question to the government is, are you going to take this to committee? My request is that you take it to committee. Because this is a substantive bill.

I want to start off by going through some of the key schedules in the bill and summarizing them in layperson's terms so that people understand what this bill is about. And then, for some of these schedules, I'm going to go into more detail, because some of them are pretty relevant.

Schedule 1 essentially changes the Child, Youth and Family Services Act. It gives new powers to directors to okay individuals for adoption if the person meets certain criteria—supportable.

The second thing about schedule 1 which I think warrants an additional look is that it changes conditions in which children and youth can be placed in a locked room while in a secure custody situation. Now, that is pretty substantial. What does that mean? What motivated this change? Who is asking for it? I think it's important that we see the regulations and that we hear from people about what this actually means, because that is significant.

Schedule 2 is about Christopher's Law (Sex Offender Registry). It essentially aligns the sex offender registry with recent changes to the federal government's changes to the sex offender registry—supportable.

Schedule 3 is an interesting one. It is the Community Safety and Policing Act—that's what it changes—and it gives the minister further powers to direct police boards on establishing priorities that the boards must reflect in their strategic plans. Now, that is very interesting, because in a representative democracy like this one, it's very important that policing services operate independently from politicians. That's pretty fundamental; it's similar to making sure that the legal system operates independently from politicians. It ensures accountability. So I'm curious about why the minister is choosing to give themselves greater overreach over police service boards and police services. What is the reason for that? I've got some questions about that.

It also has another interesting change, which is that it restricts police service board meetings from prescribed persons. What does that mean? Who is not allowed to go to a police services meeting? I would like to know a little bit more about that. Now, if it's a case of a police officer who has been found guilty of misconduct and they're not allowed to attend police services meetings, okay, that would make sense. But if it's general members of the public who are not allowed to attend police service meetings—or would it be politicians who are not allowed to attend police service meetings? I don't know. But there's some questions that I have about that. It seems like overreach.

Another thing with schedule 3 is that it makes changes to allow the minister to order “the inspector general to investigate and report on ... the provision of adequate and effective policing in the affected area” in certain circumstances. That's wordy. What I think that means is that it allows the inspector general to investigate whether policing in a certain area is being done appropriately. I think

that's supportable. That makes sense; we do need oversight.

I've had the unpleasant experience—this is just a personal example—of a vehicle, a rental car, unfortunately being stolen. I did not know that a Jeep Cherokee is one of the most popular vehicles to be stolen in Ontario. I mistakenly rented one, thinking that it looked interesting, it would be nice to drive. Next day, it was stolen. I called the police, and they said, “There's nothing we can do, sorry. It's probably on a boat leaving the Montreal port.”

I then called the car rental company and said, “The car I rented from you has been stolen. What do I do?” They immediately got into a vehicle and found the car within 45 minutes because they had put two GPS signals in the car.

Interjection: Wow.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yeah.

And I had a conversation with the car rental company immediately after that, and I said, “Is this common for the police to not investigate even though they know that there's a GPS in the car and it is actually pretty easy to find?” The car rental company said, “Yep. They're not doing a lot on that front.”

I remember leaving that conversation and thinking to myself, it is important that there is oversight and the opportunity for investigations into policing—because I wondered why they were not doing more to track down a \$70,000 vehicle. So I don't mind that one.

Schedule 3 also provides for the creation of a high-risk offenders list to be made publicly available by 2027—certainly supportable.

Schedule 4 is the Enforcement of Canadian Restraining Orders Act. This would allow restraining orders made by Canadian courts in other jurisdictions to be enforceable in Ontario. This also makes sense. I don't know why it hasn't been done already. You can imagine an individual moving to Ontario hoping that their ex-partner does not find them and then discovering that the restraining order that they had placed on them in another province was not applicable here. That sounds like a horrifying situation, so it's good that it is being addressed.

I also think that when we're talking about restraining orders, we need to make sure that they are properly enforceable. The reason why I say that is because I just did a quick look at how many murders of women took place in the last two years in Ontario, and the number that came up was 62. I'm going to hazard a guess that most of those murders were done by their partners or ex-partners, because that is often the case. I'm going to also hazard a guess that in most instances a restraining order had been placed on that individual who had then eventually managed to kill their ex or their partner. And when I read those statistics, I think to myself it's not just enough that we have a restraining order system; it is essential that those restraining orders are properly enforced, and, clearly, there is more that we can do in Ontario.

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Schedule 6 is also interesting to me. It is the Pill Presses and Precursors Act, 2026, and what this essentially does is it makes it a provincial offence to possess a pill press in

most cases. So essentially, what this means is that it gives police officers more authority to go in and arrest an individual if they have equipment that allows them to make a whole lot of opioid drugs, which they are then selling on the market. I could see this as certainly supportable.

But when I think about this, what I also think about is the government's lack of action on dealing with downstream issues around helping people who are addicted to fentanyl, who are addicted to opioids, to have the treatment options that they need to no longer be addicted. I had the privilege of sitting in public accounts, where we investigated the government's opioid addiction strategy, and it's safe to say that the government's opioid addiction strategy is lacking. It's falling short.

I think that this is very important, because the number of people who are dying from overdoses in Ontario has gone up by 300%. Seven people a day die from overdoses in Ontario today, and it's affecting all of us. We all know someone—a family member, a member of our extended family, friends—who have addiction challenges. We all have that experience. And we also know that people will go to great lengths to find the drugs that they need, and that we need a comprehensive approach to dealing with this issue, which includes not just having an effective response at stopping drugs from entering the market in the first place, but also having effective treatment for people who are wanting to manage their addiction and to engage in addiction withdrawal; and then also to ensure that there is a harm-reduction approach, so if there are people using, they don't die from an overdose because they have injected toxic drugs into their bloodstream.

While this government is talking a lot about getting tough on crime, what we're not seeing are evidence-based methods to ensure that an individual can go to a family doctor or an emergency room or a hospital to get addiction management services. Right now, it's actually pretty hard to get. So I think there's a lot that the government can do on that.

Schedule 7 is the Planning Act changes. It allows municipalities to impose administrative penalties for land uses that violate zoning bylaws. Essentially, the purpose of this is to stop illegal truck yards that have been popping up in areas around the GTHA. This is a good thing. I've had meetings with municipalities who have raised this issue with me. They have said, “We do not have the tools and the bylaw power to go into an area where we know there are a lot of trucks being located on farmland, and there's very little that we can do.” This is actually quite an issue. Neighbours are often concerned about trucks going in and out at all hours of the day, waking people up. There are a lot of lights, there is a lot of noise and it's not what this land is for. Planning exists for a reason.

Schedule 9—I'm going to skip—is the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017. This is a good schedule; we like this schedule. Essentially what this schedule does is it helps individuals who have been trafficked. What we have heard in the Legislature is that sometimes, if an individual is being trafficked, their traf-

ficker will have them take out a whole host of credit cards. They'll have them go to a bank and have them take out a whole lot of money which then is handed over to the trafficker. So once a person is able to leave that situation, not only are they traumatized, but they often have thousands of dollars of debts that they now need to pay back. It makes it very difficult for these individuals to find a place to rent, go to college or university, save—you know, get their life in order. What this schedule does is it says that individuals who are trafficked, and who have ended up with what's called coerced debt, will essentially have that debt for a variety of reasons cleared. That's a good thing.

We would like to see some assurances from the government that this schedule is retroactive. So it doesn't just apply from now, moving forward to people who are going to be incurred with coerced debt in the future, but it also applies to individuals who have come and had meetings with your side and ours, and explained how difficult it is for them to get out of the debt that has been forced upon them. It should be retroactive, and we would like to see that with amendments.

Schedule 11—this is an interesting one; these are changes to the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act. What this essentially does is it says that for any animal—not just dogs, but also cats and other animals—if they have been required to undergo a medically unnecessary procedure—so what we're talking about here is if their ears or tails are docked—it must be reported. That's essentially what schedule 11 does. What we would like to see, maybe in amendments, is that the government move ahead with banning the practice—not just tracking the practice, but banning the practice of medically unnecessary procedures.

Schedule 14 is changes to the Special Investigations Unit Act, and this is supportable. This is a necessary change that will allow the SIU to investigate a discharge of firearm instances of special constables. This makes sense. The SIU plays a very important role, and it must be strengthened so that it can ensure that there are impartial and rigorous investigations into instances where someone dies in the presence of police—to ensure that the police force is accountable and trusted.

I want to talk a little bit about what's not in the bill in my concluding remarks. I gave a summary—I think that's important—but I want to talk a little bit about what's in the bill. The reason why I want to talk a little bit about what's in the bill is because this government—maybe it's because all these prisoners were released from jail and you don't know where they are, and there are a lot of issues around that because it undercuts your “tough on crime” message. There's a lot of talk about how you're going to fix some of the issues with crime in Ontario. And one of the issues that I think this government is not doing enough about is the issue with our backlogged court system. The reason why I think that's important to address and to conclude on is because it's a serious issue. It's a very serious issue, and I want to give you an extent of how bad it is.

In 2025, there were 4,790 sexual assault cases. So enough evidence was collected for individuals to be charged and these cases were on their way through the court system. Because of court backlogs and delays, 1,639 of these cases were dropped—not because there was insufficient evidence, not because the victim changed their mind and decided they didn't want to proceed with it, but because they ran out of time because of court backlogs.

So when we're talking about getting tough on crime, I wonder why this government isn't getting more serious about court backlogs and its failure to provide justice to people who have had the courage to come forward after being traumatized, after having a crime imposed upon them, and then to find out that the court system is not going to give them their day in court.

It's not just sexual assault. I had a look at some of the other major crimes and I want to read out a few of them to conclude. Homicide: There were 394 cases received of homicide; 102 of them were withdrawn. That's a lot—because of court backlogs, that's why. Then there's break-and-enter: 6,863 cases received, and of those, 2,609 were withdrawn or stayed before trial. So those individuals that are victims of break-and-enter—those individuals, family members who have had a loved one who was killed; literally thousands of them—will not see their day in court because of court backlogs. That is entirely upon the Ontario government.

1700

We just went through a budget process. I saw how much money this government is allocating to the Attorney General and the Ministry of the Attorney General, which includes courts, and it is very clear that it is a cut. So these issues around court backlogs are going to go from very, very bad to worse. I'm very concerned about that.

I would have liked to have seen—and I hope to see—measures to address some of these very serious issues.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to commend my colleague the member for University–Rosedale on her remarks. I think she did an excellent job of giving us an overview of what is in the bill and pointing out the many missed opportunities that the government could have used to actually improve safety in Ontario communities.

One of the concerns about this bill that I've been hearing is around the fact that much of the commitments that have been made, the public announcements that have been made, by this government about this legislation—much of that concerns issues that aren't reflected in the actual bill, that it's all going to be left to regulation, the action on transit safety, retail theft and animal welfare. Is that a concern?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member for that question. Yes, this is a big bill. It's a big omnibus bill that came out two days ago. It's pretty significant. What we find is that for a lot of the schedules, we don't know exactly what they mean and what impact they will have until the regulations are released. Currently, a lot of these

regulations have not been released, so we've got a lot of unanswered questions.

For me, one of the big ones is, what new authority does the minister now want when it comes to police services? Who can come to a meeting, and who cannot? How are you determining priorities? Why do you want to determine priorities? I have a lot of questions about that, and we just don't know what the answers are until we start seeing the regulations, so we have some concerns.

And yes, an additional thing is that the government has made a lot of announcements. But when I go through the bill, I just don't see that information. We just heard about Chinese drones. I'm not seeing it. I'm not seeing it in the bill.

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

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the member from University–Rosedale for her comments and for her support on elements of the bill.

I wanted to ask her about high-risk offenders. Police already share information with communities about high-risk offenders, but it's often fragmented, difficult to find. Our proposed amendments in the bill would establish a centralized, province-wide website similar to other models used elsewhere to enhance that transparency, that public awareness, that access. I wanted to know the member's thoughts on that element of the bill.

Ms. Jessica Bell: We all agree on the goal. I think everyone here wants Ontario to be a place where there is minimal crime; where violence isn't a thing; where people can take the TTC, marry, go on dates, go into underground parking lots, go where they go without worrying about their personal safety and what's going to happen to them. We agree on that.

When it comes to the registry for high-risk offenders: At first blush, it seems supportable. I think that's the kind of information that people want to know. If you're an individual who is impacted by a crime and you are learning that individual is being released from prison, I think that's something you would want to know.

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

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague from University–Rosedale for reading that statement about 13-year-old Dominic Rovinelli who is missing in Sudbury.

We're talking about the end results of crime, and that's important as well. But I know that you have been passionate about the affordability of housing and rent, that sort of thing. We know that, since the Premier has come into power, 85,000 people are now homeless. We have tent cities in Sudbury—we've never had tent cities before—and all across the province. Probably in every riding there are multiple tent cities.

I want to know your thoughts. Could we be preventing crime if people had safe, affordable, accessible housing?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for that question. Last night, I was watching hockey, and I noticed there was an advertisement that came up talking about how the Ontario government was taking steps to ensure that drug injection

sites were not next to parks. And I thought to myself, wouldn't it be wonderful if all that money that this government is spending on partisan advertising were re-directed to an effective mental health and addictions strategy and a supportive housing program so we could tackle some of the root-cause issues that we're seeing in our parks, our neighbourhoods and our cities?

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

Mr. Aris Babikian: Madam Speaker, I'm going to touch upon the private security sector because, unfortunately, earlier I didn't have enough time to express myself and my question.

This is a very important industry for us because the police are stretched and we need additional human resources. Criminals, right now, know that the current security-sector people don't have the power. This bill will give that sector the power to act properly and deter criminals from perpetrating their crimes. They will be under strict control of the police. They will have proper training, accountability etc.

Will my colleague on the opposition side support this bill so that we can enhance the safety and security of our public?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for raising that issue. This is a big omnibus bill. We just got it two days ago. I think you're referring to schedule 10, which is the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, which essentially makes largely technical amendments and would allow the registrar to use discretion to determine if an investigation into a complaint made against a security guard is warranted.

When I read that, my assumption is that it would provide greater oversight over the security industry. What I'm not reading in this bill are measures to tackle criminals that interact with security, so I'm a little confused about what your question is. Maybe in the second round you could provide me with more information so I can better answer it.

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

MPP Jamie West: The member talked about how this bill was tabled two days ago. It's a thick half-inch or quarter-inch bill with multiple schedules, tabled two days ago and debated today—little time to have any consultation, reflection. There are a bunch of spelling errors in the bill, for example, that shouldn't have gone through.

And I was thinking about our House sitting schedule. We didn't return until, I think, October. We rose early in December. We didn't come back until—well, normally in Sudbury the snow would sort of be melting; we had a giant snowstorm. But was it the end of March, beginning of April?

So there seems to be enough time to shop these ideas around. If we're not going to be sitting at Queen's Park and we're going to rise more often to speak to people in our ridings, wouldn't it make sense for the government to say, "Look, here are the bills that are coming. We're not going to sit at Queen's Park for a while. Why don't you

get feedback for us? Why don't you provide information to us so that we can have the best possible bills?"

I don't understand why they don't do that, and I'm wondering if you have any thoughts about this.

Ms. Jessica Bell: These are fairly low-ball questions that you're asking me, member for Sudbury. With a bill like this, it's the kind of bill that affects a lot of people, a lot of stakeholders, a lot of organizations. A lot of people interact with the criminal justice system. A lot of people have experienced crime. There are people who are in the social work industry, who work in the tow truck industry, who care about the welfare of animals, dogs and cats, people who might want to adopt a child—like, this is a big bill that affects a lot of things. My hope is that we do not just ram this bill through and don't give it the attention and thought that it deserves. So that's a question to you all: Can you take this bill to committee so that we can give it the attention it deserves?

1710

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A very quick question and response.

Mr. David Smith: Thank you to the member across the way. I know that you have expressed great concerns and there are certain elements of the bill that you do admire or would like to support.

Illegal drug production operations, often hidden within commercial space, pose serious damage and danger to surrounding neighbourhoods. These proposed measures will ensure landlords are held accountable if they knowingly permit such activity. How do you feel that you would want—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A very quick response from the member from University–Rosedale.

Ms. Jessica Bell: We agree on the goal: We want Ontario to be a place where crime isn't a thing and violence isn't a thing. The member opposite mentioned matters related to holding landlords to account. I don't see it in the bill. I have gone through the bill, and I don't see it in the bill, so maybe we can talk afterwards and you can identify to me what it is—

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

Further debate? I recognize the member for Don Valley North.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Thank you very much, Speaker. I was—

Interjections.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: See, that is the Thursday afternoon spirit that I love at the Ontario Legislature. It's all about camaraderie and being together.

Speaker, it's always a pleasure to be able to rise in this House to speak on a bill, especially on Thursday at 5:15. My colleagues are always the most attentive and engaging. I rise today to speak regarding Bill 119, the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, 2026.

Let me begin with a simple point: Every person in Ontario deserves to feel safe. Every parent deserves to know their child can walk to school safely. Every senior

deserves to feel secure in their home, in their building, at the bus stop, at the pharmacy and in the park. Every community deserves to feel safe on transit. Every small business owner deserves to open their doors in the morning without wondering whether they'll be left on their own if something were to go wrong.

That's true in every single part of Ontario, and it's especially true in my riding of Don Valley North. In our community, safety is not an abstract slogan. It's a parent in Bayview Village waiting for a vulnerable sector check so they can volunteer on a school trip. It's a nurse, a teacher or an early-childhood educator trying to get cleared for work. It's a woman fleeing violence who should not lose protection just because she crossed a provincial boundary. It's a newcomer family trying to navigate systems that are already complicated enough. It's a senior living alone who wants to know that police, health care, housing supports and community agencies are actually working together and able to communicate with one another.

Speaker, that is why I approach this bill with seriousness. I won't dismiss every measure in it simply because it comes from the government side. There are pieces of Bill 119 that are indeed useful. There are pieces that reflect work that Ontario Liberals have already championed. There are pieces that, if properly implemented, could make an added difference for people.

But there are also serious problems in this bill. This is a large, comprehensive bill. It touches policing, privacy, adoption, youth justice, human trafficking, restraining orders, drug enforcement, towing, municipal bylaw enforcement, provincial offences, social work, animal welfare and victims' rights. A bill this broad cannot be passed on branding alone; it must be judged schedule by schedule, power by power, safeguard by safeguard.

The real question should be this: Does Bill 119 truly make our communities safer, or does it merely expand government power while leaving the underlying problems unaddressed?

Speaker, I want to start with the provisions that do deserve acknowledgement—and indeed, they do exist.

First, schedule 4, the Enforcement of Canadian Restraining Orders Act, 2026, would make restraining orders from other Canadian provinces and territories automatically enforceable in Ontario. That is a good step number one.

Interjections.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Thank you very much, colleagues.

People fleeing violence should not have to start from scratch when they come to Ontario. They should not be told that a piece of paper protecting them in one province becomes less useful the moment they cross into another. A survivor's safety should not depend on jurisdictional technicalities.

Second, schedule 9, the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017, includes measures on coerced debt for survivors of human trafficking. This is important. Traffickers do not only control people through

physical violence; they control people through fear, through isolation, documents, phones, housing, immigration, shame and money. Coerced debt can follow a survivor long after they have escaped exploitation. It can damage their credit, limit their housing, affect their ability to work and keep them tied to the person who exploited them.

I want to acknowledge the work of my Liberal colleague MPP Lucille Collard, whose Bill 41 helped bring this issue forward. When the government adopts a good Liberal idea, we should acknowledge it. We should not be afraid to acknowledge good policy when it helps survivors.

The key now is implementation. Survivor protection cannot exist only on paper, Speaker. They need properly funded organizations, trauma-informed processes and a system that does not force survivors to relive their exploitation just to get basic financial relief.

Third, schedule 8, the Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015, includes changes that could help reduce delays in vulnerable sector checks. In a community like mine in Don Valley North, this matters. Our schools, daycares, seniors' programs, youth sports, long-term-care homes and community organizations depend on people who work and volunteer with vulnerable people. If checks are delayed, programs are delayed, hiring is delayed, volunteer support is delayed. Reducing those backlogs, Speaker, if done carefully and securely, is a practical step.

Fourth, schedule 7, the Planning Act: This gives municipalities stronger tools to deal with zoning bylaw violations through administrative penalties. Municipalities have been asking for better enforcement tools. When illegal land use creates traffic, noise, safety concerns, road damage or unfairness for neighbours and legitimate businesses, local governments need timely remedies. Not every issue can afford to take years and drag on in court.

Fifth, schedule 15, the Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act, 2021, includes stronger rules around towing near collision scenes, and those are very much welcome. Anyone who has been in a car crash knows that those first few moments are extremely stressful and confusing. People should not be pressured by predatory operators while they are shaken, injured or just trying to protect their families at the roadside.

And finally, schedule 16, the Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995, adds civil remedies for victims of harassment. That is worth serious consideration. Harassment can destroy a person's sense of safety. It can follow someone online, at work, at home and in their community. Victims deserve tools to seek justice even where the criminal process is not able to provide a full remedy.

So, Speaker, as I said, there are good pieces here. But the presence of good pieces does not mean the entire bill is good as written.

The central problem with Bill 119 is that it's built around the government's favourite pattern: Announce a tough-sounding bill, expand enforcement powers, centralize decision-making and then call it a public safety plan.

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But public safety is not just enforcement after harm has already happened. Public safety is a family doctor who can identify a mental health crisis before it becomes a police call. It's an emergency department that is not overwhelmed. It's an addiction treatment that is available at the time that someone is ready to ask for help—not months later. It's a school with enough teachers, educational assistants, guidance counsellors, social workers and mental health supports to keep kids connected before they fall through the cracks.

It's housing. It's community programming. It's early intervention. It's violence prevention. It's properly funded victim services. It is local police who understand the neighbourhood that they serve. It's accountability and trust. It emphasizes proactive prevention and risk reduction, reflecting a responsible approach rather than only imposing punishment, which is reactive—after harm has occurred.

This government too often treats health care, education, housing and community safety as separate files. They're not separate files in the lives of the people we represent. When a young person is struggling in school and cannot access support, that is a public safety issue. When a family cannot find mental health care for their child until the situation becomes a crisis, that is a public safety issue. When a hospital is under strain, and people with addictions or mental health illness cycle through emergency rooms without stable follow-up care, that is a public safety issue. When community agencies spend more time chasing short-term funding than helping people, that is a public safety issue.

So when the government brings forward a bill called the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, it's fair to ask: Where is the prevention? Where is investment in health care? Where is investment in schools? Where is the support for the community organizations that do the everyday quiet work for safety? A bill that gives government more powers does not help communities build resilience. This is not a complete public safety plan.

One of the most concerning aspects of Bill 119 is schedule 3, the proposed amending of the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, which would permit the minister to direct police service boards to incorporate provincially mandated priorities into their strategic plans.

Speaker, that should make every member of this House pause and reflect. Police service boards exist for a reason. They are meant to provide civilian governance. They are meant to reflect local realities. They are meant to ask: What does this community actually need? What are residents experiencing? What are local businesses, schools, faith groups, seniors and youth telling us?

The safety concerns in Don Valley North are not identical to the safety concerns in Thunder Bay, or Sudbury, Windsor, Brampton or even Ottawa. Even within Toronto, neighbourhoods have different needs. The safety concerns around transit hubs, high-rise communities, school zones, seniors' residences, places of worship, shopping plazas and local parks require local knowledge. A minister sitting

at Queen's Park should not be able to override local priorities with broad political directives that police boards must fold into their plans.

This is not about being soft on crime—let us be absolutely clear about that; it is about being serious about governance. If a government can direct the priorities of local police boards, then the public has a right to ask: Will those priorities be based on evidence, or on politics? Will they reflect community needs or government messaging? Will local boards be able to respond to what they hear from residents, or will they be forced to chase whatever headline the minister has chosen this week?

Public safety depends on trust. Trust depends on accountability. Accountability depends on local voices being heard.

Bill 119 risks moving us in the wrong direction, Speaker. This is especially troubling, because the bill appears to allow these directives to bypass the normal consultation requirements that apply to strategic planning. That means a local board could be required to revise its plan to reflect a ministerial directive without the same level of public consultation that would normally be expected.

Community safety is built on trust from results of effective response to local needs. We should be strengthening local accountability, not weakening it.

The second major concern is schedule 6, the proposed Pill Presses and Precursors Act, 2026. Let me be absolutely clear in this House: Illegal drug production is a serious issue. Fentanyl and other toxic drugs are destroying lives and communities. Families are grieving. Communities are under strain. No responsible legislator should ignore the harm caused by organized criminal networks that profit from addiction and death. But the severity of the issue also demands smart, effective laws, not just tough-sounding laws. This schedule creates provincial offences related to pill presses and precursors. That may be reasonable in principle. But the bill also gives police broad powers, including warrantless searches in certain circumstances and seizure powers. It also allows arrests without warrant connected to failure to identify, when an officer believes on reasonable grounds that an offence has been committed. What makes these provisions especially concerning is the absence of clear limits and safeguards around the exercise of such expansive powers. Those powers require scrutiny.

Ontario Liberals believe in effective enforcement. But we also believe enforcement powers should be clear, targeted, reviewable and consistent with civil liberties. The charter is not a technical obstacle to public safety. It is part of public safety. People are safer when laws are constitutional, trusted and applied fairly.

Again, what is missing from this bill is just as important as what is included. The government says it wants to protect people from illegal drug activity. Good; they should. But where is the matching investment in addictions care? Where is the low-barrier treatment capacity? Where are the mental health supports? Where is the plan for hospitals and community clinics that are already dealing with the consequences of a poisoned drug supply?

Where is the support for families trying desperately to get help for someone they love?

We cannot arrest our way out of a health crisis. Yes, organized crime must be confronted. It needs to be confronted. Yes, illegal production must be disrupted. It needs to be disrupted. But if we only focus on enforcement and ignore the health care system, the education system and the social supports that prevent harm in the first place, we will be back here again with another bill, another slogan, and the same communities will once again be begging for our help.

In Don Valley North, parents do not want politics. They want practical solutions. They want safe schools. They want safe transit. They want timely health care. They want youth supports. They want police to have the tools they need, and they want those tools to be used proportionally. That is the balance this bill has not yet achieved.

Speaker, another serious concern is oversight. Bill 119, through schedule 14, the Special Investigations Unit Act, 2019, makes changes related to the Special Investigations Unit. On one hand, the bill recognizes that if additional officials are authorized to carry firearms, SIU oversight should follow. That principle is correct. If the province gives someone greater power to use force, the public deserves stronger independent oversight. But then the bill also gives regulation-making power that could exempt certain officials from parts of the SIU framework.

That raises a basic question: Why create oversight and then give government the ability to carve holes in it and weaken the process? The danger of broad exemption powers is that they can slowly erode transparency and public accountability without meaningful public debate or legislative scrutiny. Once oversight can be selectively bypassed, confidence in the fairness and independence of the system is put at risk.

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Public and legislative oversight is not optional. It is not a public relations feature. It is a core safeguard in a democratic policing system, ensuring that those entrusted with significant powers remain accountable to the public they serve. This matters in every community, including communities like my own in Don Valley North, where residents come from many countries and many different experiences with government authority. For some, trust in law enforcement has to be earned. For others, language barriers, immigration history or past trauma can make interactions with authority more difficult. Strong oversight helps build confidence that when something serious happens, there will be independent review.

The same concern applies to schedule 2, Christopher's Law, and to the public disclosure tools in schedule 3, the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019. Everyone in this House supports protecting the public from people who pose a serious risk; that is without question, and I have no doubt. But when government publishes personal information online, the rules must be precise. There must be accuracy. There must be notice. There must be correction mechanisms. There must be removal mechanisms. There

must be safeguards against harassment, vigilantism and mistakes.

Public safety is not strengthened when systems are rushed, vague or politicized. Public safety is strengthened when people can trust that the system is fair and that it is effective.

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

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: To the member: Thank you for your excellent presentation today. I always enjoy listening to you speak.

I'm curious about the bill's lack of reference to anything related to extortions. We know that extortions have been making the headlines as of late. In particular, in Ontario, we're seeing families of Indian background who have said that they are feeling threatened. The police have apprehended 17 individuals connected to a case of extortion that has connections to transnational relations. And yet, there's nothing in this tough law-and-order bill that speaks to targeted extortions, especially those disproportionately affecting specific communities. Does that raise any concerns for you?

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: I want to thank my honourable colleague for this very good question.

I want to give the government the benefit of the doubt. I walked into this place as a new legislator—just over a year old—and I want to believe that the government wants to do its best. But this is what happens when you constantly use omnibus bills. You have a bill that encapsulates over 14 different items. If you're going to have a buffet of a bill, of course you're not going to get the details right. When you're not going to send it to committee to hear what the public has to say, of course you're not going to find out what the issues are.

To my colleague here—when they make a point that this point is totally missing from the bill, it's a very good one.

We had government members, all afternoon, talking about drones. It's a very good point. But as my colleague from Kanata–Carleton said to me, where in this bill do we find drones? Where is this being discussed?

This is where I have great concern about the use of this omnibus bill.

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

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I want to thank my great colleague from Don Valley North for his excellent and lively debate this afternoon.

I want to talk a little bit about schedule 3. It talks about the duty to consult and looks at the effective operation of police service boards and OPP detachments. But the OPP actually had to refer the investigation into the greenbelt to the RCMP. I'm wondering if you could comment a little on that and what this bill might mean in relation to the OPP investigating this government on anything.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: Thank you to my colleague from Don Valley West. It's always great to have a fellow Don Valley MPP ask a question in this House to me.

Schedule 3 is of great concern to me. The police services boards, as I mentioned in my presentation, serve an important role in civilian oversight of our policing, and not only in terms of oversight but also making sure we have local representation and local knowledge about what our police services need.

I want to be very clear: I want to see more resources given to our police services. I want to see our police services be able to do the work they need to do to keep our communities safe. This isn't about that. This bill is not about giving them that tool, giving that power or giving them resources; it's about control. It's about being able to have a minister direct them politically about what their agenda should be, and that should be a great concern to this entire House.

We know that crime is on the rise in Ontario. We know that criminals are escaping from prisons and running wild on the street. We need to be enabling our police to do more, not giving them political directives.

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

Mr. Ric Bresee: Speaker, through you to the member opposite: We know that the world has changed. These days, when it comes to retail, when it comes to cultural events, concerts, things of that nature, and when it comes to places of worship, there's a lot more private security that's being used to ensure the safety of those individuals—those attending those events, those controlling that infrastructure.

The industry of private security has evolved, and it's essential that our legislation keeps pace with those changes: the modern training requirements for all of those types of services, the regulatory processes for those services.

The proposed updates in Bill 119 would strengthen accountability while exploring new guard tiers that better address the skills with the risk environments and ultimately enhancing safety for the workers, for the attendees—for everyone.

I know that there are pieces of this bill that the member has expressed his opposition to, but will the member acknowledge that this is actually a good direction to go in?

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: I want to thank my honourable colleague for that wonderful question.

I made it very clear in my presentation that community safety—anything that makes my community safer, makes my residents feel safer, I support. But as I made very clear, these oversight changes of the police service boards do not accomplish that.

This government has often focused not on supplying the public agencies the resources and tools they need and more on the private sector. What I would encourage this government to do is to take a strong look, speak to our police, speak to the officers on the streets and ask them what they need to make our province safer, because, folks, it's not right now.

People are scared. People need to be protected. The police need the help of this government to do their job to keep us safe. And I want to say, as an MPP, that is one of

my top roles that I am very proud of doing every single day: to stand up for the work that 33 division does to protect us. I'm proud to stand in this House to say thank you to every single officer in 33 division for everything they do every single day to keep my community safe.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to thank the member for his comments today.

This province is far less safe than when this government took power eight years ago. We've got an opioid epidemic that's just spiralling out of control. We've got 85,000 people homeless. We've got prisoners literally walking out of jail. We have 268 sexual assault cases that were dismissed because the courts did not have enough staff to actually try the person who was accused.

And yet this government's response to this is not to fix those problems. The response is actually to seize control of the police service boards. This is extremely dangerous, I think, because there's supposed to be a separation between politicians and the police.

What is your perspective on this government's seizure of this much control of the police service boards?

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: I want to thank my honourable colleague for the question. It's not often that I find myself in agreement with members of the NDP, but I will say we do agree on this topic.

Mr. Chris Glover: That's because you're not often right.

Mr. Jonathan Tsao: But on this topic, we absolutely do agree.

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Look, crime is out of control. We know this. And this government loves polling. It loves to look at the polls, but it only likes to look at the polls and talk about them when it's in their favour. The polls show Ontarians do not feel safe. They do not feel confident that this government is putting their safety first.

What is it doing instead of actually enabling the police to keep them safe? It does what it always does: It seizes control of something, whether it be Billy Bishop or whether it be our school boards. Rather than addressing core issues, rather than getting down to do the hard work of making structural and fundamental changes and investment, it's, "Let's just take it over. Let's change the channel and give political directives, so now our problems disappear. We can now tell them what to do. We can now tell them what the problem is."

This is what we're seeing over and over again. So I want to urge the government: Send this bill to committee. Let the police come here to give their thoughts on this topic, on what they need.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): There is not enough time for another back-and-forth.

Further debate?

MPP Billy Denault: I am pleased to rise today for the second reading of Bill 119, the Ontario government's proposed Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, which the Solicitor General introduced in the House

just this week. I would like to start with thanking Ontario's first responders, police officers, firefighters, paramedics, correctional officers, probation and parole officers, 911 operators and all of those who work diligently every day to keep people safe.

Before I really start, I just want to give a shout-out to a couple of first responders in my own community. A big shout-out to my friends at the Haley Station Firefighters' Association: I had a great time at the Ben Church family cornhole tournament—Ben Church, who is an amazing firefighter in my community, in Haley Station—just a couple of weeks ago. The folks there are a great example of those who keep our community safe in the best and hardest of times.

I also want to send a big congratulations to the recent appointment of Chief Kane, who is now the next chief of police for the Deep River Police Service, and who will be chief effective June 29. Those who are trivia fans might not know that the Deep River Police Service is actually the smallest municipal police service across the province of Ontario. So it's a great congratulations to him and looking forward to working with him going forward.

Speaker, none of our public safety legislation would have any effect if not for the valiant efforts of professionals who risk their own livelihoods for the greater good. I would also like to acknowledge their opinions regarding this bill through their own words. This is what Mark Baxter, the president of the Police Association of Ontario, had to say on the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act:

"The Ontario government's introduction of the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, 2026 marks a step toward safer communities. If enacted, this legislation will strengthen public safety, provide additional support to victims of crime and give law enforcement enhanced tools to protect Ontarians. We commend the government's unwavering commitment to public safety, to supporting our members and to safeguarding the communities we proudly serve."

Bill 119 builds on the government's broader agenda to strengthen safety and security across Ontario. The legislation supports efforts to reinforce both the justice system and public safety measures in communities throughout the province of Ontario. As part of this approach, the government is also providing unprecedented support for front-line law enforcement, so police services are properly equipped and staffed to respond to public safety needs.

Moreover, the government has undertaken major reforms to the adult corrections system through facility upgrades and expansion. The government increased recruitment of correctional officers and introduced new measures aimed at improving institutional safety and operations. Along with these investments, we've advanced bold legislation in the name of justice and public safety. Just recently, Speaker, we passed the Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act in third reading.

But this government is not stopping. That is why the Solicitor General introduced the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act as a further step towards a

more secure province which prioritizes law-abiding citizens. This bill forms the central element of a wider public safety and justice initiative organized around three main goals: (1) increasing safety across Ontario's communities; (2) strengthening the authority and tools available to police and other enforcement agencies; and (3) enhancing protections and supports for victims of crime, as well as individuals in vulnerable situations.

I'd like to take a deeper dive into the various provisions within this bill this evening. A core pillar of this bill is strengthening Ontario's community safety across the province, ensuring people can feel secure in their neighbourhoods, homes and public spaces. To support that goal, Bill 119 introduces amendments to the Community Safety and Policing Act. They're aimed at improving governance and transparency within municipal police board systems. These reforms include measures such as restricting the hiring of current or former board members by police services or police service boards, introducing clearer attendance requirements for closed board meetings and empowering the Solicitor General to establish provincial policing priorities for boards.

To be clear, changes related to police services boards are aimed at creating consistency rather than direct operations or routine board decisions. This includes establishing safety priorities that boards must reflect in their strategic plans. It also includes providing clarity on expectations for board conduct and good governance, such as addressing who can attend closed board meetings and placing limits on hiring board members.

The bill also proposes adjustments intended to streamline and improve the functioning of the Inspector General of Policing, expanding oversight. In parallel, the legislation modernizes the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, reflecting the rapid expansion of the private security sector over the past decade. The province now has over 136,000 licensed private security personnel—more than four times the number of sworn police officers—highlighting the importance of strong oversight and alignment with provincial safety priorities. Proposed updates would improve training supports for security personnel and strengthen mechanisms for handling public complaints within the sector.

On the justice system side, the government is proposing procedural changes under the Provincial Offences Act to allow plea agreements for certain offences to be reached outside of court. This is intended as a practical reform to reduce courtroom congestion and improve overall system efficiency.

Beyond legislative amendments, the government is also advancing broader public safety policy initiatives that respond to emerging risk and technological developments. For instance, following concerns identified by the RCMP regarding certain Chinese-made drones in specific policing and national security contexts, the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, led by Minister Stephen Crawford, is reviewing procurement and usage standards. The objective is to ensure

drones used in provincial policing contexts are secure, reliable and appropriate for operational needs.

Finally, work is under way on a provincial anti-money laundering strategy, alongside efforts to strengthen oversight in sensitive areas such as forensic care.

The second pillar of the government's package is focused on enhancing enforcement capacity by ensuring laws are practical, enforceable and effective in real-world conditions. A major area of concern is illegal drug activity, particularly the growing number of public complaints about visible and disruptive drug use in shared spaces. Public transit is a clear example, where millions of Ontarians depend on systems like OC Transpo or TTC every day and expect these environments to be safe and free from criminal behaviour and hazardous exposure. Most importantly, people do not want their kids to be exposed to risk during their commute to and from school.

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Since the pandemic, people have noticed a significant rise in security incidents on transit, many involving intoxication, drug use and frequent overdose situations.

To respond, the government has introduced a regulation under the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act expanding the authority of transit special constables. These officers are now empowered to confiscate illegal drugs, direct individuals engaging in drug use to leave transit property and issue provincial charges in cases of non-compliance.

The government is also targeting the production side of illegal drug trade, including drug labs and other illicit manufacturing sites.

Through the coming into force of the Measures Respecting Premises with Illegal Drug Activity Act, landlords would be prohibited from knowingly allowing illegal drug production on their properties. A lot of illegal drug manufacturing facilities are posing as commercial businesses. Our proposal would crack down on them.

Bill 119 is building on our previous safety legislation, Bill 75, by further criminalizing the unlawful possession of precursor chemicals and equipment such as pill presses used in drug manufacture.

Beyond drug enforcement, the package also addresses safety and regulatory concerns in the towing industry. Amendments to the Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act, which the Minister of Transportation has indicated, aim to curb dangerous driving practices among tow operators and strengthen oversight over the sector. These changes would also improve the ability of regulators to impose penalties on non-compliant towing companies.

Municipal enforcement tools are also being expanded through proposed amendments to the Planning Act, led by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. These changes would allow municipalities to issue administrative monetary penalties for certain forms of unauthorized land use, helping to address issues such as illegal parking operations and unregulated storage yards.

Finally, the Attorney General is advancing measures to improve interprovincial enforcement, by making it easier

to recognize and enforce restraining orders issued in other Canadian jurisdictions. If passed, Bill 119 will allow restraining orders from other provinces and territories to be enforced in Ontario without having to obtain a court declaration to make them enforceable. It would also give at-risk individuals the option of registering their orders with the court to support enforcement.

The third component of the government's public safety and justice agenda is centred on strengthening protections for victims of crime and other vulnerable Ontarians.

As part of that effort, Bill 119 proposes amendments to the Community Safety and Policing Act that would authorize the OPP to maintain a public website providing information on high-risk offenders, including sex offenders, who are subject to community notifications issued by a chief of police. Right now, police are authorized to share this information, and they often do so through their social media and website. However, our amendments would create one unified, dedicated website that will help Ontarians keep informed about significant public safety risks.

The bill would also update Christopher's Law to better align reporting obligations under Ontario's sex offender and trafficker registry with the requirements of the national sex offender registry.

The legislation also addresses operational pressures within the police record check system. Police services in Ontario process more than one million record checks annually, with over 70% consisting of vulnerable sector checks for individuals working or volunteering with children, seniors or persons with disabilities. These checks are often resource-intensive, requiring enhanced identity verification, detailed analysis and manual review processes.

Current federal rules restrict vulnerable sector checks primarily to the police service in an applicant's home jurisdiction. Bill 119 would amend the Police Record Checks Reform Act to allow police services to conduct these checks for applicants residing outside their jurisdiction, helping reduce administrative burdens and improve processing times province-wide.

The Attorney General is also proposing amendments to the Victims' Bill of Rights that would establish a new statutory tort of harassment. A statutory tort is a civil cause of action set out in legislation that creates liability for harm caused by certain wrongful conduct. It allows a person to sue the wrongdoer to recover damages for such harms. And while harassment is typically addressed through the criminal justice system, the proposed changes would allow

victims to pursue civil action against alleged harassers, even in the absence of a criminal conviction.

Additional amendments would support the implementation of the Protection from Coerced Debts Incurred in relation to Human Trafficking Act by ensuring victims of human trafficking are not held financially responsible for debts forced upon them by traffickers or exploiters.

The proposed changes related to combatting human trafficking include updating the definition of human trafficking, establishing a trauma-informed dispute resolution process for debts up to \$50,000 and adding offences and penalties to support effective enforcement of the act.

Survivors of human trafficking who incurred debt as a result of human trafficking would have access to a designated survivor support organization. The organizations would negotiate the voluntary removal of debt that survivors have incurred as a result of human trafficking and assist them through the trauma-informed dispute resolution process, if that process has begun.

To be clear, trauma-informed dispute is a process that prioritizes the survivor's well-being during the dispute resolution process for a decision to be made by an adjudicator about whether the debt is coerced. The proposed changes clarify that survivors can go through this process in writing and that a police report or investigation is not required.

But beyond these legislative reforms, the government has introduced regulations aimed at strengthening animal welfare protections, including prohibitions on medically unnecessary cat declawing, as well as dog devocalization and ear-cropping procedures. An individual who is convicted of causing an animal to undergo a prescribed prohibited procedure could be subject to a maximum fine of \$75,000, to imprisonment for a maximum term of six months, or to both for committing a first offence.

And of course, there are many other different enforcement tools that are being brought into this legislation, and I want to conclude by just saying the measures today represent a further step to our government's broader efforts to strengthen public safety and the justice system across Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Seeing the time on the clock, there being no private members' public business proceeding today, the House stands adjourned until Monday, June 1, 2026, at 10:15.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.
The House adjourned at 1759.*

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