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Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy

Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026

1st Session
44th Parliament

Thursday 7 May 2026

Chair: Hon. Laurie Scott
Clerk: Tanzima Khan

Journal des débats (Hansard)

HE-21

Comité permanent du patrimoine, de l'infrastructure et de la culture

Loi de 2026 pour la construction de logements et l'amélioration de l'infrastructure de transport

1re session
44e législature

Jeudi 7 mai 2026

Présidente : L'hon. Laurie Scott
Greffière : Tanzima Khan

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURAL POLICY

COMITÉ PERMANENT DU PATRIMOINE, DE L'INFRASTRUCTURE ET DE LA CULTURE

Thursday 7 May 2026

Jeudi 7 mai 2026

The committee met at 0901 in committee room 2.

BUILDING HOMES AND IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE ACT, 2026

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

Consideration of the following bill:

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

The Second Vice-Chair (MPP Tyler Watt): Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy will now come to order.

We are here for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 98, An Act to enact the Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act, 2026 and to amend various Acts. We're joined by Simone Bittman, legislative counsel, in the room, and various ministry staff joining us virtually to assist us with questions members may have. A copy of the amendments filed with the Clerk has been distributed electronically, and a hard copy has also been provided to you. As always, please wait until I recognize you before starting to speak, and, as always, all comments should go through the Chair. Are there any questions before we begin?

We will now begin the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 98. Before we begin considering the specific sections and accompanying schedules, I will allow members to make comments to the bill as a whole. Afterwards, debate will be limited to the specific amendment, section or schedule under consideration. Committee members, pursuant to standing order 83, are there any comments or questions on the bill as a whole? Yes?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The NDP official opposition have a series of improvements to this bill. We ask that all of our amendments be recorded votes.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Good morning. After the "good morning," I'm going to start off by saying there's been a request that all of the New Democrat motions will be recorded votes. I think that's where we were. Are there any further comments to the bill? No comments? Yes, MPP Rakocevic?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you for hearing my request to make all of our amendments be done with recorded votes.

I was very honoured and proud to be part of the hearings to hear what people had to say. In particular, my interest and my specialization here is with regard to transit. I think we heard quite a bit—in fact, pretty much from everyone who spoke about the transit parts of this bill—that there was simply a lack of consultation, that it was all expected to be done in the back end through regulations. There were a number of other concerns that opened up possible transit to having different rates per zone—all sorts of issues that were not really a step forward and left too much to regulations and too much to having to trust the government.

We will be tabling a series of amendments to deal with those issues that have been raised at the hearings, and hopefully the government will support them, because you will have heard from everyone that talked about the transit portions that these would be the things that were needed to fix the bill. And so, if the members care deeply about transit, as I believe they do, they will support the amendments we will be tabling, and I look forward to working with them so that we can improve the bill and make it work for everybody.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. Any further comments to the bill generally? If not: Bill 98 is comprised of three sections which enacts nine schedules. To deal with the bill in an orderly fashion, I suggest we postpone these three sections to dispose of the schedules first. Is there agreement? Okay, there is agreement to that.

Section 1 has no amendments. Any discussion on schedule 1, section 1? No comments. Is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried on schedule 1, section 1.

Schedule 1, section 2: We have a Liberal amendment. MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: I move that section 2 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by striking out subsection 35(4) of the Building Code Act, 1992 and substituting the following:

"Environmental standards

"(4) Municipal bylaws respecting the construction or demolition of buildings referred to in subsection (1) include municipal bylaws that prescribe construction standards for the protection or conservation of the environment unless the bylaw incorporates construction standards that are set out in provisions of the most recent edition of:

"(a) the National Building Code of Canada; or

"(b) the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion?

MPP Tyler Watt: Section 2 of schedule 1 of the bill is intended to squash all municipal power to pass bylaws for the protection and conservation of the environment. These are consequential and important bylaws in the fight against the climate crisis, and mandate building measures that protect Ontarians from worsening weather events, things that we have been seeing more and more severe and increasing lately.

This amendment, rather than completely putting municipalities under the Building Code Act for environmental bylaws, would allow leeway for standards that are recognized all over Canada. Ontario's building code system is already rooted in national model codes, which are developed through a rigorous pan-Canadian process involving provinces, industries and technical experts. Allowing municipalities to pass bylaws rooted in these codes is a fair and grounded way to allow them to respond to local need and protect local environments.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion on that? Is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is lost on the amendment.

Any further discussion on section 2? If not, shall schedule 1, section 2 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Schedule 1, section 3: MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I noticed that, at least according to my notes, for schedule 1, sections 3 through 9, there are no amendments. I'm wondering if we could bundle those.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You're getting ahead of me here.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Oh, sorry. My apologies.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): There are no proposed amendments of section 3 to 9 of schedule 1, therefore I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Agreed.

0910

Shall sections 3 to 9 of schedule 1—we're not going to vote on that yet; we're going to have debate on those sections. If there's no further debate, shall sections 3 to 9 of schedule 1 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

There are Liberal and NDP motion notices of schedule 1 to the bill. We will look at the Liberal and the NDP members for debate on schedule 1 as a whole. MPP Watt?

MPP Tyler Watt: Schedule 1 of the bill crushes municipal powers to pass environmental bylaws and green development standards. Green developments increase energy efficiency and protect and manage the environment. They are important steps towards reducing the climate impact of municipalities.

The Toronto Green Standard would have led to greenhouse gas reductions of 30.6 megatonnes by 2050—the equivalent of 250,000 cars each year. Toronto's housing starts have grown or stayed consistent nearly every year since the TGS was implemented. Torontonians should absolutely have the right to democratically implement standards to protect their environment and climate.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? Any comments?

Shall schedule 1 carry? Further debate? No further debate. Ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 1 is carried. It's not amended.

Schedule 2, section 1: Is there any debate on schedule 2, section 1? If there is no debate, all those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 2, section 1, carries.

Schedule 2, section 2: We have a New Democratic Party amendment. Jeff—MPP Burch?

Mr. Jeff Burch: You can call me Jeff if you want.

I move that subsection 2(2) of schedule 2 to the bill be struck out.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate on the section? MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: By way of explanation, this section allows the city of Toronto to ensure sustainable design, otherwise known as the Toronto Green Standard, in its site planning control process. The Toronto Green Standard future-proofs new development and ensures lower costs over the long term. It's shortsighted to block such standards.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? If there is no further discussion—MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I always enjoy hearing government members speak in the House and providing a rationale during debate when bills are tabled. I'm just missing the sound of their voices. I would love to hear a rationale as to how and why they are voting for what appears before us in the bill. I'm hoping that they'll make my day better by blessing me with the sound of their voices to explain the rationale as to why they are voting the way that they do. I'm hoping to hear. Of course, the Chair is, in fact, a member of the government—

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I would just point out that I do not believe it's in any member's job description to have to speak to every motion.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Well, I want to amend what I said. In fact, I am hearing one government member speaking and I'm appreciating that.

Certainly, it is not in anyone's job description to have to do things, but I would imagine that as we pore through these amendments, presumably, the government—I'm hoping—will start to support some of them, because, in fact, everything I've heard so far have been reasonable and good improvements to the bill.

If the government, in fact, doesn't vote for the proceeding ones—maybe for the first few, it's going to be a little different—I just want to hear from them the rationale as to why they're voting the way they're voting. I'd appreciate that.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further discussion on that? MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I think it's self-evident in the nature of this legislation and the debates we've had on it, as well as what we've heard from the public, so to the member opposite: I think you might have to prepare yourself for a day of disappointment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further discussion?

A recorded vote has been requested.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have a Liberal notice to section 2 of schedule 2. MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: Section 2 of schedule 2 removes references to sustainable design like mentioned in amendment 2 and removes the ability of the city to require electronic vehicle charging in off-street parking facilities.

The Premier has claimed to champion EVs, but just when municipalities would want to support them and make them viable by ensuring there is charging, the government is removing their ability to pass those bylaws. This amendment shows how government is not serious about EVs.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion?

Shall schedule 2 of section 2 carry?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

Nays

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Schedule 2, section 2 carries.

There are no proposed amendments to sections 3 and 4 of schedule 2; therefore, we propose to bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Agreed.

Shall sections 3 and 4 of schedule 2 carry? Any discussion? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

We have NDP notice to schedule 2 of the bill. We'll look to the members for debate.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Didn't we just pass this?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I don't know why this is there.

Interjections.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, I think we're through with that one. Shall schedule 2 carry? Further discussion? If not, all those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

0920

Schedule 3, section 1: There is no proposed—

Mr. Jeff Burch: Chair?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I would like one second to confer with the Clerk, if that's okay.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, okay.

Interjections.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you, Chair.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much.

There are no proposed amendments to sections 1 to 3 of schedule 3. Therefore, I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Thank you. Is there any debate? If there is no debate, shall sections 1 to 3 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 3 carry? Discussion? If not, all those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Schedule 4, section 1: We have an NDP amendment. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 1 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause:

"(a.1) increase transit ridership;"

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: What this does is just adding increasing transit ridership to the purpose of the Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act. What is the purpose of fare and service integration if not to increase ridership? So much of the bill is being left to regulations, leaving people to guess where the government is going with this. I believe this strengthens it. It tells those that have attended the hearing that there is an understanding that we want to increase transit ridership.

When you bring in fare integration, it's great for the rider, but municipalities, obviously, were set up originally to have a double fare. Where they offset, the cost is that you get more and more people getting on transit. They are then paying fare into the system, so it becomes larger and larger numbers of people coming on board and that's helpful to the municipality. Of course, I think we all want more people to use the transit system.

This is a very simple tweak, but I think it will be very effective in framing where this needs to go for the future. I know that this is very supportable, and I know that those that have come to depute would agree. In fact, we heard from the executive director of TTCriders, Andrew Pulsifer, saying, "Fares in Toronto have consistently risen above

the rate of inflation, and the TTC has long relied heavily on the fare box to keep the system running.

"The TTC's own data shows that every time fares" increase, "people take transit less. Even a 10-cent fare increase results in 500,000 fewer rides taken."

So what we're trying to do is enshrine in this legislation words to show that we want to increase transit. It will make fare integration work better. It is a sensible amendment, and I'm sure government members will be supporting this one. If not, I'd love to hear from them as to why.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Committee ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

The next one is number 4: schedule 4, NDP. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm quite surprised by the result of the previous amendment, but thank you very much. I would like to read this new amendment.

I move that section 1 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause:

"(a.2) make transit more affordable for transit riders;"

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: It's self-explanatory, but it adds affordability to the purposes of the act. A poorly designed fare integration scheme could drive up fares for some riders, forcing to them to subsidize the fares of other riders.

This amendment would ensure that any fare and service integration scheme would make fares more affordable, not less. Again, with a bill like this, with a schedule pertaining to transit that could have huge impacts, certainly on transit systems themselves and the costs that they require, we want to ensure that this actually improves the experience for transit riders.

We've already heard that we want to increase transit ridership. Apparently, the government does not want to increase transit ridership; otherwise, they would have supported the amendment.

Now we want to make transit more affordable. Here we are, putting this in words so when it gets to the regulatory stage, should this bill pass, there is a clear direction to make transit more affordable for riders.

I want to hope that five members just accidentally voted the wrong way last time. Surely, affordable transit, affordable fares, are something that should be a priority to each and every member here in this government, and transit riders are counting on them to support this amendment to improve this legislation.

I just want to leave you again with the executive director of TTCriders, who stated, "This bill is presented as something that will benefit riders, but we are very concerned that it could lead to fare hikes, the elimination of discounted fares like the Fair Pass and seniors' fare, and an end to the two-hour transfer window."

I don't want to believe that the members here in this room would want to see something like this happen. Let's frame this legislation in a way to send the signal out there that we want to reduce fares. We understand how important this is, and that is why we've tabled this amendment. This time, I'm hoping we can count on the support of government members to help improve this legislation, and I'm looking forward to that vote.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: As I indicated earlier to my friend opposite, it might be a bit disappointing for you, but this is the government that brought in the One Fare program that saves an average rider about $1,600 a year. We've heard from the witnesses even on the transportation front that they were in support of that, and the intent of this legislation is to make that system more available across the board.

To go to my friend's comments about the purposes of section 1, it's actually set out right in the section. It's to:

"(a) improve the transportation system to strengthen Ontario's economy;

"(b) enhance rider experience through greater transit fare and service integration, including for persons with disabilities and others who rely on public transportation;

"(c) enable people to use transit to travel across municipalities and access employment, education and essential services; and

"(d) improve the convenience, consistency and accessibility of municipal transit services by establishing provincial requirements."

The proposed amendment is redundant. It doesn't add to the substance of what's set out in section 1, so we will not be supporting the amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I appreciate the explanation. I didn't hear "affordability" in there.

0930

I also heard that the CEO of the TTC came in and said we need to limit the scope pertaining to this schedule. We heard every single person come in and share very similar concerns about consultation and their concerns.

Yes, we heard those saying that One Fare worked, but now what we are doing is making changes. We are actually debating changes to what everyone who came to speak about the transit portion of this bill said they were satisfied with. Now changes are being made. They've said to us that these are the ways in which we are concerned. We want to see more ridership, we want to see more affordable transit, and what we are seeing are changes to a system they said was working for them and a bill that is going to be specific

down the road in the regulatory portion of it, leaving many to absolutely wonder what is going to happen.

That's why what we are trying to do: not to create redundancy; it's to try to create clear language to set a direction for this government, as they unfortunately create the details on the back end, to say, "This is what we want: to increase transit ridership and more affordable fares." They are making changes that will affect the fare boxes, they will ultimately affect these transit organizations. We want to set clear goals of what is being achieved here. We are trying to improve this legislation in a way that every single person that came to speak to the hearings would agree with, and I do not believe that this is in any way, shape or form redundant. It is surprising, and I don't understand why we simply wouldn't include language like this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, is the committee ready to vote on the amendment? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

No more amendments on schedule 4, section 1. Are you ready to vote on it? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 4, section 1, carries.

There are no proposed amendments to sections 2 and 3 of schedule 4, therefore I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? All those in favour? We have agreement. Further debate? No debate. Shall sections 2 and 3 of schedule 4 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Schedule 4: We have amendment number 5. MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: I'm honoured to put this amendment forward on behalf of MPP Hazell, a true champion of Scarborough and transit.

I move that section 3.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"Net losses

"Requirements imposing a net loss

"3.1(1) This section applies if a requirement imposed under this act results in,

"(a) a net reduction in fare revenue of a prescribed transit system; or

"(b) a net increase in operating or capital costs of a prescribed transit system.

"Publication

"(2) Before the minister imposes a requirement under this act that is described in subsection (1), the minister must make available to the public a document describing,

"(a) the expected net reduction in fare revenue for every prescribed transit system that is affected by the requirement or the expected net increase in the operating or capital costs of those transit systems, as applicable; and

"(b) a description of how the minister intends to assist the affected prescribed transit system with the impacts described in clause (a)."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: This amendment is important and a reasonable addition to the bill. The Fare Alignment and Seamless Transit Act gives the minister massive powers over our transit systems. Those powers include power over fees, discounts and frequency.

These requirements can have a huge impact on transit system budgets, and it is vital that the impact of these requirements is not only predicted but shared with the public. The public deserves to know if extra costs are being imposed by the minister and what the minister plans to do about it.

I'd ask government members to say exactly what their objection with this amendment is. Do they not want the extra costs on our transit systems predicted, or do they not want the predictions shared with the public?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Burch?

Mr. Jeff Burch: We agree that if a requirement under the act reduces fare revenue or increases net transit cost, the minister should publish the expected impacts and describe how the minister intends to assist the affected transit system prior to imposing the requirement. So we think this is a good amendment, and we'll be supporting it.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I just want to thank the member for introducing the amendment.

One of the biggest concerns we heard at the hearings was that, obviously, fare integration is something that's important—I think everyone is in agreement to want to see that move forward—but there are obviously going to be associated costs. Essentially, everyone heard about this without the consultation necessary and required. One of the big concerns, of course, is that it will possibly result in funding gaps.

We had 50% operational funding in the late 1990s for transit, and it was a Conservative government at the time that removed that. We never saw it returned. And so what we need to do is ensure, when big changes are being made or being asked of these transit agencies, that commensurate funding and support from the provincial government is going to happen. This is not being specified whatsoever, and it must be very stressful for these associations and their riders and their workers to wonder what is going to happen if and when this bill passes and comes into effect.

I think this is supportable, and I will be supporting it.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: I'm not sure if this is the right time to ask, but I'd like a recorded vote on this.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Are we ready to vote? A recorded vote has been requested.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Schedule 4, section 4: We have some amendments, starting with NDP amendment number 6. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 4 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by striking out the portion before clause (a) and substituting the following:

"Fare structure

"4. The minister may make regulations establishing fare structures for routes that cross the boundaries of the areas served by two or more prescribed transit systems, including,".

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the amendment. Discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The minister may only establish a fare structure for routes that cross transit area boundaries and not for routes that don't cross boundaries. This change was requested by the TTC ATU 113 and TTCriders. Ultimately, if it is to deal with fare integration, we should be speaking about cross-boundary trips, cross-boundary routes. So why not specify that? If there's no intent to tinker all the way down to what the routes are going to be within jurisdictions, within regions, within transit systems, let's make it clear. This is something that is supported and has been spoken to by pretty much everyone that came and spoke with regard to the transit portions of this bill in the hearings.

I'm hoping the government will support this. After all, this is what we heard during the hearings. If you want to talk about fare integration, talk about routes that cross boundaries—but why? Just start focusing—why, basically, bring in the power to start tinkering with smaller local routes that don't cross boundaries? That is way beyond the scope of what they explained this legislation is for.

0940

This is very supportable. I hope that they support this amendment, which will improve this legislation immensely and, I think, will provide some relief to those that are concerned that this is just an overreach and is not within the scope of this bill or what they seem to be setting out for themselves.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Watt.

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you to my colleague for putting forward this amendment. I think it's extremely fair.

I am deeply concerned about the amount of centralization of power to the ministers that has been going on, not in just this bill, but many bills. I was here late last night debating one of them.

I have a lot of people from my riding who have been reaching out who are very concerned about the amount of power that is being given to ministers at Queen's Park. This amendment would restrict the minister's regulatory power to set fares and discounts only to routes that overlap. So this isn't a radical amendment; this is something that would pull that back a little bit and actually reflect what the members were hearing during public consultations.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: We've seen government members now vote against prescriptive language that says, "We want to see an increase in ridership in transit systems. We want to see that it's more affordable." We've seen government members vote against committed funding, essentially, even just simply words to say that the government will help; that if there are any funding discrepancies or any issues that pertain to this legislation, that they're going to come in and do this.

Now, we are setting clear language to say, "You want a bill about fare integration? Just talk about cross-boundary routes, not local routes." Don't overreach. This is not what people want. Leave the transit associations and the transit systems themselves to make the expert decisions on how to manage those routes.

This is just a common-sense amendment that will improve the bill. We're counting on government members to support this, and it's not just us; all the people that attended the hearings, all the transit riders out there, the workers and the transit systems, I know, would appreciate this language.

I'm looking forward to the vote. They voted, surprisingly, the wrong way in all the other amendments; maybe this time, we'll get it right and we're hoping they will do that.

We appreciate that, Chair. Thank you so much.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Are you ready to vote?

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have another amendment from the NDP.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 4, schedule 4, to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Agreement re fare structure

"(2) The minister shall not make a regulation under subsection (1) unless the minister has entered into negoti-

ations with all municipalities or municipal agencies that have established or that operate or maintain an affected prescribed transit system, and negotiated in good faith to reach an agreement on a fare structure for the routes described in that subsection."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: In plain language, the minister, if this amendment should pass, cannot unilaterally impose a fare structure on local transit agencies, but must negotiate an agreement in good faith.

Now, I can't imagine, in a Legislature of 124 members, when presented with an opportunity to support even something as small as an amendment to an existing bill that talks about good faith, and would ensure that negotiations happen in good faith—I can't imagine a situation where they would vote against something like that.

We've already discussed how much of an overreach this is starting to appear to be, because the government voted against the amendment that would limit their tinkering such that they cannot discuss local transit routes, leaving expertise, leaving the judgment, to the transit systems themselves. Surely members of this government will support this crucial NDP amendment that will enshrine good faith in all agreements and will stop the overreach of this government with regards to the transit schedule of this bill.

I'm hoping, finally, today that they will support an amendment to improve this legislation, an amendment that is what we have heard from everyone that spoke about the transit portions of this bill at hearings. I look forward to the vote. I hope they will be supporting this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate. Are we ready to vote?

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have another amendment from the New Democrats. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm not sure—I'm quite surprised—about what's going on here in committee today, but we're going to continue. We're going to continue moving on.

I move that section 4 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Fare within local transit system

"(3) A regulation made under subsection (1) does not prevent a municipality or municipal agency from establishing a fare structure for a route operated by a prescribed transit system that is entirely within the boundaries of the primary service area served by the prescribed transit system."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): We've heard the motion. Discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: In a simple way, it clarifies that a transit agency can continue to set fare policies for routes that are entirely within their local transit area. This is ensuring autonomy. This is ensuring that self-direction continues to exist—the ability that transit agencies have control over their own routes and that they themselves are able to set fare policies.

So much of this bill has been left to the regulations on the back end—a bill that was created, not asked for by anybody and done without any consultation. What we've been trying to do is add amendments to give direction to this government and bind them to principles I think we could all agree upon.

This is important. This is a sign of respect, a clear flag to all of the local transit agencies that you respect their ability to make decisions, that they can direct their own policies and be able to do what's necessary internally—not overreach, not take them over, not impose their will upon them. This is something that has been asked for. This is an amendment that will improve this legislation. We're hoping the government will support it.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? If not, are we ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I declare it lost.

Any further debate on schedule 4, section 4? No further debate. Are we ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Interjection.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Shall schedule 4, section 4 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Interjection.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I think I've still got to go one more time, folks.

Interjections.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Shall section 5 carry? Debate? No debate on section 5? Ready to vote? All those in favour? Opposed? Section 5 carries.

Schedule 4, section 6: We have an NDP motion.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Chair, I move that subsection 6(2) of schedule 4 to the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

0950

"Same

"(2) Fares collected by a prescribed transit system that is designated in relation to a geographic zone described in subsection (1) for a route that crosses the boundaries of the primary service areas of two or more prescribed transit systems shall be apportioned among the systems designated in relation to that geographic zone in accordance with the regulations; and

"Same

"(2.1) Fares described in subsection (2) for a route that does not cross the boundaries of the primary service area of two or more prescribed transit systems shall not be apportioned."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Again, the minister may only apportion fares collected for routes that cross transit area boundaries and may not force transit agencies to share fares collected for routes entirely within their own areas.

ATU 113 and TTCriders showed their concern that the government might raid TTC fare revenues in order to subsidize other passenger transportation systems. This amendment would ensure that local transit agencies keep all fare revenues generated entirely within their own service areas. As was pointed out by the TTC CEO, only 20% of trips are cross-boundary.

One of the major concerns is that when this legislation was sprung on transit agencies, who came and spoke, saying that they were satisfied with One Fare and the way in which it was going, are seeing these huge changes. They are seeing legislation that is not prescriptive, that leaves everything to the back end. They don't want to now see extra money coming out of their own fare boxes, out of their own systems, to subsidize other regions. If the government wants to impose change and they want to increase fare integration, they have to come to the table with clear numbers. Set all of these transit agencies at ease.

In the city of Toronto, they have specialized rides, like Wheel-Trans and others. You have local routes that are able to get hard-working people, maybe on a night job, out across the city to get them out somewhere. And you know what? It's not a lot of ridership, and these routes may not have the sheer amount of numbers that routes during rush hour on main streets have. A lot of those routes, obviously, cost a bit of money to those transit agencies. But if they now have to start figuring out how to make this legislation work, and they have to start paying and subsidizing other regions in a way that they're not prepared to do, that will have commensurate effects on the transit experience, the ride. Specialized transit services might go by the wayside and be on the chopping block. All of this stuff can happen.

This is something that we're asking them to support. Let's enshrine this in the legislation, give direction and set transit agencies at ease. We've heard their concerns. We heard it during the hearings. This is the right thing to do. They are counting on you. We hope the government will support this necessary amendment to improve this legislation.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? Are you ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have amendment number 10, from the NDP.

MPP Tyler Watt: Chair, I move that the committee invite the chair and CEO of Metrolinx to testify on the Metrolinx settlement air rights scandal.

Interjections.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): When I'm looking on my schedule here, the next amendment is from the NDP. Are we ready to present it?

Interjections.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I'm repeating what I was—we're time allocated. We can't take your motion now. It does not deal with the topic.

MPP Rakocevic, the next amendment.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 6 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Exception

"(4.1) A regulation made under subsection (4) shall not require the payments of fares to a passenger transportation system that was not established or is not operated or maintained by a municipality or municipal agency."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: What this does is it would ensure that municipal transit fare revenue can only be shared with other municipal transit systems and not with Uber or other private transportation systems.

We have heard that these transit agencies want to be able to have their own autonomy. We don't want to see any secret backdoors placed in legislation like this to create privatization. This is a theme that exists in this government whereby they're constantly trying to find ways to privatize literally everything they can. We don't want to see this here. We don't want to see backdoors open up such that Uber and other private entities find their way in because the government is forcing this upon transit agencies.

We want to see the government members support this. This will really put transit agencies—and many that are concerned about privatization leeching its way into this legislation that they have not consulted anyone on. The regulatory portion is going to define so much of the details of this, and it has all been back-ended. What we are trying to do, again, is provide some focus to the legislation and set transit agencies at ease so that they don't find themselves dealing with unwanted, unasked and unhelpful privatization that this government is so interested in doing in other areas.

We hope that the government members will support this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: It just continues the theme across the floor, the bogeyman of privatization. We have not privatized anything during this term of government, nor have we made noises that we would, from health care to municipal services corporations.

In Bill 100, we've been extremely clear these are publicly owned assets that will remain that way. I just go on record as saying that there is no agenda for privatization. It continually gets raised out of the blue and there is no substance for it. It's a strawman argument and, frankly, I don't think it has a place in this debate.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I realize there's a difference in the definition of what privatization is between our political parties, but health care is a bridge too far. Everyone knows there has been massive privatization in health care, especially with nursing agencies—millions and million of dollars going to private agencies. I can't let my friend get away with that one.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Further to my colleague, so much of this government's agenda—and we don't want to see this here. This is what the concern of critics has been, is that they create planned obsolescence of public delivery of very many different things. We saw that with the nursing agencies, where hospitals are not getting the funding they need. Incredible health care workers are dealing with massive amounts of stress, breaking their backs, and then what happens is these hospitals bring in private nursing agencies that are charging double or triple what just properly paying their own workers would do and giving them some respect.

We see this in every single way. I don't agree with my friend in the government's characterization. I think this is a very, very founded concern that everyone has about this government and their desire to privatize. And again, if there is no intent, that's great. Today, he has spoken to try to alleviate the concern, saying that there's no hidden privatization agenda, and if that's true, fantastic. And if he believes that, then why not just put it right here in writing, such that we have it in legislation? "That is not what this is about, and this is not what will happen as a result of it." If you support it, just agree to this amendment. Put it in the legislation.

Again, I've said it several times, this is a government that loves to put the meat of the bill in the regulatory portion. So the people that are affected by this are told, "Here's a law that we're introducing. In very vague terms, it's going to do this. What are the details? Don't worry about it. Trust us. We'll deal with that later."

That is not anything—surely the members would never enter into any kind of contract if that was it. Can you imagine? Imagine being sold a TV in a box where there's no example of it; in fact, it's just a box. You have no idea what's inside it, there's no warranty, nothing; just, "Buy this." In fact, there's not even a picture of a TV. There's a box. It says "TV" on it. You shake it and there is something heavy. It could be rocks; we don't know. "Buy this. It's a TV." What we're asking for is to put in a nice panel, maybe create a warranty system. Come on. I mean, this is simple stuff.

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We have introduced amendments here—everyone on this side—to try to improve this legislation, to try to create prescriptive language, so that at the end of the day, when they get to the regulatory phase should this bill pass third reading, this will be the guidelines. It will be the guardrails—no privatization. Let's find a way to increase transit rides. Let's make it affordable. Let's respect the autonomy of these transit systems. Let's ensure that they're properly funded so they can make this happen.

Surely, since it has been said now so eloquently that privatization by this government is, in fact, not happening—which we disagree with, but that's okay; we can disagree in committee that this is not going to happen here—just agree to this amendment. Let's put it in writing. Let's all say, at the end of the day, this one thing we can agree upon: No privatization is coming, whether directly or indirectly as a result. Let's do this together, friends.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, are we ready to vote?

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have the next motion. It's an NDP motion. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 6 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same, agreement re apportionment

"(7) The minister shall not make a regulation under subsection (4) unless the minister has entered into negotiations with all municipalities or municipal agencies that have established or that operate or maintain an affected prescribed transit system, and negotiated in good faith to reach an agreement on the apportionment of fares."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Any discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Simply put, the minister cannot unilaterally impose a fare-sharing arrangement on local transit agencies but must negotiate an agreement in good faith. If you don't want to take it from us on this side here, let's hear from Marvin Alfred, president of ATU 113, who stated that we should "focus the proposed solution to the actual challenge: how to make it easier for transit riders to travel between systems. This could be achieved without

legislation, through funding agreements and negotiation." Well said. We agree.

This, once again, is supportable. Don't impose anything on these transit agencies. If you want to make transit work better, come to the table with sustainable funding. Consult them on the front end. Talk to them about what they think they need to make this work. We don't want to create an adversarial situation between different boundaries and different agencies because a rider lives in one place and works in another. Find ways to help. Be a mediator. Don't create any kind of conflict. Don't force agencies to have to now cut specialized transit rides. Don't force them to cut small local routes.

Let's come to the table with funding and let us do what we can today to try to create this bill to be more prescriptive and describe where you're going with it. Because right now, everything just seems to be up in the air, and the government just inexplicably seems to be voting against everything—issues that you would expect that they would support.

It's just simple language to let everybody know that they actually are serious about fare integration in a way that makes it work and doesn't create systems that cause massive strains on transit agencies, causing disputes and fights between different agencies because riders happen to live and work in different areas. This will improve the legislation immensely. This is what we heard from the ATU 113 president, Mr. Alfred, and this is something that I'm sure everyone at these hearings have agreed upon and, in fact, have said similar things in different ways.

I'm calling on the government members to at least, if one thing—just support this. Once again: good faith. We're raising the words "good faith." We've put it in the amendment. I just can't imagine, after—sure, we've seen them vote on pretty much—well, everything else that they themselves haven't introduced. Surely, we want to see good faith enshrined in the language of this bill.

Members, just help yourselves here. I know you're conflicted. I know this must be difficult for you. I know you're not going to sleep easy tonight, so I want to give you, if nothing else, a good night's rest. Support this well-thought-out, well-supported amendment. We are counting on you. The people of Ontario are counting on you.

Let's move to a vote, Chair.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? If there's no further debate, are you ready for the question? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

Those are all the amendments. Shall schedule 4, section 6, carry? Are you ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 4, section 6, is carried.

Schedule 4, section 7: We have an NDP amendment. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I think this is the one.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Yes. I'm feeling confident this time.

I am someone that actually believes in hope, Chair. I'm going to read this out. I mean, it is so self-explanatory, such an improvement. It says:

I move that clause 7(a) of schedule 4 to the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(a) designating new and existing routes that cross the boundaries of the primary service areas served by two or more prescribed transit systems as priority routes;"

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The minister may only set service requirements for routes if those routes cross transit area boundaries and may not set requirements for routes that are entirely within a municipal transit area.

Now, historically—and when I say "historically," I mean "today"—we have introduced an amendment similar to this, and erroneously, possibly by mistake, the government members voted against. Incidentally, we are offering them an opportunity to right their own vote, right their own record, come back to this and improve this.

Let us stay out of the tinkering of local routes. How does this government get up and say a schedule has to do with fare integration when they are setting forth legislation that allows them to tinker with routes within a system where there's no cross-boundary occurring in those routes?

Let us give those riders the ability to sleep easy at night. They're certainly not willing to do so for themselves, but let these riders understand that this bill will not tinker whatsoever with local routes. It will respect the autonomy and the self-direction of these transit agencies. They're not willing to come to the table with money. At least put in the legislation—legislation that's so vague and allows themselves to do whatever it is they want in the end—just say you're not going to mess around with local routes. This will give a lot of ease to the transit riders.

Think about those that have very not-well-used routes because they're occurring maybe at night, because our hard-working Ontarians are trying to get to a job. Maybe it's a PSW, a nurse—you name it—going out there to work a late night. They don't want to find out that the government is now directly or indirectly eliminating those routes.

You want to talk about fare integration? Let's put in this legislation limitations to just talk about routes that cross boundaries. I've raised this before in a similar amendment. Again, they voted against it. Miraculously, we have an opportunity for them to set the record straight and improve this legislation. We're counting on you.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I just have to make an observation. I feel like we're at a baseball game and my friend is pitching us. They come back and come back and come back with the same pieces again, the same suggestions again, and we're not going to change. Thank you for the opportunity to re-examine, but we're going to be consistent in our stance. We're not going to swing on this one. Thanks.

1010

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate on this amendment?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I am a baseball fan. At least we can agree that, hopefully, the Jays will actually make the playoffs this year. It's not looking good at this point, but I believe in hope.

But you know, a batter goes up, and they're swinging, I guess, 0 for, what, 12 now? And you're still hoping that, on the 13th at-bat, they're going to hit that ball out and make the fans happy—the fans being the TTC riders across the province of Ontario.

You may not have hope in your own voting pattern going forward, but I'm someone who has hope. We know that these are amendments that'll improve the legislation. Come on, do the right thing. Just hit one of those balls out of the park and feel good about yourself, because you will go to bed tonight knowing that you've improved this legislation that is just not full of any kind of details that will actually improve transit integration here.

The gentlemen was an Olympian, and I believe in him. He has accomplished great things, and I'm sure, had he tried baseball, he would have done well in that too. I'm hoping he's going to hit this one out of the park, and I'm hoping all five of them will do that.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): With that, I dare not ask if there's more debate.

Are you ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have another NDP amendment. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 7 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same, agreement re service standards

"(2) The minister shall not make a regulation under subsection (1) unless the minister has entered into negotiations with all municipalities or municipal agencies that have established or that operate or maintain an affected prescribed transit system, and negotiated in good faith to reach an agreement on service standards or requirements."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The minister cannot unilaterally impose service requirements on local transit agencies but must negotiate an agreement in—I know it's a word that doesn't seem to be popular today, or, in fact, two words—good faith.

Again, this will just limit the ability of this government to take away self-control from transit agencies who know best. They're not willing to come with any amount of money to the table. The agencies have come. We heard the CEO of the TTC say, "Limit the scope." Everyone has said to just limit the scope of this, to try to be more prescriptive. Every single amendment is trying to make this legislation more prescriptive.

Once again, we're calling on this government to do the right thing and support this. We've tried to introduce it in many different ways. Please support this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? Are we ready to vote?

Ayes

Burch, Rakocevic, Watt.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Shall schedule 4, section 7, carry? Further debate? No further debate.

Are you ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

With that, we'll recess until 1 o'clock.

The committee recessed from 1014 to 1302.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Good afternoon everyone. The Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy will now come to order.

We will resume clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 98. We'll resume with schedule 4, section 8 of the bill, where we have an NDP amendment, number 14. With that, we will turn it over to the NDP. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you, Chair. It's nice to see you again.

I move that section 8 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same

"(2) The unified trip booking system shall be controlled by a joint municipal services board established by the municipalities in which the prescribed specialized transit systems operate."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: In simple terms, what we're asking for here is that any unified trip booking system for persons with disabilities shall remain under the control of municipalities and not a private operator.

As we heard in debate here in committee earlier this morning, we are always vigilant and concerned about the possibility and the spectre of privatization occurring, whether intentionally or unintentionally, in this government's bills. We certainly don't want to see it, and what we are doing here is specifying it now. Not only do we not want to see privatization creep occurring, but that any trip booking system for persons with a disability shall remain under the control of municipalities.

Municipalities like the city of Toronto have Wheel-Trans and other specialized ride services that I have mentioned this morning. When you have a movement into a fare-integrated system, it is great for transit riders—this is something that we are all advocating for, something that we are all pushing—but what we don't want to see is that the transit agencies have their backs broken by the additional cost. That's why the government has to come to the table. But because they have not specified funding in any way, shape or form in this bill, that leaves everything to the back end to decide. We see the risk of specialized transit rides possibly being put in jeopardy and other many different things that exist within these local transit providers.

Hopefully after lunch, people have had full bellies, coming here with a smile, ready to support transit users, transit agencies, transit workers and doing the right thing. I think we are starting off the afternoon with an excellent amendment that will improve the bill. I'm hoping to see a round of unanimous support for this amendment and I think I've begun my afternoon with some hope. So let's hope they do the right thing here.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? No further discussion. Are we ready to vote? And we need a recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

Shall schedule 4, section 8, carry? Any debate? If no debate, are we ready to vote on section 8? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Section 8 carries.

We're on schedule 4, section 9. We have two amendments from the Liberals. MPP Hazell.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that section 9 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following section:

"Implementation plan

"The minister shall not prescribe a distance for the purposes of subsection 1 unless the minister has published an implementation plan on a government of Ontario website that addresses fleet capacity, staffing, training, safety and service quality indicators, including wait times, on-time performance and trip denials for each of the affected specialized transit systems."

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tanzima Khan): You just need to repeat this part and correct it to say "subsection" and not "section."

MPP Andrea Hazell: Oh. I move that section 9 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. You've heard the motion. Debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Section 9 allows the minister to prescribe a distance that specialized disability transit systems must go outside of their primary service areas while providing service. While we support increasing specialized transit service, it should not come at the expense of the residents that are currently reliant on specialized transit within the primary service area.

The government needs to be transparent about how their mandates will affect fleet capacity, staffing, training, safety, service quality, wait times and trip denials before handing down mandates to local providers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: This simply requires the minister to publish an implementation plan before prescribing how far outside a primary service area a specialized transit system transports persons with disabilities. We think it's reasonable and we will support this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Further debate? There's no further debate. Are we ready for the question? All those in favour of the amendment? All those opposed? The amendment is lost.

We also have amendment number 16 from the Liberal Party.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that section 9 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"No reduction of service

"(5) Subsection (1) does not apply to a prescribed specialized transit system if the prescribed specialized transit system notifies the minister, in writing, that compliance with subsection (1) would result in a reduction of service within its primary service area."

1310

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: In detailing my amendment, this amendment would allow local specialized transit providers to write to the minister and describe how his extended area beyond the primary service area would reduce service. If so, the minister's regulation has no effect.

This gives local specialized transit providers to determine what is best for their municipality, to let them maintain service at high levels and reject ministerial orders that would negatively impact their riders.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: A municipal transit system serving persons with disabilities doesn't need to comply with a

regulation requiring it to transport people outside its primary service area if it would result in a loss of specialized transit service within its primary service area. So I'm not sure why extending service outside of a service area should ever necessarily require a corresponding loss of service within a service area, since the municipality can always raise property taxes to cover the costs of the additional service. But in practical terms, there's only so much money to go around.

It would've been even better if the amendment required the minister to compensate the specialized transit system for any additional costs, rather than allow the transit system to provide less service for persons with disabilities travelling outside the service area. But it's a good amendment, and we're going to support it.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there's no further debate, I'll call the question. All in favour of this amendment? All opposed? The amendment is lost.

There being no further amendment to section 9 and if there's no further debate to section 9, shall section 9 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 9 carries.

Schedule 4, section 10: There are no amendments in it. Debate on schedule 4, section 10? Are you ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Schedule 4, section 11: We have a government amendment. MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I move that subsection 11(2) of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by striking out "a prescribed specialized transportation system" wherever it appears and substituting in each case "a prescribed specialized transit system".

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion? MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: This is really a housekeeping motion, just to make sure the terminology is consistent throughout. "Specialized transit system" is a defined term and "specialized transportation system" is not, so we're just bringing it in line with the defined terms in the act, to make sure it's consistent.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Further discussion? If not, are we ready for the question on the motion? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion carries.

There are no other amendments. Shall schedule 4, section 11, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Schedule 4, section 12: There's no amendments there. Any debate or questions on schedule 4, section 12? Seeing none, are you ready to vote?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: What section?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tanzima Khan): Section 12.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Section 12? I thought there was an NDP motion.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tanzima Khan): We're just going to vote on section 12 first, and then—

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Okay. All right.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): That's what I was voting on.

Are we ready to vote? Schedule 4, section 12: All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

We now have a proposed new section from the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I move that section 12.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"Limitations on regulations

"12.1 Despite sections 4, 6 and 7, a regulation made under those sections shall not require service integration between a prescribed transit system and a passenger transportation system that was not established or is not operated or maintained by a municipality or municipal agency."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Mr. Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: This is simple. It simply ensures the minister cannot force municipal transit systems to integrate their service with Uber or other private transportation systems. We want to keep the system public and protect good union jobs.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? No further discussion? Ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): We have another new section, introduced by the NDP. MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 12.2 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"Limitations on regulations

"12.2 Despite sections 4, 6 and 7, a regulation made under those sections shall not establish a fare structure based on the distance of a trip on a local transit system entirely within its primary service area or based on whether or not a trip starts or ends in different areas or zones within the primary service areas."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This would prevent the minister from establishing a fare-by-distance system or zone-based fares for trips that are entirely within a municipality. Currently, anyone in Toronto can travel to anywhere else in Toronto for the same fare. But there have been previous attempts to increase fares for people who take longer trips within Toronto, which would be especially unfair for suburban commuters. This amendment would ensure that every TTC rider travelling within Toronto pays the same fare and aren't discouraged from travelling within their

own city due to a distance-based or zone-based fare policy. It's very self-explanatory.

When you look at the size of the boroughs of the city of Toronto—let's take Scarborough, as an example. A person could live in the south side of Scarborough and have to travel all the way to the north, or from the west to the east—quite a large distance as compared to metropolitan Toronto and downtown Toronto areas.

There's been conversation and even suggestions made in the past that zones could be developed within and almost punish people for taking long-term transit rides. This goes, really, against the spirit of what fare integration would try to take, because under fare integration, a transit user would pay a single fare to get across a municipal boundary. But in a place like Scarborough, you could travel a dozen kilometres, versus two kilometres, traversing Steeles in the north end of Toronto from Vaughan. But a person might be spending an hour on a bus and then, all of a sudden, getting punished because a zone gets established, saying, "You know what? If you want to travel from west to east Scarborough, you've got to pay an additional fare."

We are saying to put it in this bill. Specify. Do not allow for this. Prohibit it. This is something that we've heard about from transit riders. It has been raised with concern by those fearing that such a system could be implemented. Again, let's make this bill more prescriptive—a bill that just leaves so much up to the imagination of the transportation minister.

At some point, if government members want to ask the opposition and others to support their measures, support their laws and support their legislation, please come to the table with language so we know where you are going with this. What we are doing—again, just like in the morning—is trying to help you, trying to get you a place that the people that attended the hearings would say, "Good job. We wondered about that, but you stepped in, government, and you made it clear that you're not going in this direction."

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I encourage and I hope that you will support this amendment that will improve the bill and give relief to many that are worried about zone-based fare coming into effect.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate. Are you ready for the question? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost. We now go to schedule 4, section 13. We have a notice here for the debate.

We're at section 13. Further debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This is something we see far too often in government legislation, and it was really, really disappointing to see it here. Section 13 of schedule 14 blocks lawsuits and damages against the government for anything done under the act, including misfeasance, bad faith or a breach of trust. It begs the question: Why is the government giving itself the power to commit acts of misfeasance, bad faith or breach of trust with impunity?

Multiple times this morning, we introduced amendments to bring in language that actually says "use good faith" in negotiations and many other ways. Not only did these respectable, honourable, well-intentioned government members, for some reason, not vote for this, but now we are being called to ask to allow this government to protect itself from lawsuits and allow itself—again, and I quote—to stop themselves from being sued for "misfeasance, bad faith or a breach of trust."

Look, we have time right now, a moment. Committee, let's work together to remove this. This has been a constant criticism of this government, protecting itself from lawsuits in this way. Surely, it's true this government has spent a lot of taxpayer money and time in the courts fighting. Yes, they've used the "notwithstanding" act to ram through legislation. It is quite surprising what they've done here.

But today, on this early day in May, we could turn a corner. You could set an example of leadership for all of your colleagues—the many seats you have across the province of Ontario—and say, "Do you know what? We don't want to do this. It's embarrassing. Why do we even need this? Of course, we're going to act in good faith even though we don't want to put it in amendments or support amendments that ask to just trust us," like you always say. "We will always act in good faith. Why would we get sued? Why would we ever commit misfeasance or a breach of trust?"

I'm reaching out to my colleagues in government. Just vote against this. It is not necessary if you're going to do a good job, if you're going to do the right thing for people. It is not necessary in this bill. I'm hopeful that today might be a beginning of a new dawn for this government, starting in this committee, where these five members will rise up to a moment of leadership and make everyone proud, including themselves. I hope that you will support against this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, are you ready to vote on schedule 4(13)?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

Nays

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I declare schedule 4, section 13 carried.

Shall schedule 4, section 14, carry? There are no amendments to section 14. Any debate on the section? If not, ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Schedule 4, section 14, carries.

Schedule 4, section 15: We have an NDP amendment.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I move that section 15.1 be added to part III of schedule 4 to the bill:

"Collective agreements

"15.1(1) Nothing in this act shall be interpreted as requiring or authorizing a—"

Interjection.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Sorry? Ah.

Interjections.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I would like to just take a special moment to recognize the Clerks in the province of Ontario, for without them, where would we be?

Applause.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Certainly, the number 20 comes before the number 21, and so I would like to move this amendment—

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): And we would be pleased to hear it.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you very much.

I move that 15 of schedule 4 to the bill be struck out, and the following substituted:

"Conflict with the Railways Act

"15. If a provision of this act or of a regulation made under this act conflicts with the Railways Act, being chapter 331 of the Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1950, the provision of this act or the regulation under this act prevails to the extent of the conflict."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you, Chair. I got carried away, wanting to reveal future amendments, but I will return to the one we were debating.

Section 395 of the City of Toronto Act gives the TTC the exclusive right to operate a local passenger transportation system within Toronto. As written, Bill 98 would allow the minister to ignore section 395 and allow fragmented service within Toronto. This amendment would ensure the continued integrity of the TTC network.

So many amendments today have been tabled to give autonomy to transit agencies, like the city of Toronto. They have the expertise; they know what they've been doing. They've been operating this incredible, world-class system for decades. Why are we now overriding the City of Toronto Act? It's not what they've asked for. Had this government consulted the TTC in advance and not as an afterthought, I would assume this would not have been implemented or this would not have been part of the bill.

And so, what we're doing is we're giving you help. We're helping you, because when you do talk to the TTC, they're going to say, "Why did you put this in here?" But by that point, should this bill pass third reading and pass into law, it will already be a part of the law itself.

What we're trying to do is, again, for the 20th time today, to help you improve the legislation. Treat the city of Toronto, the TTC, with some respect and give them the autonomy. The expertise—they have it. They deserve to make their own decisions about their networks. Don't force things upon them and don't override the City of Toronto Act to do this. They don't want it. You'll find out when you, in reverse, go and ask them what they think of the bill. Let's support this. Let's do the right thing today.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate? Want the question?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Shall schedule 4, section 15 carry? Any further debate on the section? If not, ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 15 carries.

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We have a new section that's going to be added to section 15, that we just passed. With that, I think we'll turn it over to New Democratic Party.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you, Chair. I spoiled the surprise earlier by beginning to read this. I saw the absolute interest—they were so captivated, the government members, as I read it out—and I'm sorry that I had to stop, but the good news is I will be reading it again into the record today, right at this moment. I know that they are eagerly listening, so I shall continue reading it out.

I move that section 15.1 be added to part III of schedule 4 to the bill:

"Collective agreements

"15.1(1) Nothing in this act shall be interpreted as requiring authorizing a municipality or municipal agency to breach the terms of a collective agreement to which the municipality or municipal agency is a party.

"Same

"(2) For greater certainty, nothing in this act affects the operation or enforcement of a collective agreement relating to a transit system to which this act applies."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): We've heard the motion. Debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Yes. Thank you, Chair.

This clarifies that the minister can't breach a collective agreement related to a transit system or stop the enforcement of a collective agreement.

We heard from ATU 113 president Marvin Alfred, who came here, and quite a number of members were in committee. He spoke very, very well on the day of the hearings and he said many things that I hope the government should have listened to.

So what happened was he had actually said—I'm going to quote and once again read into the record: "If you want to make regional integration work, we will be happy to

work with you. We even proposed ways to make it work within the existing collective agreements."

He also said, "We're here to use our knowledge and wisdom. We have the experience on the job to actually assist and give feedback into what's actually happening and how it's impacting people.

"We have been working and negotiating and dealing with these issues on multiple occasions. It's not the first time we've ever had to be exposed to cross-boundary; that's something that was even proposed in our collective bargaining."

The hard-working transit workers get up every morning, working even in the middle of the night. They work so hard to move millions of people around the city of Toronto. They're on the front lines. They see the effect of the legislation and the laws that pass. They're living that life, and they're working hard and delivering their best every single day for us. And their leaders fight for their members and they do a great job of it.

This is a government that spends a lot of time bragging and patting its back about their relationship with labour. And so, once again, we are trying to help you by putting amendments in that would not allow you to tear up and effect collective agreements. Certainly, this will irritate not just hard-working transit unions, leadership and their members, but unions across the province when you do this sort of thing in legislation. They don't appreciate it.

We had a member speak up and talk about the fact that the spectre of privatization is nothing but a spectre, contrary to what we see in government legislation, because it really finds its way in there. But if there's no interest to privatize public transit systems, if there is no secret hidden agenda to bring in any form of privatization, then certainly, certainly, this is something that is supportable, because to do so would be to show no respect to our unions, their incredible hard-working workers within ATU 113 and many others.

Support this amendment. Respect our unions. Respect collective agreements. It's the right thing to do. I know in your hearts you know it is. Do the right thing. Support this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I will just add to that. As my colleague was talking, I remembered some of the conversations we had with the head of the transit union. We spoke about merging collective agreements, which is something that could happen if this bill moves forward, which looks like it will.

That's an incredibly complicated process, and so this clarification that the minister cannot breach a collective agreement—whoever the government is at the time; it might not be this government, or it might be. But in the future, it's important that if different collective agreements are merged across the system, that we respect those agreements and that we don't leave workers behind by going to the lowest common denominator of conditions in those agreements. This is actually a really important clarification.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, do you want the question? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

There is another amendment, number 22, a New Democratic amendment. MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I move that section 15.2 be added to part III of schedule 4 to the bill:

"Environmental Bill of Rights

"(15.2) Part II of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 applies to proposals for amendments to this act and proposals for any regulations made under this act."

This is really just a clarification and, obviously, we all agree how important the Environmental Bill of Rights is and that it should apply to fare and service integration proposals, so that we respect the environment. It's a clarification, and I hope the government will support it.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, are you ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

We now go to schedule 4, section 16. The first amendment is amendment 23, and it's a Liberal amendment. MPP Hazell.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that subsections 16(3) and (4) of schedule 4 to the bill be struck out.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: This amendment removes a section of the bill that allows the LGIC to pass regulations which retroactively give whoever they want immunity from legal challenges to the actions under this act. This legal immunity is wrong and shields the government from rightful and legal accountability.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: This motion simply prevents the making of regulations that retroactively block lawsuits and shut down ongoing proceedings related to something done under the act by someone who may be named later. Why does the government need this power, and which unnamed

persons are these provisions intended to protect? We're not sure, so it's a good amendment, and we're supporting it.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, are you ready to vote? Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I'm getting a little punchy here; the recorded vote wasn't asked for on that one, but we got it anyway.

That's the end of the amendments to it, so we now deal with: Shall schedule 4, section 16, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 4, section 16, carries.

We now have a new section 16.1. It's a Liberal proposal.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that section 16.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"Consultation

"16.1(1) Before making a regulation under this act, the minister shall consult with,

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"(a) every municipality that would be affected by the regulation;

"(b) every municipal agency that would be affected by the regulation;

"(c) every prescribed transit system that would be affected by the regulation; and

"(d) Metrolinx, if it would be affected by the regulation.

"Consultation period

"(2) The minister shall publish notice of the consultation on a government of Ontario website and shall provide a period of not less than 30 days for written submissions.

"Summary of submissions and response

"(3) Before filing the regulation, the minister shall make a summary of the submissions received and the minister's response to the key issues raised available to the public."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: It requires consultation with every affected municipality and transit system that would be affected by that minister's regulations. It also requires that the minister publish its summary of those consultations, so the public can transparently see the risk involved in that minister's plans.

This is a common-sense step that ensures that regulations would not have negative impacts foreseeable by those actually on the ground.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: The NDP is in favour of public consultation, so we're going to support this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? I'll call the question. All those in favour of the amendment? All those opposed? The motion is lost.

We also have amendment 25 from the Liberals. MPP Hazell.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that section 16.2 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"Fiscal impact statement

"16.2(1) Before making a regulation relating to any matter in section 4, subsection 6(4) or section 7, the minister must prepare and publish a fiscal impact statement for the proposed regulation in accordance with this section.

"Contents

"(2) The fiscal impact statement for a proposed regulation must include,

"(a) the purpose and intended outcomes of the regulation;

"(b) ridership assumptions and projected ridership impacts;

"(c) projected fare revenue impacts for any affected prescribed transit systems;

"(d) projected operating and capital cost impacts; and

"(e) an assessment of impacts on persons with disabilities, including the impact on service frequency for any affected prescribed specialized transit systems.

"Timing

"(3) The fiscal impact statement must be made available to the public on a government of Ontario website at least 60 days before the regulation is made.

"Tabling

"(4) The minister shall promptly table the statement in the assembly or, if the assembly is not in session, at the beginning of the next session."

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Before making any regulation under the act, the minister would be required to completely account for the financial impact of their regulation to ensure that no undue cost is being passed down to municipalities without that information being shared with the Legislature or the public. This is basic transparency and should be no barrier to regulations that are adequately thought out and costed.

What I can say to actually strengthen this is that in my conversations with so many transit agencies across Ontario, they're lacking transparency from the government when it comes to fiscal responsibility. When revenue is down low, who is going to be responsible for this? They're strongly not supporting this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further discussion? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The NDP supports transparency, and we will be supporting this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Any further discussion? Are we ready for the vote?

All those in favour of the amendment? All those opposed? The amendment is lost.

We now move on to schedule 4, section 17. There are no proposed amendments to sections 17 to 18 of schedule

4. I therefore propose that we bundle those sections. Is there agreement? Thank you very much for the agreement.

Now, if there's no debate on those, we will ask for the vote. All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 4, section 17 and 18 carries.

Shall schedule 4, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 4, as amended, carries.

Schedule 5, section 1: There are no proposed amendments to sections 1 to 4 of schedule 5. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Okay.

Shall sections 1 to 4 of schedule 5 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 5, sections 1 to 4, carries.

There is an NDP notice to schedule 5 of the bill. I look to the NDP member for that debate.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The NDP opposes schedule 5, which states that the Building Code Act does not apply to Metrolinx. There may be good ways to speed up transit projects, but exempting Metrolinx from the Building Code Act is not one of them.

I don't know what this government has against rules, but it certainly likes to find ways, as we've seen today in committee, to exempt itself from lawsuits. This is one of these places where we're just going to allow Metrolinx to avoid the Building Code Act, to be exempt from it.

What does the Building Code Act do? Why on earth would Metrolinx want to build a facility that is not in line with the building code? What benefit would that really bring? I'm sure, certainly, based on today's engineering, that they can find ways to make things work.

Like so much of what's transpired in committee today, which has been surprising, why is this being introduced as a schedule? We should find ways to have agencies like Metrolinx follow the rules, not get around the rules or actually give them the ability to be exempt from the rules entirely, and certainly with regard to the Building Code Act.

We don't believe this should be supported. Again, this is an opportunity for this government, or at least the members of this committee, to send a message back to other government members to say, "Come on." I mean, Metrolinx has come up so many times in the media and certainly in debate in a number of different ways. I don't think giving them the power to be exempt from the building code in their projects is a way forward.

We should be making sure that the building code is first-class, a premier building code that is exactly what everyone would imagine it would be: full of protections. To exempt Metrolinx from it is just not the way forward. It's not something that we could support, and we hope that the government takes a sober second look at this and agrees with the NDP. Let's just oppose this schedule entirely.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, I'm ready to call the question. Shall schedule 5 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 5 carries.

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Schedule 6, section 1: There are no proposed amendments to sections 1 to 2 of schedule 6. Therefore, I propose we bundle these sections. Is there agreement?

Shall sections 1 to 2 of schedule 6 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 6, sections 1 to 2, carries. Shall schedule 6 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 6 carries.

Schedule 7, section 1: There are no proposed amendments to sections 1 to 7 of schedule 7. Therefore, I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Agreement.

Shall sections 1 to 7 of schedule 7 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

We're now at schedule 7, section 8. We have an NDP amendment. MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I move that subsection 8(2) of schedule 7 to the bill be struck out.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): We've heard the motion. Debate?

Mr. Jeff Burch: Very simply, this allows municipalities to ensure sustainable design in their site plan control processes. A lot of municipal control has been eroded under a lot of the bills the government has brought forward. Most municipalities, as part of their strategic plan—it's centred around sustainability and sustainable design in the city's site plan control processes. It's extremely important, and we think that should be retained. So we urge the government to vote in favour of this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, ready to vote?

Recorded vote.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have another notice to section 8—the schedule—from the Liberals. MPP Hazell.

MPP Andrea Hazell: The Ontario Liberal Party recommends voting against section 8 of schedule 7 to the bill.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: It removes the ability of the city to require electric vehicle charging in off-street parking facilities. The Premier has claimed to champion electric vehicles, but just when municipalities would want to support them and make them viable by ensuring that there is charging, the government is removing their ability to pass those bylaws.

This amendment shows how the government is not serious about electric vehicles.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, I'll call the question.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Could we have a recorded vote, please, Chair?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): A recorded vote for this one too.

We're voting on schedule 7, section 8. No further debate? A recorded vote is requested.

Ayes

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

Nays

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Schedule 7, section 8, carries.

We now go to schedule 7, section 9. We have a government amendment. MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: This is another housekeeping motion. I move that the English version of subsection 9(1) of schedule 7 to the bill be amended by striking out "(43.1)" and substituting "(4.31)".

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Discussion?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: This is just to make sure that we're referring to the correct section in subsection 9(1). It was a typographic mistake, so we have moved the decimal to the appropriate place so that it is referring to the correct section.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further discussion?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I just want to say that I support this amendment because decimal places matter—

Interruption.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. It's just the alert. So while the sound was off—we will go back to the debate.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I again will state, as we've learned in committee today, that decimal places matter, and, as a result, I will be supporting this amendment.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? If not, we vote on the amendment.

All those in favour? All those opposed? The amendment carries.

Shall schedule 7, section 9, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 7, section 9 carries.

We will go to schedule 7, section 10. We have a notice from the Liberals, and we look to them to address this section.

MPP Andrea Hazell: The Ontario Liberal party recommends voting against section 10 of schedule 7 to the bill.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): With that, debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Section 10 removes the requirement that the minister provide notice when revoking or changing ministerial zoning orders, MZOs. MZOs are massive ministerial power reaching into our municipalities and changing local guidelines. The very least that the minister should do is provide adequate notice that their orders are changing and allow the public to know and react.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate on schedule 7, section 10?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I'm not sure why anyone would want this in the bill. Why wouldn't the government want notice given about an MZO? We're not arguing about MZOs. Obviously, the NDP has not been in favour of ministerial zoning orders, but this just asks for notice. Perhaps a member of the government might want to explain why they wouldn't want to give notice for an MZO or a change to an MZO.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, are we ready to call the question on schedule 7, section 10?

Mr. Jeff Burch: Recorded vote, sir.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): A recorded vote is requested.

Ayes

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

Nays

Burch, Rakocevic.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Schedule 7, section 10 carries.

Schedule 7, section 11: There are no proposed amendments to sections 11 to 16 of schedule 7. Therefore, I propose we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Everyone is agreed.

Shall sections 11 to 16 of schedule 7 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 11 to 16 of schedule 7 carry.

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Shall schedule 7, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 7 is carried.

There are no proposed amendments to sections 1 to 3 of schedule 8. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Shall sections 1 to 3 of schedule 8 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The sections carry.

Shall schedule 8 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 8 carries.

Schedule 9, section 1, has NDP amendment 28. MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I move that section 1 of schedule 9 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause to subsection 2(2) of the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025:

"(0.a) all affected lower-tier municipalities consent to the designation;"

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the motion. Debate? MPP Burch.

Mr. Jeff Burch: We've had debate about water and waste water public corporations. We've heard both the government and opposition side. We've heard CUPE. But this isn't really about that. It's about whether or not it can be imposed on a municipality, which is a separate issue whether you're for or against these waste water public corporations.

The NDP has been very consistent in arguing that they should not be imposed by the provincial government on a municipality. I can tell you, in my municipality of Niagara, whether people are for or against them—and there are opinions on both sides—pretty much everyone agrees that they should not be imposed against the will of the municipalities involved. I will hope that the government will recognize that.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? We're voting on the amendment.

Ayes

Burch, Hazell, Rakocevic.

Nays

Anand, Babikian, Grewal, Saunderson, Vickers.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

There are no further amendments for the section, so shall schedule 9, section 1, carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Schedule 9, section 1, carries.

There are no proposed amendments to sections 2 to 7 of schedule 9. I therefore propose we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Shall sections 2 to 7 of schedule 9 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 9 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Schedule 9 carries.

I'm running out of paper here.

We are now going to return to sections 1 to 3 of the bill. Shall section 1 of the bill carry? Is there any debate? If not, all those in favour of section 1? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Shall section 2 of the bill carry? Is there any debate? All those in favour of section 2? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall section 3 of the bill carry? Any further debate? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 3 carries.

Shall the preamble of the bill carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The preamble carries.

Shall the title of the bill carry? Any debate? If not, all those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall Bill 98, as amended, carry? Is there any debate? MPP Rakocevic.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The members of the committee got to sit through hearings, and with regard to schedule 4, with regard to the transit elements of this omnibus, we heard time and time again that this bill needed changing, certainly within that schedule.

And today in committee, the honourable members, the well-intentioned members of the government side, spent a lot of time exercising their arms saying no. Sometimes it was the left arm, sometimes it was the right arm and at times it was both arms.

You know, fare integration is a good thing. But in some ways, it's sort of like a vase perched upon a small table with a pedestal, and it seems like this government feels the irresistible urge to knock it over.

We heard in hearings that One Fare was something that transit systems had to work to make work, but it worked. And they cited something we don't often hear with this government: There was some level of consultation that appeared on the front end. It's truly miraculous because so much of the activities of this government exist without consultation, or at least not in the public sense amongst the broader public.

What we heard with regard to the transit portions of this bill and fare integration is that they back-ended all of the consultation. They put it in the caboose of the train. And so, what they've done is they've tabled, before all of us here and the people of Ontario—and certainly those who either take transit on a daily basis or work to make it work—that consultation doesn't matter. They were going to ram through legislation, do whatever it was they thought and make tweaks to fare integration, but not describe what they were. It was a "just trust us" schedule.

And so, what we heard were questions. "Why didn't you consult us?" "Is this going to lead to privatization?" "Why give yourself the opportunities to rip up and affect collective agreements?" We attempted here, after listening to well-thought-out submissions at the hearings—how can we fix the schedule to make it supportive; something that we could support; something that would bring the train in the right direction of fare integration; something that wouldn't break the backs of municipalities or transit agencies that are fighting so hard to deliver excellent service without raising fares through the roof, preserving transit that's reliable and on time so that certainly millions people in the city of Toronto and millions across this province can get around?

We tried here in committee to bring forth amendments, a large number of them, to fix the legislation, to bring in transparency, to nail this government to wording that would give people the sense of ease—transit riders, transit workers and transit agencies—to know that this government wouldn't overreach, wouldn't meddle, wouldn't tell transit agencies how to do their jobs. They would leave that expertise to them; leave it to the agencies, to the management and, of course, the workers who work so hard every single day.

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We saw the opposite: a bill that had no consultation, that would tweak fare integration in a way that we don't understand and without the necessary details. Here we are now, being asked to vote on this bill; after an entire hearing process, two government amendments were tabled: one to

change the word "transportation" to "transit," and the other one that, at least to their credit, understands the importance of decimal places.

But on anything that was said, we are all going to be told, "Wait until the regulations. We'll figure it out at this point." We in the opposition say: If you want to make this bill work, if you want to make transit work, if you want to make it a legacy for this government, bring back the operational funding that's necessary; respect and give autonomy to the different transit agencies, and don't put them in a conflict with one another; come to the table with money; front-end those consultations; listen carefully; and don't do all that consultation, should this bill pass third reading at some point, within a day or two or even 45 days. Be comprehensive about this.

And when you come back to the Legislature with further laws, please do the homework in advance, because it was very difficult to hear in these hearings, and especially today, that this group of well-intentioned MPPs on the government side just refuse to vote in favour of any amendments other than the two they themselves tabled.

With that, we cannot support this. We simply cannot. This is not what was asked for in hearings. This is not the type of legislation we need to hear. So today, in committee, we will be voting to oppose.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I was going to say I appreciate the presentation, but I hadn't yet asked how you were going to vote. That's what we're here to do. Are we ready to call the vote? Okay, we're going to talk about—we'll put the question, once again. Shall Bill 98, as amended, carry? MPP Hazell.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I just want to put my comments on record. I sat in hearings for schedule 4 and I did listen to a lot of transit agencies. I've spoken to riders from Scarborough and really listened to their concerns. I can tell you, all the agencies, there are two concerns that they have with this schedule 4.

They're wondering why it's hidden in Bill 98, and it's an omnibus bill. There are some good things in the bill, but because of this schedule 4, I am leaning towards not supporting this bill, because there is no transparency. I even asked the CEO for the TTC, "What confidence do you have if this project does not work? Do you have the capacity of taking the load of the revenue loss?" He could not answer.

This is tough. This is really tough. The transit agencies are already suffering. They have nothing extra to give for their operational fund. They have been underfunded year over year over year. The funding model for this government to the transit agencies is like building them a house in the sand and never returning after 10 years. There will be no house.

What I'm afraid of is if this project doesn't work—and I've asked the minister's assistant, "When did you start consulting with organizations, with companies, with stakeholders?" She didn't even have any answers. I said, "You're working backwards. You have not done your homework."

I spoke to the Minister of Transportation himself and I said, "Come on. You want us to approve this bill. Give us something to go on." I begged him. I'm going back to have another conversation with him, because I think that's what we should be doing, is having conversations back and forth and coming to an agreement to get this passed. I just wanted to add that.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much for the comment. I just want to point out that this is not the debate in the House about all the policy; this is about this bill and that's why we go through it clause by clause: to debate the items in this bill, whether you agree or disagree, and how we believe it could be changed. Then, the voice of the committee is final as to what we end up with.

We can sit here for three days debating the evils of the world, but the truth is, what we are doing is reviewing to make sure that we collectively, as a committee, believe that this reflects what was heard in the House in the previous reading and what we will bring back. The House will still decide whether it's where it's supposed to go. We are just asked to review this report.

So, with that, are there any further comments on "shall Bill 98, as amended, carry?" Any further debate? MPP Grewal.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Thank you very much, Chair. Just in closing, I just wanted to talk about—my honourable member across from me mentioned the legacy of this government. The legacy of this government originally started with building transit, with a $70-billion investment into public transit across this province, and ensuring that we build transit for the future. A prime example is the Ontario Line. It's going to move around 400,000 people every day. Every day, we're going to be moving 400,000 people with the Ontario Line.

However, our government wanted to make sure that transit is also integrated. Not only are we building transit for the future; we're integrating existing infrastructure to ensure people have better access. A lot of the conversation that I heard in this committee when witnesses came and they gave their opinion—the government moved just a little while ago on One Fare. My honourable colleagues opposite, again, voted against One Fare; we voted in favour of One Fare. That saved the average commuter about $1,600 every year.

We want to continue on that integration work, where this Bill 98 is so essential for us to continue integrating transit to make it easier for people to use transit, get cars off the road and reduce emissions. This bill is a part of that framework.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): That, too, is not what we're here for. This is not about the legacy for anyone; this is about reviewing this bill and when we can make changes to make it work better, as to what the committee believes the House intended when it came here.

With that, MPP Saunderson, and then we'll go back to the issue at hand: to approve what we have finished doing here.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank the committee for our hard work today. I would also note that much of the discussion was around the issue of transit and the fare integration. There's a lot in this bill that deals with important infrastructure—municipal infrastructure; municipal service delivery corporations for water and waste water; as well as official plans; things to streamline and get housing built—and most of those, if not all of them, passed with no changes. So I appreciate the work of the committee on that today.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further speaking to the motion I have on the table?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Chair, actually, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your good work today. I want to thank the Clerk, legislative counsel, Hansard, research, everybody that made this possible. Though disappointed with the outcome of the committee, it has been an honour to sit here with all of you today and to debate this. Thank you very much.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you.

With that, shall Bill 98, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

This ends the clause-by-clause considerations. Is there any further business?

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

MPP Andrea Hazell: I have a motion that I would like to move.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. MPP Hazell, you have a motion.

MPP Andrea Hazell: I move that the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy conduct a study pursuant to standing order 113(a) on the operation of Metrolinx and its settlement with Craft Kingsmen Rail (East) Corp; and

That the committee meet for hearings on Monday, May 11, 2026, from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m.; and

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That the president and CEO of Metrolinx be invited to appear at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2026, and that the president and CEO shall have 20 minutes to make an opening statement followed by 60 minutes of questions and answers divided into two rounds of 10 minutes for the government members, two rounds of 10 minutes for the official opposition members, and two rounds of 10 minutes for the third party; and

That legislative research provide a draft copy of the report to the committee as soon as possible following the hearings; and

That the committee meet for the purpose of report writing on the following days:

—Wednesday, May 13, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.; and

—Thursday, May 14, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.; and

That, prior to adjourning on the final day of report writing, the Chair shall put the question on the adoption of the report; and

That the final version of the committee's report, as agreed to by the committee at the end of the final day of report writing, be presented to the House no later than Monday, May 18, 2026.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Have you got a copy for everyone to read?

MPP Andrea Hazell: We have copies.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Point of clarification, Chair.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Yes?

Mr. Aris Babikian: Shouldn't a motion like that be passed through the House first, and after that go to the subcommittee?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): No. Members of the committee are allowed to put motions before the committee. If members of the committee disagree with the motion, they can vote it down, and then it will be over. They do have the right to do that, since we are in session.

I do ask that we recess for just a few minutes until we get copies for everyone to get a copy of the document.

The committee recessed from 1421 to 1428.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I believe everyone now has a copy of the motion that was read into the record. We will ask for a quick debate. I have to ask for debate, and then we can vote on this motion.

MPP Andrea Hazell: Do I go ahead?

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Yes.

MPP Andrea Hazell: As you are aware, Metrolinx recently entered into a settlement arising from a dispute reportedly valued at approximately $500 million. Given the potential scale of the settlement, the public funds involved and the broader implications for transparency—here we are with transparency again—and accountability and especially governance within one of Ontario's largest provincial agencies, we believe this matter is of the utmost public interest—and it should be—and it warrants careful examination by this committee.

The motion seeks to invite the president and CEO of Metrolinx to appear before the committee to provide testimony and answer questions regarding the circumstances of the settlement and Metrolinx's decision-making processes. We all should know.

We are specifically concerned with the appearance of a conflict of interest, and it could be an appearance of a conflict of interest regarding a senior executive of Craft Kingsmen Rail (East) Corp., Carmine Nigro—a known donor to the Progressive Conservative Party—and whether there was any undue influence on Metrolinx to settle.

Our goal here is bringing this matter forward to ensure public confidence. That's what we want to do today. That's what we're asking for: transparency and to bring back public confidence.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Any further discussion?

Mr. Brian Saunderson: In response: This issue, really, is out of the scope of today's discussion. I know it's

committee business, but this has just been raised in the House today. This is really a fishing expedition, and I see no basis, so we will not be supporting this.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): I think the best way to deal with that is with a vote of the committee.

Any further debate? If not, all those in favour of this motion? All those opposed? And the motion fails.

Thank you, and with that—

Interjection.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Saunderson.

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I move that the committee enter a closed session for the purposes of organizing committee business.

The Acting Chair (Hon. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Any debate on the motion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The committee continued in closed session at 1431.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURAL POLICY

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