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CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 3 November 2026 / Mardi 3 novembre 2026

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2026 (No. 2), Bill 143, Mr. Bethlenfalvy / Loi de 2026 sur le plan pour protéger l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires) (no 2), projet de loi 143, M. Bethlenfalvy

Ms. Stephanie Bowman 5301
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon 5304
Mr. Adil Shamji 5306
Mr. John Fraser 5307
Mr. Dave Smith 5308
MPP Alexa Gilmour 5308
Mme Lucille Collard 5309
Mr. Lorne Coe 5309
MPP Lisa Gretzky 5309
Ms. Laura Smith 5309
Mr. Deepak Anand 5310
Second reading debate deemed adjourned 5311

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Township of Manitouwadge
MPP Bill Rosenberg 5311
Steel industry
MPP Robin Lennox 5311
Gaming control
Ms. Lee Fairclough 5311
Riding of Brampton West
Mr. Amarjot Sandhu 5312
Treaties recognition
Mr. Sol Mamakwa 5312
Élections municipales
M. Stéphane Sarrazin 5312
Addiction services
MPP Catherine McKenney 5312
Government investments
Hon. Laurie Scott 5313
Anti-Semitism
Ms. Laura Smith 5313
Electoral reform
Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady 5313

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly) 5314
Hon. Kevin Holland 5314
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam 5314
Ms. Marit Stiles 5314
Hon. Greg Rickford 5314
Hon. Michael Parsa 5314
Hon. David Piccini 5314
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon 5314
Mr. Adil Shamji 5314
MPP Alexa Gilmour 5314
Mrs. Michelle Cooper 5314
Hon. Steve Clark 5314
Hon. Rob Flack 5314
Mr. Mike Schreiner 5314
Ms. Chandra Pasma 5314
MPP Lisa Gretzky 5314
Mr. Stephen Blais 5314
Hon. Nina Tangri 5314
Mr. Tyler Allsopp 5314
Mr. Anthony Leardi 5315
Ms. Peggy Sattler 5315
Mr. Terence Kernaghan 5315
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly) 5315

QUESTION PERIOD / PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS

Government accountability
Ms. Marit Stiles 5315
Hon. Nolan Quinn 5315
Government accountability
Ms. Marit Stiles 5316
Hon. Rob Flack 5316
Student assistance
Mr. John Fraser 5317
Hon. Nolan Quinn 5317
Government accountability
Ms. Lee Fairclough 5318
Hon. Nolan Quinn 5318
Government accountability
MPP Jamie West 5319
Hon. Trevor Jones 5319

Hospital funding
Mr. Stephen Blais....5319
Hon. David Piccini....5320
Northern Ontario development
MPP Bill Rosenberg....5320
Hon. George Pirie....5320
Community use of schools
Mr. Chris Glover....5321
Hon. Paul Calandra....5321
Health care funding
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon....5321
Mr. Anthony Leardi....5322
Municipal funding
Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady....5322
Hon. Rob Flack....5322
Mental health and addiction services
Mr. Andrew Dowie....5323
Hon. Michelle Cooper....5323
Trucking safety
MPP Lise Vaugeois....5323
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria....5323
Government accountability
MPP Stephanie Smyth....5324
Hon. Nolan Quinn....5324
Emergency preparedness
Ms. Natalie Pierre....5324
Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal....5324
Notice of dissatisfaction
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly)....5325

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

Mr. Rob Cerjanec....5325
Mr. Lorne Coe....5325
Mr. Deepak Anand....5325

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Martin Farms Limited Act, 2026, Bill Pr63, Mr. Anand
First reading agreed to....5325
Moratorium on Artificial Intelligence Data Centres Act, 2026, Bill 146, Ms. Clancy; Mr. Schreiner / Loi de 2026 sur le moratoire relatif aux centres de traitement de données en intelligence artificielle, projet de loi 146, Mme Clancy; M. Schreiner
First reading agreed to....5325
Mr. Mike Schreiner....5325

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Government accountability
Ms. Chandra Pasma....5326
Education funding
Mr. Ted Hsu....5326
Trucking safety
Mr. Joseph Racinsky....5326
Health care workers
Mme France Gélinas....5326
Cancer screening
Mr. Ted Hsu....5326
Energy policies
Mr. Dave Smith....5326
Taxation
Mr. Tom Rakocevic....5327
Municipal elections
Mr. Ted Hsu....5327
AI data centres
Mr. Mike Schreiner....5327
Education funding
Ms. Jennifer K. French....5327
Social assistance
Ms. Chandra Pasma....5327
Northern Health Travel Grant
Mme France Gélinas....5328

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2026 (No. 2), Bill 143, Mr. Bethlenfalvy / Loi de 2026 sur le plan pour protéger l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires) (no 2), projet de loi 143, M. Bethlenfalvy
Mr. Deepak Anand....5328
Mme France Gélinas....5330
Mr. Lorne Coe....5330
MPP Jamie West....5330
Mr. Ted Hsu....5330
Mr. Mike Schreiner....5331
Mme France Gélinas....5331
Mr. Ted Hsu....5333
M. Andrew Dowie....5334
MPP Jamie West....5334
Mr. Lorne Coe....5334
Ms. Jennifer K. French....5335
Mr. Ted Hsu....5335
Mme France Gélinas....5337
MPP Stephanie Smyth....5338
Mr. Joseph Racinsky....5338
Mr. Tom Rakocevic....5338
MPP Stephanie Smyth....5339

Mr. Mike Schreiner 5339
Mr. Andrew Dowie 5340
Ms. Chandra Pasma 5340
Mr. Guy Bourgouin 5340
Hon. George Pirie 5340
Mr. Sol Mamakwa 5343
MPP Susan Lahey 5343
Mr. John Vanthof 5343
Hon. Todd J. McCarthy 5343
Mme France Gélinas 5343
Ms. Natalie Pierre 5344
M. Guy Bourgouin 5344
M. Stéphane Sarrazin 5347
MPP Jamie West 5347
Mme Lucille Collard 5347
L'hon. Todd J. McCarthy 5348
Mme France Gélinas 5348
MPP Andrea Hazell 5348
Second reading debate deemed adjourned 5349

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 3 November 2026

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 3 novembre 2026

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PLAN TO PROTECT ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2026 (NO. 2)

LOI DE 2026 SUR LE PLAN POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES) (NO 2)

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 2, 2026, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 143, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 143, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Further debate? I recognize the member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Good morning, Speaker. It's an honour to rise today to continue the debate on Bill 143.

Speaker, I'll carry on from where I started last night and just say that, again, the fall economic statement shows very little for families who are struggling during this affordability crisis—very little progress on jobs, and in fact a decrease in the number of jobs that the government expects in the coming year. So the statement just does not meet the moment. It's another example of this Conservative government's "more talk than action." The statement purports to protect Ontario, but when you get past the words and get into the numbers, there are so many inconsistencies.

The failing Ford Conservative government is trying to use tariffs that have been in place for a year and a half to justify the six earlier years of missed housing targets, rising debt, infrastructure cost overruns, and a structural deficit that still has not been eliminated despite their many years of promising to do just that.

We've all seen the videos of the Premier saying that he was glad his preferred presidential candidate won, and we know that he called an expensive early election on that basis, trying to say that it was time to protect Ontario. It does make me wonder what he thought he was doing in the years before that, because certainly the challenges that this government has faced in our economy and in the finances started long before US tariffs. They said that they needed to spend billions of dollars in new money to protect us. But guess what? They've not spent anything close to that. And we can see from the public accounts, the fall economic statement, what's really going on there.

They talk about workers, and yet they're projecting fewer new jobs. Job creation in 2026 has been revised down a total of 13,000 over the course of the outlook. Compared to the budget, projected job creation has been reduced by 8,000 jobs in 2026 and another 8,000 in 2027. So that's not a promising outlook for workers here in Ontario who are worried about their futures, worried about the crumbling public services that they're dealing with in education and health care and beyond.

Speaker, the protecting Ontario economy—is again more talk than action. We see weaker growth in GDP and less investment. GDP forecasts are weaker. The GDP forecast for 2026 has been cut from 1% in the budget just six months ago to 0.5% in the fall economic statement.

The government continues to present the Ontario Together Trade Fund as a response to the economic uncertainty and supply chain challenges, but according to the public accounts referenced in the fall economic statement, actual spending to date in that program is only $4.84 million. That will not do much to protect Ontario and the workers who are struggling.

Just last week, I visited the United Steelworkers in Kingston and talked to them about the layoffs that they've experienced recently at one of the plants that has been affected by the aluminum tariffs. There's no plan for help there—no plan for the plant, no plan for the workers. It really does beg the question: What are they talking about when they say they are protecting Ontario?

Speaker, let's talk about housing starts, housing affordability. Housing affordability is getting worse because housing starts are going down; they're down 15,000 from the projection just six months ago. Fewer homes are being built than projected in the 2026 budget. Housing start projections have been revised downward in every year of the forecast, from 70,000 to 65,000 in 2027 and from 76,000 to 72,000 in 2028. That amounts, in total, to about 15,000 fewer housing starts over the medium term, at a time when Ontario is already facing a severe housing shortage. Fewer homes coming online means the gap between supply and demand will remain wider for longer, and that puts continued pressure on affordability for buyers and renters alike.

Just this weekend, I heard from a constituent who talked about the importance of having homes that are actually affordable. She said, "And who defines affordable? A two-bedroom apartment in my building was advertised at just

under $3,000 a month. That's $36,000 annually. At the conventional 30% affordability threshold, it requires an income of $120,000. And what about single people living in Toronto? The financial burden of maintaining a household on one income is real. Our housing policies must recognize it."

Speaker, you cannot claim to be solving a housing crisis while projecting fewer homes and less supporting infrastructure. Let's move to that: infrastructure—again, a lot of talk about helping municipalities build homes, yet infrastructure funding is collapsing. The infrastructure program investments fall from $1.2 billion to $600 million next year. And municipalities continue to hear they're partners, but municipal infrastructure funding projections tell a different story. Spending in this category is down 50%. So the government talks about historic infrastructure investments, yet infrastructure spending will be declining over the next few years. Total infrastructure spending is projected to fall from $36 billion this year to $35 billion the following year and $27 billion the year after that. The 10-year capital plan? It would total 16.8% as a share of GDP in 2025. The 10-year plan was larger, actually, under the previous Liberal government. The capital plan is financed with debt, and the finance minister likes to call that "good debt." But the amount of good debt has grown to 15% as a share of GDP since the Conservatives took office, and good debt has averaged 14.8% as a share. So the reality is that the government is not setting any new precedents compared with previous governments. This is not historic infrastructure spending.

But there is historic waste in this government. I've added up about $18 billion in waste. Certainly, things like the Beer Store deal; using private, for-profit staffing agencies for nurses; the redevelopment of Ontario Place and the Ontario Science Centre; and of course we've got the Skills Development Fund, billions of dollars in money that—the Auditor General called the process not fair, not transparent, not accountable. We've got the management of personal protective equipment, masks that expired—$1.4 billion. That's from the Auditor General.

0910

And then, of course, we have the Ottawa Hospital, which, again—it's kind of shocking: $2.8 billion was the plan, and the minister just kind of dropped the "oh, by the way, it's now $10 billion." Speaker, I think we should be stopping the presses. What happened with that project? What is going on that this government almost quadrupled the size of the project? We're still only getting one hospital, and of course, it's a needed hospital, and the Ottawa community will be happy when it's done. But I think the public deserves some answers on how the project went from $2.8 billion to $10 billion overnight. What is happening with the procurement and the contracts? It's not just COVID costs. The government likes to find any excuse for their mismanagement, but this has to be acknowledged for what it is: It's mismanagement.

The Premier talks about being a businessman. If he was the CEO of a company that had a project that went from $2.8 billion to $10 billion, I don't think he'd be the CEO the next day. He needs to acknowledge that this government is mismanaging public dollars, and I think it will go down as the government that has wasted the most money in Ontario history.

Speaker, we've also got the federal government working very hard on infrastructure projects across the country. I think there was a list of about 140 projects. There was a summit, in fact, right here in Toronto this past summer, where leaders from across the country, from industry, came together and talked about infrastructure and how to support the Canadian economy, and of course that includes the Ontario economy. But it's kind of like Ontario was absent. The Premier's submission for major projects—a fantasy tunnel under the 401. And guess what? It was declined because there's no substance to it. It's just a fantasy.

How about putting together a solid plan and vision for what infrastructure in Ontario should look like? Where do we need new highways? How about a 400-series highway in the north? Instead of just widening, let's actually talk about a 400-series kind of highway that connects southern Ontario to northern Ontario to western Canada. Let's talk about what infrastructure would actually change the game here in Ontario. I don't hear that being talked about at all. In fact, the business leaders, the pension funds, the money managers in this country are saying, "Where is Ontario? Bring us some projects." It's just not happening. The government needs to shake its head and get its act together when it comes to getting Ontario's fair share of the infrastructure funding that is available both from the federal government and from those with capital. It's just not happening, and we need to make sure that gets addressed.

Speaker, let's come back to the Canada Investment Summit. The Premier was hoping that he would attract billions with his deal book but the province, again, as I said, was notably absent from the national list. So we need to remind the Premier, we need to remind the finance minister, we need to remind the economic development and trade minister that a fantasy tunnel under the 401 is just not going to cut it. They need to actually think about some real projects that will help Ontario build a stronger economy.

Speaker, let me give an example that I think everyone can relate to, and that's tourism. We have a beautiful province here in Ontario. I'm sure everyone can highlight things in their ridings that they think other people should come and see. Certainly, I've talked about things like the Toronto Botanical Garden and Edwards Gardens in my riding. They're just stunning.

We know that the tourism industry has actually said, "Please, would you give us about $15 million for us to do an ad campaign?" That will help keep us on par with other provinces who are doing so and attracting visitors. The tourism industry here in Ontario is also made up of many small businesses, and we know that more small businesses are closing in Ontario than opening their doors. So investing a little bit of money in tourism advertising would go a lot further than self-promoting ads about how great this government is doing, when it's just not true, as I've said.

We've got slowing GDP growth. We've got fewer jobs, fewer houses being built. We don't need ads to brag about those failures. We need ads that actually help pump up and build up Ontario.

Let's talk about Ontario to the world, to the rest of Canada and make sure that we are supporting our tourism sector, because it brings great jobs to the province, in particular for young people. Summer is a beautiful time here in the province, and many visitors come during that time of year to experience our natural beauty. Young people often get those jobs. Sometimes it's their first job to go work in a—I visited a rafting company this past summer, on the Ottawa River. They provide great opportunities for jobs, and they are doing well despite the lack of government support and advertising. But think about what these industries could do with a little bit more support, with an actual plan for how we make sure that we are building up Ontario's tourism sector and supporting the jobs that come with it.

Speaker, let me move to innovation. The government talks about life sciences as one of Ontario's most important innovation sectors. The fall economic statement highlights the province's strengths in medical technology, pharmaceuticals, biotech and health research, but what is missing is any significant new funding commitments attached to those announcements—so, again, a lot of words but not a lot of action.

I want to use another example of a company that, sadly, recently failed here in Ontario. It's a company called Synaptive, which had done some great, innovative work here in Ontario, operated here in Ontario and was a leading innovator in its field, in medical imaging. They were globally recognized as a leader, but it's so hard to sell here in Ontario. Hospital procurement—the founder talked about how, to sell 10 machines in Ontario, he has to sell to 10 different hospitals. That, of course, is costly; it takes time and means that his margins are smaller. He said that if he goes to the US, he could sell 10 machines in one call. Certainly, he is not supporting private medicine, private health care, like this government is. He wants to be here in Ontario. He wants to operate here in Ontario, employ people here in Ontario. But given the nature of health care procurement in this province, he found it very hard to survive, so he did end up focusing or certainly doing a good chunk of his sales in the US. But after the start of US tariffs, the company went into creditor protection and it was sold. It's really a tragedy.

If you think about innovators who want to build their companies here in Ontario, they need a little bit of support. These companies will say that a government contract is worth more than a government grant. How can we help those companies? By giving them our business, by making sure that we are making it easy to do business here in Ontario. I think those are some of the things that we need to focus on.

If we look at how we're supporting those most vulnerable, spending numbers show very little growth. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services spending is rising by only $20 million year over year—basically flat in a budget of tens of billions, hundreds of billions. With inflation, population growth and increased demand for services, that kind of increase just doesn't cut it. It basically means there will be a reduction in supports, in actual services. Again, the government's words talk about helping people, but the numbers show that they're really not going to be able to do that.

In education, one of the core services that our province provides, projected spending is down by nearly $300 million compared to the previous outlook. That reduction affects our kids every day. I visit schools in my riding, and they're so discouraged when they talk about the number of educational assistants they have. They'll say, "Well, last year, we had two, and this year we've been told we'll have 1.5," or "Last year, we had 1.5; it's getting cut to one." We know that with the mental health challenges and the learning loss that did occur during COVID, our kids need some extra support right now. We should be investing in those kids, and that, of course, takes money.

The government gave out cheques, post-pandemic, to parents, notionally for learning loss during COVID—a couple hundred dollars for tutoring—but that might buy, what, two, maybe three sessions? That's not going to cover the learning loss that occurred. That money added up to $350 million two years in a row, and the government borrowed that money. I want to just highlight to people—I kind of joke with them, "If you get a cheque from this government for $200, be prepared to give them back a cheque for $340," because that's what it costs with interest. The average term for borrowing is about 15 years under this government. Do the math. Calculate the interest rate—basically, get a cheque for $200, write me a cheque for $340. This math just doesn't add up.

0920

Of course, we've got Ontario colleges and universities continuing to face financial pressure. We've got students struggling—those who are waiting for their OSAP funding, their OSAP loans from the private career colleges.

I just need to talk again about the historic waste of this government, and the latest private career college scandal is another example. Hundreds of millions of dollars went out the door when this government's system should have detected that—this is what the minister is not highlighting when he tries to defend what actions the government is taking now. The system should have identified, "Hey, we've got a problem here with all these applications coming from one IP address." The system should have been ringing alarm bells. Either the system was broken and it wasn't ringing alarm bells, or they ignored the alarm bells and kept the money flowing. Either way, we're not getting that money back. It has gone to fraudsters, potentially hundreds or thousands. How is this government going to get that money back? Time will tell. We will get the numbers eventually, but it's hundreds of millions of dollars that we have just lost because of this government's incompetence.

These things need to be called out. We need to make sure we are taking action. Certainly, the minister needs to resign, at a minimum, and somebody who's competent

needs to get in there and fix the problem. And we need to make sure that the students whose lives are being put on hold get the money they need.

I talked to a young woman who's working in the trades. One of the great things that we want to do in this province is get people in the trades and, in particular, get more women in the trades. This young woman is in a plumbing apprentice program, and she's waiting to get into her college. And guess what? There aren't enough spots. She applied when she got the call to apply for her semester of training. She got her application in within seven minutes, and she didn't get a spot. Guess what? Now she has to wait until at least March of next year to have another chance to get her training done. What that does is prevent her from getting to the next level of earning. She can't reach her full licensing status without those courses, and her courses are delayed because of insignificant funding to the colleges. So the spots are just not available.

I also want to talk about agriculture in the time I have left. The government talks about food security, but we know that total spending for the agriculture sector is projected to decline—so, again, lots of words but no action. We've got some particular sectors of the agriculture and agri-food industry that are facing some real challenges.

Eight greenhouse operators came forward with a problem that threatens the industry, and the response has been years of inaction. I visited some of these greenhouses this past summer, down in the Leamington area, and they're doing an amazing job of bringing innovative technology, trying to grow food more effectively using technology and greenhouses to grow it for longer seasons. We all get our tomatoes and peppers—we love to buy those grown here in Ontario, and these producers want to do that. They want to supply Ontarians with that fresh produce. They signed Combined Heat and Power Standard Offer Program—CHPSOP—contracts. They made substantial investments; they were encouraged to by the province's energy planning framework. According to the people who have signed this, they worked for years with the agriculture and energy ministries to seek a solution as the IESO's Market Renewal Program fundamentally changed the economics of these contracts.

Let me just get into that for a minute. They continue to have these conversations, but they're stuck in limbo. They've got no member of the CHPSOP group that has signed the proposed Market Renewal Program amendments that operators have spent more than a year seeking a solution to without any success. The consequences extend well beyond the balance sheets of just a handful of greenhouse businesses. These operations were built to produce food, create jobs and contribute to Ontario's food security. Instead, growers say they're being forced to subsidize the energy systems they were encouraged to build.

Greenhouse operators are now operating on extremely thin margins, sometimes at a loss—we know that can't go on forever; these businesses can't operate at a loss indefinitely—and financing and loan repayment obligations are increasingly at risk. They warn that some operators may ultimately be forced to shut down or sell their greenhouse operations simply to service the CHPSOP-related debt.

One grower described investing roughly $20 million in the project and said that had he known this would be the outcome, he would have invested instead in expanding greenhouse production. That really captures the problem perfectly. This incompetent government talks about strengthening Ontario's food supply, but its actions have left food producers wondering whether the investments they made in good faith will be allowed to succeed. And it's not just about making a profit. The growers argue that the current framework requires them to operate under unrealistic assumptions, penalizes facilities when maintenance is required, and leaves little room to absorb unexpected equipment failure or a catastrophic event. CHPSOP facilities are deemed to operate under a virtual power plant model that does not reflect actual operating costs, and operators can be required to run extensive hours with limited downtime for maintenance.

The government says it cares about food security. It says it supports Ontario agriculture. It says it wants reliable energy and economic growth. But when greenhouse growers tell the government they're struggling to stay financially viable under a provincially administered program, when years of discussions produce no solution, when businesses that help feed Ontarians are left carrying the burden, the gap between what this government says and what it does becomes impossible to ignore.

Food security is not protected through press releases; it's protected by ensuring the growers who produce our food can remain in business.

Speaker, with that, I'm going to close my remarks. I want to thank those who provided input to me for my debate today.

There are many issues that we're facing here in Ontario, and the government needs to do more to make sure that Ontario's economy remains strong for workers and families across this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's always a pleasure to rise in this House and represent the very good people of beautiful Beaches–East York—today, as we discuss Bill 143, the financial and economic statement.

Yesterday, the government stated that no country anywhere is immune to global uncertainty. While there is some truth to that, a good government is proactive. They listen to their constituents, and they hear from them what they need for a better quality of life.

Ontario will not be forced into complacency; we will demand better.

For years and years, this government has been warned of many things:

—the dangers of relying on waste exports to manage garbage;

—the growing Ontario Autism Program wait-list;

—an increasingly severe health care crisis;

—more and more mental health struggles in our schools; and

—record highs in homelessness.

Yet they did nothing, and they have failed to plan for any of this in their budgets—any budget. There is a clear juxtaposition between the things that this government spends tax dollars on and the things they claim they do not have funds for.

0930

I thought it would be enlightening to explore what this government is willing to go into a $16.9-billion deficit for:

—$48 million—just chump change, really—to remove the bike lanes in Toronto, which does nothing for anyone, quite frankly. But for anyone in northern Ontario, western Ontario, southern Ontario, it's a colossal waste of money. Removing infrastructure that has been proven to save lives, while engineering, health care and legal experts all have advised against it—$48 million, just toss it out the window;

—$240,000, the extra cost to taxpayers for the blue licence plates;

—$4.3 million to settle legal costs of Bill 124 cases. This was the bill—there have been so many bills rammed down our throats—that restricted salary increases for public sector workers at 1% for three years. This government chose to cap wages of 650,000 public sector workers; notably, workers in hospitals, universities, colleges, long-term-care homes, children's aid societies, and more—key areas that matter. This government went after Ontario's essential workers. That shows how little they value equitable health care and the well-being of nurses and other hospital workers;

—$210 million for alternative speeding measures. Have we seen them? Is a little bit of paint on the road going to save lives after they chose to remove a measure that was working well—speed cameras—because they claimed it was a cash grab? Don't worry about your lives, pedestrians, because that's a cash grab; it's more important. We've seen how that removal of the speed cameras has played out. You just have to look at Parkside Drive to see how devastating the effect has been, and on many other streets;

—$112 million on advertising for themselves: There was millions of dollars for no one's benefit but their own. Personally, I believe if you have good policies, they should stand on their own. You wouldn't have to resort to bragging—I would not even say humble bragging, because you just brag outright about yourselves;

—$850,000 to pay back to communities due to lost staff time and legal and consulting fees after—remember that?—the greenbelt scandal: I know; there have been a lot of scandals, so it's kind of hard to keep track of them, but I'll remind you;

—$742 million wasted in Skills Development Fund money doled out to poorly ranked applicants. It's the only time in your life that if you did poorly, you would succeed—including the ever-infamous strip club that received $10.8 million for skills development and staff training.

But when it comes to life-saving care for cancer patients through out-of-country and exceptional access programs, they deem it time to close the purse strings. Planned health care spending is $500 million lower than the spring budget—in a health care crisis.

When students need OSAP grants, or in the case of private career college students needing OSAP, period, the government orders them to not take basket-weaving courses—a.k.a., don't follow your passion. Post-secondary spending is $100 million lower than in the last budget.

The ways that this government spends taxpayers' dollars perfectly illustrates where their priorities lie. Donors will always come first with this government.

Right in beautiful Beaches–East York, which I'm always happy to bring you to—there's a time when you can brag, brag about your residents in your area—there are so many projects we need funding for.

Michael Garron Hospital phase 2—I've been screaming it to the rooftops in here, to no avail. Michael Garron Hospital has delivered quality and crucial care to more than 400,000 people from over 20 distinct neighbourhoods. It has the fastest-growing emergency department in the GTA and the second-highest growth rate amongst hospitals in the region. Despite being designed to see only 60,000 people per year, its emergency department volume has exceeded 100,000 patients. This is insane. With the influx of more than 135,000 residents to east Toronto over the course of the next five years, this is only slated to worsen. And it requires the sign-off of phase 2 for the campus redevelopment, which I have asked for repeatedly for the last four years. And what did the Minister of Health do? She smirked in her answer—not only that, she had to draw a smirky face. So we obviously know how much health care is important to this government. They take it as a joke.

We have the Secord Elementary School rebuild. It's going to grow by nearly 900 students in fewer than 10 years. It was meant to accommodate 591 students and is currently serving 800 students in temporary spaces. As you know, because I've spoken to you about it, it has the largest portable system in the country. And do you know where new immigrants come to Canada? A lot of them come to Toronto, and to the Main and Danforth area. They come to Secord Elementary School, and that is the greeting we give them—a dilapidated school that you won't fix? But, hey, a strip club gets $10.8 million. So don't worry, kids, you can just study in that portable system for years.

Main Square community centre is—when we're building housing, it's great—on a mobility hub at Main and Danforth, which is one of the biggest mobility hubs outside Union Station; you should know that. So I'm all for density, absolutely, especially in a mobility transit area, but you need to build around it. You need to invest in the schools. You need to invest in the community centre that is teeny tiny and has the tiniest pool and space for people.

I would love some money to put back in the TTC express bus to downtown in the Beach, to whip people downtown, take cars off the road and deal with the number

one thing you care about, supposedly: cars, traffic, congestion—no bike lanes there, but you can definitely get the express bus back.

Waterfront improvements: We're lucky to live on a Great Lake. Ashbridges Bay Park is listed as a high priority for major maintenance, with erosion mitigation. I would take some money there.

Coxwell Barns: a massive public property that we could redevelop and reimagine, with housing, an arts centre and the like.

I'm realizing that I'm running out of time, so I'm going to leave it there, other than just saying that all in all, this financial economic statement is a fail.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Don Valley East.

Mr. Adil Shamji: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me this opportunity to speak to last week's economic statement—essentially, a report on the financial vital signs of the province of Ontario.

As I reflect on what we heard from our failing and flailing finance minister, I can't help but admit that my diagnosis on this fall economic statement is that our province and our province's fiscal state is an entire disaster.

Just take a moment to reflect on all of this. This finance minister and his Premier have set us on a path to a greater-than-half-a-trillion-dollar deficit. This finance minister and his failing Premier have set us on a path that has no credible path to balance. Of course, every successive budget and fall economic statement says that there's a path to balance, and every successive fall economic statement and budget says that point of balance is farther and farther down the road. This finance minister just keeps kicking the can down the road, and that's not what Ontarians deserve.

But to me, what was truly most offensive in what we saw in this budget is that the amount of interest that we are going to pay to service Ontario's debt—which has increased under this Premier's watch—is $17.4 billion this year. To put that in perspective, that is $47 million spent on interest alone every single day—more than $500 a second.

0940

The Premier says that he will always cut taxes. But the reality is that no Premier in Ontario's history has collected as much tax as this one.

There is a world in which it can be said that a government collects taxes so that it can deliver services to those Ontarians. In light of that, I pay taxes every year. I think I pay too many taxes every year, certainly under this Premier. And if I am a taxpayer, as are over 100,000 of my constituents, you can bet that we want to see some results for those investments that we are making in our provincial government. And what do we have to show for it?

I'm going to break it down into a few policy domains and make the argument, which is not very difficult to make at all, that the $47 million a day that's spent merely on servicing interest, let alone all of the other funds that are getting washed down the toilet, isn't delivering on the things that Ontarians want.

For example, we need housing in this province. Yet, for the last more than eight years under this Premier, we have lived in a housing market failure. Housing starts continue to plummet. This government continues to fail on its promise of delivering 1.5 million homes by 2031. They won't even utter the statement anymore. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing now even goes so far as to say that he's not focused on delivering 1.5 million homes. Certainly, the proof is in the pudding, because every fall economic statement and budget shows that the projections are going to be lower, that the targets are just kicked down the road, and that we're not going to get the housing that Ontarians need and deserve and are paying for with their taxes. Housing starts are at an astronomical low.

This government very reluctantly introduced an HST rebate for new primary residences, at the prolonged and extended encouragement of myself and the rest of us in the Ontario Liberal caucus. Even after the government did that—far too little, too late—it took them about four months to get the program kick-started. It's set to expire in a few months, and this fall economic statement shows no indication that it's going to be renewed, yet again condemning us to poor housing starts and a perpetuated housing market failure. One could say that maybe people will rent or there are some other initiatives, but the Financial Accountability Office reminds us that, under this government, homelessness is projected to go up. The final common pathway when a government fails on delivering on housing is, we end up with homelessness. That is projected to go up.

One would imagine that, in a fall economic statement, a Premier who claims to be concerned about homelessness, who says he's got so much to do around protecting encampments, would have something to offer on that. The only thing that he has to offer on that is cutting a quarter of a billion dollars in homelessness prevention programs. That is simply unacceptable, especially when he's committing us to another $17.4 billion in interest and yet another $17-billion deficit for this year.

In health care, again, what do we have to see for this reckless spending? None of the things that people are looking for.

The majority of hospitals in Ontario are in deficit. Allow me to give you some examples. We know that SickKids, just down the street from us—declared, I believe, the number one pediatric hospital in the world—is posting a $73-million deficit this year. But imagine this: If we just spent a day and a half's worth of interest payments, we could eliminate that deficit. Kingston Health Sciences Centre—$38-million deficit. Lakeridge Health—$41-million deficit. Trillium Health Partners—$65-million deficit. If we were more responsible with our borrowing, if we weren't increasing our debt and our deficit in the reckless way that we are seeing under this Premier, these hospital deficits could be eliminated in literally one day, for each hospital.

Our hospitals are trying to deliver exceptional, world-class care with their hands tied behind their back. They're firing nurses left, right and centre. My office has tracked

about 1,800 current or planned terminations. The Financial Accountability Office projects another 2,500 nurses fired by 2029 and something like 2,400 beds cut by 2029—again, despite reckless spending by this government. There's no health care worker retention plan, wait times are up, and hallway health care is at an astronomical new high, despite the government's promise that they would eliminate hallway health care.

Education is in shambles.

This government has failed to deliver on $10-a-day child care; it isn't even close to that. It can't even deliver on the seats that it has promised. It can't even deliver on getting close to $10-a-day—I think we're at $20-a-day.

Small business confidence continues to be at an all-time low.

I want to be crystal clear on something: There are those who would argue that with the amount that this government is spending, there isn't much money left to be able to invest in these things. Well, this is ultimately a question of priorities. This government and, particularly, this Premier have always shown that when forced to choose between his own priorities and the priorities of Ontarians, he always chooses his own.

He could have chosen to invest in health care and housing. Instead, he chose to try to invest in a private jet.

He's busy trying to build a tunnel under the 401, and despite the fact that initial plans have said that this is a terrible idea, he's investing more money to get the feasibility studies to try to prove his case. He's committed to a tunnel under the 401.

He's committed to relocating the Ontario Science Centre, which is entirely unnecessary.

He spent $1.9 billion moving alcohol into convenience stores one year early.

There was close to a billion dollars paid out to private career colleges, despite the government being warned about that for over three years—and there were billions to buddies of the Premier, with the Skills Development Fund.

There are members of this very House on the government side spending reckless amounts of money on luxury hotel stays despite living mere kilometres away from our Legislature.

There's the Ontario Place scam, where a company literally misrepresented its credentials to secure a contract with the Ontario government and then was outed afterwards for not having any of the experience or potential that it promised that it had.

It's one thing after another.

At the same time that we are spending recklessly, there are things that could be done that don't require spending any money at all, that could get our province back on track. We could implement a health care worker retention plan. Bill 133, the Health Care HEROES Act, which I have introduced and will be debating on November 17, provides a pathway to keeping the health care workers we have without spending a single penny. There are many regulatory reforms that could be implemented. We're still waiting on the implementation of all the Housing Affordability Task Force recommendations.

I could go on and on and on, but I see my good friend here, the member from Ottawa South, is champing at the bit. He wants to get his words in here as well.

I will just end by saying that this is ultimately a question of optics versus outcomes. This government will never hesitate to grandstand, to hold a press conference, to try to parade a novelty cheque in front of Ontarians. But when the rubber hits the pavement, this government always fails to deliver on the things that Ontarians care about. This has been the track record for more than the last eight years, and it certainly was the track record when the Minister of Finance delivered his fall economic statement last week.

With that, I give the rest of my time to the spectacular member from Ottawa South.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: I want to begin by quoting my colleague from Don Valley West. "Never has a government spent so much"—never has a government borrowed so much, never has a government incurred so much debt—"to deliver so little." It is absolutely incredible. This is the worst fiscal management by any government in Ontario ever. All you have to do is look to things like how you're 50% more likely to be in a hallway in a hospital than you were in 2018. Your kids' classes are going to be bigger, and they're going to get less help. At the same time this is happening, the Premier's office went from about $2.3 million or $2.4 million a year to $8 million a year—almost quadrupling in eight years. The guy who was going to stop the gravy train loaded it up. Then, if you look at ministers' offices—they went from $34 million to $82 million in that same period of time. That's incredible.

0950

But the things that Ontario families count on, like having a bed in a room in a hospital, aren't there. A classroom that's the right size so their child gets the kind of education that they deserve—it's not there. And every member here knows the story of someone who was cut off from their OSAP loan—seven weeks into school, this government got caught trying to cover it up, and they cut off all these people.

And yet, the finance minister is making like everything is fine. I don't know if people heard this in question period yesterday, and I'm not quite sure exactly what the minister said—I have to check Hansard, but I'm confident I heard him say that the deficit was an "itsy-bitsy deficit." That's what he said in response to a question: that $16.9 billion is an itsy-bitsy deficit. Folks, that pays for a lot of stuff. It's not itsy-bitsy.

The fall economic statement is about priorities, and it's very clear what this government's priorities are.

Look back to last winter. The Premier was busy picking out the leather for his luxury private jet until we all found out, and then they stopped it. But do you know what? What was really interesting is, the Premier said, "I deserve it." Even after he gave it back, he said, "I deserve it. I deserve to have that."

This is a government that's living high on the hog. It's unbelievable, the spending in ministers' offices, the spending in the Premier's office.

And then you come here and you say, "We're ready to fight the Trump tariffs. We're ready to fight the Trump tariffs with Protect Ontario ads." You basically spent about as much money, a bit more than $117 million that you spent on Protect Ontario ads, as out of the Protect Ontario fund to give to businesses last year—as much money on ads as you gave in support. And what do these ads do? These ads tell us how good things are; how you're redeveloping, building infrastructure; what a good job the government is doing. The only good ad I saw was on last night, encouraging people to go to Remembrance Day ceremonies. That's a good ad. Telling people to get flu shots: That's a good ad—not touting the accomplishments of the government; not telling people that life is easier, that somehow you've made it easier for them, because that's not the way it feels.

Life shouldn't be harder for people. They shouldn't have to wait longer for surgery. They shouldn't have to wonder whether their kid's class size is going to be too big for them.

It's a question of priorities. And when you go out and spend $117 million on stuff that promotes you, people have got to ask themselves, "Are they really looking out for me?"—and it's clear that the government isn't.

I know that we always get a picture of cranes or some piece of infrastructure—but here's the thing: What's the point in building a new hospital if what's working inside hospitals isn't working; if people are 50% more likely to be in a hallway than they were in 2018? When they are waiting longer in emergency rooms, when they are waiting longer for surgeries, when they are waiting longer for diagnostics, what is the point? The point of building the hospital is to make sure that people get the care that they need. The point of building a school is to make sure that kids get what they need to be successful. And do you know the amazing thing about those two things? They're not just nice things to do—they're not just because we want to be good to each other, which is important. It's good for our economy.

There seems to be a failure to understand over there that the most important thing in a competitive global economy is people—highly skilled, highly trained, healthy people. That's where the rubber hits the road.

We look at our schools; we look at our hospitals; we look at what's happening with post-secondary education, whether that's at a college, a university, a career college, a trucking school—it's unbelievable. It's like this government doesn't get it.

And the fall economic statement—at some point, the Premier is going to have to stop blaming Trump for everything. I don't like him. He's an awful person. He's awful for North America. But do you know what? He's not responsible for most of these things I talked about; this government is responsible.

You're eight years in. You lost your way. I don't even know if you ever had it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Dave Smith: I appreciated listening to the hour lead from the Liberals on this. They did bring up some key interesting points, though.

I'd like to take us back to August 2015, when the then health minister, Eric Hoskins, cut the number of medical residency positions by 50.

My question for the opposition is, how many more doctors would we have today had the Liberals not made the foolish decision of cutting the number of physicians that Ontario trains?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Don Valley East.

Mr. Adil Shamji: We would have vastly more physicians today were it not for the fact that this government has created a health workforce crisis in our province.

On any given day, we have doctors, nurses and PSWs leaving their professions, retiring early, restricting their practices because this government has implemented ruthless strategies that have contributed to moral injury and burnout, that have been deeply offensive to the health care workforce, and that fall squarely on the shoulders of this Premier and that Minister of Health.

I really struggle to understand how that member can, with a straight face, stand up and profess to doing anything to support our health care system and our valiant nurses, doctors, PSWs, and other health care workers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Parkdale–High Park.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: It's always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Parkdale–High Park.

Speaker, did you see the news today? In 2022, one in 15 children in Toronto were relying on food banks to survive. Four years later, one in eight children is going hungry—one in eight children—4.1 million food bank visits just in Toronto. And at the heart of this growing need is unaffordable housing—some 82% live in unaffordable housing. After paying their housing costs, they have $8 left for food, for essentials, for laundry, for TTC, for clothing, for looking after their children. Eight dollars a day—that's all they've got.

We need a public builder. We need a plan like the NDP's Homes Ontario plan—but this government continues to focus on building luxury.

So I want to know, why does this government refuse to hear and answer the cries of hungry children?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much to the fine member from Parkdale–High Park for that fabulous question. I think that's what Ontarians are asking—where is the priority of this government?

I already spoke about the juxtaposition of how this government has no money for things that matter desperately to Ontarians, yet they have money for frivolous things, ridiculous things we don't need: as I mentioned, $10.8 million to a strip club for skills development—just explain that to your constituents; $27 million to a nightclub for skills development; $48 million to rip out

bike lanes that save lives. The fetish and obsession with downtown Toronto is obscene—we know, because this Premier is acting like the mayor of Toronto. But the priorities need to be there for the people of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^me^ Lucille Collard: I'm going to direct my question to my colleague from Ottawa South. I know you had so much more that you wanted to say in such limited time.

You properly indicated that the FES is about priorities of the government. The government has been plagued with scandal after scandal. It is wasting public money. But, obviously, the priorities that this government is setting are failing people in Ontario.

Can you tell us more about who those people are that this government has been failing again and again?

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Mr. John Fraser: Thank you to the member from Ottawa–Vanier.

We've been talking a lot about OSAP. These are honest, hard-working people who you said you'd back for a loan—they're going back to school. They have kids. The loan is going to help them go to school. It's going to pay for food. It's going to pay for rent. They have maybe left their job. And you pulled the rug out from underneath them. That's one thing that's wrong, that shouldn't be happening.

We have classrooms that are too big. And what happens because of the way that the Ministry of Education has organized things is, more often than not, kids with exceptional needs aren't having those needs met. And we're not even addressing the challenges with mental health in our schools.

We're spending $600 million less in education. How is that going to make things better—and $500 million in health?

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Speaker, an otherwise successful business in Whitby can face serious cash pressures when tariffs disrupt their orders and supply chains.

This question is directed to the member for Ottawa South.

The Protect Ontario Financing Program provides up to $1 billion in working capital loans to eligible businesses, like Gerdau steel in the south part of my riding. Does the member from Ottawa South support this financing?

What would the Liberal Party offer employers who need immediate support to maintain operations and, yes, protect jobs?

Mr. John Fraser: I support it. I just wish you'd use it.

You spent literally as much money as you did on Protect Ontario ads as you did for the business you're talking about—to the member from Whitby. Why don't you just use it, man?

I know it's so nice to be able to say, "We have a $5-billion fund." You spent less than $150 million.

Come on. Give me a break. Was that a real question? You didn't spend any money.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I will ask the House to come to order.

I recognize the member from Windsor West.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It's interesting; what I consistently hear from the government side is, "It's not our fault." They're always blaming somebody else. Heck, they go back as far as 35, 40 years and blame a government before them.

But I want to talk about the record of this government.

Over one million Ontarians are using food banks. That's up 165% over 2020—two years into this government. Feed Ontario says that 13,250 people accessed a food bank in my riding alone in 2025—that's this government.

Over 2,000 people per day are waiting in hospital hallways for health care. This government has made hallway health care worse.

Speaker, we've lost Diageo, Titan Tool and Die. Workers at Windsor assembly plant—over 6,000 workers have been unexpectedly laid off for three weeks, with another week coming.

We hear this government say they haven't raised taxes, yet they're downloading the costs onto municipalities that are struggling to pick up the—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you.

I recognize the member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: There's nothing in here that's going to address that. And even if they tell you that they're going to have a $5-billion Protect Ontario fund, they're not going to spend the money.

We lost 20,000 jobs last month—that's 20,000 families.

And then, we read this morning about a young man, Aaron, who lost a job at Algoma Steel. He lives in Sault Ste. Marie and went back to be a paramedic—he was getting a Learn and Stay grant. Guess what? The government pulled the rug out from underneath him. Do you know what? Aaron has kids. That Learn and Stay grant was helping to feed them, helping to keep a roof over their head. And the government, through no fault of Aaron's, just cut him off.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Ms. Laura Smith: Speaker, we're creating generational infrastructure, not just for this generation, but the next. In the face of what's happening south, and regardless, we need to keep working as a sovereign nation. In the face of the tariffs, now more than ever, we need to build in the sectors—critical minerals, life sciences, and agri-food. The road to the Ring of Fire just broke a few weeks ago. These are generational sectors that will build on Canada as a sovereign.

Will the member not agree that we need to move in this critical fashion—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: I know the government would like to blame Donald Trump for hallway heath care, for class sizes that are too big or kids who aren't getting what they

need in school—but it's not Donald Trump; it's this government. You've had eight years. You messed it up.

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: I rise today to support Bill 143, Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2026, and our government's fall economic statement.

Speaker, as always, I'll start by thanking God for giving me the physical and mental health so that I can represent the residents of Mississauga–Malton.

Thank you to the residents of Mississauga–Malton, my staff, my family, and the job creators, like Dr. Lisa Bentley, who's here from Mississauga–Malton. Thank you to each one of you for always being there for each other.

My remarks will focus on what the plan means in the everyday life of the people we represent: workers who want stability, families who want relief, young people who want opportunity, and seniors—those who took care of us—who want dignity.

Speaker, as we all know, the world has changed. Whether it is global tension, whether it's American tariffs, disrupted supply chains or rising costs—everything has made the future less predictable.

I want to start by thanking the Minister of Finance and his wonderful parliamentary assistant for outlining the government's plan and working hard to make sure we are ready for any challenge. These challenges may begin far beyond Ontario's borders, but their consequences are felt every day at the kitchen tables and in the workplaces across our province. Behind every headline about a tariff is an employee wondering whether their job is secure. Behind every rise in costs is a parent deciding what their family should do, what they can afford this month. Behind every delayed investment is a young person, a new Canadian or an unemployed Ontarian hoping for a good job, a chance to prove themselves.

In Mississauga–Malton, I hear these concerns from hard-working families, entrepreneurs, newcomers, students and seniors. And the message is straightforward: Protect what we have built, make life more affordable, and create real opportunities for the generations to come.

That is what this bill is doing. We cannot control every event beyond our borders, but we can choose how Ontario responds. That is the purpose of this legislation, and that is the responsibility before us.

I want to start by saying, an economy is not just a collection of statistics; it's made of people who show up for work, businesses that make payroll, and families who depend on both.

Since April 2025, Ontario has announced nearly $30 billion in tariff relief and support, including measures intended to build long-term economic resilience. People often ask, "Where is the money coming from?" I always tell them, "It is your money. Government doesn't have a tree where it can grow the money. It is the money of our people. When we collect it, we can invest it back."

Ontario has worked with the federal government on nearly $9 billion in support for strategic industries, including automotive, steel, critical minerals, and energy. Where are we doing it? We're doing it through the Ontario Together Fund, the Trade-Impacted Communities Program and the Protect Ontario Financing Program—all part of the same response. These programs are designed to help employers adapt to changing markets, manage financial pressures and protect employment.

Consider a manufacturer facing a sudden change in orders—something like Downsview Kitchens in Mississauga–Malton. A delayed or reduced order can affect shift schedules; suppliers; trucking companies that supply their product, move their product; and families working there whose mortgage depends on that paycheque. That's why the right support provided when it's needed can help a company navigate uncertainty, rather than closing a door.

1010

We know this is a tough time, and a tough time is a test time; it is the time when we have to look and we have to protect what we have. Before we run or we walk, we need to crawl.

That is why what we're doing through this bill is, we're making sure that training matters. We're making sure, through $2 billion in training and reskilling support, that workers will continue to have opportunities to learn new skills and the technology that involves.

Protecting Ontario means protecting people through change. I believe that every worker deserves the opportunity to keep contributing, whether they're beginning a career, changing fields or returning to the workforce after time away.

Speaker, immediate help is essential, but at the same time, long-term security also requires businesses to invest and innovate to grow. It's a simple cycle: When we have companies investing into machinery, they're building our new technology; they get better orders; they're able to hire more people; and those people have the ability to contribute.

That is why the fall economic statement proposes Ontario's competitiveness tax cut, an important measure which would provide $8 billion in provincial tax relief for eligible capital investments by allowing immediate writeoffs on a wide range of assets, forcing the job creators to make it a priority to invest into the machinery. Together with the accelerated writeoff measures announced earlier, total provincial tax support for business investments would exceed $12 billion over five years—and it's not just a number; it is a reason to grow and give back and do more. What matters is how these investments will create opportunities—a company buying modern equipment, a producer improving efficiency, a supplier becoming more competitive, an employer having the confidence to take on another worker.

In Mississauga–Malton, that connection is especially very clear. In Mississauga–Malton, we have manufacturing, transportation, logistics, businesses linked to Pearson, and all depend on a reliable supply chain and the confidence to invest.

When businesses can compete, families have stronger foundations. But we cannot invest and then bury them under avoidable delays.

That is why this government believes in cutting red tape, streamlining permits and making it easier for job creators to operate across provincial borders. These are the practical steps we're taking towards a stronger economy.

A small business owner should be spending time serving customers and growing their business, not waiting endlessly for an answer. A company considering an expansion should have clear rules and a predictable process. And a skilled worker should be able to see new opportunities opening up every single day in our Ontario.

That is what this bill is doing.

Economic growth must mean something at the kitchen table. A family feels the cost of living when it fills the car, buys the groceries, pays for transit; a young couple feels it when they wonder whether they can afford their first home; a senior on a fixed income feels it when ordinary bills don't leave too much room for anything unexpected.

Ontario is standing up. Their government is providing more than $12.5 billion in support for families and individuals this year. That includes continuing savings from the provincial gasoline and fuel tax reduction and the One Fare program, which will save eligible regular transit users up to $1,600—money that can stay in a family's budget.

I do remember talking to a resident, and the resident said, "We know this is a tough time. The first thing the government can do—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but now it's time for members' statements.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TOWNSHIP OF MANITOUWADGE

MPP Bill Rosenberg: Today I rise to recognize one of my municipalities, the township of Manitouwadge, and the important contributions this community makes to northern Ontario.

Manitouwadge is a proud and resilient community shaped by its history and by the strength of the people who call it home. Nestled in the heart of the boreal forest, this waterfront community offers a unique balance of natural beauty, year-round outdoor recreation and a high quality of life that continues to attract residents and visitors alike. As a full-service community at the end of Highway 614, it is halfway between White River and Marathon and five hours from Sault Ste. Marie.

Manitouwadge provides essential amenities, recreation facilities and year-round activities that support families, workers and seniors throughout the region. From the golf course, community centre, ski hill and trail networks to vibrant community programs and local businesses, Manitouwadge demonstrates the spirit and the determination that define northern Ontario.

In recent years, Manitouwadge has continued to strengthen its identity as a welcoming, family-oriented community. Local programs, recreation facilities and volunteer-driven initiatives reflect the pride the residents take in building a vibrant and supportive place to live.

Manitouwadge stands as a testament to the resilience, adaptability and community pride found across the north, and we celebrate the people who continue to shape its future.

I would also like to recognize and congratulate the mayor and the new council for the upcoming term—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you.

Members' statements?

STEEL INDUSTRY

MPP Robin Lennox: Just two weeks ago, our leader, Marit Stiles, came to Hamilton, and we had the opportunity to sit down with steelworkers and talk about what is happening to Canada's steel sector.

Cleveland-Cliffs plans to lay off 500 workers from Stelco; 175 workers have already lost their jobs. We've since heard directly from the mouth of the Cleveland-Cliffs CEO that he bought Stelco in a bad-faith attempt to undermine the competitiveness of the Canadian steel market, and our Hamilton workers are now being sacrificed. This cannot be allowed to go unchallenged.

Our Ontario NDP leader, Marit Stiles, has called for bold action to protect our steel sector. We believe that every option must be explored, including public ownership of Stelco if it comes down to it.

But this government has been missing in action. Premier Ford is quick to talk, but once the headlines die down, we don't hear a peep from him about a plan to support our steelworkers or the sovereignty of our steel sector. The fall economic statement talks about supporting 12 POWER centres, but that's life support after the good jobs are already gone. That's not an industrial strategy that's going to save Ontario's steel sector.

One of my constituents, Mike, has worked for Stelco for 21 years. He was laid off a couple of weeks ago. He has a mortgage and four kids. And thanks to this government's inaction, he's now out of work. So Mike has asked and wants to know: Will the Premier demand that we stop selling our industries to American companies that turn around and sell out Ontario workers? Will we do everything in our power to support our workers at risk of layoffs currently? And will the Premier commit to bold—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you.

Members' statements?

GAMING CONTROL

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Speaker, across Ontario, people are telling me the same thing: They want change. They want leadership that listens, that takes problems seriously and has the courage to act. And nowhere is that need more urgent than with the devastating rise of online gambling addiction. Behind every statistic is a person, a life, someone struggling and people who love them.

We know that gambling-related suicides have reportedly tripled since 2018, that emergency department visits are up, and that 85% of students in grades 7 to 12 recall seeing a gambling advertisement in the last month.

We now know that this government was warned about the risks before opening up the market in 2022.

Speaker, how much more evidence of harm do we need before we act? If any other product was associated with this level of harm, it would be pulled from the shelves. And yet, online gambling continues.

Ontario Liberals are calling for an end to online gambling advertising today.

But this is about something bigger. It's about the kind of leadership Ontario deserves—leadership that doesn't wait for a crisis to become a catastrophe, leadership that puts people ahead of powerful interests, and leadership that has the courage to make difficult decisions.

Across this province, I see people who are ready for change, and I share their hope for an Ontario where—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you.

Members' statements?

RIDING OF BRAMPTON WEST

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I had a busy and productive summer. It was spent attending community events, meeting with residents, and engaging with organizations across my community. Over the course of the summer, I participated in more than 530 events and meetings, providing countless opportunities to connect with the people I represent.

1020

Some of the highlights of this summer included the Brampton Boat Race, Taste of India, Ride for Raja, the 48th annual Jalsa Salana Canada 2026, and the ISKCON Brampton chariot fest.

I also hosted a park cleanup and soccer ball distribution event through my Brampton West Youth Council and participated in the third annual Peel Crime Stoppers Golf Tournament.

Speaker, each of these events reflects the vibrant diversity, generosity and community spirit that makes Brampton such a wonderful place to call home.

I also want to thank the organizers, volunteers and residents who made this summer so memorable.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside our community as we return to the Legislature.

TREATIES RECOGNITION

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: This week is Treaties Recognition Week in Ontario. It is an opportunity for everyone to reflect on the treaties of the lands that we live on and the responsibilities that we all hold as treaty people. Here at Queen's Park, Treaty 13, known as the Toronto Purchase, is being displayed in the LG suite for the week. I encourage all MPPs to go visit and read the treaty.

Treaties set out the guidelines for a relationship where everyone living on the lands can mutually benefit and have their rights respected. Through Bills 5, C-5, C-39, 140, and the proposed regulation change to limit the right to protest infrastructure, like the roads to the Ring of Fire, governments continue to violate the treaty rights of our people while paying lip service to treaties and reconciliation.

We need a new path forward, together, honouring the true purpose of the treaties: to peacefully share and care for the lands.

I urge Canada and Ontario to pause these harmful pieces of legislation and listen to the rights holders who have lived on these lands since time immemorial.

ÉLECTIONS MUNICIPALES

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: J'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour féliciter l'ensemble des élus municipaux qui ont été choisis par leurs concitoyens lors des élections municipales de la semaine dernière dans Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Je tiens d'abord à féliciter les maires de North Glengarry, de Russell, de Clarence-Rockland et de La Nation qui ont tous été réélus, et j'ai hâte de poursuivre notre collaboration au cours des prochaines années.

Ce sera également un plaisir de voir de nouveaux visages se joindre aux conseils municipaux. Dans cinq autres municipalités de ma circonscription, j'aurai le plaisir de travailler avec des nouveaux maires élus : M. Antoni Viau du canton d'Alfred et Plantagenet, M. Paul Groulx de la municipalité de Casselman, M^me^ Corina Parisien du canton de Champlain, M^me^ Julie Séguin de la ville de Hawkesbury et M. Richard Sauvé de la municipalité de Hawkesbury Est. Je félicite chaleureusement les nouveaux maires élus ainsi que tous les nouveaux membres qui feront leur entrée au sein des différents conseils municipaux.

Je tiens également à prendre un moment pour remercier celles et ceux qui ont quitté la vie municipale à la suite de cette élection, que ce soit de leur propre gré ou parce qu'ils n'ont pas été reconduits dans leurs fonctions. Plusieurs d'entre eux ont consacré de nombreuses années au service de leur communauté et méritent toute notre reconnaissance pour leur engagement. Je tiens donc à exprimer ma sincère reconnaissance pour leur engagement, leur dévouement et tout le travail accompli au bénéfice de leurs citoyens.

Félicitations à tous les élus dans Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

ADDICTION SERVICES

MPP Catherine McKenney: New documents obtained by Le Droit and reported out yesterday show that this Conservative government was warned about the risks related to the closure of supervised consumption sites. On March 30, 2025, the day before nine sites were forced to close—and in the case of Somerset West Community Health Centre, backed by knowingly false data—the Premier's office and health minister were briefed by their very own ministry. The staff at the site and at other nearby community health centres and the closest hospital had all warned that they might not be able to handle the increased

demand and that the closure would put emergency and front-line services at risk.

The health minister was told that clients of another health centre here in Toronto had already started opening their own homes as de facto consumption sites. Those homes will include apartments and rooms in dense neighbourhoods with no health care available—and will likely be close to schools and parks. But that evidently was never the real concern.

The minister knew all of this, and she closed the sites anyway. The government didn't respond to those warnings, and it still won't answer questions about them. This was never about evidence.

People in my community are paying the price for a decision that was made against expert advice. This scandal-ridden government owes Ottawa Centre an explanation. An independent review of the effects of the closures must be conducted in order to restore any remaining faith in this government.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS

Hon. Laurie Scott: Speaker, I rise today to share some good news for my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Our rural communities are wonderful places to live, work, and raise a family, but we know that strong communities don't happen by chance. They depend on access to key services, opportunities for youth, and investments that support families and growth.

Recently, our government announced another increase in land ambulance funding, ensuring our residents have timely access to care.

Through the primary care action plan, 15,000 residents across Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock will be connected to a primary care team, improving access to health care close to home.

We are also supporting the next generation of health care professionals. With the expansion of the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant—nursing and paramedicine programs at Trent University and Fleming College. This program reduces financial barriers and encourages graduates to build careers in the communities that need them the most.

I recently attended the groundbreaking for the Trillium Lakelands District School Board's new outdoor and Indigenous education centre in Minden. This centre will offer students hands-on learning opportunities in nature, which helps deepen their understanding of Indigenous perspectives.

Speaker, whether it's expanding access to health care, supporting future professionals or creating new learning opportunities, these investments all contribute to building stronger, more connected rural communities.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Ms. Laura Smith: Last month, after the Jewish High Holidays, I visited the Sons of Jacob synagogue in Belleville. Unfortunately, I did not go to celebrate Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur or Sukkot; I went there to meet members of the congregation in solidarity and support after they faced a targeted, anti-Semitic and hate-motivated mass shooting attempt. Thankfully, Constables Jeff Smith and Michael McCurdy fought off the shooter, with Smith suffering multiple injuries while protecting the 25 congregants inside. This is just one example of the hate and evil that continues to exist.

Despite Jewish Canadians being less than 2% of the population, post-October 7, anti-Semitic incidents have spiked, accounting for 40% of reported hate crimes.

That is why our government has continued to take real action, making Holocaust education mandatory and strengthening our grade 6 social studies and grade 10 Canadian history curriculums to deepen students' understanding of the Holocaust and the lasting effects of anti-Semitism.

Last week, Officer Smith was released from the hospital.

We are so grateful to both Smith and McCurdy for their bravery. This Holocaust Education Week, we remember the six million Jews who were murdered simply for who they were and the 25 in Belleville who are still here because of the bravery of those two police officers.

Now, more than ever, we have to double down. If we don't learn from the past, we are doomed to repeat it.

Applause.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: Last Monday, municipal councils were elected across Ontario, and in Norfolk county, we saw an unusual turn of events. In ward 4, two candidates, Jeni Lambert and incumbent Chris Van Paassen, received exactly 858 votes.

I understand that ties can happen. The legislation provides for an automatic recount to ensure every vote is accurately counted. But what happens if the recount still produces a tie? Well, according to section 62(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the successful candidate is chosen by lot. In other words, we put two names in a hat and we draw one out.

This is 2026. At a time when technology has transformed how we conduct elections, I find it difficult to accept that the outcome of a democratic election could ultimately come down to a lottery. Voter apathy is already a real concern. We should be doing everything we can do to strengthen public confidence in our democratic institutions, not introduce another reason for people to question the process. Democracy should be determined by the voters, not by a coin toss or a name drawn from a hat.

That's why, this morning, I will table a motion calling on the government to modernize the Municipal Elections Act and remove this outdated provision. Surely, in 2026, we can come up with a better way to resolve a tie than leaving the outcome to chance.

1030

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today a cohort of interns from the Parliament of Canada's Parliamentary Internship Programme. They are here to learn about Ontario's Legislature and meet with their counterparts in the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme.

Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, if I could have your attention, please.

The year is 1981. Canada's Wonderland opens its gates. Interest rates are 22%. And Bill Davis wins a massive majority. Sitting in the media gallery is a cameraman with a full head of hair, who would go on to cover nine Premiers: Davis, Miller, Peterson, Rae, Harris, Eves, McGuinty, Wynne and Ford.

This week, CHCH-TV's Randy Rath celebrates 45 years here at Queen's Park, making him the longest-serving current member of the press gallery.

Randy, from all of us here at the Ontario Legislature, congratulations. Thank you for the work you do, your sense of humour and friendship.

I love you from the bottom of my heart.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Introduction of visitors?

Hon. Kevin Holland: Joining us from Thunder Bay in the House today is Dr. Donald Young and Dr. Gerald Smith.

Welcome.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'm very proud to rise and to recognize a number of esteemed guests we have in the House.

Ted Garrard, Patsy Anderson, Dr. Peter Szatmari and Priscilla Ofosu-Barko are all here for Capitalize for Kids. Their reception took place this morning.

From the Ontario Dental Association, we have Dr. Lynn Tomkins, Dr. David Ho and Dr. Jaclyn Chin.

Lisa Philipps is the interim president and vice-chancellor of York University.

And from the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, we are joined by CEO Sean Longboat as well as president Armand Jourdain Sr.

Welcome to your House.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I want to join my colleague in welcoming board president Armand Jourdain Sr., CEO Sean Longboat, and everyone joining us on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. I look forward to meeting with you this afternoon. Welcome to your House.

Hon. Greg Rickford: My very talented policy analyst Katherine Hunt joins us in this magnificent place.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I'd like to welcome the members of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and the friendship centre movement: president Armand Jourdain Sr., CEO Sean Longboat, and the entire team. Thank you very much for hosting us this morning. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. David Piccini: I'd like to welcome Alex Tinker, mother of page Robert, who's here from our riding, following in the footsteps of Katherine. It's a family affair of pages here. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'd like to welcome two fantastic dentists from the Ontario Dental Association: Dr. Lily Zhang and Dr. David Stevenson. Welcome to your House. Please excuse my candy bar in my office.

Mr. Adil Shamji: This morning, I'd like to welcome to the House the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, the Ontario Dental Association, as well as Life Sciences Ontario. Welcome.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Today I'd like to welcome Angela and the whole team from Capitalize for Kids, the 20-plus organizations serving our youth and their mental health needs. Welcome to your House.

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: I'm pleased to welcome Angela Simo Brown, not only from Capitalize for Kids, but from my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence—a national charity dedicated to improving child and youth mental wellness. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Steve Clark: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature Dr. Lance McIntosh and Dr. Homa Jammehdiabadi. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Rob Flack: I'd like to welcome Dr. Edward Busvek, the Ontario Dental Association's president-elect, from St. Thomas, Ontario.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour to introduce Anne Dyck, today's page captain, and welcome her parents, Sarah Westmacott and Paul Dyck, who are here to see her perform her duties today.

I'd also like to welcome everybody from the Ontario Dental Association, especially Dr. Maneesh Jain from Guelph.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'd like to welcome, from Ottawa West–Nepean, Dr. Isha Moza and Dr. Lance McIntosh from the Ontario Dental Association, and also, from the Parliamentary Internship Programme, director Paul Thomas, a long-time friend.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I would like to welcome a Windsor dentist, Dr. Charles Frank, who is here with the ODA. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Stephen Blais: I'd like to welcome dentists from Orléans and across Ottawa who are with us today from the Ontario Dental Association: Dr. Isha Moza, Dr. Sherif Elsaraj and Dr. David Schooley. I look forward to our meeting this afternoon.

Hon. Nina Tangri: I'd like to welcome Dr. Cyril Tahtadjian here at Queen's Park, from Mississauga–Streetsville, with all of the Ontario Dental Association.

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: It's my pleasure to introduce Dr. Matti from my riding, who's here with the Ontario Dental Association. I've never flossed harder.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Welcome, from the Ontario Dental Association, Dr. Leith, Dr. Bentley, Dr. Frank, Dr. Silverman, Dr. Dwyer from Essex county, and CEO Frank Bevilacqua.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm delighted to welcome Dr. Brock Nicolucci, who's here with the ODA, from London West.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Dr. Peter Fendrich and Dr. Edward Busvek with the Ontario Dental Association. I look forward to our meeting.

I would also like to welcome Ken Hughes, Emily Beduz, Mark Jeddi and Monte Lamka from Life Sciences Ontario. I also look forward to our meeting.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, that's all the time we have. Please come back at 1 o'clock if you have other introductions of visitors.

But I would like to mention that joining us today is Phil Gillies, the representative for Brantford in the 32nd and 33rd Parliaments; also, Caroline Di Cocco for Sarnia–Lambton in the 37th and 38th Parliaments.

Also with us are members of the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians and students; I believe they are with former MPPs Gillies and Di Cocco.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Yesterday, this government voted against bringing in urgent financial relief to students who have been caught in the crosshairs of this Premier's private college debacle. Students are being hung out to dry while this government is clearly in panic mode trying to cover their tracks.

Academy of Learning, a private career college, has been raking in hundreds of millions of dollars in OSAP grants despite red flags being raised over and over again. The minister knew and did nothing for years, and people are asking me why, and I will tell you, there are some reasons, some indications of why—three executives behind the Academy of Learning donated over $11,000 to members of this government. To the Premier: Did your government look the other way because they wanted to keep raking in donations?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I said yesterday, the ministry was conducting its own investigations for two years into the career college sector. Once we realized that it was more widespread than initially thought—that is why we brought forward KPMG, a third-party expert auditor, to understand the impact across the sector.

1040

Speaker, these are bad actors who took advantage of taxpayer dollars for their intended use—they're supposed to go towards students and bettering themselves in their education. Unfortunately, these are serious criminal allegations we're speaking about here. These bad actors took advantage of all taxpayers right across Ontario.

That is why we brought forward the third-party auditor to ensure that we can get the confidence back into the private institutions before we release another taxpayer dollar.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Back to the Premier: This is not a coincidence. It is a pattern of behaviour from this government. As long as the donations continued to flow, they turned a blind eye. And now they're panicking and they're punishing thousands and thousands of students across this province.

Ministers from this government were actually celebrating the opening of that private career college. I sent a photo, by the way, over to the Premier yesterday, and he ripped it up. Well, I've got to tell you something. Guess what? That's not how this works. I've got lots of copies, okay?

I want to say to the Premier again, was the government simply waiting for private career colleges to hit the maximum donation before taking action against fraud?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I'm not sure how that member can say we've turned a blind eye when, since 2020, we've done over 3,200 OSAP inspections into individual OSAP accounts.

These are bad actors we're speaking about.

Again, I will remind the member opposite of the time frame: In late 2024, we saw an increased amount of OSAP applications at career colleges. In January 2025, Career Colleges Ontario, a third-party agency, saw the same concerns that we saw in late 2024. In May 2025, the federal government gave us the results of their own inspection, which had my ministry do enhanced, targeted inspections in July 2025. I'm not sure how we're said to be turning a blind eye when, this year, we eliminated the eligibility of six of those institutions prior to pausing OSAP across the whole sector—because we realize it really is widespread, and we need to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being utilized for their intended purpose: to help students advance their education.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, this government opened the floodgates and then they raked in the donations from these executives. They were warned. They knew that there were red flags all over this, and they chose to ignore it. That minister chose to ignore it.

This government's incompetence is costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, and it is burying the next generation in debt.

The single mom in Windsor who's going back to school to become a PSW to support her family, the northern paramedic who wants to work in his community—these are the people who are being forced to pay for your failures.

Red flag after red flag—but the PC donors at the Academy of Learning kept getting their grants.

So I'd like to ask the Premier: When are you going to fire this minister and actually bring in somebody competent to fix this problem?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I understand the impact this has on the good students. I've read thousands of emails. I've spoken to students on the phone as well. I'm not too sure she understands the impact on taxpayer dollars right now.

Speaker, we've referred this to the OPP and to the Auditor General. In the coming weeks, we're introducing further legislation to bring more guardrails into the private institution sector. We're going to require all private institutions to meet stricter criteria for OSAP eligibility. We're going to ensure that every single taxpayer dollar is spent properly and in the best interest of students, because that is the premise of OSAP. While this is a serious course of action, we needed to take this, because these are taxpayer dollars that have been fraudulently used by bad actors across the system. This is a serious criminal allegation. I can't repeat that enough. As much as the opposition trivializes and makes this about myself—

Interjection.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: —as the member of the third party is laughing—these are serious criminal allegations, and I won't rest until we bring them to account.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'll just say that that minister's tea and tears and sympathy are not going to pay the bills for those students. And I'm not surprised that the minister is doubling down, unfortunately, on this, because it is a pattern.

Last week, we learned that the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock promised government favours for the clients of a now-banned lobbyist, John Mutton, as long as they could pony up some cash for the Premier's fundraiser. Don't take it from me; take it from her, in her own words: "Do you think you could get a couple of your people especially the people we just helped to buy a few tickets for (the) March 2nd event? They have to go thru my portal so I get credit."

So, to the Premier: Is the only way to get this government's attention and get on your agenda to buy your way into it?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Rob Flack: Speaker, as you know, what the member opposite is talking about is not true.

We have ministerial zoning orders in place. Frameworks are in place. Protections are in place. They are diligently followed and will continue to be diligently followed. The bottom line is that we will continue on this path—end of subject.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Just a caution in the wording of our responses.

Back to the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, just to be very clear, that was a text from that member that was tabled, and it was part of the Integrity Commissioner's investigation.

If it happens one time, it's a coincidence, but if it keeps happening over and over again, it is a pattern.

We all know that with this government, the rot starts at the top.

Unlike the Premier's phone records, the public has full access to the text messages between John Mutton and that member opposite. But even she knew that if you want to cash in on your favours, you have to go through the Premier. She went on to encourage Mr. X to give the Premier a "nudge." We'll never know whether he did or not, because guess what? The Premier changed the law to make sure we will never find out, by burying his cellphone records.

Protect Ontario? It's more like "protect the Premier."

Back to the Premier: Can the Premier tell the people of Ontario if he exchanged favours for donations to their party?

Hon. Rob Flack: That is why, in April 2024, we introduced the new zoning order framework centred around a transparent intake process. It's working. That is why we are focused diligently every day to build more homes and more homes faster. And guess what, Speaker? The program is working. Just released today—I want to point out that through an independent study, we have seen great action. In fact, year to date, through the third quarter, we've seen new home sales up, starts up, 93%; 60,490 new homes, thanks to the HST pause and the rebate. It's working. We're going to continue along this path.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Let's be very clear: This was never about building homes or making affordable homes available to people. It could not be clearer.

The member opposite told a lobbyist to "get a couple of your people" that "we just helped" to buy those tickets to the Premier's fundraising dinner. And what was the help? It was handing over an MZO, carving up the province so developers could continue to make massive profits off the backs of regular people. Developers profit, and the Premier's party cashes in.

Students worried about making tuition payments, health care workers getting laid off, patients waiting for care in hallways, anybody who ever dreamed about one day owning a home—they are sweet out of luck, because they don't have thousands of dollars to donate to this Premier and his party.

This kind of pay-to-play scheme is what brought down the previous Liberal government.

How many fundraiser tickets is it going to take for the people of Ontario to get on this Premier's agenda?

Hon. Rob Flack: Well, I'm glad we're talking about housing starts, because our program is working. The HST rebate is working. The DCRP, Development Charge Reduction Program, is working and will work even more in the future.

Since last year, we've passed three bills: 17, 60 and 98. Why? To reduce the time and cost it takes to get shovels in the ground. And we're seeing those results come through.

We paused the HST for 12 months—the pause in the HST—and as I said earlier, up significantly since we announced it April 1.

We're seeing the results—$8.8 billion in the Development Charge Reduction Program, across the program. Well over a hundred municipalities are going to benefit from this critical infrastructure investment for the next 10 years.

The program we're on is working. We have a housing affordability crisis. We're doing everything we can do to change the conditions to get more homes built faster. We're on that path; we're going to continue on that path because the path is working.

1050

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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

Last week, the Minister of Colleges and Universities was touting the Learn and Stay grant while he was defending this OSAP scam.

And today we learned that students at the CTS campus in Sault Ste. Marie who were approved and promised a Learn and Stay grant got the rug pulled out from underneath them, just like thousands and thousands of honest, hard-working Ontarians. Forty students have dropped out of the program—a program in northern Ontario, a program where health care workers like paramedics are really badly needed.

And just to be clear: Because of the minister's failure to act—this government's failure to act—over a period of four years, thousands and thousands of hard-working, honest people are being cut off at the knees.

So my question, Speaker, through you, to the minister is, when is the nightmare that he has created for these thousands and thousands of people going to end?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, let's remember what happened here: Bad actors took advantage of Ontario taxpayers and defrauded the Ontario taxpayer and unfortunately used OSAP dollars not for their intended use. We brought in the Ontario Provincial Police once we realized how widespread this issue was. Ultimately, we need to ensure that there is confidence in the OSAP system across the private institutions. That is why we brought in forensic experts from KPMG to do their important work to ensure that we can bring confidence back to the OSAP system.

Again, I will not forget to remind the member opposite about how we got here. It was bad actors who brought us to this position. We did over 3,200 individual OSAP inspections over the last six years. We have not been sitting on our hands. We take every single tip very seriously, and we thoroughly investigate every single tip that the ministry receives.

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

Mr. John Fraser: There's a lot of bad acting going on. Yes, there were bad actors, but there's a government that failed to act, and that's why we're here today.

Aaron Madgett is one of those students I mentioned. He was laid off from Algoma Steel. He was approved for the Learn and Stay grant, and he wanted to become a paramedic. Here's what he had to say: "It kind of ripped away all the goals and aspirations that I had for me and my family, and I was gutted at the time." He is now behind on property tax, electricity payments, and he has been making use of the food bank.

Speaker, through you: Aaron has a family, just like the minister and I do.

So my question to the minister is, when is this nightmare that this minister has created for Aaron and his family going to end?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Again, these are serious allegations of fraud. We needed to bring it to the KPMG auditors to bring back confidence into the system.

But what we uncovered through our investigations left our government no other choice but to act—all funding to private institutions, to protect taxpayer dollars and hold bad actors accountable.

There is only one private institution that is eligible for the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant, as the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant has a separate, rigorous accountability process in place, including in-person instruction and return-of-service commitments. Work is currently under way to reassess OLSG eligibility at this specific institution.

The OLSG continues to support thousands of students across the sector studying in health care programs at publicly assisted colleges.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Every member in this House on that side and on this side knows a story like Aaron's, and if they don't, they just need to check their inbox—and I suggest, Minister, that you check yours. You have let them down. They're people just trying to get ahead, to do better, to make more money so they can feed their families, so their families have a future. You're making life harder for them. The electricity bill can't wait, the rent can't wait, the mortgage can't wait, the grocery bill can't wait, but for some reason, this government believes they can wait. It's unbelievable. It's out of touch with people's everyday lives. You're making it harder for them. You're making them wait.

This is just so wrong—what's happening to these families. When is this minister going to make it end for these thousands and thousands of honest, hard-working people in Ontario?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, I am reading every single email that comes into my constituency office. I'm phoning the students, and I understand the impact online. I truly understand the impact this is having on the good, legitimate students.

But these are serious allegations. I need to have confidence in the system. Bad actors have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer significantly, and we need to ensure that the taxpayer dollars are going towards their intended use. Once we realized that it wasn't just the six institutions that we removed eligibility from, we knew we had to act urgently and fast to ensure that no more taxpayer dollars are flowing to criminal actors. This is something that we needed to take seriously, and it's something that we did take seriously. After years and years of multiple investigations into individual institutions, we realized how widespread this was.

That is why we're working as urgently as possible with the third-party auditor to ensure that we're able to have the confidence to flow taxpayer dollars and OSAP dollars back to the students who deserve those dollars.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Speaker, every day, new revelations emerge about the nearly-billion-dollar OSAP scandal. We know that seven private career colleges received $385 million in OSAP grants in 2024-25. Thousands of applications came from single IP addresses. The government received repeated warnings about potential fraud dating back to 2023, and Career Colleges Ontario told the ministry to call the police in 2024. And the federal government even warned them that something was very wrong. Yet the money kept flowing.

Yesterday, I brought forward a motion calling on the Auditor General to independently investigate this scandal. The Ford Conservatives voted it down.

My question to the Premier: If your government has nothing to hide, why are you blocking an independent investigation by the Auditor General into what went wrong with hundreds of millions of dollars?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, as I've stated in this House many times, the Auditor General was notified in early October—even though the third party wants to make this a partisan issue. As the third party knows, the Auditor General investigates a referral as she sees fit.

These are very serious allegations, and we need to take them seriously, and that is why we brought forward KPMG. They're the forensic experts. They are there on the ground, investigating the institutions, so that we can bring back confidence to the private institutions right across Ontario. That's why the Ontario Provincial Police have been notified of this, and it has been referred to them because this is very serious.

They can trivialize it all they want, but these are serious allegations of criminal fraud that we took very seriously. After years of individual investigations, we understood how widespread it was. They may not understand how widespread it is.

That's why we needed to bring forward the third-party auditor—to bring back confidence into the system that we all know and trusted for years.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Speaker, this isn't good enough. The government is hiding behind a review by KPMG. Do we even know if their work has begun? Do we know what the scope of that work is—the public won't, actually, because that report will only go to government members; it will be a secret. The government will hide behind it, and their changes to the freedom-of-information laws made that possible for them.

We have seen this movie before—the Skills Development Fund, the greenbelt. They warranted Auditor General reviews.

Before entering politics, I led a large organization. I was taught that you listen to warnings, especially about potential fraud.

But the minister had years of warnings and failed to act.

Speaker, to the Premier: Why is the government hiding and refusing a review by the Auditor General at this moment?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've said, we take every single tip very seriously, and we act upon those tips.

But again, let's make this about the bad actors who got us here. We received over 3,200 tips towards OSAP usage, and we investigated those.

That is why we're bringing forward legislation this session to ensure that we have the appropriate guardrails to push back against the bad actors who have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer.

We've seen third parties completing coursework on behalf of students in a single day. We've seen exams done in six minutes. These supposed students couldn't even identify the institution they attended or the course they took.

1100

Speaker, this is very serious. Regardless of if the opposition wants to acknowledge the seriousness of this, we will continue to ensure that the appropriate action is taken on this file.

That's why KPMG—yes, KPMG—has started their investigation with ministry investigators. It is currently active right now. I will reassure you that KPMG is on site at these institutions, doing the work that's required to bring confidence back to the OSAP system.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Speaker, all that I am asking for here is that the government be accountable to the public. That's the job of elected officials.

Thousands of students were blamed for the OSAP program, and their funds were frozen. It was only when the media uncovered that something was very wrong that the minister acted. It was clear that a handful of private colleges had abused hundreds of millions of dollars. Only then did we hear about KPMG or the OPP being called, after years of warning.

Surely others—the Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board, the House leader—can see that this OSAP program mess needs a full review.

Speaker, to the Premier: Will you do what's right and accept an immediate review by the Auditor General?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, as I've already said, we referred this to the Auditor General in early October, and the Auditor General can see fit if she wants to investigate the referral that we've brought there.

But again, I will repeat this, and I will repeat this and I will repeat this again: This is about the bad actors, whether you want to listen to what it is about. Unfortunately, that's on them. The bad actors have defrauded the Ontario taxpayers.

These are extremely serious allegations of criminal fraud that we have to take seriously. That is why we've ensured that KPMG has the information that's needed, the data that's needed to be able to bring back confidence to the Ontario government and the OSAP system.

For that member to say that we took the investigations not seriously enough—I can't take that, because ultimately, we have done years of investigations into the sector. But once we realized how widespread it was, we brought forward KPMG and the third-party auditor, because we understood the widespread nature of the fraud allegations, and we've taken them very seriously since day one. We take every single tip seriously, and we'll continue to do—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Jamie West: This morning, the Canadian Press reported that 40 paramedic students have dropped out and there are dozens more at risk of leaving. This is because the province abruptly ended the Learn and Stay grant for the paramedic training programs. Just yesterday, the minister boasted that this program was helping people train for in-demand professions, so imagine my shock when I read the news this morning.

We also learned through the news that the Better Jobs Ontario program, a program that helps unemployed people train for new professions, was also paused. That was the program meant to help people get off social assistance and into the workforce.

Speaker, the Conservative government is leaving thousands of people without any certainty or support.

Will the Premier confirm if the Learn and Stay grant and Better Jobs Ontario programs are paused and how long students in training institutions must wait for an update?

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

Hon. Trevor Jones: Workers deserve training that leads to real opportunities. Our responsibility is to make sure the programs we invest in actually deliver on those results.

Following serious allegations raised about OSAP, our government is actually taking action.

Other streams of provincial funding to private institutions—both past and present—are currently under review, as the member knows.

Again, it's our job to maintain and protect the integrity of the system so we can make investments that create real results. That's exactly what we're doing.

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

MPP Jamie West: Speaker, the minister talks about integrity, but we're finding out about this in the news, not from them.

Just yesterday, the minister bragged about this program, and now he's pausing the very program he bragged about yesterday, with no explanation and no plan for the students who are being affected.

The Conservative government is pulling the rug out from under people who are trying to build a better life. Parents with young kids who are going to school to support their families; young people who want to go into the trades, like HVAC, because that's what the government and the minister told them to do; people who lost their jobs and are training for new professions, like Aaron in Sault Ste. Marie, who lost his job at Algoma Steel and wants to become a paramedic—this is who the collateral damage is, because of the government's incompetence.

My question is, when will the Premier admit that his minister's incompetence is costing thousands of Ontarians their future and finally fire this minister?

Hon. Trevor Jones: Every dollar we invest in training is an investment in someone's future. These are real people. We know these real people. That comes with a responsibility, as a government, to spend those dollars wisely. I take that responsibility seriously.

The member opposite knows we're making clear investments in people's futures, because the member from Sudbury is very happy to pose in front of a press release, at a conference, in his community that we're investing in—like the mine rescue centre in Sudbury: a $125-million investment in people's futures and safe working environments in our north.

That's why we're conducting additional due diligence into Better Jobs Ontario and other provincial funding streams: to make sure those investments are done for people's futures.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Stephen Blais: My question is for the Minister of Finance.

Last week, under my questioning, the government finally admitted that the cost of Ottawa's new Civic hospital is approaching a 500% increase to the original estimate. The Ottawa community has already been asked to find $700 million locally, from private fundraising and from a $150-million request to property taxpayers. Ottawa cannot afford that bill to multiply by 500% because of this government's mismanagement. Will the government guarantee today that the original local share will be capped and that the province will cover the increase instead of passing it on to Ottawa property taxpayers?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Response? The Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. David Piccini: This hospital investment in Ottawa is a game-changer for the delivery of quality care for the residents of Ottawa.

The member references project estimates and a conceptual design that were pre-COVID, pre-tariff war, pre-war in Iran. The member knows nothing about construction. He has voted against every single investment in health care in his community. In fact, he voted against this very hospital in his own city. Shame on him.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

The member for Orléans.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Unless the minister is hiding the final cost of the hospital in the budget somewhere, we haven't voted against anything.

Ottawa property taxpayers and donors need certainty about what they will be expected to pay for the Civic hospital. The mayor has already said that the city cannot afford billions in additional costs for the local share. A more expensive hospital should not mean the loss of recreation centres or public transit projects or new roads.

Hospital construction is a provincial responsibility, and Ottawa residents already pay provincial taxes. Ottawa residents pay provincial income taxes that have never been cut. They pay provincial sales taxes that have never been cut. They cannot afford a new Ford property tax to cover this government's inability to manage construction costs.

Will the minister make a clear commitment today, in writing, that Ottawa's local share will be covered by the government of Ontario and they will not be asked to pay more? Will he make that guarantee to Ottawa today?

Hon. David Piccini: The guarantee we've made to the people of Ottawa is, after years of dithering and delay, we're getting a hospital done for the people of Ottawa that's going to deliver better care—$64 billion that that member voted against in successive budgets, fall economic statements—to ensure Ontarians get better care closer to home. We're investing in more nurse training, new medical schools. And at each and every step, that member has voted against it. We'll take no lessons in health care from that member.

The people of Ottawa know that under Premier Ford and this government, they're going to get better care closer to home.

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

MPP Bill Rosenberg: My question is for the Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth.

I want to thank the minister for coming to Algoma–Manitoulin and area several times over the summer and for his great advocacy for northern Ontario.

During a time of economic uncertainty and trade disruption, I look at northern Ontario as an opportunity for growth in our province. To support this growth, I know that our government has been hard at work with the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., helping to keep investment flowing.

I recently saw that since our government took office, the NOHFC has supported over 9,000 projects, leveraging over $3.4 billion in investment, creating over 11,500 jobs, and sustaining over 2,000 jobs across northern Ontario. Minister, how is our government using this program to support businesses and strengthen key sectors in northern Ontario while creating jobs and supporting long-term growth?

Hon. George Pirie: Speaker, I want to thank the member for his question and his tireless advocacy for northern Ontario—and when I say "tireless," it's an understatement. This member has travelled over 26,000 kilometres this summer, in his riding and across Sault Ste. Marie. He is a true champion.

The NOHFC is one of the government's key tools for supporting economic development and growth. In the forestry sector alone, our government, through the NOHFC, has invested $64 million in over 350 projects, leveraging $280 million in investment, and helped to create and sustain over 1,400 jobs.

The NOHFC has invested over $31 million in 37 tile drainage projects since taking office, improving 50,000 acres of agricultural land in northern Ontario. It's in a place we're actually growing.

We are also supporting the development of our critical minerals supply chain, with over $100 million invested in over—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Algoma–Manitoulin.

MPP Bill Rosenberg: Recent disruptions show that we cannot take access to markets for granted, making it more important than ever to build resilience right here at home. By supporting key industries, expanding domestic supply chains and investing in strategic infrastructure, our government is helping communities pivot away from our reliance on the US. These investments are creating opportunities today while building the foundation for long-term prosperity across the north.

Minister, you have outlined how the NOHFC is supporting important sectors of our economy. Can you share some examples of specific projects that help build a stronger and more self-reliant northern Ontario?

Hon. George Pirie: Speaker, the member is right; the need for resilient supply chains has never been clearer.

That is why, alongside the Premier, I announced more than $2.8 million in NOHFC funding for the new and upgraded port facilities in Marathon and Thunder Bay. If we're going to pivot away from dependence on the US markets, we've got to get our product out to market. That's why we're investing in these ports. These investments strengthen Ontario's transportation network and expand trade opportunities, with most cargo through the Port of Thunder Bay destined for markets beyond the US. This announcement received a lot of support, including from the opposition.

Also in Thunder Bay, we invested $500,000 in Greenwater Technology to build a demonstration plant that will convert underused wood by-products to diesel and aviation fuel, creating 20 new jobs—and this is a pilot

project. When this is fully built, we'll be building these plants in Thunder Bay and Chapleau and Timmins and all across the north. I am pleased to say the plant's construction is almost complete. Our government—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Spadina–Fort York.

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Chris Glover: My question is to the Premier.

Simon Rogers has been running a basketball program at Central Tech collegiate for more than a decade, but this September, he discovered that this Conservative government had tripled the cost of his permit, from $3,400 to $10,000.

Community groups; sports organizations; community theatre groups; even philharmonic orchestras, like the Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra, have used our schools in the evenings and on weekends, after the kids leave. But suddenly, this fall, the government jacked up the permit rates, pricing many organizations out of existence.

Why is this government trying to prevent community organizations from using the schools that they have built with their own taxes?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: As you know, Madam Speaker, community use of schools is something that is very important not only in the city of Toronto, but across the province of Ontario. That's why the ministry is working very hard to facilitate greater access to our school infrastructure.

Of course, in the city of Toronto, one of the challenges that we had at the Toronto District School Board—and a couple of other boards with significant deficits—was that they were running these programs at a significant loss. What we have asked them to do, of course, is to get themselves into a break-even position, where the cost of running the program is the cost of the school. As you know, there are a number of contracts in place. Whether it's with respect to how many janitors should be in the school, how many hours—those are all things that were bargained by the previous Toronto District School Board trustees. It just did not make sense for these programs to run at the significant costs they were running at, taking money out of the classroom.

Madam Speaker, as you know, we're focused on putting more money back in the classroom to support students, and we'll continue to do that.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: Before I became an MPP, I was a trustee at the Toronto District School Board, and I was chair of the Community Use of Schools Community Advisory Committee. More than a decade ago, we created permits that were on a cost-recovery basis. So the allegation you're making that these were costing the board is absolutely false.

What has happened this year is, this government is now charging for custodial fees. They're double- and triple-charging different groups at the same school at the same time for the same custodian. So you fabricated a way of jacking up these rates and pushing the community groups out of the—

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I'll withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): A reminder to direct your questions and responses through the Speaker.

I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Need I say any more, Madam Speaker? The member of the NDP was a trustee in charge of the board that ran at a significant loss. Not only that program, but he decided that in his wisdom—and the Leader of the Opposition, of course, was also a trustee. Under their leadership, what happened? Student achievement, every single year, went down—reading down, writing down, math down, school maintenance down. Every measurement that a parent and a teacher looks at for success, under the leadership of the NDP and the Liberals—not only here, when they were in government, but when they ran the reign of destruction over school boards across the province of Ontario—was one of loss for students.

Now, under our government—billions of dollars more in, putting more money back into the classroom.

Student success and achievement is the focus of the Ministry of Education, and they hate it, but we like it because we know parents, students and teachers want achievement to be at the top of the list—and we're going to continue to do that.

No wonder it was such a bad mess. I didn't know you were a trustee as well.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Speaker, let me tell you about a wonderful and widely loved 59-year-old named Kevin Nash, who is here today in the chamber. Kevin has a love for the outdoors and a zeal for life, spending as much time as he can with his loving family in Haliburton.

Tragically, Kevin was diagnosed with melanoma and underwent several surgeries, immunotherapy, and radiation at Princess Margaret hospital. Unfortunately, these treatments exhausted the options covered by OHIP. Kevin tried to access tumour-infiltrating lymphocyte—TIL—trials in other countries to no avail. Princess Margaret and Iovance worked to find a solution, but OHIP did not engage. Bristol Myers Squibb offered new immunotherapy at a reduced price, yet OHIP refused. Kevin's oncologist believes TIL therapy offers the best hope.

My question is to the Premier. The doctors, the hospitals and the drug companies are doing their jobs. When will you step up and do yours?

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

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Of course, anybody facing the terrible disease of cancer and other related diseases has a very, very serious challenge to face—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

I apologize to the member for Essex.

Back to the member for Essex.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Thank you, Speaker.

Anybody facing one of these very serious diseases, like cancer, is facing a very, very tough challenge. We support those people, and we support their families as well.

1120

Madam Speaker, the out-of-country coverage for these types of serious diseases has a set of policies, and those policies have been in place since 2011. Our government has a program called the FAST program—that stands for "funding accelerated for specific treatments." It is a program that introduces more treatments available faster for everyone across the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: With all due respect, Kevin wants to see action, not words.

Not only is Kevin Nash a dynamite dad to three beautiful children, but he has been the financial adviser to the Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund since its inception. He truly cares about humanity.

To deny Kevin and other Ontarians life-saving treatments is unfathomable. We live in a great province that once had a world-renowned health care system—one that explored every possible solution to heal people.

The Minister of Health's claim that funding rare, out-of-country care would dismantle the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance is not just wrong; it is dangerous.

Speaker, my question to the Premier: Why is your Minister of Health refusing to co-operate with Princess Margaret's world-class oncology team on a cost-effective pathway for advanced cell therapy access?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Indeed, our government and our province has a fantastic and world-class cancer treatment program, not only at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, but also at the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research.

In addition to that, our government instituted the FAST program, which stands for "funding accelerated for specific treatments." Under that program, there are various treatments that have been accelerated for cancer—including acceleration for lung cancer, leukemia, prostate cancer, lymphoma—and a combination of therapies for colorectal cancer and liver cancers.

Madam Speaker, we are investing in this program and other programs across the province of Ontario to make sure that people suffering from severe illnesses such as cancer can get the treatment that they require here in Ontario from, of course, fantastic treatment centres such as Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: With municipal elections now behind us, newly elected mayors and councillors across Ontario are preparing to take office and make decisions that will shape their communities for years to come. One of the most important questions they will have is how provincial funding decisions are made.

I think it would be helpful to hear directly from this government as to how provincial funding is allocated to our municipalities. Is there a standardized, transparent formula that considers population, infrastructure needs, economic circumstances and growth pressures, or are these decisions made at the government's discretion?

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: Can he assure municipal leaders across Ontario that funding decisions are based on objective criteria and the needs of the community?

Hon. Rob Flack: To the member from Haldimand–Norfolk: That is a very good question.

We're very proud to say that we are providing historic funding for municipalities, across all 444. We take a multi-ministry approach to ensure that financial sustainability exists for our municipal partners.

In fact, when you take a look at homelessness prevention funding through the national housing strategy, infrastructure—let's talk about infrastructure: over $10 billion, plus the new $8.8-billion Development Charge Reduction Program, including a $1-billion sleeve for small, rural and northern Ontario.

Yes, it is equitable. We work closely with every municipality. In fact, a key point—from 2019 to 2024, key provincial support to municipalities grew by over 45%. So we continue to support our municipal partners, and I look forward to seeing what that number is at the end of 2026.

Bottom line: We are treating our municipal partners equitably. I look forward to meeting them all in the days and weeks ahead.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Haldimand–Norfolk.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I thank the minister opposite. It's heartening to hear that response.

I want to acknowledge that both Haldimand and Norfolk counties have seen provincial funding increases year over year. I appreciate those investments, and I will continue to press this government, though, for more funding in areas our communities need it.

There is only one taxpayer, and regardless of which side of the House we sit on, every community deserves that fair and equitable consideration.

I would add that municipal leaders have a responsibility to be accountable to their own taxpayers for how they spend public money and the decisions they make. At times, they should maybe be looking at their own fiscal decisions rather than pointing the finger at Queen's Park.

Speaker, through you again, to the minister: What message would he give to elected mayors and councillors who conveniently say their communities are being shortchanged?

And explain to them that funding allocations have nothing to do with political affiliation or the MPP representing them.

Hon. Rob Flack: Well, that is a good question.

Let's take a couple of examples.

When we take a look at infrastructure investments across this province, they're done on an application basis—especially the $10 billion we invested thus far.

When it comes to the $8.8 billion we're investing to the Development Charge Reduction Program, again, municipalities applied through a formula, and they are being treated equitably in terms of how they're measured, in terms of the monies they're going to receive over the period of 10 years.

So, yes, we're going to continue to work closely with every municipality.

I also want to point out that small, rural and northern municipalities, much like Haldimand–Norfolk, my riding and many in this chamber, are also benefiting consistently and equitably from this government.

We have a multi-ministry approach to this funding. Whether it's health care, whether it's children, community and social services or the municipal affairs, agriculture—whatever it may be, we're here to support our municipal partners day in and day out.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Speaker, across Ontario, people are facing challenges related to mental health, addictions, and homelessness. These are complex issues that affect all of our communities. For someone struggling with addiction or experiencing homelessness, finding the right support can be difficult. Far too often, people face barriers when trying to access mental health care or other essential services—certainly, my office has handled many of them.

People need access to services that recognize the connection between mental health, addiction, and overall well-being.

Can the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions please tell us how this government is working to strengthen access to treatment and recovery services for the people of Ontario?

Hon. Michelle Cooper: It is an honour to stand here as the new Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, and I really want to thank the member for Windsor–Tecumseh for my first question here, as minister.

Speaker, our government believes that everyone struggling with mental health challenges or addiction deserves access to treatment and the opportunity to build a healthier future.

That is exactly what we are delivering through our Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hubs, known as HART hubs.

Last Friday, I was pleased to celebrate the opening of the new Brockville HART hub with my colleague from Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. Last Friday's announcement was about strengthening communities, supporting recovery, and helping more Ontarians build healthier, more stable lives.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Thank you to the associate minister for that response. It's truly encouraging to hear that this important work is being done in Brockville, and of the partnerships that are making these services possible.

For individuals who have experienced homelessness, addiction, or serious mental health challenges, completing treatment can be an important milestone. But maintaining that progress often depends on having access to ongoing care and the services needed to regain independence. Without those supports, individuals may face additional barriers as they work to rebuild their lives.

Can the associate minister please share with this house what results our government is seeing through HART hubs across Ontario and how these investments are helping individuals move towards lasting recovery?

Hon. Michelle Cooper: The success of our HART hubs is about much more than the number of facilities we open. Our province-wide network of 29 HART hubs has now served more than 56,000 clients and supported more than 560 individuals in accessing supportive housing. Behind those numbers are friends and families and loved ones taking life-changing steps towards recovery.

In Windsor, the HART hub served 98 people during its first six months, and of those, 20 transitioned into temporary housing, and seven completed treatment and moved through transitional housing into permanent housing with ongoing supports.

1130

Speaker, what makes this model so important is that it recognizes recovery does not happen in isolation.

By working together to help more people recover, we are building a safer, healthier and stronger Ontario.

TRUCKING SAFETY

MPP Lise Vaugeois: The government recently announced new mandatory training for commercial truck drivers that is exactly the same as the old mandatory training, which was never enforced.

Through you, Speaker: Minister, have you actually changed anything to guarantee the training of commercial truck drivers?

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

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: We have introduced a variety of measures to strengthen commercial truck training across this province—whether that be the introduction of minimum waiting periods before commercial vehicle licences are issued, or whether that be residency checks, as well, at ServiceOntario locations across the province. More importantly, we have hired over 100 transportation enforcement officers. We have turned scales to 24/7.

Unfortunately, every single one of the measures that we have put forward to strengthen truck training, to strengthen

oversight, the members opposite and the NDP have voted against every single time.

We'll continue to push forward, increase inspections and increase oversight across the province to deliver safer roads across Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Fraud is rampant in the training and testing of commercial truck drivers, and this fraud ultimately costs people's lives. Yet, according to the government's press release, only one enforcement position is being created—responsible for policing hundreds of schools and test centres.

Speaker, through you: Does the minister really believe that one officer can end the fraud and prevent untrained drivers from getting behind the wheel of what are effectively 80-ton missiles?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Just last year, over 100 transportation enforcement officers were hired; almost half of those were in the north. It's a shame that member voted against every single one of those transportation enforcement officers being on the road.

Over 120,000 inspections, 24/7 enforcement at the Shuniah scale, which is located in her area—and what did she do? She voted against not only the $30-million investment, but more enforcement—24/7 enforcement—in that area.

We're going to continue to move forward and make sure our roads are safe, despite the opposition voting against every single one of those measures.

On top of that, we're building and expanding roads on Highway 11/17 and ensuring that Highway 69 is built five years quicker.

That's our commitment to the north, and that's our commitment to advancing roads across Ontario.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Stephanie Smyth: In January 2025, Ontario's private career colleges warned this government for the third time that there was a lot of trouble with OSAP, so they hired their friends at KPMG to do an audit—an audit that will never see the light of day, thanks to their FOI legislation. So we asked for the Auditor General to step in and do an independent oversight audit for the people of Ontario. They shot that down yesterday. What are they so afraid of?

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Colleges and Universities: Will you commit to opening up the KPMG audit so all of Ontario can see what this government did with their billion-dollar OSAP boondoggle?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I think that member is missing a few important dates. Yes, Career Colleges Ontario did give us a letter in January 2025 highlighting the same concerns that we highlighted in December 2024. But I think the important date that she is missing here is May 2025, when the federal government finished their own investigation. They gave us the results of that investigation, which the ministry took and did enhanced, targeted inspections on this year. We ended up, this spring, removing eligibility from six of those institutions because of the targeted, enhanced inspections that we had done the previous year. We did bring it to KPMG because of the fact that we understood it was more widespread than initially thought. And in the end, KPMG are the forensic experts to ensure that we have confidence back in the OSAP system, when it comes to private institutions.

Speaker, these are serious criminal allegations against bad actors, and we need to ensure that we have the confidence in the system that is needed.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Toronto–St. Paul's.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Speaker, through you to the minister: Yes or no?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Yes, these are very serious allegations. I will always say that. These are very serious allegations, and we took them very seriously. Every single tip we receive at the ministry is investigated very seriously. We've received over 3,200 tips into OSAP, and we investigated all 3,200 tips into OSAP. We will continue to take every single tip our ministry receives very seriously.

So if that is the question, yes, I will take every single tip seriously, and we will continue to ensure that we bring back confidence with the legislation, this session, into the OSAP system.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response.

When emergencies and natural disasters strike, it's critical that support is readily available so that communities in our province are safe, practised and prepared. Residents, municipalities and local organizations are all stepping up, but we know that coordination, training, and access to equipment are essential for an effective response.

That's why our government is building an emergency response network across our province to help communities respond to local emergencies and deploy critical resources at a moment's notice.

Through you, Speaker: Can the minister tell us more about Ontario Corps and what investments have been made to strengthen training and strengthen equipment?

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

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Thank you to the member from Burlington for that question.

Speaker, when an emergency strikes, communities need trained people, the right equipment and a coordinated response. Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is delivering exactly that through Ontario Corps, bringing together skilled professionals, dedicated volunteers and trusted partners to support communities when they need it most.

Right now, our minister is touring the north in Ontario with Team Rubicon and Ontario Corps volunteers for a training session, as well as a symposium on flooding and wildland fires.

Our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has invested $21.5 million into Ontario Corps partners, including more than $6.5 million announced this year for equipment, supplies and training for 13 partner organizations. Through this work, we can mobilize people and specialized equipment within 24 to 72 hours to support local emergency efforts. These investments turn preparedness into practical supports on the ground, when our communities need them most.

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the parliamentary assistant for the important update. It's great to hear about how this growing network is supporting Ontario communities and delivering critical on-the-ground support, from emergency shelter and debris management to food services and specialized equipment.

During emergencies, such as severe weather, people in my riding of Burlington want to know how they can help in their communities and what our government is doing to support volunteer efforts on the ground. They're asking how Ontario Corps works, who can join, and how volunteers are trained, coordinated and deployed.

Speaker, can the minister explain how Ontario Corps is engaging volunteers to communities across Ontario during times of need?

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: When emergencies strike, people across Ontario step forward to help their neighbours and support their communities. Ontario Corps helps turn that willingness to serve into coordinated action.

Speaker, already, 33,000 volunteers have registered with Ontario Corps, ready to support their communities in times of need. To support their efforts, our government has built a strong network of experienced organizations and partners that can be mobilized quickly during emergencies. Through this network, volunteers provide essential assistance, including emergency shelter and accommodation, debris management, and emergency food services. They are supported by specialized equipment, including flood barriers, drones and water pumps, to help communities across Ontario.

This is about communities coming together and ensuring those who are willing to help have the support they need to make that difference.

I encourage Ontarians over the age of 16 to register with Ontario Corps and join the call to help protect Ontario.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security regarding the Learn and Stay grant. This matter will be debated today, following private members' public business.

There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'd just like to recognize some folks from York University who are here today: the interim president, Lisa Philipps; Ijade Maxwell Rodrigues; and Shawna Teper, of their government relations team. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Lorne Coe: We have guests with us from York University: Lisa Philipps, the interim president and vice-chancellor; Amir Asif, the vice-president of research and innovation; and Ijade Maxwell Rodrigues, the chief of government and community relations and protocol. Thank you for visiting Queen's Park.

Mr. Deepak Anand: I'll take an opportunity to welcome Dr. Lisa Bentley from the Ontario Dental Association, as well as a dentist from Mississauga–Malton. Welcome to your House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MARTIN FARMS LIMITED ACT, 2026

Mr. Anand moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr63, An Act to revive Martin Farms Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

MORATORIUM ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DATA CENTRES ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LE MORATOIRE RELATIF AUX CENTRES DE TRAITEMENT DE DONNÉES EN INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE

Mr. Schreiner moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 146, An Act to enact a moratorium with respect to artificial intelligence data centres and to make related amendments to two other statutes / Projet de loi 146, Loi pour édicter un moratoire relatif aux centres de traitement de données en intelligence artificielle et pour apporter des modifications connexes à deux autres lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I turn to the member for a brief description.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: This bill establishes a moratorium on AI data centres and establishes an advisory committee to prepare legislative amendments designed to ensure that strict environmental and societal guidelines are put in place such that they have limits on noise, electricity use and water use, among other things, and that they are Canadian-owned and -operated and will benefit their local community.

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I am pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents in Ottawa West–Nepean to table a petition entitled "Repeal Bill 5."

Just as a reminder, Bill 5 is the bill that was passed by this government and rammed through the Legislature which creates special economic zones that allow cabinet to set aside any laws within a particular region, whether they're labour laws, environmental protections, or public health rules. But it also runs roughshod over the duty to consult with First Nations. The First Nations have been very clear that it violates the duty to consult and ignores the requirement of free, prior and informed consent.

We are marking treaties week here in Ontario this week, and the member for Kiiwetinoong spoke very movingly this morning about the importance of that treaty relationship and respect—and, quite frankly, the lack of respect that the Ontario government has historically had for the treaty relationship, and the need to rebuild trust and ensure that we are following our obligations.

As the member was very clear, Bill 5 does not respect that treaty obligations, and my constituents agree with that. They are calling for the Legislature to repeal Bill 5, to start over again from scratch with full consultation, so that we do development properly in Ontario, in full partnership and with respect for the rights of treaty holders.

I wholeheartedly endorse this petition, will add my name to it, and send it to the table with page Jessica.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition from my constituents entitled "Increase Funding for Staff and Ensure All Students Have the Support They Need at School."

They are asking us to commit to funding to hire more education workers in schools across Ontario, to ensure that students have the supports and schools have the number of adults to ensure that our kids have a proper learning environment. This is the number one thing I hear from teachers, Speaker. They need more help in the classroom to ensure that all of our kids have the environment they need to learn.

TRUCKING SAFETY

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: I have a petition here from my constituents asking the Legislature to pass Bill 119, Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act.

Specifically, this petition is concerned with the expansion of administrative monetary penalties to the municipalities so they can tackle illegal truck yards. It's a big issue in Halton Hills, and I want to thank the many constituents that continue to sign this petition supporting Bill 119, including the other measures contained in it.

I support this petition, I will sign it and hand it to page Marcus to bring to the table.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

M^me^ France Gélinas: I would like to thank the Ontario Nurses' Association for this petition—more specifically Vanessa Desjardins from Lively in my riding. This petition has thousands of signatures from all over Ontario. The petition is called "Stop Privatization and Support Staffing Ratios."

The petition talks about the understaffing that is negatively impacting the quality of public health available, causing longer wait times, unreliable access to care, unmanageable workload and many more issues. Understaffing causes burnout in our nurses and health care professionals, which drives many of them out of the profession. Did you know, Speaker, that one in five registered nurses with the College of Nurses is non-practising because of burnout and many other reasons?

Nurses and health care professional staffing ratios restore our public health care and ensure quality care across the system. The underfunding of our health care system, while the private, for-profit corporations are getting funded, is something that doesn't sit well with them. The nurse vacancies and burnout decrease in other jurisdictions—if you look at British Columbia or Manitoba, where they are putting forward nursing ratios.

They ask the Legislative Assembly to mandate staffing ratios for nurses and health care professionals. We will have an opportunity to debate that bill on November 25. I hope everybody will support it.

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

1510

CANCER SCREENING

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition—actually, this is an older petition, but it continues to come in. This is a petition which asks the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ontario Breast Screening Program to allow women over the age of 74 to self-refer for mammogram screening.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Dave Smith: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

We know, back in 2018 when we were first elected, one of the biggest challenges that Ontarians were facing was the cost of electricity and that reliable and affordable electricity is something that is essential for all households. We know that a strong electrical grid is something that our businesses need for our communities to continue growing.

We also know that—the NDP opposed it, but having the refurb of the Pickering nuclear plant and ensuring that we have a good, strong base-level nuclear power in Ontario is something that is imperative for a modern electrical infrastructure system like ours to continue to meet the long-term goals and long-term energy needs for Ontario.

And we know that, when you're putting in the largest nuclear reactor in Wesleyville, here in Ontario, this is a project that will employ a significant number of people across all of Ontario: pipefitters, construction workers, skilled labour of all kinds. This is something that is very, very good for the people of the province of Ontario, supporting skilled trade jobs when we know that the Americans, right now, have this tariff war on us which is causing so much havoc with our system.

Therefore, we the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the 2026 fall economic statement, because this is something that will support all of those workers across Ontario.

I fully endorse this petition. I will sign it and give it to page Anne to take it to the table.

TAXATION

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This important petition is about taking all taxes off food.

It came as a huge surprise when the Conservative government voted against a very important NDP bill to remove the tax off of all foods.

Members of your communities, our communities, are coming home—the clocks have been rolled back—in pitch darkness after working a long shift and overtime. They don't have time in some cases to whip together a meal. They go by the grocery store. They just want to buy a prepared meal like a chicken, and guess what? They get slapped around with taxes on this.

This is what we tried to remove, and this petition is the people of Ontario calling on this government to take the taxes off all foods. It's time. Do the right thing.

I'm absolutely supporting this petition, and I'm giving it to page Penelope.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Ted Hsu: This is a petition entitled "Municipal Integrity."

They are petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass legislation requiring all candidates seeking municipal office to submit a criminal background check and to introduce eligibility criteria prohibiting individuals recently convicted of serious criminal offences from running for municipal office for a fixed period of time afterwards.

AI DATA CENTRES

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a petition from over 200 individuals raising concerns about the threats of unregulated AI data centres in their communities. The petitioners raise concerns about the negative impacts, including how much water they use, how much energy they consume, how few jobs they create and how much noise they make. They're also concerned that tech billionaires are benefiting more than communities and local everyday folks.

As a result of that, these petitioners are asking the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement a moratorium on the construction of new AI data centres until their effects on water, power, health and jobs are studied, regulated and made public.

I fully support this petition. I will sign it and ask page Kate to bring it to the table.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am very pleased to present this petition. As you may or may not know, I used to be a teacher. Old habits die hard, so I'm very pleased to be able to bring the voices from across Durham region.

This is a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly to reduce class sizes in our public elementary schools. The signatures were gathered from across the Durham District School Board. I'm sure many of us have been hearing from teachers and education workers about the need to invest in our schools for so many reasons. Some of those reasons are that this government is not investing what is needed to keep up with the costs. We're looking at about $6.35 billion that has been cut since 2018 from public education. But what that means is we see larger class sizes and inadequate special education and mental health supports for students.

Larger class sizes have a negative impact on the quality of education. It reduces access to the teaching resources, significantly diminishes the teacher-student interactions and also the education worker and student interactions. That's so detrimental to the students who really need that support.

The vast majority of parents, of education workers, educators, students—really, everybody—recognizes that smaller class sizes are better, and they want what's best for all of our students in our public education system. I would say, Speaker, everybody except this government. So here we are, calling on them to recognize—our school system has always been internationally recognized, but in order for that to continue, we have to invest. We have to respect it.

This petition is calling on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to commit to making the necessary investments in public education to lower class sizes, increase student supports and ensure students have the schools that they need. Their learning environment is the working environment, and they all deserve respect and investment. So, of course, I support this. I will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Jessica.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Chandra Pasma: It's my pleasure to rise to present a petition on behalf of Dr. Sally Palmer—the tireless Dr. Sally Palmer—entitled "To Raise Social Assistance Rates."

We know that there's a real challenge in the cost of living. We're hearing more and more from people who are struggling to put food on the table on top of paying for

housing. We know that one in four households in Ottawa is now food insecure, and we're seeing record use of food banks. But there's no doubt that the people who are among the poorest residents of Ontario are those who are receiving ODSP and Ontario Works, both of which are pegged so far below what it actually costs to pay for even a basic apartment that we are leaving these people cruelly struggling to survive in Ontario.

We saw, with the basic income pilot, that when we actually invest in income security, people have better health outcomes; they're actually able to go back to school; they're actually able to find employment. What we're doing is making it impossible for people to lead healthy lives where they're able to get back on their feet, to be able to live a life of basic human dignity.

More than 230 organizations have signed a letter to the Premier and his cabinet asking that social assistance rates be doubled. We also saw with the CERB program during the pandemic how important that level of financial security was for people, and how quickly we could flow it out.

I wholeheartedly endorse this petition calling for the Legislative Assembly to double social assistance rates. I will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Oliver.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

M^me^ France Gélinas: I'm proud to present this petition called "Let's Fix the Northern Health Travel Grant" and thank Mrs. Shirley Vezina, who lives in Foleyet, a little community in the north of my riding, for this petition.

Basically, the Northern Health Travel Grant exists because we don't have the same health care services in northern Ontario that exist in southern Ontario. We don't have organ transplants, and we don't have many services. People have to travel. In order to gain access to those services, we use the Northern Health Travel Grant.

The Northern Health Travel Grant has not kept up with the pace of change: the price of gas or the price of renting a hotel room in Toronto. There have been some changes done in the right direction, but people would like to be able to have a committee where they would sit with the minister to talk about how it's just as hard to go to the dentist, because none of the communities in my riding have dentists; it's just as hard to go see an optometrist.

It would be good to be able to support people from northern Ontario to gain access to dentists, optometrists and many other health services that are not available in small communities in the north.

1520

I have hundreds and hundreds of people that have signed the petition. They ask for a Northern Health Travel Grant advisory committee that would bring together health care providers in the north, as well as recipients of the Northern Health Travel Grant, to make recommendations to the Minister of Health that would improve access to health care to the people who live in northern Ontario, like myself and the people that I represent.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PLAN TO PROTECT ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2026 (NO. 2)

LOI DE 2026 SUR LE PLAN POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES) (NO 2)

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 3, 2026, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 143, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 143, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: I am pleased to continue my remarks. As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, I want to speak about the important work our ministry is doing.

At its heart, the ministry has a simple but powerful purpose: According to provincial projections, Ontario had approximately 3.1 million seniors in 2025, a number expected to reach 4.6 million by 2051, including me and hopefully you too, Mr. Leardi. Statistics Canada also identified approximately 3.2 million Ontarians aged 15 and older living with disabilities in 2022.

Speaker, these are more than statistics; these numbers are the people that represent our parents, neighbours, friends and those who helped build the Ontario we know today. They remind us that the province's strength must be measured not only by its prosperity but by the opportunities it creates for its people.

For 2027, in the FES, our ministry's expenditures are estimated at $178 million in operating spending to support programs that promote independence, strengthen communities and remove barriers. Let's take a look at it:

—$100.2 million for the Ontario Seniors Care at Home Tax Credit to help low- and moderate-income seniors with eligible medical expenses, providing up to $1,500 annually—every single year—per eligible senior family and expected to support over 200,000 families;

—$22.9 million for seniors active living centres—and there are 416 such centres in our province of Ontario—to help older adults remain physically active, mentally healthy, independent and socially connected to live independently with dignity; and

—$7 million for seniors community grants, supporting approximately 325 community projects in 2026-27, with grants of up to $25,000 for local organizations.

Behind these figures are people—a senior seeking connection, a caregiver balancing responsibilities and a person with a disability seeking to work and travel without barriers.

We are also providing $2.4 million for the seniors safety line, elder abuse prevention and the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, including 24/7 confidential support in over 150 languages and assistance for seniors living with dementia and their caregivers.

Speaker, accessibility is equally central to our mandate. Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, our ministry works to identify, prevent and remove barriers to participation.

Let's look at the initiatives that we do:

—$15.6 million for the Home and Vehicle Modifications Program, delivered through March of Dimes Canada—if you know anyone, they can get help—up to $15,000 for home modifications and an additional $15,000 for vehicle modifications every 10 years, including ramps, stairlifts or accessible bathrooms. These are the ways we're making sure that our community has the care that they need;

—$2.25 million for the Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone program, providing up to $60,000 per project for accessible ramps, washrooms, pathways and community improvements to some of the organizations that are helping our seniors and people with disabilities.

Our ministry is small, but it has a big impact. Whether helping seniors remain connected to their communities or enabling people with disabilities to overcome barriers, under the leadership of Premier Ford, our responsibility is clear: to build an Ontario where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

As parliamentary assistant, I look forward to working alongside the minister, community partners and members across this House to advance these priorities. I encourage all members: Look at the list of grants and other programs available for seniors, look at the active-senior areas that are in your riding and reach out to seniors and people with disabilities, especially during the Christmas period. That is the time when we can stand with them and celebrate our province and our prosperity. As parliamentary assistants, PA Daisy Wai and I are available to assist wherever and with whatever is needed.

Speaker, moving on to infrastructure, health care and the next-generation part of the FES: The strongest investments are the ones that make daily life better today and open doors for tomorrow. Let's look at what we're doing here. We're making sure Ontario's $210-billion capital plan includes highways, transit, hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure. Road improvement mean less time in traffic; more reliable transit means getting to work on time; a new hospital or school means greater confidence in the future of a growing community. Infrastructure is not only concrete and steel; it is the time returned to a parent, access created for a person with a disability, opportunity brought closer to home.

Health care is deeply personal to me. Speaker, as you know, my daughter, Suvidhi Anand, is training to be a nurse, and my son, Shrey Anand, is working in medical clinic fields. It is important that we serve our communities.

When a child becomes sick, a parent wants help, when somebody is living with a chronic condition, they want continuity. When a loved one grows older, a family wants to know that the care is accessible and compassionate. That is why this government is making sure we are making investments through a four-year primary care action plan that commits $3.4 billion toward connecting more people to primary care. The minister's broader economic plan also emphasizes continued investment in hospitals and essential public services. These are the commitments that require sustained implementation.

I want to see our young Ontarians believe that their efforts will lead somewhere. Whether their path is in skilled trades, technology, health care, engineering or entrepreneurship, they should have the chance to develop their abilities and contribute to our province. That is why, Speaker, compassion and responsibility must go together. We know today we're going through a tough time, and I always believe a tough time is a test time. This is the time to be financially prudent while making required investments.

Let's look at Ontario's projected net debt-to-GDP ratio: Last year, it was 37.7%; today, it is 37.4%. It may look like a number, but what it does is it tells that there is progress. By the way, this number also includes additional contingency funding and reserves to help the province respond to economic risks.

As we know, fiscal discipline is not the opposite of compassion; it is one of the ways we preserve our ability to act when people need us most. And investment is not an end in itself; it is the value found in the job it supports, the care it makes possible and the opportunities it creates along the way.

This is the choice before us: to meet uncertainty with fear and delay, or prepare ourselves with confidence and determination. Bill 143 and the fall economic statement reflect our government's approach to helping workers and businesses, the job creators, face immediate pressure while strengthening Ontario's foundation for future growth.

1530

The goal is straightforward: Let's keep people working. Let's help job creators invest. Let's make daily life more affordable. Let's build the infrastructure communities need and ensure that seniors and people with disabilities are supported.

In today's digital world, uncertainty is the only thing that's certain. We can only hope that the world may become predictable soon—probably after this mid-term. Meanwhile, we can stay focused and take challenges seriously to prioritize what matters to us and to keep working for the people who have placed their trust in us.

Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Finance, his PA and his entire team for their leadership and for presenting the 2026 fall economic statement. Going forward, we are going into budget consultations, which will be happening soon. This is the time for all Ontarians to come forward, work with the government and come to those consultations. They will be going city to city, the minister and the PA, along with committee, listening to people's needs, helping them, working with them and making sure

all those suggestions are documented, listened to and worked with.

As I come to my closing remarks, I look forward to supporting the bill, and I look forward to all the members: If you believe in a better, stronger Ontario, if you believe that we are in an uncertain time and we need to stand up, fight back and build an even stronger Ontario, I urge each one of you to support our fall economic statement. Let's continue to work together to build a better, stronger Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

M^me^ France Gélinas: The fall economic statement makes reference to Highway 69 briefly. Bill 143, the bill we're debating, an act to implement budget measures, has two schedules—Building Ontario Fund Act under schedule 3, and schedule 7, Capital Investment Plan Act—where the government could have said how much money will be going towards Highway 69, when it will start, when it will end and how long the project will take. The Minister of Transportation has talked about cutting the project into six sections. Four of them are supposed to go forward—he had said last time he was in Sudbury—to tender this fall, with shovels in the ground next year, 2027.

I was rather surprised that not a mention of Highway 69 is included in Bill 143. Is Highway 69 a priority or not?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Anything that supports our province is always a priority. That is why, when it comes to building infrastructure, our government is delivering the largest capital plan in Ontario's history. We're talking about $210 billion in planned investments over the next decade, and this plan is helping us to build highways, transit systems, hospitals, schools and other infrastructure.

Speaker, these projects are supporting our economic growth, improving connectivity and creating communities with skilled workers across Ontario. We're making sure communities are safe and progressing, and that is what we're doing through this.

I'm looking forward to members on all sides supporting this fall economic statement so that we can build a better, stronger Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Lorne Coe: Speaker, you'll know that in the fall economic statement, our government announced the Ontario Competitiveness Tax Cut, which will provide $8 billion in provincial tax relief to help businesses, whether they're in Whitby or other parts of the region of Durham, to lower the cost of investing in machinery, equipment and other capital assets. This measure is part of the government's broader plan to strengthen Ontario's competitiveness and encourage long-term economic growth.

Speaker, through you, I'd like the member for Mississauga–Malton to explain how this tax cut will help local businesses in his riding invest, expand and create good-paying jobs.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Speaker, first of all, I want to recognize the wonderful member for Whitby, who has always been a champion for his community. To the member from Whitby: Not only for my riding of Mississauga–Malton but your riding of Whitby and all along everywhere else, our government understands that Ontario must remain competitive to attract investment and create good-paying jobs.

As we all know, Speaker, it's like any other vicious cycle. If we are competitive, investors are going to come. When they're going to invest, we're going to create jobs. When we're going to create jobs, we will bring the prosperity. When we bring the prosperity, more investors will come. And that's what we're doing through this bill.

Speaker, we announced the Ontario Competitiveness Tax Cut, which would provide $8 billion in provincial tax relief to lower the cost of business investment. The measure will allow businesses to write off 100% of the value of a wide range of eligible capital assets.

So, Speaker, I'm saying this to all the people looking to invest—

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

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague from Mississauga–Malton. I know he's also the PA for seniors and accessibility, and so, Speaker, I'm very happy to share, especially because it's a week from Remembrance Day and one month from the 100th anniversary of my Legion—the Dr. Fred Starr Branch 76 Legion. It's my Legion, my dad's Legion. They'll be 100 years old this year on December 2. They've been a staple in the community in Sudbury for 100 years, and 54 of them in the location they have right now. I just think it's a great thing to share with everybody to be able to celebrate that. As well, Speaker, I spoke with the Solicitor General. He's going to help me out in helping them to celebrate, and that's a great thing.

I just wonder if my colleague had anything he'd want to share about the fall economic statement that would be helpful for seniors and for veterans?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you for that wonderful question and congratulations.

Speaker, talking about the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility—something which I have recently joined, and I'm looking forward to all the wonderful work we're doing within this ministry—we are making sure during even this tough time, we're not reducing. We're actually making sure there's enough money for people—for our seniors and for those with disabilities. We're making sure there is $178 million, which will be invested and will continue to be invested through this fall economic statement.

I'm looking forward to all members—let's take care of those who took care of us, our seniors, and let's work with them. Especially, the Christmas season is coming—I encourage everyone to reach out to the local seniors centre and meet your seniors during this Christmas season.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: I wanted to return to the subject of my honourable colleague from Whitby's question about the productivity mega deduction, and I am actually quite happy that this government has followed the lead of the federal government to put in the productivity mega deduc-

tion. In Canada, we have under-invested; we have been lagging in business expenditure on research and development. It's a stat that Statistics Canada keeps.

But it is one thing to have investment in equipment and buildings. It is another thing to have the key people to convert those things into innovation and competitiveness and good jobs. I think one thing that we're missing here is support for training those key people, for finding those key people. Why isn't the government, at the same time, funding universities at the amount recommended by their own blue-ribbon panel?

Mr. Deepak Anand: The question is about funding in universities. We have a wonderful PA, we have a wonderful minister who's been helping our universities. And in fact, Speaker, we have recently made investments in the universities to the tune of $6.4 billion in additional funding, bringing annual operating funding to $7 billion, the highest level in the province's history.

1540

Speaker, this is not just money. What matters most is our young professionals, our youth leaders for the future. We want to be in line with their needs. That's why this funding also includes support for 70,000 more seats for in-demand programs like STEM, health care, education and—

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I was looking and the Daily Bread Food Bank released their hunger report today. I found it particularly disturbing that one in eight children in Toronto rely on a food bank in order to be fed.

I was thinking, where in the fall economic statement—especially since I've participated in events of the food bank where all parties have participated—is there a specific policy program targeting ending this hunger of so many young children in our communities?

Mr. Deepak Anand: First of all, I want to say thank you to the member opposite for asking that question, something that is very dear to me.

I'll tell you the reason why it is very dear to me. My wife, Aruna Anand, runs a program called Fueling Healthy Minds.

As we know, in my riding of Mississauga–Malton, two out of five children come to school without breakfast. There was a tweet that came out that said, "What's going to happen during COVID because there's no school open? Where are these kids going to go? Where are they going to get their breakfast?"

Speaker, rather than just listening or reading that tweet, she actually acted on it. The government cannot do everything. She believes it is the community's responsibility to come together, to work together. That's why she started a program, where she reached out to local businesses and picked up their surplus food. Every single Friday, she packs the food for a week for these students. These students are from the Peel school board and the Catholic school board.

I think it's a great example. If we all come together as a community, we can work to alleviate all these pressures.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I don't think there's enough time left. We'll move to further debate.

Further debate?

M^me^ France Gélinas: I'm happy to have a few minutes to talk about the fall economic statement as well as Bill 143, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

I would like to start with page 96. Page 96 is called, "Building highways for northern Ontario"—something that is dear and near to my heart. I travel northern highways all the time. I have a highway—Highway 144, 300 kilometres from Sudbury to Timmins—that starts in my riding and ends in my riding.

Many highways are in need of support, but the one that I want to focus on is the 68 kilometres of Highway 69 that is still a two-lane road. I want to bring up page 96 because on page 96, the government goes through an entire page of projects that they intend to do.

There's nothing wrong with projects. The number one they talk about is the Little Current Swing Bridge. If you've ever gone to Manitoulin Island to see the swing bridge, it's something that needs to be seen—really, really cool. But they also need a bridge that is there throughout the winter and everything else.

They talk about the passing opportunity with the 2+1 highway. They talk about expanding Highway 17 from Thunder Bay to Nipigon. They talk about Kenora to the Manitoulin border. They talk about the permanent bridge in Pikangikum. They talk about the $81.3 million in Geraldton.

And then they talk about Highway 69. I will read for you what is written: "Advancing the widening of Highway 69 between Parry Sound and Sudbury from two to four lanes by introducing legislation to speed up permitting and approvals and get shovels in the ground up to five years earlier."

When people in northern Ontario read this, Speaker, it's not well received. Why is it that we have the amount of money that goes to other highway infrastructure, but we don't have a penny allocated to Highway 69? Why is it that the others have a starting time, a time where it will go out for tender and how long the work will take, but not when it comes to Highway 69?

For Highway 69, all we get is that they're introducing legislation to speed up permitting, when this legislation already exists in Ontario. They passed that legislation about two years ago to fast-track the 413 and others. All they had to do was take that legislation, put a new regulation in place and add Highway 69 to it, and voila, case closed—it's done.

Speaker, there are so, so many people who have lost loved ones on Highway 69, whose families' lives have been changed forever because of serious accidents that leave people seriously handicapped. I will tell you that even the paramedics who work that stretch of highway, many of them have PTSD. They know that when they get a call for that stretch of highway, it's going to be brutal. It's going to be people badly hurt. It's going to be a head-on collision, and more than likely with a big truck, where people will die, where people will be severely injured.

The Minister of Transportation came to Sudbury three times in the last four months to talk about how important it was to them. When we started the session back last Tuesday, one of the first questions—the Premier was there; he answered the question. Within 90 minutes of Parliament being back on, they were talking about Highway 69 and how important it was.

But when it comes to allocating money to it—because we're talking about an economic statement here—when it comes to actually setting a starting date, length of construction, how things are going to go, how long it will take—nothing. We get, "Advancing the widening of Highway 69 between Parry Sound and Sudbury from two to four lanes by introducing legislation."

If you're a northerner and you read this, Speaker, it doesn't fly. It's not acceptable. The other projects have money allocated to them; tell us that there's money allocated to Highway 69. Other projects have dates where tenders will be started; tell us when things will go out to tender. The six sections—I have no problem with dividing it in sections. When the six sections are divided, let us know. Where do they start? Where do they end? Which one will go forward?

Give people a sense that it is an important project, that you understand that if you want the minerals, if you want all the resources that are in northern Ontario, you need a road to get there and you need a road to get back home. Right now, Highway 69 is way too dangerous. When you have an entire page dedicated to advancing highways in northern Ontario and you don't have a single date, a single penny, a single anything allocated to it, it's not acceptable.

But I'll move on. I'm now on page 119. It talks about expanding primary health care teams. This is something good that has been happening in our province. More and more, interdisciplinary primary health care teams are receiving money to be able to hire more staff so that they can provide access to more people.

The thing is that what they provide is attachment, not necessarily access. We all know that the Ontario Medical Association was here at Queen's Park yesterday. They came, talked to anybody who would listen to them and basically said—their research is there—50% of family physicians intend to take retirement in the next five years.

Where is the plan to make sure that we will be able to give access? It's one thing to be attached—it's great. You're attached to a new primary health care team, a community health centre, a family health team, a nurse practitioner health clinic, an Indigenous primary health care team; that's great. But what happens when 50% of primary care physicians retire? You're attached, but you have no access. To be attached to a family health team and the next available appointment is in three months is not that hopeful or that useful.

So I would like the ministry to not only focus on attachment but also focus on access. People need access. There has to be same-day appointments for some urgent problems that arise. There has to be next-day appointments in every interdisciplinary health care team so that people get the access that they need. None of that is in there.

1550

One thing that I found really interesting—and I will quote again—is they're "calling for fair and sustainable federal funding for health care." They talk about that the "temporary extension is a positive first step, sustainable and predictable federal funding is essential to sustaining public services."

Funny, because you can go to any health care provider—so the Ontario Hospital Association has asked for exactly what they want: sustainable and predictable funding coming from the provincial government. But it never comes. It's always the same. You see the budget. Their fiscal year runs from April 1 to March 31. In September, they will get their budget, and then in December, if they're lucky, some of the money put aside will be floating to a hospital.

That's not what they want. They need to be able to plan. They want to be able to plan three years in advance. In northern Ontario, you cannot hire a new physician or a new nurse or a new lab tech—you can't do this in three months' time; you need to give them time to plan so that they can deliver the care that we expect them to deliver.

The government asked for this and hoped to be listened to, but I can tell you that the health care providers in Ontario asked the government to do the exact same thing, but the government is not willing to do what they're asking for. There's a bit of a disconnect here.

Then we go to page 123, "building and expanding hospitals," where they go through the fact that the government is investing $64 billion in health care infrastructure, including $50 billion in capital grants over the next 10 years. So for the next 10 years, we have $50 billion to build hospitals and we have about 50 hospital projects in the waiting queue. But let me tell you, Speaker, that the new Ottawa Hospital will cost us about $10 billion. The last hospital that was just built under the progressive P3 system that the government has put in place cost $14 billion.

I'm strong in math. If a hospital costs us $10 billion and we have $50 billion for the next 10 years, that means in the next 10 years, we'll build—if we're lucky—five hospitals. There are 50 of them—50 hospitals. We have 142 hospital corporations. Fifty hospitals need to be rebuilt or expanded, including Health Sciences North.

Health Sciences North is the name of the hospital in Sudbury. It was renovated in 2001. We used to have four hospitals in Sudbury: the memorial hospital, the general hospital—anyway, we used to have four; we now have one. They've all been consolidated under what is called now Health Sciences North, Horizon Santé-Nord. It was built too small; it is still too small. We are in 2026, 25 years later, and we are at section 1C, I think, in the building of a new hospital project.

The government can say, "Oh, we have $50 billion over 10 years," but the new progressive P3 that the government has put into place has hospitals coming out—as I say, Ottawa Hospital: $10 billion; the last hospital before that: $14 billion. It doesn't leave too much money for too many new hospitals; although $50 billion seems to me like such a huge amount of money.

The Auditor General told the government about the progressive P3 that they have put into place, that it was supposed to increase the number of different companies who had an opportunity to bid on the different jobs. The exact opposite has happened. Only one bidder came forward, and it's a bidder who—I don't know why, but they're very, very generous with making donations to the Conservative Party, but they also happen to be the one and only bidder that answered the call for proposals and they got the contract. What we thought would cost maybe up to $2.8 billion at the time—nobody could believe that: "It's $2.8 billion for the Ottawa Hospital? No, no, no; the P3 will save you money. You'll see. We have a new progressive system in place. It will be way cheaper." And now the reality hits us that what we thought was impossible before—how could it cost $2.8 billion?—well, no, it now costs $10 billion under the new financing scheme that the government has put into place.

There are many hospitals that are in need of expansion. The government has a goal of 3,000 new hospital beds. If they continue down this path, there is zero chance that we will ever get there.

I'm now on page 125. Page 125 talks about the new emergency department action team to shorten wait times. The Ontario nurse practitioners' association was at Queen's Park. I think it was the first day we were back; they were here with us. I'm sure if you took the time to listen to what they had to say you would remember that they need to be at the table. The new emergency department action team—is it something good? Yes, absolutely. We need to do something about our emergency departments. It makes no sense that people go to the emergency department because they're sick, because they're ill, because they need care, and they sit and wait for 18 hours—in my neck of the woods, 36 hours. You will run out of diapers with your baby before your baby is seen. What? Does it need to change? Yes. Are there strategies out there that exist to decrease wait times in emergency departments? Yes, there are best practices that exist elsewhere. The NDP has put forward many ideas as to how you do this.

So the government has put an emergency department action team—you have to realize that nurse practitioners are a huge part of the solution, and they need to be at the table; they need to be considered at every table that Ontario Health puts together. How can we have a primary care action team with no nurse practitioner sitting at that table, no nurse practitioner at Ontario Health? That makes no sense. Things have to change—and I just realized that time goes by really quickly.

The dentists are here at Queen's Park. Their recommendation—they have four recommendations for change. They want to make it easier to get dental assistants, to make it easier so that, if you are a dental assistant in Manitoba or Quebec, if you want to come to Ontario, to make it easier. Right now, they have to redo their entire course. As well as look at what happened with—the great majority of dental assistants get their training through private career colleges, and now most of them have been stopped. So there's already a huge shortage of dental assistants. What's happening with our career colleges is going to make that shortage even worse. It has to change.

The same thing with—the suggestion that was made by the Ontario Medical Association yesterday to centralize referral systems. This is something that decreased the amount of time that people have to wait. When your family physician sends a referral to a specialist, the specialist has two weeks to answer back to your family physician whether he or she is able to see that patient or not. So two weeks later, you get the response: "No, I can't see your patient." You send another referral to another specialist who has two weeks to answer to you and says no. Sometimes months will go by before you can find a specialist who's able to take on your patient.

1600

A centralized referral system changes all of this. Why we don't have that in Ontario—other provinces do it. We do it for some specialties but not for all. This has to change. It's not in the budget. It wouldn't cost a whole lot of money, but it needs to happen.

J'aimerais dire quelques mots en français également. En ce moment, au département de la culture, il y a eu des coupes au niveau de l'argent qui est disponible pour les artistes visuels francophones en Ontario—massives. On parle de près de 30 % de coupures, comparé à ce qui s'est fait dans les années précédentes. Si tu regardes du côté anglophone, on n'a pas vu de coupures, mais du côté francophone, on en voit beaucoup.

Même chose avec l'Université de Toronto. L'Université de Toronto offre un programme pour préparer des enseignants qui vont travailler dans les universités pour enseigner aux étudiants comment devenir professeur. Donc ils offrent des cours de maîtrise et de doctorat en français pour les gens qui vont devenir professeurs dans nos facultés d'éducation pour enseigner aux professeurs. Ce programme-là se fait couper. C'est le seul programme qui existe en Ontario. Ils ont de beaux partenariats qui ont été faits avec l'Université de l'Ontario français, etc. Tout ça est en train de se faire couper. On ne sait pas pourquoi, mais on voit que les coupures aux programmes francophones ont tendance à être difficiles à justifier mais se font faire de toute façon.

Il y a beaucoup d'autres choses que j'aurais aimé voir.

There are many other things that I would have liked to have seen in this budget: bringing in pharmacare for people with diabetes and for birth control medication. We see the huge difference it has made in British Columbia, in Manitoba, in Prince Edward Island when people have access to diabetes medication. Diabetes is treatable, but if you don't manage it well there are many, many risks to your health. The great majority of people with foot amputations are diabetic. All of this changes.

There are many things that should have been in there that are not, but thank you, Speaker, for allowing me a few minutes to talk about the fall economic statement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Ted Hsu: I want to thank my honourable colleague from Nickel Belt for talking about dental assistants, because I did have the Ontario Dental Association visit my

office this morning. The dentist who came has their office right next door to Trillium College, in the mall in Kingston. They would hire the dental assistant students, who are just one class away from starting their placements. They've been hiring students from Trillium College for a while. They just, for the life of them, cannot understand why this government chose to use a sledgehammer to cut off OSAP from all private colleges when they have this relationship with Trillium College training dental assistants.

They're short of dental assistants. The whole dental sector needs more assistants to provide better care. I want to invite my colleague from Nickel Belt to expand on her remarks regarding dental assistants.

M^me^ France Gélinas: Thank you for the question. The Ontario Dental Association is here at Queen's Park. If you haven't had a chance to talk to them, please do. They would be more than happy to accommodate a meeting with you. They were there at lunch; they're there tonight also, if you can.

But at the end of the day, there are more people that have access to dentists now because of the Canadian dental program that has become available to millions of Ontarians. The demand on dental services has increased; the demand for dental assistants has increased, but unfortunately, the government decided to cut all of the career colleges, and that includes dental assistants, that includes PSWs, that includes paramedics.

A lot of private colleges that were doing good work are now closed, and dental assistants that were days away from practising are—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you.

Further questions?

M. Andrew Dowie: Alors, question pour la députée de Nickel Belt—merci pour votre discours. Je vois, chez moi, même les entreprises les plus solides peuvent faire face à d'importantes difficultés dans leur trésorerie lorsque les tarifs douaniers perturbent les commandes, les investissements et les chaînes d'approvisionnement. Les relations, ça compte pour beaucoup entre les compagnies, et on ne sait jamais si une compagnie, un client est plus nationaliste ou non.

C'est pourquoi le programme de financement pour la protection de l'Ontario met jusqu'à 1 milliard de dollars en prêts de fonds de roulement à la disposition des entreprises admissibles.

Alors, ma question pour la députée, c'est si elle appuie cette mesure pour protéger les emplois et soutenir les employeurs dans sa circonscription.

M^me^ France Gélinas: Ce sont des pas dans la bonne direction. Je vous dirais que vous devriez essayer d'augmenter ceux qui sont admissibles à ces fonds-là, parce que si tu regardes du côté médical, il y a beaucoup de petites et de grosses entreprises qui fonctionnent dans cette partie-là de notre économie qui, elles, n'y ont pas accès.

Par contre, ce qui se passe aux États-Unis a un gros impact sur tout ce qui a rapport au système de santé. Mais eux, même s'ils doivent laisser aller des employés, même s'ils perdent des contrats, ils n'y ont pas accès. Donc, pour les entreprises qui ont accès à ce fonds-là, oui, absolument. Ce qui se passe avec nos amis du Sud, on doit le prendre sérieusement, mais on doit admettre plus de différentes entreprises à ce fonds-là.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Sudbury.

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague from Nickel Belt for talking about the fall economic statement, and I too ripped open the book and was looking for Highway 69, as you'd mentioned. There's a whole section on highways, and if I can just read the part on Highway 69—it is a couple of pages in. The good side, Speaker, is that I didn't have to use a lot of highlighter on it because it's only two sentences—one sentence, sorry; it's just long: "Advancing the widening of Highway 69 between Parry Sound and Sudbury from two to four lanes by introducing legislation to speed up permitting and approvals and get shovels in the ground up to five years earlier."

It's a good step forward, because in the past, they wouldn't even say, "Highway 69." Then, they wouldn't say the amount the entire budget was in Highway 69—so what does it mean in northern Ontario, when people are dying on these highways, that there aren't dollar amounts or start dates or completion dates?

M^me^ France Gélinas: We are all human beings. When you lose a loved one on the highway, when people that you know are severely hurt or become handicapped, there's a level of stress that comes with this. This level of stress is felt throughout northern Ontario, throughout the people who use Highway 69.

So when they see a government where all they have is two lanes, no amount of money, no start date—the amount of stress goes up, and it goes from being stressed to being anxious to being angry. We are really, really feeling it in our community, that people are becoming more and more angry at the government for not taking this issue seriously enough. We need to four-lane Highway 69.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Part of the discussion of the economic statement focused on Ontario steel and automotive industries because they support good-paying jobs and entire communities that are now facing pressure from US tariffs—not unlike mine, with Gerdau Steel. Our government has partnered with the federal government on an $8.7-billion action plan supporting steel, automotive and critical minerals industries.

Speaker, through you, to the member for Nickel Belt: Will the member support this partnership to protect workers and strengthen the steel, automotive and critical minerals sectors?

M^me^ France Gélinas: Those are important parts of our industry, for sure. Do I support protecting workers? Every single day, I will.

But there are many workers right now losing their jobs. I attended a press conference last week: 1,877 nurses have received layoff notices in Ontario right here, right now. Those jobs need to be protected also.

1610

The wait times in our emergency rooms, the wait times in our hospitals: All of this is not going to improve when 1,877 nurses—those workers also need to be protected. The steelworkers who lost their jobs, there's a good chance it will affect their mental health. There's a good chance—I don't wish harm upon anybody—they will reach out to our health care system. The health care workers also need to be protected so that they are there when people need them, and none of that is in that fall economic statement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I appreciate the very thoughtful comments from the member from Nickel Belt, who has served as our shadow Minister of Health for a long time. I have been the critic for infrastructure, and at estimates recently, we took the minister to task about the government's stubborn refusal to switch from P3s, which are always so expensive.

We are seeing that $10 billion for the Ottawa hospital, as you mentioned, the over $14 billion for the Mississauga hospital. I know that, in Durham region, we have our hopes up for the Whitby hospital—a lot of my colleagues are looking forward to that investment in their community.

How many hospitals are going to be built in the province of Ontario in our lifetime when the government cannot get costs under control?

M^me^ France Gélinas: Well, I hope you live a long life. This way, it will give you the opportunity to maybe see more than five new hospitals.

But right now, the budget is clear: We have $50 billion—that's a huge amount of money—for the next 10 years to build hospitals. But if every hospital comes in—Mississauga at $14 billion; Ottawa at $10 billion—then do the math: $50 billion divided—that's five hospitals, if we're lucky.

Is yours going to be one of the lucky five? I don't know. There are 50 hospitals right now in the lineup for big investments and expansions. The government promises 3,000 new beds. Will yours be one of them? Will the one in Sudbury be one of the four? Who knows?

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: As I thought about how to talk about the fall economic statement and Bill 143, it was very hard to avoid thinking about the election in the United States today. It is very consequential, and what's happening in the United States has influenced much of the policy focus that we've been talking about in the last while here in Ontario. I just wanted to take a moment to remember that we do have some allies in the United States who share our values, and many are working hard at this very moment on getting out the vote today, and I want to salute them.

We are at a critical time, Speaker, because of this global situation, and yet I find that this government doesn't have a long-term plan or a broad vision for this province. I know that we're just talking about an update in the fall economic statement, but we are now, since the budget, in a full-blown tariff war with the United States. As a nation, Canada is standing up to Donald Trump and taking the pain instead of going down this slippery slope of doing another deal.

The fall economic statement was an opportunity to lay out this longer-term plan and a broader vision. I'm going to point out a bit later some ways in which we missed an opportunity to do that, but first I want to talk about some policy changes in the fall economic statement—some I will call technical corrections. But I want to acknowledge them before I talk about this government's lack of broader vision, because there are some things that I agree about.

There were more details for the reporting of beneficial ownership in the fall economic statement. Historically, that's been weak in Ontario and in Canada. It's hard to trace the ultimate owner if you want to root out conflicts of interest or people trying to hide behind this complicated "companies owning companies owning companies." I know that the government wants to make sure that we have some sort of control over foreign ownership of agricultural land, so these kinds of improved reporting requirements are going to be needed. I think that's a good idea.

The development of a standardized truck driver training curriculum, I think, is important. It's welcome as a part of reform in the training and regulation of truck drivers. I've heard complaints about that as much as I've heard complaints about the need to upgrade the Trans-Canada Highway in northern Ontario. More regulation is therefore welcome.

I just want to mention that in October 2025, the chairman of the Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario told the House of Commons that certain carriers have bought or influenced schools to fast-track them through bare-bones programs, undermined the provincial licensing standards and shift the training liability away from those carriers. So more training to make our roads safer is always a good thing.

I will likely support schedule 2 of the bill. This is an educational property tax exemption for university student housing. I definitely think that's something we need more help with. Next week, I'm going to attend a session at an open house at Queen's University to ask—you know, we're creating some extra STEM seats in universities, but I want to ask where they are going to live, because that's an ongoing issue in Kingston.

Buy Ontario: I think it's a good thing to think about. That's going to be extended to municipal procurement, fleet vehicles and how we design infrastructure projects. I will just mention one thing, which is that we are not succeeding in getting companies who use cold-rolled aluminum to use cold-rolled aluminum that's made in Canada. They buy it from the United States. They buy it from China. Hopefully there will be some measures to encourage—I don't want to force companies to do something that will increase costs by too much, but I do hope that there will be some measures to incentivize companies to diversify their supply chains in cold-rolled aluminum, because we do make it in Canada, but a lot of consumers do not buy it from a Canadian source.

I do agree with the changes in the Ontario Electricity Rebate. Starting in May of next year, the Ontario Electricity Rebate will be limited to the first 1,200 kilowatt hours consumed monthly, and farms and small businesses are going to be excluded. This is what costs $3 billion in subsidies every year.

I had an exchange with the Minister of Energy in committee at the estimates, and I think we both agree that it's not sustainable. I asked in estimates about means testing, like, "Why do wealthy people need this Ontario Electricity Rebate, this subsidy?" I know it's hard, because introducing figuring out what people's wealth or income is and then coordinating that with the utility bill can be hard. So I'm glad to see this 1,200 kilowatt-hour cap in the Ontario Electricity Rebate. I think it's a good proxy because it's simple for a means-tested rebate. I think it's good to try it.

Now, one thing that is not explained—that I can't find the explanation for yet—is how multi-unit dwellings without individual metering will be treated. That is still to come. Maybe it's 1,200 kilowatt hours multiplied by the number of units, but I'd like to see that stated very clearly.

Another thing that happened in the fall economic statement is something that seems to happen over and over again with this government. I'll just give you some numbers, Speaker. In the 2023 Ontario budget, they had a projected year of budget balance of 2024-25. In the budget the next year, the 2024 Ontario budget, this was pushed back to 2026-27. In the 2025 Ontario budget, the projected year of budget balance was pushed back again to 2027-28. And in 2026, the next budget, that projected year of balance was pushed back yet another year to 2028-29. And in the fall economic statement we just got, the year of budget balance was pushed back yet another year to 2029-30.

1620

This is a pattern I just want to point out for the people of Ontario: The government seems to have this phantom, ephemeral projection of budget balance, because they never reach it. It keeps going back further—in fact, it goes further into the future faster than we're going further into the future. We have to watch out for that.

The biggest policy change in the budget, I would say, is that the province is following the lead of the federal government in introducing this so-called productivity mega deduction. I think this is a good idea to try out, because Canada, historically, has been a laggard in what's called business expenditure on research and development. It's a statistic that's compiled by StatsCan, and it's something where Canada is a laggard compared to other countries. It's a key reason why the productivity of our workers has lagged behind those of other countries, and that's directly connected to long-term affordability, cost of living and standard of living. It's a key ingredient of productivity growth and long-term economic and social benefits.

One thing that's missing, I would say, in this government's way of looking at things is how to have an overall strategy. The funding for graduate programs in STEM is still far below what was recommended by this government's own blue-ribbon panel. I know that they've created some STEM seats, but that actually doesn't affect the funding for graduate programs.

What that means is the key people that you often need to turn business investment in equipment or buildings, to turn that into what we really want, which is innovation, competitiveness, entry into new markets, increased sales, profits and good jobs for Ontarians—often you need those key people to turn money into the final success. You have to have a strategy, and I think the strategy should include making sure that we are producing those key people in Canada to turn business expenditure in research and development into a stronger economy. This is something that is an example of how the province doesn't have a clear strategy.

I want to talk now about what a vision for Ontario could be based on, and I want to look at it from the point of view of young people, which is something I would recommend to this government. I was very fortunate to grow up in the 1960s and 1970s, a time of great prosperity in Canada. I had many opportunities. It's like saying previous generations, like my generation, we got a ladder. There were ladders all over the place. We had a lot of opportunities.

Today, young people don't seem to have a ladder. What they're being handed is the bill for everything that we've accumulated, a lot of debts that we've accumulated—financial, environmental, social. So today there's a lot of intergenerational unfairness, and it's very much related to the economic and social challenges we are facing. I believe that the government should be targeting a plan for Ontario, a vision which makes us stronger and addresses the unfairness to younger Ontarians.

What sort of things does that entail? Young people's education was disrupted by the pandemic. We should be making sure that we have a world-class education system, but this doesn't seem to be a priority of this government. The first rung of the employment ladder, that first job that gets you into the workforce, is getting hard to reach. Youth unemployment still hasn't recovered to what it was before the pandemic.

Housing costs aren't merely preventing home ownership; they're delaying independence. So 40% of young adults between the ages of 20 and 34 in Ontario were still living with at least one parent after the pandemic.

Today, the economy is facing a big transition with artificial intelligence and automation, and young people are bearing most of the risk of these technological changes.

AI and automation may ultimately boost productivity, but right now, if you are an entry-level worker lacking experience, lacking training, you're not going to benefit from AI and automation; you can't make use of it. If you're an experienced worker, an established worker in whatever place you work, you're in a really good position to make use of AI and automation to increase your own productivity first. So a lot of entry-level jobs are at risk, and that's what young people are facing.

We have record historical levels of debt-to-GDP, so young people will inherit less fiscal flexibility to solve their problems. Young people are inheriting an environ-

ment where inflation is back like it was in the 1970s. Young people are also inheriting a big public infrastructure deficit that will require an enormous catch-up investment that they will have to pay for during their working lives: everything from housing infrastructure, roads, bridges, transit, hospitals—which we just talked about in this debate—schools, electricity infrastructure and climate adaptation. All of these things young people have to pay for, but we should be thinking about them in a long-term plan and a broader vision for Ontario.

Young people are not only facing climate change, but the world they are inheriting is less safe. They are coming of age in an era when liberal democratic institutions around the world have been damaged. Autocratic governments are rising, and this long period after World War II of relative peace, international co-operation and shared prosperity seems to be coming to an end. I believe that we owe it to young people to make the sacrifices so that they can have opportunities equal to what we, the older generations, were able to have decades ago.

I want to turn now to the bill, Bill 143, and I'm just going to talk about some of the schedules. It's got a lot of schedules, so I can't talk about all of them, but I'll talk about a couple that I wanted to draw the attention of this House to.

Schedule 23, the Securities Act: I agree with this schedule. Canada has provincial and territorial securities regulators, a whole bunch of them rather than a single national securities regulator. That means that when a company is raising money, an investment firm seeking registration or maybe some sort of financial institution operating internationally, they face all sorts of different requirements from different regulators. What's been set up is a regulatory passport system for Canada, and this schedule makes it easier for Ontario to participate in this regulatory passport system.

Access to capital is very important. It's important for prosperity. I know that for technology start-ups, it often happens that the second-best technology, maybe even the second-best people win, and they win because they have better access to capital. From what I understand, there are a lot of examples of this, and Ontario cannot afford to have self-inflicted barriers to capital.

Suppose a Kingston technology company wants to raise investment from funds in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. That often happens because you need to search far and wide for capital because the expertise and understanding, the experience needed to de-risk a new venture is often geographically dispersed. You've got to go travel to find it. If you need to travel to different jurisdictions in Canada, under a fragmented system, which we would have without the passport, a company faces all sorts of separate regulatory filings, wait times and processes. This regulatory passport system is going to be really important. It's going to result in lower legal costs, less administrative work and also faster access to financing. The speed of getting financing is a critical factor in the success of businesses, especially new businesses.

I want to talk about schedule 18, the land transfer tax exemption. Now, this is just a technical exemption from the land transfer tax when the crown acquires beneficial ownership of land without an official registration of ownership transfer. But I want to discuss something related to this, which is something that the government could do right away to help build affordable housing without spending any money, and that is to grant an exemption to the land transfer tax when land is bought or sold, or when there's a lease of 50 years or longer that would ordinarily trigger the land transfer tax. If we had an exemption to that, we would have more money available for affordable housing.

1630

There's a great example in my riding in Providence Village, which is the legacy of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. They want to build affordable housing. They have to pay this land transfer tax because of the ownership structure of this land, but if they didn't have to pay—because they have to pay the land transfer tax, they're going to be much less competitive when it comes to getting funding from the CMHC and so they may not be able to build affordable housing at this site. It would be a shame. I hope the government will reconsider the idea of giving a land transfer tax exemption when a transaction occurs for the purposes of building affordable housing.

Last thing I want to talk about it schedule 7 and that gives more retroactive freedom-of-information exemptions and this time, it's to the CEO of the Ontario Financing Authority. The Ontario Financing Authority are the people that take care of Ontario's debt; the debt that we take on when we have a budget deficit. The activities of the Ontario Financing Authority are rather technical. You don't hear, in the public discourse, debates about what's the average maturity of Ontario's debt, but I think it needs more scrutiny. It would be disappointing if freedom of information were limited for the Ontario Financing Authority. I would like the minister to tell us why this is needed because I think it's important. During the pandemic, I asked myself that question—I made a video on social media—"Why don't we extend the maturity of our debt as long as we can because interest rates are so low?"

And right now, a lot of governments around the world are selling less long-term debt and financing short-term. How should we adjust our debt profile in the face of that global market condition? There should be a debate about that, and so I don't see why we should be shutting off freedom-of-information requests.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

M^me^ France Gélinas: I heard the member talk about the 1,200 kilowatt hours monthly limit on an electrical rebate cap. I wanted to share with him that I represent 33 small northern communities. In most of the communities, including where I live, there is no natural gas; propane or oil furnaces are a no-go because the winter roads are not good enough for the big trucks to come and deliver through the winter.

For many people in Nickel Belt, the only way to heat your home is to have an electrical furnace or electrical

baseboards and wood. Is it reasonable to ask an 80-year-old to get up twice a night to put wood in the stove so that she stays warm? In the winter months, we all go above the 1,200 kilowatt hours. Does that make the member change his mind?

Mr. Ted Hsu: That's a very good suggestion for an amendment to this policy. Yes, I know that there are many cases where people heat with electric baseboard heating. I know that there are cases in southern Ontario where they should probably have some incentive to convert, but I think it makes sense in certain areas, defined by climate, to change the numbers.

The government has proposed 1,200 kilowatt hours for all of Ontario. Looking at my own electricity bill, it makes a lot of sense in southern Ontario, but I do understand that in places where heating is primarily with baseboard heating or other electric means, not heat pumps, that we should perhaps have a different number for northern Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I heard my colleague from Kingston and the Islands talk about how this bill doesn't have vision, it doesn't have a view for young people and how young people have been handed the bill for our debts and intergenerational unfairness, as he called it.

What do you think this government could have done—some ideas to have made this more of a level playing field, more fairness. You talk about education being disrupted by the pandemic. That's not a priority. They're missing that first rung on the ladder of the job—youth unemployment hasn't recovered—so ways you think that could have been more inclusive and boosting the futures for young people in the province.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Well, we know that today's young people are going to be paying throughout their whole working lives. They're going to be paying more for flood protection. They're going to be paying more for wildfire suppression. They're going to be paying more for disaster recovery. They're going to be paying higher insurance costs, because insurance companies are not stupid; they know what the real risks are from climate change, and they will charge accordingly. The young people today are going to be paying more for adapting our electricity system to climate change, and they're going to be paying more for stranded infrastructure, because we can't keep burning fossil fuels at the rate we are now for the rest of the 21st century. So what I would say is that any kind of plan should recognize that we should be paying more for that now and not forcing young people to pay for all those things later on.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the member for Kingston and the Islands for his remarks on the fall economic statement this afternoon, and I want to thank the member for mentioning some of the things he supported in the bill at the beginning of his remarks.

But I was interested by his comment about record debt-to-GDP. Last year, we had a 13-year low in debt-to-GDP, and it was under the previous Liberal government in 2014-15 where we saw net debt-to-GDP of over 40%. That's actually one of the reasons why I got involved in Conservative politics: because I was concerned about young people, our future and the debt. It's very important to me.

That's why our government is attracting record investment to this province to create jobs. That's why we're expanding transit. That's why we're cutting the HST and development charges on housing. That's why we are having skilled trades funding, like Landscape Ontario in my riding, to train up young people to have the good-paying jobs of the future. This is what our government's plan is; it's what's in the fall economic statement.

So I just want to ask the member if he supports the fall economic statement.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Thank you for the remarks from my honourable colleague. What I would caution my colleague about is, sometimes there are gimmicky things that make people think that you're dealing with the cost of living when you're really not, because you have to pay back that money. I think the best example of that is the $200 per person that this government paid out just before the 2025 election. So forget about the fact that it seemed to be a bribe for votes in 2025, given the timing, but just think about where that $200 per person comes from. It comes from the same people, so you're just adding to debt and giving people a cheque without thinking, really, about what matters in the long term. If you want to deal with affordability, cost of living, productivity, economic growth in the long term, you've got to focus on productivity gains. That's what we've got to focus on going forward.

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

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you for your presentation. I feel for the Conservatives in your riding who went out there to the polls to vote and voted for a government that believed balancing the budget and fiscal responsibility was nothing more than a stretch goal.

We are at a deficit of $16.9 billion. The debt of this province is approaching half a trillion dollars, and yet this government continues to spend. When you ask the people of your riding, my riding, the ridings here, "What are we getting out of it?"—you mentioned there was that buyback of their own money, where they basically paid people back their own money, $200 a person, and said, "Here you go. Hopefully you'll remember that and thank us for it."

When you have to console Conservative voters in your riding, what do you have to tell them, considering what has happened?

1640

Mr. Ted Hsu: I don't know if I would use the words "console conservative voters in my riding." You know, I serve the conservative voters in my riding, and there are often a lot of things that we work on together.

I think what I would say is, if you're going to spend money, just make sure you're spending it on something that's going to give you a positive return in the future. When I talk to small-c conservatives who are very inter-

ested in making sure that we don't waste money, I think there's a lot of common ground here.

I just feel that some of the things that this government has decided to spend money on have not produced a good return. I think the biggest, most recent example would be the money spent on advertising. It's hard to understand what the return on investment has been for some of this government's $100-million-plus in advertising this past year.

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

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I would like to ask my colleague about schedule 7. I'm always intrigued when we're talking about freedom of information, and the retroactive freedom-of-information exemptions and the Ontario Financing Authority. We were just talking about freedom of information earlier today as it relates to KPMG, a report that we will never see thanks to the freedom-of-information laws passed by this government.

I know you're scratching your head trying to figure out why this is needed. Could you maybe offer up some ideas as to why this is so important that they had to put a schedule in this bill for it?

Mr. Ted Hsu: There are times when you need some secrecy when you're doing trades in the global market. You don't want anybody to front-run your trades, so I can see that there needs to be some secrecy when it comes to what operations you're going to do in the capital markets.

But the freedom-of-information process is so slow, I cannot believe that anybody could be front-running or taking advantage of that kind of information that comes from the FOI process, to make money off knowing what the government of Ontario is going to do in the capital markets. So it has got to be something else, then.

So I would like the finance minister to tell us what kind of information needs to be protected and why, because I don't get it, and we haven't needed to do that until now. It was working in the past.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): There is no more time for question and answers. I will move to further debate.

I recognize the member from Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour to rise today to debate Bill 143, the government's implementation of the fall economic statement. It comes at a time that's critical for so many families in Ontario who simply can't afford to live in Ontario.

People are struggling: homes not affordable, a whole generation of young people wondering if they'll afford a home, groceries through the roof. We shouldn't be surprised today when we learn that one in eight kids in Toronto go to a food bank to access food. Hospitals are overflowing and wait times are at unprecedented levels: 2,000 people a day now in Ontario experiencing hallway medicine.

Kids are crammed into crowded classrooms. In special education, students are being sent home because schools can't serve them.

OSAP cuts: I have single moms reaching out to me right now due to the freeze in OSAP, wondering how they're going to pay November rent and continue their studies.

People with disabilities are forced to live in legislated poverty. It probably doesn't surprise us today that we learned one in four food bank users in Ontario pay 100%—think about that; 100%—of their income just on rent. Electricity prices are going up.

You think of all that pain, and the government is still going to have a budget deficit of $16.9 billion. Everyday people are struggling. The rich are getting richer, but everyday people are struggling. It's not fair; it's not sustainable.

People are asking themselves, "How can they pile up so much debt and we get so little?" Speaker, I'm going to give you one answer: That is exactly why the fall economic statement should have contained a wealth tax on the super-rich in this province, so we would have the financial resources to actually make life more affordable and easier for people.

We could raise $26 billion with a one-time wealth tax of 5% on wealth over $100 million and 10% on wealth over $1 billion. Think about that, Speaker. What would $26 billion allow us to do? We could reduce the deficit, and we could actually start building homes people could afford. We could afford to invest in health care and education and reverse the cuts to OSAP. We could make life more affordable and easier for people.

I'm going to say that if you look at this government's spending pattern since 2018, almost every government category has failed to keep up with the rate of inflation. As a matter of fact, post-secondary education has actually seen real cuts, even in this year's budget.

But there is one item that has gone up by 63.2%. Do you know what that is? Interest on debt. If we asked the rich to pay their fair share, we could reverse that and actually invest in the things people need. And that starts with housing.

I have a lot of respect for the housing minister over here, but I've got to tell you, housing starts are actually going to go down again next year, according to the fall economic statement. This is exactly why we need to legalize multiplexes and mid-rises in Ontario. That's why I appreciate that the housing minister came to Guelph and toured a building site that took 15 single-family homes and turned that into 280 homes for people through a mid-rise development, multiplexes, stacked townhouses and single-family homes. Those are the kinds of developments we need in Ontario, so people can have homes they can afford in the communities they know and love.

Speaker, we now have over 62% of hospitals in the province of Ontario taking out a line of credit just to meet day-to-day operational needs—think about that—and we have a $16.9-billion budget deficit. Imagine what a $26-billion revenue from a wealth tax on the super-rich would allow us to do to reverse that and actually improve health care. We could also reverse the $6.5-billion cut to education, so we could actually, properly fund special education, so students could learn in classes that are not overcrowded.

If we had a tax on the super-rich, we could actually start investing in made-in-Ontario, low-cost, renewable energy and attract our share of the $2.3 trillion that are being deployed in the green energy transition to help lower people's energy bills, create generational jobs and make Ontario a global leader in the fastest-growing sector of the global economy.

But the government will tell you, "We don't have the money to do that." They will tell you, "We don't have the money to do that." Well, I'm going to tell you, we are a wealthy province. We have wealthy people in this province, and I appreciate their contribution to our society. But by gosh, they should pay their fair share in taxes, so everyday people can afford to live in this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Now is the time for questions and answers.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Guelph for his statement. I just wanted to better understand some of the position on taxes. I understand the income tax proposal put forward, but we at home—certainly back home in Windsor and Tecumseth—many of us rely on our vehicles to get to work, take our kids to school and attend appointments. So our government is proposing to make gas and fuel tax cuts permanent and reduce those costs on businesses transporting goods.

I'm wondering if the member opposite plans to commit to those tax breaks for those that live in rural and urban communities alike.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate the member opposite's question and love to have conversations about how to make life affordable for people.

Do you know how we can really make transportation affordable for most people in this province? Help them afford to drive an electric vehicle, which saves them, on average, $3,000 a year in fuel costs.

1650

I will compliment this government for their investments in a mining-to-manufacturing EV supply chain in Ontario. I support that. I support the government doing that. What the government has failed to do is make electric vehicles affordable for urban and rural people or to have the charging infrastructure we need so people can rely on them so they can save, on average, $3,000 a year in their fuel costs.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you to the member for Guelph for his comments on the fall economic statement. The member mentioned special education. We know that the Auditor General tabled a report in the spring saying that there are shortcomings in the special education system, that school boards are spending hundreds of millions of dollars more than what they're actually getting from this government to pay the costs of special education, that there are many children who are waiting a year or more for assessments.

Does the member feel like this fall economic statement adequately responded to the concerns that were raised by the Auditor General?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate the member's question. The short answer is no. The longer answer is, it breaks my heart meeting with so many parents and students who come into my constituency office—and I assume all of our constituency offices—who know their schools do not have the resources to adequately fund special education and as a result their children are not getting the education they deserve.

Due to lack of funding in our schools, the disruptions that happen, especially by students who aren't getting the services and supports they need, affect the quality of education for everyone. And we know that if we're going to be successful economically, we need an educated workforce, and our children deserve better.

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

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: You talked about the 2,000 people who are in corridors or in hallways. In fact, I was one of them about a year ago when I had appendicitis. I can tell you it's not pleasant to be in a corridor. In the middle of the night, you hear the guy washing the floors, you hear people coming in and screaming. If that's dignity, I don't know—if they consider that dignified, for government to accept 2,000 people a day in hallways.

I want to hear your perspective, because you talked about it real quick. I want to give you the opportunity to expand on this.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate the member's question. It's tough to walk through the hallways of our hospitals and see people in beds in hallways. I remember when I was elected in 2018, the CEO of Guelph General Hospital told me that she was done with hallway medicine—no more in this hospital. Now we're in a situation where in Guelph, like many other communities across Ontario, they've made hallway medicine a permanent feature of the hospital, where the room is literally some bedsheets covering up somebody. They have trouble sleeping, they don't have privacy, they don't have an opportunity for their families to come visit them. We're a wealthy province. People deserve better than this. That's exactly why the super-rich in this province need to pay their fair share: so everybody in this province can afford to live and receive the services they need—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you very much.

Further debate?

Hon. George Pirie: I am pleased to rise today in support of our government's fall economic statement. This update arrives at a very important time. Around the world, economies are facing uncertainty. Trade relationships have been upended. Supply chains have been disrupted. At times like these, governments face a choice: They can wait and hope conditions improve or act with confidence and work towards solutions. Ontario will continue to move forward.

This fall economic statement focuses on the future—a future that we know will be prosperous if we strengthen the assets that make Ontario unique. From my perspective and, I am sure, from many other members', few assets give

us more strength than those in northern Ontario. I may be biased, Speaker—in fact, I am biased—but I believe that northern Ontario has some of the most valuable real estate in the world. That is because the north has what the world wants and needs.

I have spent my life in northern Ontario. I have seen communities overcome challenges and grow. I have seen industries adapt and evolve. I have seen what is possible when governments, communities and businesses work together. For generations, northern Ontario has helped build this province. Our mines powered industrial growth. Our forests built communities. Our workers helped make Ontario the economic engine of Canada.

In today's world of uncertainty, we are continuing to build on our strengths. Our allies are looking for secure supply chains and reliable partners. Investors are looking for jurisdictions that can provide certainty, stability and opportunity. I say, look to Ontario and look to the north. Our resources are second to none. Our people are second to none. And together, they are helping build Ontario's future.

Speaker, when people think about Ontario's economy, they often think first about our largest urban centres. Advanced manufacturing, financial services, technology, health science—we are the leaders in all these fields, but many of these things that make them successful begin in northern Ontario: the minerals used in advanced manufacturing, the resources that support construction, the energy that helps power our economy and the workers and communities who have supplied them for generations

For too long, governments viewed northern Ontario as an afterthought. Today, Ontario has a government that values the strengths of the north—the north that is home to so many world-class mining operations. If there is a project that demonstrates the economic potential of our province, it is the Ring of Fire. For decades, people talked about the opportunity. Studies were written. Reports were commissioned. Promises were made. Our government is focused on delivering.

The Ring of Fire contains some of the most significant critical mineral deposits anywhere in North America and, I would argue, significant mineral deposits anywhere in the world, not just North America—minerals essential for batteries, for advanced manufacturing and for the technologies that will drive the global economy into the future. The world needs these resources, and our government is committed to ensuring they are developed responsibly—not only for today's economy, but for the next generation across this province.

This is not simply a northern Ontario opportunity. This is an Ontario opportunity; this is a Canadian opportunity, a nation-building opportunity and, increasingly, it is an opportunity the world is paying attention to. Across the north, we are seeing growing interest from investors. Exploration activity is increasing. Communities are preparing for growth. That means jobs for workers and contracts for local businesses. It means a chance to build domestic supply chains and strengthen Canada's economic sovereignty.

The question before us is whether we are prepared to develop these resources and seize the opportunity. Our government believes the answer is yes, because resources that remain in the ground create no jobs. They create no business opportunities. They generate no economic growth. Responsible development creates those opportunities. It supports workers, it supports communities and it helps ensure Ontario remains competitive in a rapidly changing world.

Speaker, for young people looking for exciting careers, I encourage them to look at the opportunities that we have in the north. When future generations look back at this moment, I believe they will see a turning point, a moment when Ontario chose to build and a moment when Ontario chose to unlock the potential that exists in the north. But none of this happens without strong partnerships. None of this happens without working alongside the Indigenous communities. Nothing will happen without the Indigenous communities' partnership across the north.

1700

Speaker, Indigenous communities are leaders in this economic transformation. One of the things I hear most often when I travel across northern Ontario is that communities want to be part of the opportunities being created around them. They want local jobs. They want local businesses to succeed. They want young people to stay in the north and families to build a future close to home. They want to know that the prosperity being generated is shared by the people who live there.

That is why our government is committed to ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared broadly through workers, businesses, municipalities and Indigenous communities. When communities are true partners in development, projects move forward more successfully, opportunities are shared more broadly and long-term prosperity becomes possible. The success of the north will depend on the relationships we build today—relationships built on respect, relationships built on trust and relationships built on shared opportunity.

Speaker, as trade uncertainty continues to affect markets around the world, we must do everything possible to strengthen Ontario's economic resilience. Ontario has shown that uncertainty is not a reason to stop investing; it is a reason to invest wisely. It's a reason to strengthen our economic foundations. The answer to uncertainty cannot be standing still. The answer must be growth. The answer must be investment.

Our government has consistently believed that economic growth comes from creating the conditions for investment, job creation and business expansion. Since 2018, we have not raised any taxes. Instead, we have focused on making Ontario a more competitive place to invest, create jobs and do business because prosperity is not created by asking families and businesses to carry a heavier burden; prosperity is created when people have the confidence to invest, build, hire and grow. That approach continues to guide the decisions contained in this fall economic statement.

Our government will continue investing in infrastructure, in resource development, in energy and in the services that support our communities.

In times like these, governments have a responsibility to provide confidence—confidence that Ontario remains open for business, confidence that Ontario remains competitive and confidence that we are prepared for the challenges ahead. That begins with a clear economic plan—a plan that supports investment, a plan that supports job creation.

Speaker, the reality is simple: Opportunity without infrastructure remains only potential. That is why our government is making historic investments in roads, highways and energy infrastructure. Projects like the Webequie supply road are about far more than transportation. They're about connecting communities. They're about unlocking economic opportunity. They're about ensuring future development can move forward. When communities are connected, businesses can grow. When businesses grow, jobs are created. And when jobs are created, families and communities prosper.

The same is true for the Greenstone transmission line. Reliable energy is essential for economic growth. Manufacturing depends on it. Mining depends on it. Communities depend on it. Investment follows it. Investments in roads, bridges and transmission lines may not always generate headlines, but they do build up Ontario. Without them, nothing happens.

These critical pieces of infrastructure also support sovereign supply chains. At the end of the day, this is all about sovereignty. As you know, as we pivot quickly to reduce dependence on US markets, we know that sovereignty is really what this is all about: preserving northern Ontario, preserving Ontario, preserving Canada. Every action in the fall economic statement is all about preserving our sovereignty.

Through this fall economic statement, our government is continuing to make these investments needed to keep Ontario competitive: investments in infrastructure, investments that help communities grow, investments that support workers and attract new opportunities to our province.

I'll go back to the Ring of Fire. A billion dollars has already been committed by the province to build that infrastructure around that historical opportunity in the mineral belts in the Ring of Fire, and they were joined last week with the federal government that matched that billion dollars. Both levels of government are fully committed to develop that region, because they know it means growth, it means jobs, it means opportunities for generations, investments that support workers and attract new opportunities to our province.

These investments are not simply about today's global economic uncertainty. They are so we can stand strong in the face of future uncertainty as well.

We know that we've been battered in the forestry sector by tariffs. We know that we've been battered in the automobile sector by these tariffs. So we're building a future that will be tariff-proof by these investments in infrastructure. This is what Canada must do through northern Ontario to ensure that we remain sovereign.

The decisions we make now will determine whether future projects can proceed, whether future investments come to Ontario and whether future generations are able to benefit from the opportunities being created—because economic growth is not built overnight; it is built one investment at a time, one project at a time and one community at a time. This is all about Canada. It's all about our sovereignty.

Speaker, the fall economic statement recognizes a reality that has become increasingly clear. The resources, energy, talent and opportunity needed to strengthen Ontario's economy are already here, and we know that. They've been here for generations. And now is the time to crystallize the opportunities that exist in northern Ontario.

We know we're well endowed with precious metals. We know that we're well endowed with base metal assets. But we know also that we've got the rare earths. We know we've got scandium in Kapuskasing. We've got cesium just west of Lake Abitibi. We know that we have the rare earths that Canada Nickel is going to use to build specialty steels. And we know that scandium matched with speciality steels mean that we've got the opportunity to build world-class steel—specialty steel—right here in northern Ontario. Scandium that's been discovered in Kap Minerals will be used with aluminum foam, and aluminum foam with scandium—they will put it underneath the tanks that are being used in battlefields to protect the armed forces in those tanks. That's what scandium can do: Scandium strengthens aluminum.

We know that we've got what the world wants right now for the aerospace and the space industry and the defence industry right here in northern Ontario, across the north, from Kenora to Kirkland Lake, from Winisk to Windsor. They're all here. They're in our backyard. Ontario has and northern Ontario has what the world needs right now, and the fall economic statement will realize and capitalize on that wealth.

1710

The question is whether we are prepared to invest in them. Our government believes we must. We must build infrastructure that connects and supports communities. We must develop the critical minerals that power modern industries. We must strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities—we know already that we have got phenomenal partnerships with the Indigenous communities. All across the north, we have got willing partnerships with all of the new projects across northern Ontario. The relationships are there; we have to grow on them.

And we must ensure Ontario remains one of the most competitive places in the world to do business and invest. We know capital is mobile. We know that it will go to the next best opportunity. We know that there's a global fight between the US and China for these very resources, and we know Canada has what the world wants. Now, are we prepared to seize the day?

By building a strong economy, we can generate far more opportunity, far more investment and ultimately far

more revenues than raising taxes ever could. Our government believes in growth. It does not believe in taxes. It believes in creating the table so that the investment capital can be mobilized across the world into the wealth projects in Ontario—especially in northern Ontario, because that's what the world is looking for: the rare earths, the critical minerals that are here in northern Ontario.

This is exactly what this fall economic statement aims to accomplish. This is a statement that will build confidence: confidence in our workers, confidence in our communities and confidence in the future of our province. Because if you're not growing, you're dying, and our province will never die. We're committed to growing. We're committed to the future. We're committed to our sovereignty. We know that Ontario is the source of Canada's economic power, and we'll ensure that it always will be because of the resources we have in the ground.

I am proud to support the fall economic statement and encourage all members of this House to do the same.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. I was listening to the minister talking about resources, about the minerals. But what I heard in there is "our minerals," "our resources." Can the minister elaborate on what that means?

Hon. George Pirie: When I say "our," I mean everybody, every citizen of Ontario. These are our resources, Canada's resources. That's what we've been doing, and that is what this statement is all about: to ensure that these resources are developed responsibly, ethically, morally and economically so Canada grows, Ontario grows and northern Ontario grows by capitalizing our resources that are in the ground to be developed for all of Canada.

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

MPP Susan Lahey: Ontario's forestry sector is an important economic driver that supports thousands of workers, families and communities, particularly across northern Ontario.

With ongoing trade uncertainty and increasing global competition, our government recognizes the importance of protecting this industry and supporting its long-term success. The 2026 fall economic statement highlights more than $90 million in investments to strengthen forestry competitiveness and innovation, alongside over $86 million to support forest biomass projects and improve wood utilization.

Can the minister explain how our government's investments are helping Ontario's forestry sector remain competitive, protect jobs and create new economic opportunities?

Hon. George Pirie: Thank you very much for that question. I'm very confident in the future of the forest sector. The forest sector that we have in Ontario is, by definition, the largest single asset the government owns—by definition. By definition, that forest across the northern stretches of Canada is Canada's largest asset.

I'm very confident about the future of the fibre basket in northern Ontario because it's the best fibre basket in the world. By that, I mean it's the strongest fibre basket in the world. It is the best fibre basket to create tissues. So yes, I'm very confident in the future of the forest basket here in northern Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: I listened intently to the minister—he's my neighbour—and I respect his knowledge of the mining industry, 100%, but the mining industry has a long legacy, as he knows, and not all of it good.

In my riding, we have the Cobalt refinery, which still has a licence, which the Ministry of the Environment has acknowledged there are toxins migrating off the site, and the reason no action is being taken is because the ministry doesn't think it's harming anyone. Does the minister think that's a good demonstration of the legacy that mining could leave?

Hon. George Pirie: You know my background. My dad was born in 1920, and I was behind the mill. I'm old enough to have seen and experienced every single mistake done by the mining industries across the north, but we have learned from every single one of those mistakes because now we are the best mining people in the world. Our discharge water is cleaner than the intake water. There is nothing better than that.

Take a look at the Victoria mine in Sudbury and see what they're doing. The water is so clean they have to add impurities to it because it's so clean. That's the type of legacy that we have: best in the world.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: This question is for the minister. I appreciate his remarks in this House—very capably delivered with passion and experience. He's a minister of the crown, a member of provincial Parliament elected twice, a mayor of Timmins and had a long career in the private sector.

We often hear the Premier talk about creating the conditions for success. Governments don't create jobs; governments don't build mines. Government creates the conditions for success in that regard to get the critical minerals out of the ground. What would be the most important aspects of this fall economic statement that help to further the conditions for success in mining in northern Ontario?

Hon. George Pirie: A successful future in the mining industry in northern Ontario that's demonstrated in the fall economic statement is all about one thing: attracting capital. If you can't attract capital, you can't grow. You can't build the mines. You can't build the resources. You can't get the minerals out of the ground. That's what this statement does: It reduces taxes. It invests in infrastructure to ensure that the workers, the families and the companies can get into those reaches in the province to ensure that those resources get out of the ground.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

M^me^ France Gélinas: There are lots of mines in my riding. You'll remember that Elliot Lake had uranium mines. The dump for the mine is in between my riding and his riding actually. The Canadian nuclear industry has told us that, since 2016, there are high levels of nuclear radio-

active radiation coming out of that dump. There are people in my riding who are sick and wondering if it's because they had a trapline, they camped etc.

1720

The provincial government is responsible for that mine dump, yet since 2016, they have not fixed the cover. There are three areas of that mine dump that are radiating radioactive radiation, and it has not been fixed. What do you figure that does to the confidence of the people of northern Ontario about nuclear energy?

Hon. George Pirie: Thank you very much for the question. I'm very familiar with the Elliot Lake mines that were a real triumph for the province at the time that they were built.

You talk about levels of radiation in the tailings. I would like to check your facts on that. The Canadian Nuclear Society has got the highest regulations associated with those types of emissions. I would like to check the facts of what you said.

There was a solution, and it was to move the tailings from an old deposit close to Lake Nipissing, and it was going to cover the ground in Elliot Lake. Your communities refused that solution.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you, Minister, for your remarks. My question is around respecting taxpayer dollars.

Ontario families work hard for their money, and they expect their government to manage public finances responsibly while delivering the services we all rely on. Our government remains committed to ensuring every taxpayer dollar is spent effectively, particularly during a period of heightened economic uncertainty.

Can the minister explain how the fall economic statement will help our government respect taxpayer dollars while protecting important public services in the province of Ontario?

Hon. George Pirie: Again, thank you very much for that question, Speaker. That's exactly what this fall economic statement does. It respects taxpayer dollars. We know that if you continue to abuse the taxpayer and you force them, perhaps—we will never do it anyway, but we know that the opposition parties would love to raise taxes.

We will control the system so that it will be sustainable. We know that Trump's tariffs can be overcome through the development here in northern Ontario. We'll grow the resources and we'll not only just survive; we will thrive.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Écoute, quand j'ai écouté l'énoncé économique de l'automne—puis c'est sûr, à toutes les fois que j'écoute un énoncé, je me demande ce qu'on va voir pour le nord de l'Ontario? Aussi, les dépenses provinciales doivent être évaluées en fonction des services offerts à la population et des possibilités de l'économie réelle.

Monsieur le Président, lorsque nous examinons un énoncé économique, nous devons regarder au-delà des chiffres et nous demander ce qu'il signifie réellement pour les gens que nous représentons. Je vais parler de quelques points, mais je vais élaborer beaucoup plus à mesure qu'on avance.

Que signifie cet énoncé pour un travailleur forestier qui s'inquiète de l'avenir de son usine? Que signifie cet énoncé pour les jeunes familles de Kapuskasing, de Hearst ou de Moosonee qui peuvent à peine trouver un logement abordable? Que signifie cet énoncé pour une personne âgée qui doit parcourir des centaines de kilomètres pour consulter un médecin spécialiste? Et que signifie cet énoncé pour les communautés des Premières Nations qui continuent à faire face à d'importants défis en matière d'infrastructure et de logement, ou d'aéroports sur la réserve? Comme vous le savez, monsieur le Président, ils sont la responsabilité de la province.

Je veux parler de quelques principaux chiffres budgétaires tirés du document d'information : dépense totale des programmes, c'est 247 milliards de dollars; un déficit prévu pour 2026-2027 de 16,9 milliards de dollars, soit une augmentation de 3,1 milliards de dollars par rapport au budget du printemps; un taux de chômage prévu de 7,2 %; le retour prévu à l'équilibre budgétaire a été repoussé à 2029-2030, puis on sait qu'ils l'ont repoussé. Ce n'est pas la première fois qu'ils le repoussent.

Ça, c'est des chiffres énormes. Parce que là, comme c'est là, la manière qu'on s'en va avec ce gouvernement-là, c'est qu'on va effacer les 500 milliards de dollars en province. C'est la plus grande dette qu'on a jamais vue en Ontario.

Notre reconnaissance que l'Ontario traverse une période d'incertitude économique—mais l'énoncé économique doit faire plus que présenter des prévisions financières. Il doit démontrer comment le gouvernement attend protéger les emplois, améliorer les services essentiels et répondre aux pressions financières auxquelles font face les familles ontariennes.

Monsieur le Président, on ne peut pas mettre de côté ce que le gouvernement a fait—reculons un peu dernièrement. Toutes les questions qu'on peut se poser avec l'abus de l'argent des contribuables—on vient encore d'apprendre pour le RAFEO. Comme c'est là, on apprend qu'il y a, quoi, près de 1 milliard de dollars qui était donné à trois collèges privés. On a vu que c'est un gouvernement qui se dit tellement responsable des payeurs de taxes qu'ils se sont permis d'acheter un jet privé pour le premier ministre dans un ministère des Richesses naturelles qui n'a même pas rapport avec ça, puis qu'on a eu les feux qu'on a vu tout l'été. Ils nous disent que, « Oh, non, » une fois qu'ils se sont fait pogner les culottes à terre, si je peux user le terme, « on leur a retourné puis ça nous a coûté près de 200 000 piastres. »

Ça, c'est ce qu'ils nous disent, Monsieur le Président. Mais on est certain que ça a coûté beaucoup plus cher que ça.

Ils sont tellement responsables qu'ils ont fait certain que l'accès à l'information est rendu beaucoup plus difficile pour les Ontariens, beaucoup plus difficile pour des députés comme nous. Mais ils n'ont rien à cacher; il n'y a rien à voir là.

On a vu dans le ministère du Travail qu'ils ont donné 10 millions de dollars à un centre de danseuses, un salon de danseuses. Puis on se dit responsable des fonds des

contribuables. On se dit qu'on fait un bon travail. On a le Cabinet le plus gros qui a jamais existé. On a des députés qui se permettent de prendre des chambres de motel, faire la grosse vie sur le dos des contribuables. Mais on est responsable financièrement.

Voyons donc, il n'y a rien à voir là. Je peux vous dire que ce n'est pas si rose que ça. C'est bien beau dire que vous êtes responsables, on fait la bonne chose pour la province—tout ce que je viens de décrire, ce n'est pas la bonne chose.

On a vu un gouvernement au Québec qui vient de se faire élire. Ils ont fait un petit Cabinet. Il y a des députés qui ont deux à trois portfolios. Il y a-tu du mal avec ça quand on est dans un temps difficile? C'est bon dire que oui, on a les États-Unis. Oui, Donald Trump, c'est problématique. It faut le reconnaître que c'est problématique, en passant. Je le reconnais que c'est problématique. Mais tu ne peux pas mettre toute la faute sur le dos.

Ce que je viens de nommer, c'est de l'abus du pouvoir d'un gouvernement qui est majoritaire puis pense qu'il est blindé puis peut faire ce qu'il veut. Puis il se faire pogner, puis après ça il dit qu'on est responsable—je m'excuse, ce n'est pas de la responsabilité, ça. C'est de l'abus du pouvoir puis c'est géré avec l'argent des contribuables.

Puis ils disent : « Oh non, on ne lève pas les taxes des autres. Mais non, on ne mettra pas de taxes supplémentaires sur les Ontariens. » Eh non, ils se virent de bord, puis ils prennent les responsabilités de la province puis ils les donnent au municipal. Puis les municipalités qui ont de la difficulté à y arriver, à mettre les deux bouts ensemble, les autres, qu'est-ce qu'ils font? Lever les taxes des contribuables.

1730

Monsieur le Président, chaque personne, on est des contribuables. On paye des taxes; que ça soit provincial, que ça soit municipal ou que ça soit fédéral, c'est la même personne. La province dit : « On ne lève pas les taxes. » Mais on prend nos responsabilités de la province, puis on les donne aux municipalités. L'affaire que je ne comprends pas, monsieur le Président, c'est que c'est plein d'anciens maires de l'autre bord de la Chambre. Quand ils étaient maires, ils disaient qu'il faut que la province reprenne leurs responsabilités provinciales. C'est la bonne chose à dire, absolument. C'est ça qui devrait arriver. Ce qui appartient à la province devrait rester à la province. Mais maintenant qu'ils sont rendus des ministres ou maintenant qu'ils sont rendus des assistants parlementaires et maintenant qu'ils sont au gouvernement, on n'en parle plus.

Mais c'est encore un problème pour les municipalités. On a vu Fauquier, une petite municipalité qui a de la misère et qui a été quasiment en banqueroute, puis M. le ministre a fait sa job. Il les a sortis de la misère—puis ce n'est pas sorti encore de la misère. Mais il y en a d'autres municipalités qui en arrachent aussi, puis les services continuent à être coupés, puis continuent à être coupés, puis les taxes continuent à monter. Parce qu'elles sont obligées de payer pour la police, obligées de payer pour les ambulances, obligées de payer pour le « DSSAB », sont obligées de payer—toutes des responsabilités qui appartiennent à la province.

Mais qu'on dit, nous autres, la province : « Bien non, bien non, on gère bien la province. » On est capable de faire des scandales financiers, puis on est capable—on ne lèvera pas les taxes. Des centaines, des millions, des milliards de dollars qui ont été contribués, qui ont été mis, qui ont été pris, puis qui se sont fait pogner, puis qu'encore c'est une controverse. Puis, ils disent qu'ils gèrent bien? Mais je m'excuse, on n'a pas la même définition. On n'a pas la même définition de gérer l'argent des contribuables, parce que c'est une honte de traiter les contribuables de la façon que vous le faites.

Puis là on met ça sur les États-Unis ou on met ça sur l'ancien gouvernement. Ça fait quoi? Vous êtes à votre troisième mandat; vous êtes majoritaires. Puis, c'est scandale après scandale : la ceinture de verdure; on l'a vu dans le ministère du Travail; là on le voit dans le RAFEO, et ça continue. Puis, on a 2 000 personnes qui sont dans les corridors pour se faire soigner. Puis, vous dites que ça va bien en Ontario, qu'il n'y a rien à voir ici. Ils ont fait un travail exemplaire; il n'y a rien à voir. « Non, non, on gère. On ne montera pas vos taxes. »

Moi, j'ai une de mes soeurs qui a perdu un rein à cause qu'elle n'a pas été capable d'avoir un appointement. Elle a demandé pour son appointement; c'était repoussé. Elle a demandé un spécialiste; c'était repoussé. Quand c'était le temps de son opération, ils étaient après de l'opérer et ils ont été obligés de lui retirer un rein à cause qu'il n'y avait pas assez de temps. Elle n'a pas été capable d'avoir un appointement au temps nécessaire. Puis on lui a dit : « Écoute, je n'ai pas été capable de sauver ton rein. Ça a trop pris de temps avant de te faire opérer. » Est-ce normal, ça, en Ontario?

Quand je dis, là, j'ai été une personne qui était dans le corridor, là. Je l'ai vécu, ça. Je ne sais pas si vous autres vous l'avez vécu, mais moi je l'ai vécu. J'ai pogné une appendicite à Toronto; je me suis ramassé dans un lit dans un corridor. J'ai demandé à l'infirmière de prendre une photo, parce que je lui ai dit : « Je suis un député et puis je veux faire certain que Doug Ford va le savoir. » Non, mais, dans quelle province? On est la province la plus riche.

Puis on a des étudiants qui vont faire—et en passant, la jeunesse et les étudiants sont notre plus grande richesse. Ce n'est pas l'or. Ce qu'on entend, quand le ministre parlait, le plus grand c'est les minéraux—ce n'est pas les minéraux. C'est notre prochaine génération qui est la plus importante, parce que notre prochaine génération, c'est eux autres qui vont s'occuper de nous; qui vont s'occuper de notre province; qui vont faire certains que notre province ait du succès, qu'elle soit profitable et puis qu'elle va être capable de soutenir—la province qu'on veut. Mais ce n'est pas en coupant dans leurs services ou en coupant dans leurs prêts qu'on va faire ça, monsieur le Président.

Je suis encore parti, là. J'aurais dû continuer à lire mes notes-là, mais c'est plus fort que moi. Quand je m'embarque là-dedans, je pars et puis j'oublie de suivre mes notes.

Mais pour le nord de l'Ontario, ces questions sont particulièrement urgentes. Un des exemples les plus frappants, c'est celui de l'industrie forestière. Moi, je viens de l'industrie forestière, un peu comme le ministre vient des mines. Mais moi, je viens de l'industrie forestière, qui constitue le fondement économique de nombreuses communautés du nord de l'Ontario.

On ne le réalise pas, mais l'industrie forestière engage près de 154 000 emplois à travers la province. C'est 3 milliards de dollars par année de revenu en taxes. L'industrie paye à peu près de 110 millions de dollars à 270 millions de dollars en « crown dues », comme ils s'appellent. Ce sont des frais à la province. Le monde ne sait peut-être pas ça, mais l'industrie forestière gère 28 millions d'hectares. Il faut reconnaître que l'industrie forestière que nous avons est la meilleure au monde. Je suis convaincu que nous avons la meilleure industrie au monde. Ils font un travail exemplaire et il faut le reconnaître.

Mais aussi, notre industrie est surtaxée. Comme c'est là, vous ne le savez peut-être pas, mais 3,5 milliards de dollars, ou bien donc 47 % de tous les produits de l'Ontario qui sont exportés sont sujets à des mesures de tarifs, et de longue durée, en plus—des disputes de longue durée sur notre industrie forestière en Ontario. C'est le secteur qui est le plus impacté par tous les tarifs—plus que les mines, plus que l'aluminium, le fer ou l'automobile. C'est le secteur qui est le plus surtaxé et le plus impacté avec les choses.

Mais, c'est drôle, elle n'est pas supportée pareillement comme l'industrie des mines. C'est dur. On l'entend de temps en temps; ils vont mentionner l'industrie forestière dans leurs discours. Mais ce qu'on entend, c'est l'automobile, les mines, les produits des minéraux critiques et le fer. L'industrie forestière, des fois, rentre dans le portrait. Pourtant, on parle de—j'ai dit quoi—150 000 jobs. Puis ça, très souvent, ce sont des industries qui sont dans des communautés où c'est la seule industrie qu'il y a.

Écoute, je ne suis pas pour dire qu'ils n'ont rien fait, là; ce serait injuste de ma part. Ce serait, je pense, irresponsable de ma part de ne pas reconnaître qu'ils ont fait des choses. Dans l'énoncé économique, ils en ont mentionné, mais c'était du réchauffé—des annonces qui avaient déjà été faites. Moi, je cherchais ce qu'ils vont faire à partir de là, puis ce qu'ils vont faire pour qu'on puisse avancer l'industrie forestière. Je sais que l'industrie forestière demande—ils disent : « Écoute, c'est beau ce que vous faites. On reconnaît ce qui est fait. » Nous aussi, on reconnaît ce qu'ils font, mais ça en prend plus parce que, comme c'est là, on a une industrie qui souffre pareil. On a une industrie qui a besoin de plus que ce qui se passe.

Écoute, on a vu le gouvernement faire la biomasse, ce qui était la bonne direction où aller. J'étais un supporteur de la biomasse. Ça aurait dû être fait de belle lurette; ça aurait dû être fait il y a bien longtemps. On voit qu'il va y avoir de l'énergie qui va sortir de là, mais il y a aussi de la chaleur pour réduire les coûts de l'usine qui va avoir une certaine biomasse. Je sais qu'il y a un nouveau projet de loi qui s'en vient, mais on traversera ce projet de loi-là mais qu'on en parle, parce qu'ils veulent changer la définition de la biomasse.

Mais ce qui manque dans ce portrait-là, c'est le « power purchase agreement », d'être capable de vendre le surplus d'électricité que ces usines-là vont faire sur notre réseau d'électricité. Puis ça, parle à n'importe qui qui connaît l'industrie forestière. Il va dire que si tu veux avoir une nouvelle usine de pulpe—puis on en a besoin, parce qu'on a perdu tellement de papier puis de pulpe—ça prend un « power purchase agreement ». Si tu veux avoir un investisseur, il va te le demander : « Ça nous prend ça pour être capable de survivre, pour être capable de revendre. » Parce que ça te donne encore plus un moyen de générer de l'argent, puis on sait combien ça coûte, bâtir une nouvelle usine de pulpe.

On a une fibre—puis M. le ministre l'a dit dans son discours avant moi, que c'est une des meilleures fibres qu'on a au monde, puis il a absolument raison. Ce qui fait qu'on a la chance de faire de nouveaux produits. Tu sais, qu'on aille dans les miettes—on a de la fibre de bois. Dans les écrans de télévision qu'on prend, il y en a, de la fibre de bois. Fait qu'il y a toute sorte de nouveaux produits qui sortent—du biodiesel. Écoute, il y a plein de choses qu'on peut faire maintenant, et il faut investir dedans et il faut développer.

Mais, ceci dit, j'entendais l'industrie—comme l'industrie leur parle, ils me parlent à moi parce qu'ils savent que je viens de l'industrie et ils savent qu'on a tous les mêmes intérêts quand ça vient à ça.

1740

Mais la mondialisation, tiens, ils disent ici—je vais le lire en anglais, ça va aller un petit peu plus vite, ça va m'aider : « Over $5 billion of private capital investment since 2018 » qui a été investi. Donc 5 milliards de dollars qui ont été investis dans l'industrie—les investissements privés qui étaient investis depuis 2018 pour avancer la robotique, aussi les avancées des « aerial vehicles », des véhicules qui volent, puis aussi du « bioproduct », des produits de bio.

Fait que, c'est sûr que l'industrie demande certaines choses. Puis ce qu'ils demandent aussi, c'est qu'on a besoin de défendre notre chose. Ça fait trop longtemps que notre industrie forestière est sous la pression des États-Unis, comme le « softwood lumber dispute » —la dispute sur le bois d'oeuvre ne peut pas être restée derrière.

On doit faire certain que—même s'ils négocient avec le Canada—le bois d'oeuvre ne soit pas oublié dans le débat. Parce que ça va être trop facile de vouloir régler l'automobile et que l'industrie forestière, encore, se ramasse—que le problème des tarifs ou le problème des surtaxes ne soit pas réglé. Il faut le régler une fois pour toutes pour que l'industrie soit stabilisée et qu'on puisse avancer avec—ce qui appartient au Canada appartient au Canada, puis on sait qu'il y a de l'abus là-dedans. Il ne faut pas oublier l'industrie forestière.

Les surcharges sur la forêt, c'est encore « a funding committed scale in line with those of the steel ». Fait que, ils demandent au gouvernement : « On veut que l'industrie forestière ait le même support que l'industrie de l'acier. »

Parce qu'on sait qu'ils n'ont pas eu le même support financier. Il faut le reconnaître. Ils l'ont eu, mais pas au même niveau. Puis pourtant, ils sont plus taxés que les autres industries. Mais on est l'enfant pauvre. L'industrie forestière, c'est l'enfant pauvre.

Mais ce qu'on oublie, c'est que l'industrie forestière—puis c'est ça qu'ils veulent mentionner, qu'ils vont aller plus loin un peu, qu'ils vont en parler, puis je vais le mentionner—mais c'est de demander le même support que les autres industries ont eu, qu'on devrait l'avoir. Parce qu'il y a tellement d'investissements qu'on pourrait faire, que ça soit de la biomasse ou que ça soit de l'énergie qu'on pourrait faire, mais aussi j'ai parlé du « biofuel » et tout le reste.

« Fully restored »—ils disent de réinstaurer le fonds, puis d'indexer—parce que je pense que depuis 2018, ça n'a jamais été changé—la construction des chemins. Parce que l'industrie forestière—si vous ne le saviez pas, c'est eux autres qui construisent les chemins pour accéder à leurs produits.

Tabarnouche, j'ai manqué le temps.

Fait que, monsieur le Président, je vais répondre aux questions.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Question and answers?

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: Merci à mon collègue le député de Mushkegowuk–James Bay, pour avoir discuté de plein de points dans son débat.

Je dois dire qu'on comprend très bien que ce sont des temps difficiles. Vous avez parlé de croissance du déficit, mais j'imagine que vous comprenez très bien que, justement, il y a beaucoup de secteurs dans l'économie ontarienne qu'on doit aider.

Vous avez parlé aussi des investissements dans le côté municipal. Moi, j'étais maire avant d'être député, puis je peux vous dire que j'aurais bien aimé ça travailler avec le gouvernement présent, parce qu'on voit des investissements records avec les municipalités. Puis dans certains cas, si les municipalités ne veulent pas embarquer avec la province parce qu'on a offert des rabais pour les frais de développement—donc je pense qu'il y a plein, plein d'initiatives pour les municipalités d'embarquer avec nous là-dedans. Puis je pense qu'il y a des investissements records—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member for Mushkegowuk–James Bay

M. Guy Bourgouin: Il n'y a pas de problème d'investir—il n'y a pas de problème avec ça. C'est tout le reste qui est en arrière dont tu n'as pas voulu parler et dont j'ai parlé dans mon discours puis, tu sais, des millions de dollars qui ont été donnés aux personnes qui sont proches du premier ministre. On n'a rien qu'à parler des « MZO ». Écoute, on peut en parler.

Mais pour les municipalités, vu que ta question est plus sur les municipalités—c'est drôle, les associations demandent que vous repreniez l'OPP, que vous repreniez l'ambulance, que vous repreniez toutes ces surcharges-là, parce que s'ils reprennent ça, tout d'un coup, on va avoir de l'argent pour faire beaucoup plus d'infrastructure et bâtir plus de logements. Il y a une pénurie de logements en Ontario—que vous avez réduit, en passant. On a le bois d'oeuvre pour construire. On est capable de tout faire. L'industrie vous demande de le faire. Vous avez échappé le bâton; vous avez échappé la balle, et, encore, c'est l'industrie qui paye, mais les municipalités—

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

MPP Jamie West: Merci beaucoup, monsieur le Président, et merci aussi à mon collègue de Mushkegowuk–Baie James pour son discours.

L'année passée, le premier ministre a acheté un avion privé qui a coûté 30 millions de dollars, mais son avion ne peut pas atterrir dans un aéroport du Nord. Il a retourné l'avion, mais il a oublié les coûts aux « taxpayers », qui sont de 200 000 $.

Meanwhile, dans chaque ville de l'Ontario, il y a des personnes sans abri, et le coût des loyers a toujours augmenté.

Pour mon collègue, pourquoi est-ce que le gouvernement n'a pas les bonnes priorités?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Pourquoi ils n'ont pas les bonnes priorités? Parce qu'ils écoutent seulement les gens qui sont près d'eux. Parce qu'ils ont oublié, honnêtement, qui ils représentent.

En tout cas—je sais qu'il y a du bon monde dans tous les partis et de tous les deux côtés, mais je pense que vous êtes rendus au point que vous pensez que vous êtes tellement blindés que vous pouvez faire ce que vous voulez avec aucune condition ou conséquence.

Des millions de dollars, des milliards de dollars de dépensés, que ce soit l'avion que vous avez acheté, le jet privé—quand on était dans une crise de feux de forêt? Et après ça, vous virez de bord et vous dites : « Oh, OK. On va le retourner. On pensait que c'était correct. » Depuis quand est-ce que c'est correct quand on est dans une crise économique? Depuis quand est-ce que c'est correct de faire de l'abus de l'argent des contribuables, d'avoir le plus gros Cabinet—

Le Vice-Président (M. Ric Bresee): Réponse, s'il vous plaît.

M. Guy Bourgouin: —le plus gros Cabinet, et on pense qu'on ne peut pas réduire ça pour sauver de l'argent? Je ne sais pas, moi; vous ne vivez pas sur la même planète que moi.

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

M^me^ Lucille Collard: Je n'étais pas pour poser une question, mais je suis trop motivée de continuer en français, et je veux te donner une autre opportunité peut-être de compléter ce que tu n'as pas eu la chance de compléter.

On sait que l'énoncé économique et le budget du gouvernement sont une expression des priorités du gouvernement. Je pense qu'on est d'accord de ce côté-ci de la Chambre qu'on n'est pas tout à fait d'accord avec les priorités que le gouvernement a prises et qu'on aimerait voir des investissements importants dans des secteurs qui ont vraiment un impact dans nos communautés.

Pour ta communauté de Mushkegowuk–Baie James, monsieur Guy, ça veut dire quoi, ce manque d'investissement-là dans les secteurs qui sont importants?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ça représente quoi? Ça veut dire des routes fermées, encore. Ça veut dire des gens qui vont avoir peur de prendre la route. Ça veut dire des gens qui sont obligés de se déplacer encore plus loin, monsieur le Président, pour aller voir des médecins et des spécialistes. On veut un « CT scan » à Kap. On a demandé pour un « CT scan » parce que le monde est obligé d'attendre six mois, des fois jusqu'à deux ans pour avoir un « CT scan ».

Imagine-toi si tu as un cancer et que tu es obligé d'attendre six mois ou un an ou deux ans pour un « CT scan ». C'est quoi cette affaire-là? On mérite mieux. On n'est pas l'enfant pauvre. Bien, on part—les ressources vont sortir du Nord, puis on est l'enfant pauvre de la province.

Explique-moi comment la priorité du gouvernement peut être tellement à l'envers qu'ils peuvent se permettre des dépenses frauduleuses et qu'ils se permettent—

Le Vice-Président (M. Ric Bresee): Réponse, s'il vous plaît.

M. Guy Bourgouin: —sur le payeur de taxes pour être capable de le faire. C'est inacceptable. C'est un manque de jugement de la province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Questions?

L'hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Merci, monsieur le Président, et je remercie le député de l'opposition pour ses remarques. Je parle français un peu, and so, en anglais, s'il vous plaît.

The member's party often thinks of itself as a party of the working person. I'm not sure that's the case anymore. But given that this fall economic statement, this proposed bill, builds on our $30 billion in tariff relief and support to protect jobs and workers by helping businesses, our $1 billion in working capital loans to eligible businesses to protect Ontario, to protect our workers—does the member, based on that, plan to support this fall economic statement, building on the support and protection for workers and small businesses in particular?

1750

M. Guy Bourgouin: Il y a 27 000 emplois perdus dans la province, monsieur le Ministre. Si ce n'est pas protéger des emplois, qu'avez-vous fait avec ces emplois-là? Vous allez les regarder partir? Comme vous avez fait, de redire : « Oh, that ship has sailed. »

Some 27,000 jobs lost in Ontario, and you're saying you're doing a great job? Trust me, I come from labour. Labour did not abandon us. Just because you may have a couple, doesn't mean you have them all.

OFL supports us. CLC supports us. And how many do you represent? You know the numbers. But they do support us; they don't support you.

Remember that: 27,000 jobs, so no lesson taken from you, Minister, on job losses that you didn't protect.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I will remind the members to address the Speaker.

I recognize the member from Nickel Belt.

M^me^ France Gélinas: Le membre a parlé un peu de ce qui se passe avec l'accès aux soins de santé dans le nord de l'Ontario et le fait que ça fait des années que l'hôpital de Hearst demande un tomodensitomètre—c'est « CT scan » en français. Les femmes qui sont enceintes ne peuvent plus accoucher dans le nord de l'Ontario. Elles doivent voyager 300 kilomètres pour se rendre à Timmins ou pour se rendre ailleurs. C'est très, très difficile pour les familles.

Est-ce que vous avez vu quelque chose dans la déclaration économique qui a été faite et dans le projet de loi 143 qui va améliorer l'accès aux services de santé pour les gens du nord de l'Ontario que vous représentez?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Mushkegowuk–James Bay.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, Monsieur le Président. I'll try to go through you.

C'est sûr que, quand tu parles des femmes enceintes qui sont obligées de se déplacer, c'est inacceptable, surtout avec les conditions des routes qu'on a.

Mais je vais vous donner un autre exemple de ce qui se passe dans le Nord. Les communautés comme Kapuskasing, c'est une communauté accueillante pour les Premières Nations qui se font évacuer. Ils sont bienvenus là; ce n'est pas ça qui est le problème. Mais on a, peut-être, des fois 150, des fois 200 nouveaux personnes qui rentrent dans la communauté, mais aucun argent supplémentaire pour l'hôpital de Kapuskasing pour être capable de desservir cette population-là. Ça fait que, là, on est déjà à 100 % de capacité. On ramène plus de personnes, puis ils n'ont pas le droit de refus—puis c'est avec raison qu'ils n'ont pas le droit de refus. Mais la province devrait être capable, quand on fait ces situations-là, de donner un surplus pour être capable de desservir la population qui vient, puis être capable de donner des services qu'ils méritent—puis ils méritent ces services-là. Le reste de la population les mérite. Ce n'est pas en sous-finançant les hôpitaux qu'on va donner cet argent-là ou qu'on va donner un service aux Premières Nations—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): This brings us to the end of the questions and answers. There is time to start the next debate.

Further debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Good evening, everyone. We're almost there.

Speaker, it's an honour to rise in this House on behalf of my beautiful constituents of Scarborough–Guildwood to speak to Bill 143, Plan to Protect Ontario Act.

After eight years of this government, the 16 million people who call Ontario home are paying more and getting less for their hard-earned tax dollars.

Listen to this, Speaker: More than 95,000 people left Ontario in just one year in search of a better life, and over 41,000 young people also left Ontario for a better life, because they cannot afford to live in this province called Ontario. People should be able to afford to stay here, to work and build their futures right here in Ontario. This government has given no reason to believe they can.

Speaker, this budget is all about making the rich richer—when I review this budget—while the hard-working people of Ontario continue to fall further and further behind.

Most of what is behind this fall economic statement has already been announced. For people who are already

struggling, I've got to tell them, unfortunately, there is nothing in this budget to help families all across Ontario that are experiencing hardship with this affordability crisis. This government always finds money for their vanity or legacy projects—whatever you want to call them—that do nothing to relieve the pressures that the families of Ontario are experiencing.

Let's look at this government's priorities because I'm trying to build the case here:

—a $28.9-million private jet was returned, but nearly $200,000 in associated costs remained;

—at Ontario Place, a luxury spa costing taxpayers $2.2 billion;

—the new science centre, when the Auditor General reviewed it, was estimated at nearly $700 million; today, the contract alone is over $1 billion;

—a parking garage at Ontario Place with a $198-million price tag;

—a Lake Ontario billboard—$25,000 to print and put up a sign—while families continuously struggle to put food on the table, to pay their rent or mortgage or to buy groceries so their kids don't go to sleep hungry; better yet, seniors on a fixed income have to choose between paying their rent and buying their medications;

—a record spending of $117 million in one year for the government to advertise itself.

Who does that when people in Ontario have been suffering under this government for eight years?

Let's go to the transportation projects. I'm continuing to make the case of the mismanagement of these files and the waste of monies that are going into the wrong priorities. We want investment in transportation, but my gosh, all the transportation projects are delayed with overrun budgets. The Scarborough subway extension went from $5.5 billion to now $10 billion. The Ontario Line at $10.9 billion tripled; it's now $34 billion. The Hazel McCallion Line is over $400 million. The Finch West LRT closed at over $300 million. The Eglinton Crosstown LRT closed at over $1 billion.

Another fantasy project that this government is working on is building a tunnel under Highway 401. Taxpayers are going to be on the hook for that, but I hope that never comes to fruition. The feasibility study alone is $9.1 million to hear the same case outcome: that it's dangerous to build a tunnel under Highway 401.

My question here to the government: Who is benefiting from all this? Who is really benefiting? Because if you look at the people in Scarborough that I serve in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood, they're not benefiting from all of this.

All these projects that I've spoken about that overrun budgets—the people of Ontario are not seeing those in this fall economic statement. We have shortchanged our health care system. We have shortchanged our education system. We continue to not work for the people of Ontario that elected us to this House to represent them.

Speaker, do you know that mental illnesses—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but the time is now 6 o'clock. It is time for private members' public business.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt
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Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Allsopp, Tyler (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	
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Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du troisième parti
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
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Cerjanec, Rob (LIB)	Ajax	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Ciriello, Monica (PC)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Clancy, Aislinn (GRN)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire du troisième parti
Cooper, Hon. / L'hon. Michelle (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associée délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	Oakville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement
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Darouze, George (PC)	Carleton	
Denault, Billy (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence
Fairclough, Lee (LIB)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Firin, Mohamed (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Leader, Third Party / Chef du troisième parti
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)	Milton	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Lahey, Susan (PC)	York—Simcoe	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
McKenney, Catherine (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
Racinsky, Joseph (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	
Rae, Hon. / L'hon. Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Hon. / L'hon. Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (IND)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaban, Fatima (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Artificial Intelligence Adoption / Ministre associé de l'Adoption de l'intelligence artificielle
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	