No. 168

Nº 168

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 4 May 2016

Mercredi 4 mai 2016

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

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Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 4 May 2016

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 4 mai 2016

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Orders of the day.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, government notice of motion number 65.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I don't believe we have a quorum, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A quorum count, please.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have a quorum.

The government House leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy; and

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy be authorized to meet at its regularly scheduled times on Monday, May 16, 2016, and Tuesday, May 17, 2016, for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 186:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario Parliamentary Channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 1 p.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2016; and

—That witnesses be scheduled to appear before the committee on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—That each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2016; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on Thursday, May 19, 2016; and

That the committee be authorized to meet at its regularly scheduled times on Monday, May 30, 2016, and Tuesday, May 31, 2016, for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill;

On Tuesday, May 31, 2016, at 4 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Wednesday, June 1, 2016. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, two hours of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The votes on second and third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that pursuant—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? I heard a no.

"I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding"—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispensed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, thank you for acknowledging me to speak on this motion as it relates to Bill 186. I've had the opportunity to speak on this important bill. This is a necessary piece of legislation that will help close the retirement savings gap for the two thirds of Ontario employees who do not have a workplace pension plan.

This gap is even worse for younger people. Three quarters of Ontario workers aged 25 to 34 do not have a workplace pension plan. Speaker, that's something I can speak to, not that I'm not in that language, but I started my working life, obviously, in that age group and I've never had a workplace pension plan. I know that for a lot of people within my circle of friends this is a very active conversation as to the retirement income security of individuals who work extremely hard, and we know that CPP is not sufficient.

That's why our government made the Ontario Retirement Pension plan, or ORPP, one of the pillars of our economic plan. We believe that every worker deserves to have a secure retirement. Bill 186 enshrines the key plan design details of the ORPP in legislation. This bill also provides employers and employees with the time and the clarity they need to prepare for the launch of the ORPP, with enrolment starting in January 2017, and the collection of contributions phased in starting January 1, 2018.

Passing this bill will bring us one step closer to our government's goal that all Ontario workers are either enrolled in the ORPP or in a comparable workplace pension plan by 2020.

Speaker, as I'm sure you are aware, the government has carried out extensive consultations on the ORPP. In 2014, the Associate Minister of Finance led a province-wide consultation to provide an overview of the government's plan to enhance retirement security. This included 13 consultations; visits to over 10 communities; engaging with businesses, associations, non-profit organizations, labour, individuals and families; and, in addition, speaking with hundreds of Ontarians.

In 2015, the Associate Minister of Finance led a second province-wide consultation to discuss the plan. That particular consultation included 15 consultations; visits to over 12 communities, including northern, rural and urban communities; engaging with businesses, associations, the self-employed, young professionals, social advocates, non-profit organizations, labour, individuals and families; and speaking with hundreds of Ontarians.

Speaker, I can personally attest, because I know that the minister came to my community in Ottawa on several occasions holding these meetings and consultations, and they were very well attended, with diverse perspectives being presented from my community of Ottawa Centre, of course, and the city of Ottawa that I live in.

Speaker, the ministry has also received over 1,000 written submissions to the ORPP consultation.

This is the third piece of legislation related to the ORPP that our government has introduced. The first was Bill 56, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act, which went through the Standing Committee on Social Policy, where we heard from 40 deputants.

The second bill, Bill 91, the Building Ontario Up Act, which established the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Administration Corp., went through the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and heard from over 50 deputants.

Now, there's this particular bill, Bill 186, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act, which this House has debated for over seven hours already.

Speaker, it's important that we move forward with Bill 186 and bring it before the committee. In the last Parliament, this Legislature was ground to a halt and was unable to move forward. Only 39% of government bills were passed in the last minority government, unfortunately, compared to more than three quarters of bills that were passed going back to 1990.

0910

The voters of Ontario sent a clear message in 2014, no ifs and buts about it: They want our government to provide Ontario workers with a predictable stream of income paid for life in retirement. We cannot afford to have the opposition recklessly hold up this important piece of legislation with procedural trickery and needless filibustering. We need to move this legislation forward in a timely manner so that employers can prepare for the launch of the ORPP.

It is time that we end second reading and refer the bill to committee. In committee, of course, stakeholders will present their views. We will be able to hear directly from the public on their thoughts on this bill, as we've been doing through the consultation process and, of course, the consultation in committee on the last two bills as well. Also, as we all know, committee members will have an opportunity to move amendments to the bill as well.

At the same time, Speaker, this House can move to substantive debate on other very important matters. There are a number of important pieces of legislation that have already been introduced, which the government would like to debate in the House and move through the legislative process; for example, Bill 119, which is the Health Information Protection Act; Bill 135, which is the Energy Statute Law Amendment Act; Bill 156, which is the Alternative Financial Services Statute Law Amendment Act; and, very important, Bill 172, which is the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act.

Speaker, we would like to spend time debating some of the other important pieces of legislation currently before the House; we cannot wait until Bill 186 is dealt with. That is why I have moved this motion. I urge all members to support this motion. Bill 186 is a very important piece of legislation. It succeeds two other pieces of legislation and completes the work of establishing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, which is going to be a

cornerstone ensuring that we have retirement income security for Ontarians, especially young Ontarians, so that for the hard work they do they are able to save money and will be able to live with safety and security in their retirement. Of course, Speaker, that is a huge boon to our economy as well, because when people retire and have a predictable income, that money is invested back in our local economy, which is also very important.

Speaker, I end my debate now and urge all members to support this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: This government is yet again shutting down debate in the Legislature to, I would say, ram something through. It's nearly getting to the point where I can start each of my speeches this way. It appears that the ORPP 'scheme-boat' is moving full speed ahead. A lot of people are really wondering why the Ontario Liberals want to rush this thing through the House without more debate. When looking over the timeline of events that led to this point, it's not the first questionable act by the government when it comes to this issue.

How did it all begin in the first place? Well, I'm glad you asked that question, Mr. Speaker. Years ago, the Premier said she needed to create her own pension scheme because Ottawa was refusing to expand the Canada Pension Plan. Perhaps if she had tried to offer a handshake instead of throwing elbows, there would have been more co-operation between levels of government. She reiterated this last year while taking time away from her office to campaign for candidates at another level of government, starkly breaking away from the long-standing tradition of Premiers staying objective during elections and focusing on governing.

The Premier stated that the only reason the province needed the ORPP was because Prime Minister Stephen Harper would not expand the Canada Pension Plan. She then said that if people voted for Justin Trudeau's Liberals, she wouldn't need to implement a costly duplicate program here in Ontario, because she would finally have a partner she was willing to try to work with. That was the Premier's argument on October 13 last year; the dates matter because it is difficult to keep up with flip-flops.

On October 13, 2015, an article appeared in the National Post with the following headline: "Wynne Says Ontario Would Drop Pension Plan if a Federal Liberal Government Expands CPP." The article explains the Premier's now-abandoned position:

"Wynne says she couldn't convince the Harper government to enhance the Canada Pension Plan, so her government introduced an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan that would mirror the CPP, essentially doubling deductions and benefits.

"She says if Trudeau wins the Oct. 19 federal election and is willing to improve the CPP, that would be 'the solution' to her concerns...."

Well, the Liberals won the election, so there should be no reason now for the redundant ORPP scheme to be implemented, right? Wrong. Well, not so fast. It turns out that the Premier quickly reversed this position as soon as the election was over. Isn't that convenient?

A little over a month later, the Premier clarified her comments by saying she actually meant the exact opposite of what she said before the election. The Liberals then made the questionable claim that they could simply roll the redundant ORPP into the CPP later. That certainly sounds quite complicated and costly, but the Liberals said it is so, so it must be true. But is that accurate?

On January 13, a National Post article threw doubt on such a complicated plan. The headline stated, "Despite What the Premier Says, Ontario's Pension Plan Can't Simply Be Rolled into an Expanded CPP." Mike Moffat, an assistant professor of economics at the Richard Ivey School of Business in London, stated, "I'm not entirely sure how they would pull that off, because they're quite a bit different." He goes on to say, "Let's say this thing exists for three or four or five years, and then to fold it back into CPP, I'm not sure how that would work, to be quite honest." The professor went on to say that while rolling the ORPP into the CPP could technically be done, the cost of doing this would be astronomical. That's another alarm bell ringing loud and clear.

With citizens seeing alarming trends from this government such as fundraising quotas being placed on ministers of the crown and billions of dollars handed out to secret Liberal friends with no public records of who got the money or how many jobs it created, they start to ask pretty tough questions about potential corruption.

Now Premier Wynne wants to reach into your pocket to pull out money for her pension plan. It kind of reminds me of a commercial I used to see a long time ago: Hands in my Pockets. Well, you know what? She wants to reach into your pocket and pull out money for her pension scheme, after she herself said that the only reason for the scheme was that Prime Minister Harper would not expand CPP and that she would drop the redundant program if the Liberals were elected. Well, the ground the Premier stood on to argue for the ORPP disappeared from under her feet, but she plowed ahead anyway.

Does anyone in Ontario actually trust the Premier with their pension money? Why do we need to set up an entirely new program with its own administrative costs to do something the federal government already does successfully? Why is the Ontario Liberal government so obsessed with getting our pension dollars in their hands? I have a few thoughts on that, but I may be asked to withdraw so I won't say them.

There is intense resistance to the Wynne Liberal pension scheme right across the political spectrum from—get this—the Fraser Institute to CUPE. When was the last time they agreed on anything? That ought to send a clear message to the government: Nobody, other than the Ontario Liberals, thinks that the ORPP is the way to go.

Is it because their focus isn't really on retirement security and pensions at all? Any program of this size has the potential to make those who are tasked with running it a lot of money. A line in the recent budget stated that through the ORPP "new pools of capital would be avail-

able for Ontario-based projects." If you're a fisherman, something smells fishy here.

One wonders why a government that handed out $163 million to its biggest donor would want to spend pension money on things other than pensions. The ORPP bill, as it's written, leaves a massive loophole for pension funds to be spent on a wide variety of different things. The pension administration corporation, which will be appointed by the Liberals, would be left to determine where to spend the money for "the benefit of members and other beneficiaries." Would those "other beneficiaries" be friends of the Wynne Liberals in the private sector?

We've seen incredibly worrisome acts from the Liberal government, but they have increased dramatically after this Premier came to power. They're giving government grants to friends and generous donors off the public record. There's also the curious trend of Ontario Liberals becoming filthy rich once they leave Queen's Park, free to negotiate secret, million-dollar deals with the government they just worked for. That is why a public inquiry is needed to restore trust in the public that its government is not becoming a for-profit business.

0920

Now the Wynne Liberals want to set up another massive pool of money to play in. They say it's for pensions, but it can actually be spent on other things. By the way, this is a government that is currently facing—count them—five OPP investigations.

Interjection: How many?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Five OPP investigations. The OPP anti-rackets branch may have to set up a satellite office at Queen's Park.

The public simply doesn't trust the Ontario Liberals with their money and certainly not their pensions. Instead of setting up an unnecessary, costly and redundant pension scheme, the Premier should keep the original promise she made before the federal election and simply ask for the CPP to be expanded. No more flip-flopping. In this case, if she flip-flops and she has to do a backflip, it would be called a flop-flip.

We're being asked to support a program with unknown costs and unknown benefits, and the very reason for this program in the first place no longer exists. What's worse, we're now being told that we cannot ask any more questions or raise any other criticisms of this redundant and expensive pension plan scheme here in the Legislature. Once again, the Ontario Liberals are running from a debate.

Mr. Speaker, I know you'll be happy to hear this: If elected, Patrick Brown and the PCs would remove and refund the redundant ORPP and ensure that no more taxpayer dollars end up in the pockets of friends of the Ontario Liberals who are becoming filthy rich while the rest of the province tries to keep up with the rising cost of living in the Wynne Liberals' Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I have to say, I'm not pleased to be participating in yet another time allocation debate. This government uses time allocation like nobody's business, as they say.

I want to ask the question to the House: What are they afraid of? Are they afraid to have debate on a bill that they feel proud about? There is a right of members to be able to express their views for or against a particular initiative of this Legislature.

It is clear in the Legislature that the Liberals' ORPP is somewhat supported by New Democrats. We're in favour of the principle. We think there are some changes that need to be made because there are some exclusions; I'll let other people speak to that. But the other party here, the Conservative Party, have, in their view, legitimate issues that they feel need to be put on the record in order to deal with what they see is a plan that they can't support. I don't understand why a government is afraid to hear from an opposition party, in this case the Conservatives, speaking against their initiative. If the initiative is so good, their arguments will prevail and the public will support them; if the Tory arguments are bad, it actually works against the Tories.

I don't understand politically, first of all, why they wouldn't allow debate, but the more important question is: This place is supposed to be about making sure that the voices of everyone in this Legislature are heard. These are all representatives of the people. We all ran and got elected in our individual ridings as New Democrats, Conservatives or Liberals to represent the people in our constituencies and, yes, to represent our political views of our own political philosophy as New Democrats, Conservatives or Liberals. When a member of this assembly who is duly elected by the public doesn't have an ability to be heard because the government decides by fiat that it's going to truncate a debate by way of time allocation, I think it's an affront to our democracy and, quite frankly, an affront to this institution.

The Legislature, until 1992, didn't have time allocation. The only thing you were able to do was to call the question, and the threshold by which you were allowed to call the question and it being called was a lot higher than it is now. Now, because there's time allocation in the standing orders after seven and a half hours, calling the question probably only needs about eight or nine hours for the question to be called. There was a time that there wasn't any time allocation and the threshold for calling the question was much higher. And guess what happened? The political parties actually had to work together. Why? Because the government of the day, whoever it might be, wanted to pass a particular initiative, whatever it was, an opposition party or two opposition parties may be opposed, and then you picked your fights. You fought on the things that you really cared about and then you traded off on the other things that you could support and then you would get something in exchange.

For an example, in this particular fight that the Conservatives are having on the ORPP, they may have demanded, "Listen, we want more hearings. We want an ability for the bill to travel." Well, how is that a bad thing for the people we represent, number one? I don't see it as a bad thing. I see it as a service to democracy.

How is it bad for the government—if they have an initiative that they think is good and is worthy of support, well, then, you should be okay with travelling your own bill and having the opposition speak against it; it'll serve your political need.

The only reason that they do time allocation now is because, quite frankly, the government has gotten lazy. It's gotten lazy with democracy. It's gotten lazy in having to listen to the voices of the duly elected members. It's gotten lazy in having to listen to the people who want to say something on this, who want to come to our committees to be heard. As you know, Mr. Speaker, once this bill is finished second reading, it is ordered to committee. And when it's in committee and if there isn't time allocation—in the old days, you would travel the bill somewhere in Ontario so people could be heard. Imagine that. Imagine a Legislature that allows the people to be heard: Oh, my God, how awful that would be.

That's what the government is saying by way of this motion. They're saying that giving members the ability to use their voice in the Legislature, which they were democratically elected to do, shouldn't be done; and they're saying the people who want to speak to this particular bill in committee, at either Toronto or other places in Ontario as the committee travels, don't have to be heard. And I say, shame on the government House leader, shame on the Premier, and shame on the government for utilizing time allocation.

There are bills in this House—and if you look at this order paper, Mr. Speaker, it's a pretty thin order paper. This isn't a prop; this is our order paper. And if you look at the order paper, it's pretty thin. There's not a lot of legislation left. Why? Because, quite frankly, the opposition has agreed with quite a few of the bills that the government has put forward. We've raised some concerns, we've allowed the bills to go to committee, and then we make changes.

But every now and then, there comes a bill where there's a more principled view on the part of the party for or against the bill. For the Tories on the ORPP—and I don't agree with them, by the way; I think the position the Conservatives are taking on the ORPP is wrong. I believe that people should have pensions and I'll speak to that in a second. They have an obligation to do what they think is right as Conservatives and as representatives of the people of their ridings. They have a right to be able to stand in this Legislature to be heard. When a government shuts them down because it's decided by fiat, by order of the Premier's office, utilizing the government House leader's office to bring a motion to censure the opposition, I say it's a bad thing.

Now, do most people out in Ontario care? Probably not. My good friend Mr. Hillier, from the riding of—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Lanark—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Lanark–Renfrew?

Mr. Randy Hillier: —Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, I can never remember all that stuff. That's why, Mr. Speaker, I could never be the Speaker; I would never remember all the names.

But my point is that the members have a right to be heard and they need to be heard. That's the first point.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, in case you're wondering, New Democrats will not be supporting the time allocation motion, even though we support the bill, on the principle that members should be heard and the public should be heard. This is what this institution is all about.

As far as the idea of the ORPP, I think there are things that the government could have done differently, but the general principle of providing a pension for workers and others in this province to be able to retire with some dignity—because we know now the Canada Pension Plan and the old age pension plan aren't going to cut it for most seniors today. If you're 65 years old and you retire and the only thing you have is the old age pension and CPP, it's going to be a pretty thin budget you live on. It's doable; there are all kinds of people who do it, but it's a pretty difficult thing to do.

The principle of trying to create another CPP-style plan I think is a good thing. In fact, our party put forward that initiative a number of times and, Mr. Speaker, if I remember correctly—and correct me if I'm wrong—you were a critic for our party who brought forward such a plan as well. So we, as New Democrats, think it's a good idea, because we shouldn't be in a situation in this province that people work all their lives and find themselves in a situation of not being able to afford to retire.

0930

We go back to our communities, all of us, as we do every weekend, and how many people do we see of retirement age are back to work, working as a greeter at Walmart, working at the Home Depot, working in the service industry somewhere? They're doing that because they can't afford to retire. I think that's sad because those are people taking the jobs of younger people who would need those jobs at the entry-level positions. What are we really doing here by not allowing people to have an adequate income for retirement?

Is the ORPP going to be the blessed answer that's going to allow everybody to retire in dignity? Probably not. It's a step forward, absolutely; I give that full credit. But it's not going to give us everything that we need.

I'll use us, as members, as an example. I have this little test. Most people think that members have got a pension. I want to let members know we don't have a pension here, okay?

Interjection: What?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I know it's a surprise to the public, the people you serve in your constituencies. I don't know how many times I go to an event and they say, "Oh, yeah, but you've got a big fat pension in the Legislature." I've got zilch.

I have RRSPs that are contributed by both myself and by my employer, the Legislature of Ontario. Here's a stark fact: I've been here for 27 years, Mr. Speaker, and I couldn't afford to retire on the RRSPs I've got. Why? Because of the whims of the market; it's not enough.

A defined pension plan is always better. You look at the people who work in this building. I look at our staff

who are here today, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Clerks. God bless them; they work hard and they are good at what they do. They get a pension in this place: 2% per year. Good for them, and I applaud that. Two per cent for every year of service of their salary up to a certain maximum, whatever that calculation is. Rightfully so, when they get to a certain age, they can afford to retire with some dignity.

We make a good income, members here. What's a base salary, $120,000?

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It's $116,000. Oh my God, sorry. They all barked back at me. Okay, all right, I make a little bit more than that as House leader. But $116,000 is a base salary.

My point is this: $116,000 in our constituencies is a lot of money. There are not a lot of people where I come from who make $116,000 outside of some certain jobs in the mining industry and others in trades and stuff that are—

Mr. Randy Hillier: School principals.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Even they don't make that. Anyways, that's a whole other story.

My point is, even with people at the income level that we have, I would love to make the following survey: How many members here can afford to retire on their RRSPs today? Please put up your hand. There's not one because you can't.

The RRSP system is not an adequate pension for people to be able to retire on. The amount of money you would have to put into an RRSP would be somewhat equal to what you would have to put into a defined pension plan. It's the only way. Plus, the problem is that once you're into an RRSP, you're at the whim of the market.

I've gone through three major corrections, as they call them, where I've lost a shitload of money. Pardon me, Speaker. I want to withdraw that comment. I feel so badly about those losses that it overwhelmed me. But the point is, as anybody who is in the market today will know, if they've been in for any while, there have been three major corrections. Essentially, what it's done is taken away whatever gains we've made. I have looked at the amount of money that I've put in my RRSPs over the 20-some-odd years that I've been here. I essentially have the same amount of money that I put in. That's pretty well what it comes down to.

I think the stock market is rigged. It's rigged for the people at the top to take the money out of pockets of people like me. Every now and then, they give me a nice return of 10% or 15% or even 20% in some year, but then they give you a market correction in order to take that all back, and you end up probably making 2% to 3% overall in a period of 20 or 25 years. You probably average over the whole thing about 2% to 3%. It's not a heck of a lot of money.

At least, in a defined pension plan, people know how much they're going to retire on. The employer puts in, generally, 10%; the employee puts in 10%. It's invested by way of large amounts of money. If you look at the Teachers' Pension Plan and others, they're doing quite well. What happens is when the person goes to retire, you know what you're going to get. It's a defined benefit. You know how much you're going to get every month, and you can get on with your life and you can figure out what you're going to do in your retirement. That's what we're trying to do here with the ORPP—not as much as we need, but to give people a little bit more security of income.

I'm just saying to my friends in the Conservative Party that I disagree with your position. I don't think standing in the way of the ORPP is a wise thing, in my view, but you're entitled to yours and I will not impugn motive or say that you have to look at it my way, because this is a democracy. We have different ways of looking at it.

But what New Democrats want to respect is the ability in this case for the Conservative members to have their say. Utilizing a time allocation motion to shut down debate on something that they feel strongly about is not only an affront to them as individuals, but it's also an affront to the people that they represent in their constituencies, because this Legislature is about letting the voices be heard. They represent people in this assembly, as I do and other members of the assembly do. We have different points of view, but they need to be heard. If you're not going to allow it—I don't mean you, Mr. Speaker, because you're not the one who brought the time allocation. But if the government is going to bring time allocation as a way of shutting down the voices, I think it's a disservice not only to the members who are being affected, but I think it's a disservice to the process of this Legislature and it's a disservice to the people of Ontario and the democracy we're here to enact.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to weigh in on yet again another time allocation. Basically, what that means is that they're limiting the debate. They don't want us to talk any longer about the ORPP. You have to ask yourself why. Why do they not want us talking about the ORPP? What is it that they don't want the people to hear?

I'll go once again, as I do many times in this Legislature, to the gas plant scandal hearing documents. Those 300,000 pages were a treasure trove, an inside look into the thinking of this Liberal government. Back during the gas plant scandal, we actually obtained confidential internal documents. One document was entitled Confidential Advice to Cabinet—Not Recommended. This was a document that warned the newly—at that time—appointed Premier that the province will lose 18,000 jobs for every $2 billion collected under this pension tax. As this is now a $6-billion plan, that's 54,000 job losses, and this government knew that. They knew that they would jeopardize 54,000 jobs and they implemented this anyway.

The government was told in this confidential document that the long-term behavioural impact of this tax would be lower business investment, relocation of businesses to other jurisdictions, reduced work effort and an

out-migration of people. In fact, of all the revenue tools the government was considering, the payroll tax had the largest negative impact.

Mr. Han Dong: It's not a tax.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: It's not a tax? Speaker, I hear from the other side that it's not a tax. With all the taxes this Liberal government had brought on, you would think they would actually know what a tax was by now.

The government also commissioned EKOS, a prominent public affairs and polling company, to assess the impact of the ORPP. They found that 54% of businesses are considering a hiring freeze—this is the government's own research that they conducted—and two thirds of businesses would make operating cuts. Speaker, this is their own research. Large businesses would consider layoffs as well as cancelling existing pension plans. This is what they were told through their own research. Small businesses told them that they would redefine employees from full-time to contract workers to avoid the ORPP. In total, they were told 60% of businesses expect to be hurt by the ORPP. This information only came to light because the Canadian Taxpayers Federation filed a freedom of information request. In fact, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation concluded, "It's remarkable the Ontario government didn't walk away from the ORPP when they saw this research. The ORPP is being sold as a benefit to Ontario employees, when in reality it will mean many of them will end up worse off."

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Further, the government decided to do additional research and they did a cost-benefit analysis that was performed by the Conference Board of Canada. Again, this was commissioned by the government's Ministry of Finance. In this report, it admitted it will take 20 years before the economy recovers from the shock of the ORPP. They calculated and told their client—the government of Ontario—the job losses, in their estimation, will peak at 23,000 in 2023. Real disposable income and consumption spending will remain lower until 2040. This will lead to a fall in real private investment that peaks at $939 million—so almost a billion dollars lost—and that will peak in 2024.

And when does the report say the good news kicks in? Well, that, Speaker, will be 2093. This will kick in in 75 years. Go for it. It'll kick in then. That's the government's own research. That's why they don't want us here debating this new tax. This is exactly why they don't want us debating their new tax.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business stated in their pre-budget submission that the ORPP would lead to a loss of 160,000 person-years of employment. They also noted that 90% of their members do not support the ORPP; that's up from 86% last year. Some 69% of their members say they'll freeze or cut salaries; 53% said they would cut jobs if the ORPP goes ahead. They concluded the ORPP tax will significantly undermine the competitiveness of Ontario businesses.

This is what the government is being told. This is why they don't want us any longer, after today, to be debating this new tax.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce presented a letter to the government opposing the ORPP. They urged the government to expand the definition of "comparable plans" and exempt many of the businesses from participating. It was signed by 150 of Ontario's key stakeholders. This included Magna, Chrysler, Ford, GM, Canadian Tire, GE, Walmart, Maple Leaf Foods—the list goes on and on. They were joined by 57 of Ontario's local chambers of commerce and many associations throughout Ontario, all telling the government of Ontario that only 26% of their members can afford the increased cost of the ORPP and 44% of its members will reduce employees or hire fewer staff.

The key to remember is that it's impossible to save for retirement if you don't have a job, and every one of these organizations is telling the government that jobs will be cut. They will actually achieve the opposite of what they're trying to do here.

Over the summer, the chairman of Fiat Chrysler, Sergio Marchionne, talked about how Ontario is becoming the most expensive jurisdiction in which to do business. He's talking North America-wide now. He's talking about our skyrocketing hydro rates. He specifically brought up the ORPP. This is what's happening. He also talked about the fact that because there will be job losses from this, there will be fewer people in a position to buy the cars he makes. This has got a downward spiral effect that is going to hurt families right across Ontario.

The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, another group—with 750,000 employees—talked about how this ORPP tax will lead to more layoffs and wage freezes. A survey of their members says as many as 35% will lay off staff to cope with the additional costs associated with the ORPP tax. About 68% said they would eliminate wage increases or bonuses to pay for those additional costs.

I can tell you, Speaker, when I was in London, Ontario, a little while ago, there was a businessperson there and we were talking about the cost of doing business in Ontario. What he told our group was that he's got 15 employees, and he plans on firing one of them to use that salary to pay for his share of the other 14 ORPPs. And he knows his employees are not going to want to take a 1.9% reduction, because, don't forget, this is not a government pension. This is not the government giving you a pension. This is your money; 1.9% of your salary, $1,643 every year, will come off your paycheque, and your employer must kick in the same amount. What he said is that he's going to fire one employee and use that salary to pay for not only his share, but likely he'll end up paying for his employees' share as well, because they're not going to want to take a haircut on their paycheque. That's anecdotally what's happening right across Ontario. That's why all these companies are saying they're going to have layoffs: because they need that money to pay for the additional costs coming from the ORPP.

There's lots of talk about whether this is actually yet another cash grab under the guise of infrastructure. Right from day one, we understood. If you look at a letter to the editor from the Associate Minister of Finance, Mitzie

Hunter—I was so disturbed at her letter to the editor that I sent a follow-up letter to the Globe and Mail last July, and I'll read it to you.

It says, "I was disturbed with the letter to the editor from Ontario's associate finance minister, Mitzie Hunter. Referring to the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, she states, 'The government will not determine where and how contributions are invested and that the government is establishing an independent body to manage and administer the ORPP.' That is not what the government told the Legislature. In the 2014 budget, it states, 'By unlocking value from assets and encouraging more Ontarians to save through the new ORPP, new pools of capital would be available for projects such as roads, bridges and transit.'"

I'm offended because what was presented to us in the Legislature is the complete opposite of what the public was being told, and that's another reason why they want to shut down debate: because they don't want us disclosing all of these things that are contrary to what we're being told.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's always a pleasure to be able to stand in this House and speak on important issues before us and the matters of the day. I guess in this case we're talking about time allocation. It's Bill 186, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act, that has been time-allocated. It is an interesting piece of legislation. It's like a chameleon: It keeps changing, not in colour but in shape and in wording. The time allocation of the bill is certainly a major change in it.

Before I get into that, allow me to state at the outset that we in the New Democratic Party, the progressive opposition in the House, believe passionately that everyone in Ontario deserves to retire with dignity. Everyone in Ontario deserves to share in the benefits of an Ontario public pension plan. We believe in retirement security for everyone. We do not believe in time-allocating this bill.

We in the NDP want people to be able to count on predictable and fair benefits when they retire. We do not believe in time allocation.

Allow me, if you will, Speaker, to take a very short detour for a moment. Last week, Gale and I welcomed our fifth grandchild.

Applause.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you. Clarity Athena Sage joins her sister Katana and her cousins Paisley, Arwen and Fletcher. Paisley is five; she's the oldest. Arwen is three, Katana is two, Fletcher is a year and a half, and now our little peanut, Clarity, who weighed in at five pounds and 10 ounces—very, very small. I mention my grandchildren not just because I'm a proud grandparent but because eventually this time-allocated proposed legislation, one would hope, would be to their benefit. I also mention them because, to their detriment, as I was reading over the Hansard from what has been stated on the bill already before it was time-allocated, I was reminded that each of my beautiful grandchildren is already burdened with their share of Ontario's debt. As I understand it, Speaker, and I know you will correct me if I'm wrong, that debt is to the tune of more than $21,000 apiece. You can't time-allocate that; you can't time-allocate owing $21,000.

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I've told each of my grandchildren many times, Speaker, that I'm their pop and my job is to spoil them rotten. What I didn't tell them is that there's no way that Poppy can ever pay off $21,000 for each of them to retire their share of Ontario's debt. So I sincerely hope that they all live long and prosper and live healthy lives and get to enjoy their retirement years with a good pension and a benefits package that allows them to retire with dignity—dignity that can't be time-allocated.

That brings me back to this chameleon of a bill that's before us this morning, this time-allocated bill, if you will. I say it's a chameleon bill, even though "chameleon" may not be the proper word for the bill. As you know, the chameleon changes colours to fit in with its surroundings; this bill changes direction, it seems, on the whims of this time-allocated government. Believe me, they will be time-allocated because in two years, they won't be the government anymore.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Now, that's a fact.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes.

I said at the beginning that we in the NDP say that everyone in the province of Ontario deserves to retire with dignity. Everyone deserves to share in the benefits of a made-in-Ontario public pension plan. No opposition debate deserves to be time-allocated on such an important matter. We believe in the universality of such a plan; however, we are concerned that the Liberal plan that was up for discussion today before they decided to shut down debate and time-allocate it has already been dissolving in dribs and in drabs as more and more people are excluded from what was originally proposed by the Premier.

We want retirement security for everyone. We want it for our children, our grandchildren and our neighbours. We want all Ontarians to prosper. Don't forget, Speaker, that what is supposed to be on the table is what the Liberals started out saying would be their plan B—not the time allocation part, Speaker; the original bill was supposed to be their plan B, their backup plan, the one they would only turn to if they were unable to convince the federal government to augment the Canada Pension Plan, the CPP.

The Ontario pension plan—the whole idea—started out when the Harper Conservatives were in power in Ottawa, and more on that in a moment. So when the Premier went out of her way to campaign so hard for Mr. Trudeau and defeat the Harper Conservatives, we all took it for granted and we all expected that part of her payback for helping with his success in Ontario would be that the Premier could count on his support for improving the CPP. That way, she said, she wouldn't have to bring in an Ontario pension plan. Of course, she didn't talk about time allocation back then either.

By the way, Speaker, when the Premier talked openly about this idea back in August 2015, more than eight

months ago, she said, "Our goal is for every employee in Ontario to be part of the ORPP or a comparable workplace pension plan by 2020." She didn't say, of course, "I'll also time-allocate that bill if the opposition keeps finding little holes to pick away at."

A few months ago, in January of this year, that "every employee" in the first announcement had been watered down to every "eligible" Ontario employee. Initially, contributions to the new plan were to start in 2017, and now we're told it will be 2018. Of course, I don't know what's going to happen now that the bill is time-allocated. Back in August, the calculation of pension benefits was to be based on a maximum of $90,000 in 2014 dollars. This chameleon of a bill has now been changed to $90,000 in 2017 dollars. The original formula would have seen pensionable earnings set at nearly $93,000 by 2017. As you well know, Speaker, the greater the amount of the money used in the calculation of the benefits, the greater the actual future pension payouts.

Let me say again, we don't believe in time allocation, but New Democrats believe in a pension plan for everyone, a plan that allows them to retire with dignity. That's why we proposed just such a plan six years ago. The Liberals are playing a little bit of catch-up. By the way, when we suggested the plan that we brought in, the Liberals rejected it. They voted against it. Now they have their own plan.

We proposed a strong plan, a defined benefits pension plan. I can just imagine what the Harper Conservatives must have said about that, but I do know what Harper's former finance minister, Joe Oliver, keeps saying about the Ontario plan we were to be discussing in the morning before it was time-allocated to shut us down in debate. In a column in the National Post in March, he calls the proposal "a job-killing tax," a "clunker scheme," "a $3.5-billion payroll tax." Maybe that's why the bill was time-allocated: The Liberals don't like hearing such things.

In the Toronto Star, reporter Rob Ferguson says Conservative leader Patrick Brown has promised to repeal the ORPP when he becomes Premier—if and when—and refund any money that was taken from employers and employees.

The Associate Minister of Finance, Ms. Hunter, in that same article in the Toronto Star, says it's "misleading" for Mr. Brown to call the pension premiums a tax—before this bill was time-allocated, she made these comments—"since they go into a pension investment pool and not to the government." With that kind of criticism out there—I guess we'll never get to hear the full argument on that since the bill has now been time-allocated.

In the Globe and Mail, Adrian Morrow writes that the proposed pension plan is one of Premier Wynne's legacy projects. Well, her legacy actually will be time-allocating pretty well every bill that came before the House when she was Premier. That article in the Globe and Mail says that after paying into the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan for 40 years, on average, you'll be able to retire on $6,410 a year.

Let's compare that to the salary of the man, the Liberal insider, picked by his buddies to run the proposed new pension plan. Saäd Rafi will be paid more than half a million dollars, and there's nothing shabby about that. That's even more than he was paid when he was brought in to run the Pan Am Games.

Remember the eHealth scandal, Speaker? Well, Mr. Rafi was brought in as a deputy minister in the aftermath of that boondoggle. He was Deputy Minister of Energy when the Liberals brought in the Green Energy Act. He must be a highly talented and capable manager as well as a Liberal insider to be hauling down more than half a million bucks on the pension file. I just wonder if he was the guy who told the Liberal House leader this morning to bring in time allocation because he's getting tired of hearing all the bad things that people on this side of the House are saying about the plan that he's going to get more than half a million dollars to introduce, to lay out—half a million bucks a year.

As you know, Speaker, we have pensioners at US Steel Canada in Hamilton losing their health benefits, and scared to death they will be losing a good chunk of their pensions. That's because this Liberal government and the Liberal government in Ottawa are not doing anything to bring in legislation that would protect workers' rights when a company goes bankrupt. Why the heck wouldn't a government that says they care about the people actually strengthen existing pension legislation before bringing in something new—or for that matter, instead of bringing in something called time allocation? Those Hamilton workers and workers right across this province deserve to get what's coming to them after their 25 or 30 years or more of service to a company, companies that are supposed to set aside that money they owe to the employee pension plan. It's supposed to always be there. Many of these big companies get government grants, they get government loans, yet the government doesn't require them to protect the pension funds of their employees.

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The Canada Pension Plan is simply not good enough. I think we can all agree on that. So why has Prime Minister Trudeau yet to act on his campaign promise to enhance CPP benefits? Why has the Premier let him off the hook? Why are we time-allocating this bill? This plan was her backup plan—plan B. Plan A was to enhance the CPP. We've heard her say that. We wouldn't need this plan B if she and her buddy in Ottawa were to keep their promises.

New Democrats—I'll say it again, Speaker—believe in a strong pension plan for everyone. We don't believe in cutting off debate; we don't believe in shutting down opposition voices; we don't believe in time-allocating this bill.

The Premier used to believe that we could do better on pensions. She said it was for everyone in Ontario. Now, in the small print, we see a growing number of people who will be excluded from the plan: the self-employed; people working in federal jurisdictions; my former colleagues at the CBC or at private radio and TV stations; those who work for the airlines and provincial railways or the post office; those who object on religious grounds; temporary foreign workers.

Speaker, if and when the feds finally come to the table and improve the CPP, what happens to the universality of the CPP, which won't be coordinated with the Ontario plan? Has the minister thought this through? If so, perhaps we'll be enlightened by someone on the government side in a few minutes, unless time allocation prevents them from doing that this morning. Inquiring minds would like to know.

As we all know, even if you work for the provincial government, you don't necessarily qualify for a government pension. That point was driven home not that long ago in the Toronto Star. Again, Speaker, their investigators discovered that 44% of the 10,682 jobs that were posted and filled in various ministries in the 2013-14 term were temporary or seasonal positions and may not have qualified for the ORPP.

We all know friends or neighbours who have reached the age of 70 and are still working to put food on the table or to pay their hydro bills. They wouldn't qualify for the ORPP either. So what was the Premier thinking when she said that the plan would cover everyone in Ontario? What was she thinking when she said, "We're going to time-allocate this bill"?

Ontario New Democrats believe passionately that everyone in Ontario deserves a decent pension plan with benefits that allow us all to retire with dignity. What is being proposed falls significantly short of that. At this point, I hope the Liberal members opposite have taken notes of what the opposition members have been saying about their bill, this time-allocated bill. We need to hear more about that. We need to hear more about the ways that we think this bill could be improved. We don't need to shut down debate, to silence the opposition, to time-allocate this bill.

Speaker, let me just wrap up with this: Shame on you guys. Shame on the Liberals for time-allocating such an important bill for Ontario's Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's unfortunate that there are only six government members in the chamber to listen to that speech from—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member knows he can't talk about absences.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you. Speaker, last time I spoke was on another time allocation motion. That's what's happening in this House: We don't actually get to speak to bills; we get to speak to time allocation motions.

The last time I was up speaking, I referred to a story, back when I was an electrician, of a boss who used the term, "Don't think; just do it." That's what we get with this Liberal government: no thinking; just doing it. But as I was thinking about this time allocation once again—and put this in perspective: time allocation motions prevent members from doing their job. It strikes at the core of what we're here to do: to bring up points, to debate and safeguard the public interest through debate on public policy.

This is on the pension plan, a major plank of the Liberal election. It's gone into time allocation. The cap-and-trade bill was the previous one that was on time allocation. Every bill that they ran on, they are preventing debate and preventing this House from doing its job.

Speaker, as I was thinking about this, you can't help but make the comparison between lemmings and Liberal members. You just can't help make that comparison. We all know that lemmings run off a cliff. They never see their leader; they just follow the herd. They just do what they're told and mass suicide ensues for lemmings. I know Liberals like to think of themselves as small, cuddly, fuzzy and warm and whatnot like lemmings as well.

It's interesting: If you look up lemmings online, you'll also get another term that often comes up when you google or search lemmings, and that is "groupthink." I think that's really what we're seeing with this Liberal Party. It's groupthink.

Let me just read a couple of things about groupthink that I think apply to the Liberal members in this House: "Groupthink requires individuals to avoid raising controversial issues or alternative solutions, and there is a loss of individual creativity, uniqueness and independent thinking. The dysfunctional group dynamics of the 'in group'"—that would be the Liberals—"produces an 'illusion of invulnerability,' an inflated certainty that the right decision has been made." That speaks to what they're doing here with these time allocation motions, that they are right; they are the only ones who are right and they are the "in group."

It goes on: "Thus the 'in group' significantly overrates its own abilities in decision-making and significantly underrates the abilities of its opponents, the 'out group.'" That's us on this side, the out group. "Furthermore, groupthink can produce dehumanizing actions against the 'out group.'" I think that is a real good summary of what we see happening with this Liberal government. They're the smart ones; they're the intelligent ones. They have an inflated sense of superiority: "We are not going to even let others speak."

But as you go through and look at this definition of groupthink, it says, "Antecedent factors such as group cohesiveness, faulty group structure, and situational context, such as community panic, play into the likelihood of whether or not groupthink will impact the decision-making process." Clearly, once again, community panic is always a great thing for the Liberal government to close off debate on: "We must get this done before the sky falls, before the planet goes off its axis and stops turning." The Liberal government will bring in legislation to do this, of course, but also group cohesiveness—and nobody will counter that; the Liberals are a very cohesive group—and, as we can see with the Premier's office, a very faulty structure. So the present Liberal government satisfies each of those conditions to allow groupthink to take place. They do it quite well.

There was a fellow who pioneered the research on groupthink. His name was Irving Janis. He coined the term "groupthink" along with "doublethink," and you can see that comes out of that George Orwell novel 1984. But

here I think he puts it in even greater clarity: "I use the term 'groupthink' as a quick and easy way to refer to the mode of thinking that persons engage in when concurrence-seeking becomes so dominant in a cohesive in-group that it tends to override realistic appraisal of alternative courses in action."

That says it all. It says it all. Concurrence-seeking is their dominant position, and it has overridden all realistic appraisal of what they do.

Speaker, we've heard it from others: The pension plan has gone through and morphed through a number of different iterations. It has gone from "everybody" to "eligible." It has gone from plan B to plan A to plan C. The member from Windsor–Tecumseh used the term "chameleon." I think it's a good term; it goes along with "lemmings." It is a good term in that the Liberals continue to hide their true purposes and objectives with the bill. That's the chameleon effect of this.

Irving Janis went on to further say, "The main principle of groupthink, which I offer in the spirit of Parkinson's law, is this: The more amiability and esprit de corps there is among the members of a policy-making in-group, the greater the danger that the independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against" others.

That's really what we're seeing. I can't understand why each of these members on the Liberal side are subjecting themselves to such insignificance and unimportance in their role as legislators. Like those lemmings, they never see the leader at the front of the herd. They never see that fuzzy little one up at the front. They just follow; it doesn't matter where they're going. Even if they know they're going off the cliff, they're going to follow anyway because they are that cohesive group and irrational thinking is not part of the program.

Time allocation, once again, Speaker, on a major plank of this Liberal government: It's stifling debate, killing debate. There must be some Star Trek fans here in the Legislature, and I'm sure there are fans who are watching. Star Trek: The Next Generation with Captain Picard—we need a Captain Picard on that Liberal side of the bench, so when the Borg in the corner office says to all the members, "Resistance is futile," we need a Liberal member over there to stand up and say, "No, it's not. Resistance is not futile." Why don't you stand up, speak your mind and be a member of this Legislature?

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's my pleasure to welcome, in the west members' gallery, Deborah Maxfield, Darlene Derbyshire and Kim Mommersteeg, all from my riding of Sarnia–Lambton.

And long-term-care workers from North Lambton and Lambton Meadowview are representing CUPE here today. We welcome them.

Also, Mr. Don Pitt, the executive director of the Family Counselling Centre in Sarnia–Lambton, a Family Service of Ontario agency, is here to take part in Family Services Day at Queen's Park.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I had breakfast this morning with three personal support workers. I see Susan, Tammy and Trudy up in the west gallery. I'd like to say welcome to Queen's Park, officially.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: In the House today we have long-term-care workers, members of CUPE from communities across Ontario. They are here today with CUPE Ontario president Fred Hahn and CUPE Ontario secretary-treasurer Candace Rennick, who is herself a long-term-care worker. I know all members will want to applaud them for the work they do and for taking care of our loved ones, and to welcome them to Queen's Park. Welcome.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I would like to introduce a group from CUPE long-term care who met with me this morning: Elizabeth Powell, Victoria Brown, Theresa Ozemoyah and Andrew Johnson.

I'd also like to introduce, on behalf of the member from Haldimand–Norfolk, Susan Wells, who is here from Reach in the Haldimand–Norfolk area. Welcome.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not often that people come all the way from Timmins to be here in the Legislature. Can you imagine? I don't get to do this very often.

I'm so proud to welcome three wonderful people who work in our long-term-care institutions in Timmins, both in extended care at the Golden Manor, which is our municipal home for the aged, which we want to keep: Brenda Lalonde, Debbie Larkin and Christine Laforest. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Bill Mauro: I have an extensive list of welcomes this morning. First, from the Catholic Women's League, in the members' east gallery: Pauline Krupa, president from Thunder Bay; Anne Madden, president-elect from Godfrey; Betty Colaneri, past president from Niagara-on-the-Lake; Carol Richer, legislation chairperson from Morrisburg; and Linda Squarzolo, resolutions chairperson and second vice-president from Sudbury.

Also visiting from Thunder Bay today: Nancy Chamberlain, executive director of the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre, and Lori Golab, a board member from the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre.

My last one today is from my office. My summer intern is here somewhere—there he is in the front row; I don't know how he got the front-row seat. Jad Halabi, welcome.

And welcome, everybody, to Queen's Park.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm really honoured to welcome to Queen's Park today a friend of mine and an entrepreneur in the province of Ontario, Michael Nitefor.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome two community leaders visiting us from Waterloo region for

Family Services Day: Wanda Wagler-Martin is here from Shalom Counselling Services Inc. in Waterloo, and Leslie Josling is here from KW Counselling Services in Kitchener. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bob Delaney: On behalf of the member for Mississauga–Erindale and page captain Ayan Siddiqui, I'd like to welcome his parents, Sehar and Kamran Siddiqui; his sister, Zayna Siddiqui; grandparents Qulzam and Irshad Siddiqui; and his grandmother Rehana Rizwan. They will be in the members' gallery this morning. Would members please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd like to welcome Darlene Derbyshire from Huron–Bruce. She is representing Meadowvale Villas.

I'd also like to introduce, in conjunction with Randy Pettapiece, Susan Melkert, executive director and president at the Family Services Perth Huron, and Nick Forte, board president of Family Services Perth Huron. Welcome.

M^me^ France Gélinas: I have visitors from Ivanhoe Lake. I'm ready to bet that 106 of us don't know where that is—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Hey, hey, hold it.

M^me^ France Gélinas: Okay, 100 of you don't know where that is. It is in the north end of my riding, and I'm very happy to welcome Shirley and Russell Litt as well as their friend Hugh McGinn, who came down this morning and are in the visitors' gallery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Mario Sergio: Joining the surge of families at the Queen's Park conference we have our summer students in the east lobby and in the east members' gallery. Jennifer Commisso: I hope she will enjoy the time with us and enjoy this wonderful place. Welcome, Jennifer.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'd like to inform the House that Shannon and Warren McPherson are here as well as Natalie McPherson: the family of our page captain today, Samantha McPherson. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm pleased to welcome Brandon Barangno, a co-op student who has been in my office. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's my pleasure to welcome three individuals from the Community Counselling and Resource Centre in Peterborough: Mike Burger, the president of the board of directors; Casey Ready, executive director; and Bob Campbell, who's the past president of the board. They're celebrating the 60th anniversary of the CCRC serving the great community of Peterborough.

Also, my summer intern, Alexander Cohen, will be joining our ministry for this summer.

Mr. Jim Wilson: In the House today are long-term-care workers, members of CUPE, from communities across Ontario. They're here with CUPE Ontario secretary-treasurer Candace Rennick, who is herself a long-term-care worker. I know that all members would like to applaud these workers for the work that they do in looking after our loved ones. Welcome to Queen's Park.

M^me^ France Gélinas: There's also a visitor from Sudbury. She is with the wonderful organization the Catholic Women's League of Canada, and her name is Linda Squarzolo. Welcome to Queen's Park, Linda.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The clock has already run out for introductions. I'm going to ask all members to be very brief and get through your introductions. As we have a tribute to give, I want to make sure that we have full attention, so let's get through our introductions. I'm trying to make sure that everyone has an opportunity, but let's be brief, please.

The member from Nipissing.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: From the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing we have Alan McQuarrie, Derek Thompson and Helen Antebi.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: From Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County in my riding of Barrie I would like to welcome Maureen Shave, Michelle Bergin and Les Stewart.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'd like to welcome Brad Davis and Leo Heuvelmans from the great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex. They're here with Family Service Kent for family service Ontario day.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: From Family Services Windsor-Essex: Joyce Zuk. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Two introductions: I'm pleased to introduce Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario, and, in particular, CUPE education workers, and—I'm not sure if she's here yet—Joanne Young Evans from Guelph-Wellington Family Counselling and Support Services.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park two long-term-care workers from my riding: members of CUPE Tom Carrothers and Susan Lovell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please welcome, from the Family Service Ontario board, Connie McLeod from Thunder Bay, Sharon Mayne Devine from Peel-Dufferin and the interim executive director of Family Service Ontario, Susan MacIsaac.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Welcome, from Newmarket–Aurora, Trudy Marsden, a long-term-care worker with Southlake village in Newmarket. She's here with CUPE Local 2040.

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I'd like to take this opportunity as well to welcome all of the long-term-care workers here with CUPE, as well as to introduce my intern, Carling Fee, who also happens to be the granddaughter of MPP Ann Hoggarth.

Ms. Soo Wong: I'd like to welcome the members of the board of Family Service Ontario to the Legislature: Brad Davis from Chatham, Robert Campbell from Peterborough, Lori Golab from Thunder Bay and Shelly McCarthy from Brantford. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'd like to welcome Janet Irvine from family counselling service Northumberland.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon on a point of order.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'd like to correct my record. In my question yesterday to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, I said that there were only 12 child protection agencies using CPIN. In fact, there are only nine.

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VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Introductions?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you, Speaker, for this opportunity to welcome a school from my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. West Hill Collegiate students are here, the grade 10 class. Welcome.

FIRE IN ALBERTA

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Premier on a point of order.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I wanted to just express, on behalf of all of us here, that our hearts go out to all the people who are affected by the fire that's raging in Alberta. We hope everyone stays safe.

As in other situations, we are committed to helping out other provinces in times of need. This is obviously one of those times, and I wanted to let the Legislature and the people of Ontario know that Ontario will be dispatching 119 staff to Alberta this week to assist in managing the fire: 100 firefighters and 19 support staff. We thank them for their service and we want them to come home safely, but our hearts are with the people of Alberta right now.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Patrick Brown: On that note, I want to thank the Premier for having Ontario show that sign of support. We all want to be there to help those in Fort McMurray. It's the right thing to do. We want to be with our brothers, sisters and family members in Fort McMurray in this hour of need.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I think that all of us have real concerns about what's happening in Alberta in Fort McMurray. I want to say that it was important that the Premier let the people of Ontario and this Legislature know that of course Ontario is going to be there doing what we can. I appreciate the quick response from our team. I say that New Democrats as well are concerned and looking to see that things hopefully turn around, and that property and people particularly are safe and well in Alberta.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): First, a personal introduction. The MacKenzies are here visiting, good friends of mine, and I welcome them. They're in the Speaker's gallery today. Thank you for joining us.

Would the members please join me in welcoming the family of the late Keith Roy Brown, MPP for Peterborough during the 26th and 27th Parliaments, who are seated in the Speaker's gallery. His daughters Jewell Bennett, Janice Gorodzinsky and Rosemary Ramey, welcome to Queen's Park for this tribute.

Also in the gallery is our former Speaker, MPP David Warner. Thank you, Speaker.

KEITH BROWN

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Keith Brown, former member for Peterborough, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pay tribute. Do we agree? Agreed.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's truly an honour to be able to stand in this place on behalf of the New Democratic Party to pay tribute to the life of Keith Roy Brown, a member who served here from 1959 to 1967, representing the riding of Peterborough. I would like to welcome his family here today.

I never had the opportunity to work with or meet Mr. Brown. He won his second election in 1963, the same year that I was born. But in doing research for this tribute, I wish I could have, because like so many who have served and continue to serve, he struck me as a man who not only worked tirelessly for his constituents and who enjoyed being with them, but one who had some incredibly funny stories to tell as well.

Looking back, Keith Brown was involved in an exciting time in Ontario's political history. He was part of record investments in schools, universities, highways and public services. Keith Brown is highly regarded for his role in bringing Trent University and Fleming College to Peterborough. He was a member of this House when some of Ontario's first anti-discrimination laws were implemented and when the voting rights of First Nations people were expanded.

Then, as now, members sat on standing committees of the Legislature. In his time here, Keith sat on many, but some of their titles might surprise those serving now. He was a member of the Standing Committee on Game and Fish, the Standing Committee on Agriculture, the Standing Committee on Highways and Highway Safety and many others. It was a time when legislators were more involved in the drafting of legislation. It was also a time when rural Ontario truly made a difference. He was also a member of the Select Committee on Automobile Insurance. I guess some issues have not changed all that much.

Keith was a successful businessman in Peterborough whose enterprises included a car dealership. In fact, when he was elected Deputy Speaker of this House, the headline in the local paper was, "Local Car Dealer Elected Deputy Speaker."

I am positive that his colleagues would have enjoyed his wit. I would like to quote the current member from Peterborough, the Minister of Agriculture—that's the prerogative you get when you're first to speak. I quote from Mr. Leal: "I bought my first ... car from Mr. Brown in 1988. I remember I saved all my money and went down there ... he said to me, 'Seeing as how you're a Liberal, maybe I should get a certified cheque from you.'"

In closing, I would like to thank his family for all their sacrifices so that Keith could work for the people of Ontario and for the sacrifices they continue to make as his son-in-law Daryl Bennett continues to serve as the mayor of Peterborough.

It was said that Keith Brown loved to close a deal. The deal that he made with the people of Ontario was a good one, and we will always respect him for it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further tribute.

Hon. Jeff Leal: It truly is an honour to rise today and honour a friend and mentor, the one and only Keith Brown. He was a gentleman. He was born and raised around the tiny hamlet of Bonarlaw, Ontario. As some of you know, it's on the road to Campbellford. Keith Brown, of course, was very interested in agriculture. He was a cheese maker by profession before he made the great move to the urban centre of Peterborough.

Before I begin today, I want to welcome Mr. Brown's daughters, who I know very well: Jewel Bennett, Janice Gorodzinsky and, of course, Rosemary Ramey. I'm truly glad that you could join us here today.

In government, we really stand on the shoulders of others who come before us, and Keith Brown was no exception. He served ably as the Progressive Conservative member for Peterborough from 1959 to 1967. He was a witness to three individuals who were so significant in the lives of Ontario politics and, indeed, national politics. During his time he served with the Honourable Leslie Frost, affectionately known as Old Man Ontario. Then, of course, he served with the famous chairman of the board, the honourable John P. Robarts. In 1959—the class of '59—he was elected with the person who would become affectionately known as "Brampton Billy," the Honourable William Grenville Davis.

He certainly worked closely with Premier Robarts and the Honourable William G. Davis, who was then the Minister of Education and Minister of University Affairs, because Keith helped to bring both Trent University and Fleming College to Peterborough. Like a great captain on a bridge of a ship, Keith could always see the next horizon. For him, that horizon was bringing post-secondary education to the sons and daughters of the people of Peterborough.

Keith was a political champion, winning both the 1959 and 1963 elections with more than 50% of the vote. It was legendary in Peterborough that on election day he used to always loan cars to his opposition so they could get their voters to the polls. That really didn't matter for Keith, when he won over 50% of the vote.

He was elected in the class of 1959 that included Mr. Davis. For the longest period of time, Mr. Davis and Mr. Brown were the two remaining individuals of that particular class.

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Keith went on to serve. He didn't serve in the Bill Davis government. He stepped down in 1967 in order to focus on his many businesses and his family. Keith was a very good politician and he was an excellent businessman. My friend from Timiskaming–Cochrane already told the story about me buying the 1988 Dodge Shadow from Keith. That's a legendary story in Peterborough.

Keith grew his business from a single car lot into two dealerships in Peterborough and Campbellford. He also went on to own a taxi fleet, a coach company and a garage, giving career opportunities to more than 400 people in my riding of Peterborough. His love of his community was exemplary, whether it was his lifelong involvement with the Mark Street United Church, his work with the Masonic Lodge or his support for the Community Living camp in Peterborough.

The camp for Community Living Peterborough has a personal significance for my family, particularly my younger brother. There was a time when families in Peterborough—of course, they didn't have the opportunity to access that camp to give these families that had sons and daughters with an intellectual disability a bit of respite over the summer. It was Keith Brown who provided a fleet of vehicles so those young children could get to that camp each and every day, something that we'll always remember Keith Brown for.

For his commitment to his community, Keith was recognized with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012, and, of course, in the not-too-distant future, he will be inducted into the Peterborough Business Hall of Fame. He was also honoured at the 170th annual Peterborough Exhibition, of which he was a big supporter.

Keith was a proud family man, raising his three daughters, Jewell, Janice and Rosemary, and, of course, somebody I got to know very well, who passed away in 2005, his beloved wife, Marjorie. There's a lot of talk these days about people with sunny ways, but Marjorie Brown was one of the original people with sunny ways. She had a 100-watt smile. When she went into a room, it turned the room into a very positive experience.

When she passed away in 2005, I saw Keith a short time after that and he had a very, very heavy heart, but then, of course, things changed. He was back, involved in many things in the city of Peterborough, and he was the real patriarch of that family. As has been mentioned, his current son-in-law, a good friend of mine, is doing an incredible job as the mayor of Peterborough, Daryl Bennett.

Ladies and gentlemen, in many ways Keith Brown was larger than life itself. I want to share one of his stories from when he was the member for Peterborough. After he was elected in 1959, Leslie Frost, the Premier of the day, gave him some very good advice. He said, "Always remember, young man, that there are no votes here in Toronto and always pay attention to what's going

on in Peterborough." To highlight that, I want to tell you the McCulloch chainsaw story.

About two months after he was elected, Keith was paid a visit by the president of Outboard Marine Corp. and the head of the Steelworkers, who represented the hourly rated employees at Outboard Marine. At that particular time, provincial parks in the province of Ontario were using an American chainsaw, the McCulloch chainsaw. But mysteriously, about a month after that meeting, the McCulloch chainsaws in every provincial park across Ontario started to develop problems. There were problems with the carburetors. There were problems with the chains. A month after that, every provincial park had a Pioneer chainsaw made right in Peterborough. That's how you make changes in politics.

Keith was a good friend of mine. He provided me with a lot of good advice throughout my 30 years of public service in Peterborough. I remember when I got the privilege in 2003, we met shortly after that and he said, "Jeff, remember the advice that Leslie Frost gave to me, and it's good advice I want to give to you."

It's been an honour to follow in Keith Brown's footsteps as the MPP for Peterborough, although they've been very big shoes to fill.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, to my friend Keith, a fond farewell until we meet again. Thank you very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Further tributes?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of my PC colleagues in paying tribute to a former member of this House, Keith Brown, who passed away on July 7 of last year at the age of 88. Keith is survived by his three daughters, who we certainly welcome here today in the Legislature. Jewell, Janice and Rosemary, thank you for being with us here today. He's also survived by his three son-in-laws, his eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

As was mentioned, Keith was born in 1926 in the Marmora area, the son of a local cheese maker. In 1945, he married Marjorie Wallace, and they were married almost 60 years before Marjorie passed away in 2005. As described by his daughter Jewell, it was truly a lifelong love affair. Keith was always a "family first" kind of guy and was and still is adored by his family.

In 1950, Keith started his own business selling cars at a single used car lot. He successfully grew that business into multiple dealerships, eventually founding the Liftlock Group of companies. His business operations provided employment for over 400 people in the community, and he was known, as was said, as the car king of the Kawarthas. Keith's successful car dealerships served multiple generations of customers. He never forgot the name of a customer, and it was obvious that his customers never forgot him.

Keith took a hiatus from his successful business career to run for the PC Party in 1959, for the government of Premier Leslie Frost, "Old Man Ontario," who was from the neighbouring riding. Keith won the election easily and, in the general election of 1963, was re-elected under the leadership of Premier John Robarts with over 50% of the vote.

During his tenure as MPP, Keith was committed to bringing growth and development to the Peterborough area, thereby benefitting his entire community. He was described by his family as a true-blue Conservative who was dedicated to serving the people of his Peterborough riding.

Keith continued to be a public figure after his days as MPP. Myself, being the daughter of long-time PC member of Parliament Bill Scott, I remember meeting Keith at various political events and actually being nervous that I was in the presence of the legendary Keith Brown, the man with the car dealerships from Peterborough. I knew my father and my mother, Betty, always considered Keith and his beloved Marjorie to be good friends.

As much as Keith enjoyed the political life, after two terms he decided it was time to return to the private sector. In 1967, he then went back to being the car king of the Kawarthas.

We've heard about the member for Peterborough purchasing his first car from Keith in 1988, Keith suggesting that Jeff, the member from Peterborough, being a Liberal, should maybe get a certified cheque. I have to say, even when he was out of elected politics, Keith was still keenly aware of the financial risks associated with the Liberals in politics—clearly an astute man, ahead of his time.

Laughter.

Ms. Laurie Scott: He was also a man who saw the humour in everything—he would have enjoyed that joke—including politics, and was always quick to employ his wit in the spirit of fun.

Although Keith was no longer an elected public official, he never lost his keen interest in politics at all levels, playing various key roles in many elections and leadership campaigns over the years, including in the successful campaign for mayor by his son-in-law Daryl. Daryl is the mayor, but we know where he got his political skills from. Keith took a great deal of pride in Daryl's success in Peterborough's municipal politics.

Following his passing, I was speaking with his daughter Jewell about some stories that she has heard about her dad. She received a number of letters from individuals expanding on the many things that her father did for the people he represented as a politician and for the customers he served in being a caring, community-minded businessman. Many of the tributes expressed in these letters were the first time the family had heard the stories.

One particular story was from a woman whose uncle had once purchased a new car from Keith, only to have it stolen a few days later. When Keith heard about it, he gave the man a new car to drive until the police located his car. That same man died of Hodgkin's in his mid-30s, leaving a widow and two very young daughters. Keith asked the widow to come and see him one day, and when she got there, he wrote "paid in full" on her husband's car loan. Stories like this only serve to reinforce the image and affection which the family has long held for their beloved patriarch.

Keith was a member of the Masonic Lodge for over 50 years and was a faithful member of the Shriners, serving these fraternal organizations with his leadership and support. He was also a devoted and generous lifelong member of the Mark Street United Church, holding various positions on the board of stewards, board of trustees and session. He was a valued friend, adviser and confidant to all the ministers who served the congregation over the years.

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In January of this year, the new Peterborough Business Hall of Fame announced that at its inaugural dinner in May, there would be a number of posthumous inductees into the hall and, not surprisingly, leading the list was Keith Brown. In announcing the criteria for consideration in the hall of fame, it was stated that a business person has to have displayed two definite traits: success in whatever their business endeavours were, and that they had been good to the community. Keith Brown not only met but exceeded these criteria, hands down.

Until the time of his passing, Keith was healthy and remained very active in his community, including the political scene. I have to say he gave me lots of advice when I would see him out at events, which is quite tremendous. As you see the generations unfold, he was still there for us.

His legendary storytelling, his tremendous wit and humour, and his keen business mind were in full evidence right up until the end. He has been referred to as a pillar of the community, a fine example of a person serving his family, his community and his customers.

With the passing of Keith Brown, the province, and the Peterborough area in particular, lost a great man and a legend. We can only be thankful for that legacy that he left behind, and we thank the family for sharing him with us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their heartfelt, thoughtful and kind words.

I would also like to thank the family for attending today for the tribute. What we will do here at the Legislature is make samples of Hansard available for you, and a DVD for your memories.

Again, one last time, thank you for the gift of Keith Brown.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Patrick Brown: My question is for the Premier. This morning, I was planning on asking the Liberals about the health cuts and about the autism funding cuts. Instead, I'm forced to ask this Premier about a media report by David Reevely about an unprecedented fifth OPP investigation—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Come out with your hands up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nepean–Carleton is warned.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, an unprecedented fifth OPP investigation:

—OPP investigation number one: the Ornge scandal;

—OPP investigation number two: the gas plant scandal;

—OPP investigations numbers three and four: the Sudbury bribery scandal.

Can the Premier confirm that her government is in fact under a fifth OPP investigation?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of Energy will want to comment.

We were not aware of any investigation until the media report. If we are contacted, we will, as always, cooperate fully with authorities.

We're taking a cautious and a responsible approach to offshore wind to allow for the development of research and coordination. The Ministry of the Environment is doing some of that research, looking at the issue, to ensure that we protect the health and safety of people and of the environment. We look forward to additional research coming forward. We stand behind our cautious and responsible approach to offshore wind energy.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I haven't acknowledged you yet.

Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: In early 2011, Trillium Power Wind was moving ahead with their offshore wind project near Kingston. At 3 p.m. on February 11, 2011, Trillium was set to close a deal on financing that project, a fact that the Liberals were well aware of.

At 2:24 p.m. that same day, minutes before the deal was to close, the Liberals put out a press release, cancelling the offshore wind program without ever explaining why. When Trillium tried to find out why, there wasn't a single record of the government's decision.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier normally make policy by press releases?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The Premier has been extremely clear that we would open up the government completely—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): If you choose to go down that road—I think I've made it quite clear that I want to go through question period properly.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the allegations are within a time frame that is covered by this report from the Information and Privacy Commissioner: "I have appreciated the cooperation I have received from Premier Kathleen Wynne.... The Premier issued a directive in accordance with the recommendations made in the report and committed the government to greater transparency and accountability.... In addition, political staff received

in-depth training on record retention responsibilities. I applaud these developments."

Interjections.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that the opposition are heeing and hawing about the report of the independent information commissioner.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier: Dodge, deny, deflect, muddy the waters—let me be a bit more specific. We know the Premier signed the deal to cancel the gas plants in order to save the seat of the finance minister, but the question is, why did the Liberal cabinet cancel the offshore wind project? Is it because the current economic development minister was worried about the planned offshore wind project at the Scarborough Bluffs? Was it to save the Liberal seat in Kingston? Or was it because Trillium never donated to the Ontario Liberal Party?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: On the issue of offshore wind, we continue to take a cautious and responsible approach. There are thousands of land-based wind turbines around the world backed by decades of science and experience.

Offshore wind in freshwater lakes is still at early stages of development worldwide. That's why we still have a moratorium on offshore wind development. The Ministry of the Environment continues to research this issue, to ensure that we protect our health and the health of our environment, Mr. Speaker. We look forward to additional research—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Prince Edward–Hastings.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —coming forward from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Even though he's in a different seat, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings will come to order. I don't think he heard me because he was still heckling while I was asking him to come to order.

You have a wrap-up sentence, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I've finished, thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. We know the Liberals cancelled the gas plants because they were afraid of losing seats in the 2011 election. That political decision cost Ontario a billion dollars. That billion dollars is being paid by every senior, every family in Ontario on their skyrocketing hydro bills, and now Ontario families and seniors may be on the hook for another $500 million that Trillium is suing for. Is that the cautious approach the Minister of Energy describes?

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: Why should families and seniors pay for yet another Liberal scandal?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As the Minister of Energy has said, there is research that is ongoing, Mr. Speaker. There's decades of research on land-based wind turbines. There is not the same body of research for freshwater lake turbines—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Why were you signing contracts? Why were you ready to sign contracts?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And whoever said that last one, if I knew who you were, I could bring you to order, too.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: That's why there continues to be a moratorium. We are taking a responsible approach and we're waiting for that body of research to be developed.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nipissing, come to order.

Supplementary?

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Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier: I think the government and the Premier are missing the point. Because of their actions, every family is paying more. Hydro customers are already paying more than $1,000 extra under the Liberals because of your political intervention. Now Trillium, I'll be very clear on this, is suing the Liberals for $500 million. That's going to go on everyone's bill. That's an extra $100 for every home in Ontario. When is enough enough? Because of your mistakes, everyone in Ontario is paying.

Does the Premier really think Ontario families and seniors should pay thousands of dollars more because of this government's incompetence?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you. This is not the moment in which I ask for attention, and I even—I am still standing. When I sit down, you start. I'll deal with it.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The Leader of the Opposition knows that this matter is before the courts. He also didn't mention that their statement of claim was thrown out by the Court of Appeal, and they have restarted that court case. It's an allegation. This party doesn't know anything about oversight. This government has created the position of Financial Accountability—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will be insistent and consistent.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: This government has created the position of Financial Accountability Officer; made the French Language Services Commissioner independent; put into place—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: —I'll complete the list, Mr. Speaker—put into place the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth; allocated new powers to the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth; expanded the Ombudsman's role to include oversight of municipalities, school boards and publicly funded universities—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier: If the Minister of Energy is correct that we can't talk about anything related to an OPP investigation, when there's five—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The back and forth is not helpful. I'd like to be able to put the question properly, as I want the answers to be put properly.

Please finish.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the question is for the Premier. If we can't discuss any matter that's under an OPP investigation, when there are an unprecedented five OPP investigations, you have to leave us something to ask about here in the Legislature. The billions of dollars wasted on eHealth and Ornge scandals are being felt in every community in Ontario. Hospitals are being closed, doctors are being fired, nurses are being let go. The billions of dollars wasted on smart meters and gas—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm sorry, but I'm getting challenged. The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, the member from Hamilton Mountain and the member from Trinity–Spadina, come to order.

Carry on.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Those scandals are being felt in every bill. Life is getting harder under the Liberals. So my question is, does this government not appreciate that it's harder and harder for families and seniors? Does this government not care that people can't get the health care they need? My question is for the Premier—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Your time is up. Minister?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the opposition continues to ignore what's really happening in the electricity sector. They have acknowledged and they support what's happening in the nuclear sector—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Leeds–Grenville, second time.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: They acknowledge and support what's happening in the nuclear sector, where, for the next 30 years, we are going to be introducing into the grid electricity at 7.7 cents per kilowatt hour. We'll be producing clean energy. They refuse to acknowledge that wind prices are coming in at grid rate now, at 8.5 cents a kilowatt hour.

They've been haranguing us about wind, and they now know that wind is successful. They can't face the truth—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Apparently, the Liberals ripped up energy contracts for political gain, again. It's alleged they destroyed energy-related documents, again. Now the OPP anti-rackets branch is investigating the Premier's office, again.

The Premier signed off on the gas plants cancellation, Speaker. What was her role in the cancelling of the wind projects?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, as I have just said, we were not aware of any investigation until the media report. If we're contacted, we will obviously co-operate fully.

We're taking a cautious and responsible approach to offshore wind in order to allow for the development of research and coordination.

The Ministry of the Environment is undertaking that research. The fact is that there is a large body of research that backs up the placement of land-based wind turbines around the world. That same body of research does not exist for offshore freshwater wind turbines. We will await that body of research before decisions are made.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, we have a very serious problem here in the province of Ontario. When the Quebec Liberals were facing scandal after scandal in the construction industry, they decided to clear the air by establishing the Charbonneau commission. Officially, it was called the Commission of inquiry on the Awarding and Management of Public Contracts in the Construction Industry.

After the gas plant scandal, the Hydro One sell-off, the fundraising quotas in the energy sector and now the latest OPP investigation, it's time for a similar commission into the energy sector here in Ontario.

Will this Premier do the right thing by the people of this province and call a commission of inquiry on the awarding and management of public contracts in the energy industry, so that Ontarians can get the answers that they so rightly deserve?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: A commission of inquiry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew, come to order.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I appreciate the role of the opposition. I appreciate the fact that they have something in the newspaper which is in the form of an allegation. And I appreciate the fact that the opposition is not going to stand up and say anything good about this government, Mr. Speaker, but I will.

You know what? She hasn't mentioned Hydro One lately, Mr. Speaker. She hasn't mentioned Hydro One because the way we're paying down debt from the proceeds of the IPO, we are saving interest charges of $100 million a year by paying down debt—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. Order.

Is the member finished? Wrap up?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberals ripped up gas plants contracts so they could win a handful of seats in Mississauga and Oakville. The Premier admitted that. That cost Ontarians $1.1 billion. It's alleged—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The Minister of Natural Resources, come to order. The deputy House leader, come to order.

Finish, please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's alleged that they ripped up FIT contracts and then tried to hide the evidence in order to win seats in Scarborough. This could cost Ontarians $500 million or more.

These decisions are about helping the Liberal Party—not the people, not green energy or good policy. But people end up paying the price, Speaker, and they deserve the answers.

Will this Premier do the right thing by the people of this province and call a commission of inquiry into the awarding and the management of public contracts in Ontario's energy sector?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

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Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, again, I understand the role of the opposition. But when the leader gets up, it's hard to focus on an answer when she takes Kenora in the north and she takes Toronto in the south and she—she's all over the map on every issue that she can possibly raise in a question. So I choose to take one aspect of what she's raised in her shotgun approach and talk about what's positive happening in this province today.

She won't ask a question about Moody's investors raising the credit rating of the province of Ontario, saying that we're meeting our targets, we're growing the economy and we're creating jobs. She won't talk about any of those. She's embarrassed by how successful we are.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier, but I might remind the minister and the Premier that the role of government is actually to work in the interests of Ontarians, not the Liberal Party. The scandal is not limited to gas plants and the FIT contracts, which were cancelled to help the Liberal Party.

The government is selling Hydro One, which doesn't build infrastructure but does help out a group of bankers who, in turn, attended private fundraisers with the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Finance. The Liberal Party held a $100,000 fundraiser with private nuclear companies immediately before the government chose private companies and scrapped their plans to work with the OPG.

People want their government to focus on making sure that families and businesses have affordable, reliable electricity in this province. But every time the Liberal Party makes a deal, their only question seems to be, how can this help the Liberal Party?

Will this Premier clear the air and actually call a commission of inquiry, like the people prefer?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The member from Trinity–Spadina, it's the second time.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to talk to the member opposite on the issue of fundraising that she raised, because when we talk about getting ideas from various parts of the province and from the opposition parties, we actually have asked the PCs and the NDP and the Green Party to sit down and look at draft legislation.

The question that the leader of the third party asked was a very wide-ranging question. She began with fundraising. It's really disappointing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's really disappointing that of all of the parties—the PCs, the NDP and the Green Party—the only party that has refused to come to look at the draft legislation and give input is the NDP.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Disappointing? The Premier needs to look in the mirror to see what real disappointment is. The people of this province are disappointed in this Liberal government and they're disappointed in this Premier for the way they're handling the energy file. When the Liberal government makes energy decisions in this province, the Liberal Party wins and Ontarians lose. It happens time and time again.

There is something seriously wrong here and people deserve some basic answers from their government and from their Premier. She has promised openness and transparency. Will she finally take an opportunity to actually

fulfill that promise and call a commission of inquiry on the awarding and management of public contracts in the energy sector in this province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me take another piece of the question that the leader of the third party focused on. She talks about Hydro One. Now, I understand that the leader of the third party and I have a difference of opinion on Hydro One. But here's the thing: I am very surprised that the leader of the third party has not once expressed her support for the building of transit and transportation infrastructure in this province, and that she doesn't seem to understand that in order to be able to build transit, we need funding.

She campaigned on the same fiscal assumptions that we did, Mr. Speaker, and we have moved forward to make those investments. It's very surprising to me that not only will the NDP not give us substance in terms of fundraising advice, but she also isn't interested in talking about how we should invest in transit and how we should pay for that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Start the clock. Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier of this province and her ministers insist that their energy decisions are business as usual, but there is a pattern, Speaker. There's a pattern that is very serious and very wrong. The Liberal Party benefits, the OPP investigates, and people pay more. That's the pattern of this Liberal government when it comes to the energy sector.

The Premier has promised transparency over and over again. I think she does not know what that word means. I'm calling on her to keep that promise. If everything is okay, if everything is above board, if there's no problem whatsoever, then the Premier has got nothing to worry about and the air can be cleared for the people of this province.

I ask her to take my question seriously, to actually give the people of this province the respect they deserve and answer the question that I'm asking her—not try to be obtuse about it but answer the question that I'm asking her, which is to give Ontario's people the answers they deserve and call a commission of inquiry into the awarding and management of public contracts in the energy sector in this province—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The leader of the third party knows that there's a case before the courts. She knows that we made a decision to gather evidence and to look at the research. She knows. I would think that the NDP has got research on clean, renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, so she would know that there are decades of research that has been done on land-based wind turbines. That same body of research does not exist for offshore, freshwater siting of turbines. That research is being done, and we will take the responsible approach and await the results of that research.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Monte McNaughton: My question today is to the Premier. A year ago today, the Minister of Economic Development said, "I'd like to see us land a new [manufacturing] plant or two in the next five or 10 years." He even went so far as to appoint an auto czar to make that happen.

Yet the Minister of the Environment has totally different plans. At the same time that he threatened the 50,000 jobs in the nuclear industry, he also took aim at the nearly one in six Ontario jobs that benefit from the auto industry. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment described our Canadian manufacturers as "lacking courageous leadership" and doomed to have BMW and Tesla "start eating [their] lunch."

For the second day in a row, which cabinet minister does the Premier side with, the minister who wants auto manufacturing or the minister who doesn't?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we've been very clear all along that we are going to invest in our economy to create good-paying jobs, and we have. The plan has been working: over 630,000 net new jobs since the recession.

We have become the top destination in all of North America for foreign direct investment, beating out California, Texas, New York and every other province. We do so because we are partnering with the auto sector, recognizing the transformations that they're making in manufacturing—value-added manufacturing, which, by the way, is also an improvement for our environment. They work hand in hand. We're working closely together to improve our economy, improve our environment and, Mr. Speaker, we're winning by this point.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Again to the Premier: Just last year the Premier appointed Ray Tanguay as the auto czar to help bring new auto investment to our province. In one day, the environment minister has reversed much of that hard work. It's another day, another uninformed comment from the environment minister.

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We've already lost General Motors in Windsor and the Ford plant near St. Thomas, and the GM plant in Oshawa could be next. If the GM plant leaves, it alone will cost Ontario $5.7 billion in GDP and over 33,000 well-paying jobs. That's why I wrote to Ray Tanguay to see if he agrees with the minister's comments.

Speaker, who does the Premier think should produce the government's policies on the auto sector, the expert with over 30 years' experience or Glen Murray?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister's title or riding, please.

Minister of Finance?

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question because it gives us the opportunity to once again talk about the importance of the auto industry and the importance of continuing to support a sector. By the way, Mr. Speaker,

the Progressive Conservatives voted against the opportunity to save the auto industry when it was most in need. They sat on their hands and they did not support what was necessary.

As a result of our ongoing support, since 2003, our government has invested over $1 billion, leveraging an additional $12 billion from the private sector for the auto industry. Ontario owns four of the top five positions in the latest survey by J.D. Power and Associates for quality vehicles built in North America.

Over the past two years, Ontario has seen nearly $4.5 billion in new auto investments. This is helping to create and sustain over 21,000 jobs in that very sector, as well as a peripheral sector that services that industry.

The auto industry is critical to Ontario, and we are going to continue to support it and we are going to continue to support—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Premier. Currently, the OPP is investigating the Liberal government for the gas plants scandal, Ornge kickbacks and the Sudbury bribery scandal. Now, the OPP is investigating the Liberal government for deleting documents in a $2.25-billion lawsuit regarding the cancellation of wind contracts to save seats.

It seems that this is the fifth OPP probe into this Liberal government. It seems that every time we look at Liberal self-interest, it leads to police investigations. Can the Premier explain this pattern?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of community—

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Government and consumer services.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government services, whatever it is.

Hon. David Orazietti: I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

Look, it's pretty clear that on this side of the House, open, transparent and accountable records are what this government supports. Bill 8—

Laughter.

Hon. David Orazietti: The member opposite laughs, but when we introduced Bill 8, with higher standards for transparency and accountability, the NDP voted against it. They sit here and laugh about it, but they voted against it.

We created an offence of up to $5,000 for the willful destruction of records, ensuring that all chiefs of staff were designated as the person accountable for records and compliance. We developed a mandatory training program with respect to that and we required that every institution have reasonable measures to secure their records.

When we introduced Bill 8 to raise the standards and raise the bar in Ontario, this party and those members—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

Supplementary?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: A commission of inquiry would clear the air. It would clear the air with regard to the cancellation of the wind contracts and the destruction of documents. It would perhaps clear the air with regards to why this government is selling off Hydro One and it would maybe answer some questions around the Liberal government's fundraising and the connection to the energy sector.

If the Premier has nothing to hide, why not just clear the air? Will the Premier do the right thing and call a commission of inquiry into the awarding and management of public contracts in the energy sector? Yes or no?

Hon. David Orazietti: The OPP investigation will take place. It will take place as an independent investigation. We're not going to interfere in that in any way, nor should we.

The importance of this is to ensure that we continue to raise the standard around record keeping and record retention. That's what our government is doing.

In fact, the Information and Privacy Commissioner commented on that and specifically said, with regards to Bill 8—which they voted against—that with the steps that we have taken, "I am pleased to report that the Premier and the government have made significant progress in addressing each of the recommendations made. I appreciate the cooperation I've received from Premier Kathleen Wynne." This, I think, speaks volumes to the leadership of this Premier in raising the standard for record keeping, retention, and ensuring that appropriate records are kept.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. As the question ended, I was ready to stand up and ask the member from Lanark to come to order, and also the member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Granville Anderson: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. We all agree that the quality of our air directly impacts our health, our environment and the future of all Ontarians. I and the residents of Durham take particular interest as we live east of Canada's largest city and our air quality changes are impacted by air in Toronto. It is in my constituents' and everyone's best interest that our air be as clean as possible. I understand that the 2014 air quality report was recently released, marking 44 years of reporting on air quality in Ontario. Would the minister please provide more details to the House on the findings of the 2014 air quality report?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: There's very, very good news in the air quality report and I'd like to share it with the House.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Renfrew, second time.

Minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The state of air quality in Ontario report has shown some amazing progress. There were absolutely no smog advisories in 2014, and the province's air was rated "very good" for 94% of the year. The 2014 Ontario air quality report shows significant decreases in smog-causing pollutants, specifically a 42% decrease in nitrogen oxide, a 49% decrease in sulphur dioxide, 40%—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, second time. Just as a reminder, if you get two warnings, the next time you're out.

Carry on.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: —and a 31% decrease in fine particulate matter. These are very significant reductions. As a matter of fact, they're record-breaking reductions.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Granville Anderson: Speaker, thank you to the minister. The 2014 air quality report seems to confirm that our actions are contributing to improve air quality and helping to fight climate change. I am glad to be part of a government that takes the health of our people and environment seriously. We have set a new air standard and rules for industry air emissions, and eliminated coal-fired power plants, and we continue investing in clean and renewable energy and have placed emissions caps on sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. All across Ontario, we are seeing improvements to air quality. Would the minister please provide the House specific regional information coming out of the air quality report?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It's a pleasure to do so. Ontario has a network of 39 outside air monitoring stations. I'd just like to give a bit of a summary of what's going on across Ontario:

—in Windsor, very good to good air quality 90% of the time in 2014. Nitrogen dioxide concentrations, a problem in Windsor, are down 26%, and sulphur dioxide is down 58%;

—in London, very good air quality 91% of the time, and nitrogen dioxide down 58%;

—here in Toronto, very good to good air quality 93% of the time, with nitrogen dioxide down 36%, and sulphur dioxide down a remarkable 75% over the same period;

—in Kingston, good air quality 94% of the time, with nitrogen dioxide down 35%; and

—in my parliamentary assistant's great city of Sudbury, air quality is good 97% of the time, which is remarkable.

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ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION

Mr. Steve Clark: My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Speaker, volunteer groups were shocked that this minister allowed the Ontario Trillium Foundation to scrap its vital capital program. Now we learn that the move is just part of what only can be described as a traumatic overhaul of Trillium, and it's all happening without input from front-line staff, OTF volunteers or the communities that this cherished program has served so well. Included is a proposal by the OTF board to dramatically reduce local input in the granting process by slashing the number of catchment areas from 16 to just five.

Speaker, is the minister aware of this plan? What is he doing to protect front-line jobs at OTF and ensure it continues to support volunteer groups in small towns and rural Ontario?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to start by saying how proud we are as a government to support the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We know that the Trillium foundation is such a successful organization, and it does great work right across the province of Ontario.

This year, our contribution as a government to Ontario Trillium is $115 million, which goes out to many different parts of Ontario. We've invested $25 million in Ontario Trillium for a new community capital program that we know is going to support the capital build of many different organizations here in Ontario. With Canada 150, we see this as an exciting addition to the celebration that will take place next year. We're very proud of our Trillium foundation and the local boards that make the decisions at the local level across the province, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Well, Speaker, back to the minister, but from that answer it's obvious the minister doesn't know about the situation. He'll be interested to know, though, that decisions made by local grant review teams were recently reversed by OTF's central liaison committee after $3.4 million was left on the table at year end. Instead of going back to the local teams—these experts—this committee handpicked the winners by approving applications that were previously rejected. This behaviour is eroding the role of local volunteers and program staff who know the communities they serve.

The good news is, though, that the minister can stop it. The CEO's report to the board states very clearly that the minister must approve the regionalization plan. Speaker, why is the minister allowing the board to proceed with this plan without insisting that OTF conduct broad consultation first?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. It sounds as though he has some concerns.

Mr. Speaker, there's a business plan that's presented to us as a ministry each year. Anything that's in that business plan is approved by me as the minister, and it goes through a very serious process locally. Any type of major shift that happens in any of our agencies that affects the public is open to discussion locally. I continue to submit names that go to cabinet that are approved for people who serve on these 16 boards. The 16 boards are currently intact, and they will continue to be in that position. That's the current plan.

If he has a specific item that he'd like to talk to me about, perhaps a local board that's within his area, I would love to sit down and talk to him about that.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. When it comes to our health care, what's best for patients should always be the bottom line, Speaker. But this Premier is forcing Ontario's hospitals to make deep cuts to front-line care, and patients are the ones who are paying the price.

More than 1,200 nursing positions have been cut since the start of 2015. Hospital beds are being shut down. Lab services and outpatient clinics are closing. Patients see what's happening to our health care, and families are feeling it. The front-line workers and nurses know exactly how deep these cuts are, but the Premier doesn't seem to be listening.

Speaker, what will it take for this Premier to stop cutting hospital care and restore the stable, predictable funding that our public hospitals deserve?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: This year in the budget we've increased our hospital line by 2.1%—well above the rate of inflation, Mr. Speaker. It's a $345-million increase.

At the same time, we're now entering year five of the quality changes that we've made to our health care system, beginning with our hospitals. We asked ICES, the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, to do a preliminary evaluation of the impact, and here's what they found. In our hospitals, they found that we are seeing more patients. We're seeing a reduction in the average length of stay for surgical and medical admissions. We're seeing, importantly, improvement in nursing-sensitive measures for selected conditions. We're seeing fewer falls, fewer pressure sores, fewer urinary tract infections, fewer in-hospital cases of pneumonia, and we're seeing that hospital readmission rates have not changed.

We're actually seeing tremendous improvements with the changes we've implemented.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, for the past four years, base operating funding for hospitals increased by—just take a guess—zero, 0%. Now in 2016, notwithstanding the way the minister tries to kind of reclaim what's really in that budget, it's only a 1% increase to base funding in that budget. Page 116: He can ask his finance minister to look it up for him.

It's no wonder that 1,200 nursing positions have been cut, it's no wonder that people in Toronto hospitals are being treated in hallways and it's no wonder that folks in Scarborough are having surgeries in operating rooms that were built in 1956.

Health care is the silent crisis for this Liberal government. When will the Premier do the right thing, stop the hospital cuts and ensure funding for our hospitals keeps up with inflation and population growth in our province?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I know that the leader of the third party understands that base funding is just part of the funding that hospitals receive. We're increasing the funding for operating for hospitals by 2.1% this year.

But I understand that she's going back to their behaviour in the 1990s, when they were in power. We're not going to do that. We're not going to do what they did in the last two years of NDP government, where they cut the health care budget two years in a row. We're not going to do what they did where, in their last year, they reduced hospital funding by 1%. We're not going to do what they did when they were in power, which was close 13% of mental health beds. That's 300 beds. They closed 24% of hospital beds.

We're continuing to invest in our hospitals and in our health care system. That's demonstrated clearly in the budget. The math does add up and makes sense. This is a substantial investment.

I want to congratulate our health care workers for the excellent work they do every day.

FAMILY SERVICE ONTARIO

Mr. Vic Dhillon: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Today, we're pleased to have Family Service Ontario with us here in the Legislature. FSO and its 48 member agencies play an integral role in this government's efforts to end violence against women, as well as the transformation of Ontario's developmental services system.

I'm proud that one of these agencies, Catholic Family Services of Peel Dufferin, is located in my riding of Brampton West. They're the lead agency for the conjoined counselling pilot project, and I know that their executive director, Sharon Mayne Devine, is with us here in the House this morning.

Can the minister please elaborate on the important work that FSO does to support vulnerable Ontarians and how the ministry supports them in this?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Thank you very much to the member from Brampton West for the question.

As the member has said, the work of Family Service Ontario and their agencies touches thousands of Ontarians and helps to make the lives of the people they serve better. FSO offers programs for children and adults with

developmental disabilities. They receive ministry funding for community participation, caregiver respite services and supports, and case management services. Also, through funding provided by my ministry, FSO agencies provide counselling and therapy for survivors of sexual abuse and family violence.

The services provided by FSO and their member agencies are vital. I truly value the work done by FSO front-line workers and will continue to work closely with them in order to support vulnerable Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Thank you, Minister. Clearly, this government recognizes the great work organizations such as Family Service Ontario do in our province.

In fact, I know that we continue to make investments that support some of our most vulnerable individuals. With the 2016 budget, our government has announced $2.4 million to pilot a new portable housing benefit that would offer more options for those fleeing domestic violence, benefiting nearly 500 households; a $1-million Rural Realities Fund to help rural, remote and northern agencies develop local solutions that address the unique challenges in serving their communities; and $1.5 million in aboriginal-designed and delivered community service, including the development of an expanded province-wide counseling help line for aboriginal women.

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I've recently heard that counselling services through FSO have also been expanded. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please share some of the details of this expansion with the House?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: As part of our government's ongoing efforts to end violence against women, I'm pleased to let this House know that we're currently funding a two-year pilot project with FSO to provide joint counselling programs for couples experiencing situational couple violence. This pilot will serve 100 couples from three pilot sites—one northern, one rural and one urban—and a focus will be placed on serving the aboriginal community as well as French-speaking clients. This pilot is part of work aimed at reducing the thinking, behaviours and conflict that may lead to domestic violence. This project is exploring the effectiveness of joint counselling for couples in lower-risk situational couple violence and whether early intervention would lead to prevention of further domestic violence.

I'd like to thank FSO for being here today. Your work makes a real difference in the lives of thousands of Ontarians every day.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Minister of Education. Speaker, while families of children with autism struggle to deal with this government's removal of vital IBI services, others are facing further hardship in having their children's designated service dog approved for use at school.

Families in the region of Waterloo have reported significant hurdles with the local board not letting their child's trained service dog accompany them to school. These are trained, professional dogs that are to be the child's constant companion, helping them overcome their challenges and improve social interactions.

Speaker, does the minister agree that families of children with autism shouldn't have their service dogs taken away from them when they get to school?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I thank the member opposite for his question. Obviously, we are very concerned about the safety, the health and the well-being of students with autism, or students with, quite frankly, a variety of other disabilities. We know that in many cases service dogs do help children with disabilities, and that could be blind students, or it might be deaf students in some cases. Certainly, students with autism and with a variety of mental health issues may have service dogs. We know that there are a variety of circumstances.

School boards are responsible for having their own policies. What I would say is that their policies, however, must be compliant with the Ontario Human Rights Code and must be compliant with Ontario's equity and inclusive education policy. So there are provincial laws and policies—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Harris: Speaker, nine-year-old Jack and his dog Jensen will now be allowed on school grounds for just certain activities, but accommodation in the classroom has yet to be addressed. Meantime, in another case, the father of a seven-year-old says the board "jerked my chain for four months of 'process,' followed by a flat denial."

The AODA calls for accommodations for people with service animals and the Ontario Human Rights Code speaks to the "duty to accommodate persons with disabilities." We support service dogs for the blind, PTSD sufferers and others. Families of children with autism shouldn't have to face further hardships to get the same accommodations for their children.

Speaker, will the minister commit to reviewing Ontario school board service dog procedures and prevent further hardships for families of children with autism?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Certainly the boards are responsible for complying with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the equity policies. At the same time, I think it is important to understand, regardless of what the dog is for—what disability is being addressed—that these are individual circumstances, and the board does look at things like the training of the dog, whether or not the child is being left independently with the dog during class, the training relationship between the child and the dog, and the ability to control the dog, or at least to make sure that the dog is under control.

So there are a variety of things that have to do with the individual child and the individual animal, and that's why boards make—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^me^ France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la première ministre. For four straight years, hospital budgets have been frozen, and our hospitals have been forced to make deep cuts to patient care.

Northern Ontario hospitals have been hard hit. Front-line workers have been laid off and beds have been closed across the entire north, in Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, North Bay, Atikokan, Temiskaming Shores, and the list goes on. At the North Bay hospital, more than 300 front-line workers have been cut in the last four years. But this government doesn't seem to care about cuts to patient care.

When will the Premier stop the cuts to health care in the north and restore stable, predictable funding to Ontario hospitals?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The member opposite well knows that we continue to invest. Our health care budget goes up each and every year an additional $1 billion, to almost $52 billion this year alone. Those are important investments.

It includes $160 million dedicated solely to improving access and wait times for hospital services, things like cataract surgery and knee and hip replacements. Importantly, $7.5 million is dedicated just for our small and rural hospitals, many of them in the north of the province.

That does not include a continuation of our Small and Rural Hospital Transformation Fund, which is a $20-million annual fund just for small and rural hospitals.

As well, there is $6 million of new funding for mental health hospitals.

We continue to invest. These are important investments in our hospitals. But we also need to recognize that we're transforming our health care system and moving more activities and supports out of hospitals.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^me^ France Gélinas: Northerners have a hard enough time gaining access to health care. We also face some of the greatest health inequity. The last thing that we need is a Premier who cuts our hospitals.

Health care in the north is a silent crisis of this Liberal government. Patients know it. Northerners know it. Families know it. But the Premier refuses to admit it.

My question is straightforward: When will the Premier stop cutting hospital care in northern Ontario and make sure that, at the very least, hospital funding keeps up with inflation and Ontario population growth?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The facts just don't support what the member opposite is alleging. We've increased hospital funding across the north by 54%. We're building new hospitals right across this province. Seven new builds, or substantial additions, are taking place in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, North Bay, Sioux Lookout, the Sault hospital, West Parry Sound and Mattawa general hospital.

We're making investments. The member well knows that I was in Sudbury not that long ago, announcing a new PET scanner for the Sudbury hospital.

We are investing like never before. We have a new school of medicine in the north, which has resulted in an increase of more than 20% more doctors being employed and working in the north than before. Our first nurse-practitioner-led clinic was in Sudbury, in the north.

We are investing in health care in the northern part of this province like never before.

ONTARIO GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. The mining and exploration industry is an incredibly important contributor in my riding of Sudbury and, of course, to our provincial economy. Ontario is a leading jurisdiction for the exploration and production of minerals in Canada, and a major player across the world.

One of the major players is the Ontario Geological Survey. This organization is responsible for documenting and communicating the geology of Ontario, and it has achieved many milestones for Ontario's mineral sector. Throughout the north today, the OGS is celebrating its own major milestone: its 125th anniversary.

Can the minister please tell us more about what the OGS is doing for us in Ontario?

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Hon. Michael Gravelle: That's just a great question from the member for Sudbury. This year is the 125th anniversary of the Ontario Geological Survey, and we could not be prouder. In fact, celebrations of this historic occasion are happening all across northern Ontario today so I want to do a bit of a shout-out, if I may, to the OGS members who may be watching today.

The OGS has been involved in some amazing and cutting-edge initiatives. Not everybody may know this, but the OGS worked with NASA on its missions to the moon in the 1970s. It's even connected to the first rock with evidence of water discovered on Mars. The OGS work has led to some incredible discoveries, such as a 9,000-year-old arrowhead near Wawa.

The Ontario Geological Survey provides essential tools that are readily available to governments, to industry and to communities at large. These tools are critical to the ongoing development of Ontario's mineral sector. I am proud of the OGS. I know everybody in the House is happy to celebrate its 125th anniversary and all it has achieved during that time.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. It is clear that the Ontario Geological Survey has an important role in helping to support Ontario's mineral sector. Ontario accounts for approximately 25% of mining jobs in Canada, with about two thirds of these jobs in the north. I also understand that the mineral sector is the largest private sector employer of aboriginal peoples in Canada—something to be very proud of. So it is great to

hear that our government has been taking steps to maintain Ontario's place as the top jurisdiction for the exploration and production of minerals in Canada.

There have been many concerns recently about the mineral sector due to global commodity prices. Can the minister please tell us more about the OGS and the investments that Ontario is making to support the mineral industry in our great province?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: It gives me great pride to be able to say that today Ontario is Canada's leading jurisdiction for the exploration and production of minerals, in large part because of the work done by the OGS.

The work of the Ontario Geological Survey has impacted an extraordinary number of initiatives. OGS mapping in the Werner Lake area north of Kenora led to an $11-million investment in cobalt exploration. OGS data was part of the early groundwork that led to the discovery of a gold deposit near Fort Frances and Emo and attracted private sector investment in New Gold's Rainy River project, a very exciting new project. The work of the OGS helped the municipality of Shelburne find safe drinking water. So there are many different initiatives; the list goes on and on.

After 125 years of exceptional service for the public good, I am sure excited to say that the Ontario Geological Survey will continue its good work for many years to come.

ÉLÈVES AYANT DES BESOINS PARTICULIERS

SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

M^me^ Gila Martow: Ma question est pour la première ministre. Malgré la relâche d'un an par le gouvernement, ce gouvernement continue à regarder les sourds et les aveugles de l'Ontario comme un moyen d'économiser de l'argent. C'est cruel. Le Centre Jules-Léger à Ottawa offre une éducation bilingue dans la langue des signes et en français. C'est la seule école bilingue pour les aveugles en Ontario. Si le gouvernement ferme cette école, il enlèverait 130 ans de sensibilisation pour les sourds en Ontario et surtout pour ceux et celles qui ont besoin de la langue des signes dans l'éducation des enfants sourds.

Est-ce que le gouvernement s'engagera à garder cette école et des écoles comme celle-ci ouvertes?

L'hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Ministre de l'Éducation.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Merci. We're back to talking about the provincial school and the demonstration school. In the case of Centre Jules-Léger, it serves both purposes. In terms of the demonstration school, we have reopened admissions for next year, as we have with all the demonstration schools. We are getting the report back now on how we address the issue in the future.

It's interesting that at Centre Jules-Léger, when you look at the children that attend the demonstration school there, about half of them actually come from northern Ontario. We really do need to consider how to serve not just the cluster of francophones who live in the Ottawa area, but also francophones who live in northern Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^me^ Gila Martow: Je retourne à la première ministre. Des années de scandale, de gaspillage et de mauvaise gestion mènent cette première ministre à couper les services essentiels. Son action est en conflit avec la preuve qui indique que priver les enfants sourds de la langue des signes entraîne des retards linguistiques et cognitifs qui se prolongent jusqu'à l'âge adulte.

Après beaucoup de pression, la ministre de l'Éducation a été forcée de rouvrir les inscriptions pour 2016 et 2017 au Centre Jules-Léger à Ottawa. Ce fut seulement pour arrêter le rassemblement à Queen's Park le lendemain. Mais une année ne protège pas l'avenir de ces enfants.

Est-ce que la première ministre va s'engager à garder le Centre Jules-Léger à Ottawa ouvert pour l'avenir?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I think that the member, in her question, has actually covered the issue, which is that we know that the work that happens in the demonstration schools, be they francophone demonstration schools or English demonstration schools, is highly effective in helping children who are multiple grades behind in the ability to read and that it actually is a very effective program at helping them learn the skill of reading, which is essential to everything else. We know that they are effective. That's not the issue.

The issue is that we have children all over Ontario who are struggling with the ability to read, and we need to make sure that the programs which will help those children to learn to read, in fact, are available throughout Ontario, either in French or in English, as the case may be.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Trinity–Spadina on a point of order.

Mr. Han Dong: I didn't get a chance to introduce four of my constituents here with us in the members' gallery: Mr. Hao Cheng Fan, Mr. Hong Ke Zheng, Ms. Sisi Liu and Ms. Shuai Chai. Welcome.

REPORT, CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the post-event report of the Whitby–Oshawa by-election from the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1208 to 1500.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Jeff Yurek: This week marks national palliative care week, with the theme of "Hospice Palliative Care

First." This is an annual awareness week organized by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association. The purpose of this week is to bring awareness and education about end-of-life care in Ontario. There are still many myths that surround palliative care in Ontario, and this year's campaign is to dispel many of those myths.

Palliative care is really about focusing on improving the quality of life for an individual and taking a holistic approach to focus on pain and symptom management.

In my riding, Elgin Hospice Palliative Care Collaborative and other organizations have been working over the last few years to not only bring awareness to palliative care in Elgin county and St. Thomas but also to create a residential hospice in the area. The need for a residential hospice does exist, and it's my hope that the government is listening to the local concerns from my riding.

In 2014, Ontario's Auditor General highlighted the dismal state of palliative care services in Ontario, which has resulted in inequitable access to palliative care, inefficient use of funding and a patchwork of varying services and standards across the province. Health Quality Ontario has estimated that only about 30% of patients get the palliative care they should. This need will only grow as the population ages.

Research shows that access to a palliative approach to care is better not only for patients but for the family. It reduces that stress on the patients and family, improves quality of life and patient satisfaction, and places less of a burden on caregivers.

I want to thank each and every health care professional who works within palliative care. Your work is not easy, and I commend you for what you do and for your dedication to our health care system.

MARYLYNN HOLZEL

Mr. Percy Hatfield: As you know, we'll soon be celebrating Nursing Week in Ontario. Down in Windsor and Essex county, the RNAO has already recognized the efforts of one exceptional nurse. Marylynn Holzel is this year's recipient of the Lois A. Fairley Nurse of the Year Community Service Award. This award, named after the late nurse, mentor and advocate, honours someone who has demonstrated a commitment to serving the community through excellence in patient care.

Ms. Holzel has been nursing for more than 30 years. She's done it all, from medical-surgical, pediatrics and telemetry to ambulatory care.

Years ago, Marylynn lost a daughter, Holly, to sudden infant death syndrome. There were no SIDS bereavement groups in our region at that time so she went to the States, got the training, came home and started a SIDS chapter to assist other parents to get through the grieving process.

She's been a volunteer manager and trainer for several hockey teams, a coach and team manager for the Amherstburg Soccer Association, and she's busy these days with the Miracle League, helping those with physical and intellectual challenges enjoy their time on the baseball field.

Marylynn Holzel is described as kind, fun, hard-working, dedicated and a compassionate nurse. She loves her job and the people she works with. Her greatest joy comes from her patients. You'll find her at the Ouellette campus of our Windsor Regional Hospital.

The annual award allows Windsor-area nurses to recognize someone who goes above and beyond, and also to honour the legacy of Lois Fairley, who had an immeasurable impact on so many lives in our region.

From the Ontario Legislature, congratulations to Marylynn Holzel, our nurse of the year in Windsor and Essex county.

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Mr. Chris Ballard: On April 28, I was honoured to attend the National Day of Mourning ceremony in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, organized by CUPE 905. Members of the community gathered to show their respect and remember all those who have died or have been injured simply because they went off to work.

CUPE 905 has created a beautiful memorial rock garden with cascading water at its headquarters in Newmarket. It's such a moving location, Mr. Speaker, that members of the community stop by to add small rocks to the garden with the names of their loved ones who have died in workplace accidents written on them.

I doubt there's anyone here in this House who hasn't been touched in some way by a workplace death or injury. My father worked in manufacturing and I heard too many horror stories about friends and colleagues who had died or been injured at work.

The National Day of Mourning is not only a day to remember and honour those lives lost or workers injured due to a workplace tragedy, but also a day to renew the commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace and prevent further injuries, illnesses and deaths.

I offer my sympathies to all those who have lost a loved one in a workplace accident and to those who suffer ongoing injury or illness as a result of poor work environments. And I offer a heartfelt thank you to CUPE 905 for hosting this moving event.

INSURANCE FRAUD

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Organized insurance fraud is a serious problem that impacts the cost of insurance for all consumers. It's estimated to cost upwards of $1 billion in Ontario alone. A recent undercover investigation, widely televised, revealed staff at professional clinics encouraging and counselling undercover investigators to commit fraud. It's shocking to see how some professionals, who should be protecting accident victims, are instead encouraging the undercover investigators to lie so they can submit phony forms and collect insurance payments for services never rendered.

A recent insurance association survey found that 69% of respondents believe there is fraud in the Ontario auto system. This systemic fraud is being carried out by those

who skirt the law, and results in higher premiums for consumers. It is unfair to honest, law-abiding Ontarians who play by the rules. It hits all of us in the pocketbooks. As much as 10% to 15% of injury payouts are fraudulent.

I urge the government to take real action to truly attack the root cause of this issue. On the organized auto insurance fraud front, reforms are needed to deliver benefits to injured claimants and not only service providers.

CLAIRE PRASHAW

Mr. Michael Mantha: I rise today on a little bit of a sad note. In my constituency office, I have Grant Buck, Vicky Arsenault and Cindy Haddow, but today I rise to recognize a really big part of my puzzle, and that's Claire Prashaw. She's my executive assistant that I have here and this is her last week that she's going to be spending with me at Queen's Park. She's moving on.

She's an amazing woman. She is a single mom raising a beautiful boy; his name is Cruz. I've often played with Cruz in my office—thrown popcorn, played a couple of puzzle games. He really likes my exploding washroom that I have in my office.

I have grown to not only respect Claire, but really love Claire. When I first got here, I was a little rough around the edges. Claire moulded me into what I am here today. She actually was on me for the last four and a half years to get to the gym. I've been at the gym now for the last eight weeks and it's thanks to Claire. But she's moving on, so her project with me is done.

When I sat down and had a chat with Claire, there were many people that came up to me and said, "Why are you choosing Claire?" My simple response to them was: "If she's good enough for Jack Layton, she's damn well good enough for Mike Mantha."

Claire, I'm going to miss you. I know you're sitting at your desk. I love you to death. You are my best friend that I've had here for a very long time. Good luck with your endeavours, and you're always welcome at suite 160 to come for a hug.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You told me I was your best friend.

ITALIAN FALLEN WORKERS MEMORIAL

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I rise in the House today to remember the over 1,000 fallen Italian workers who have lost their lives building our province.

Last April 28, on the National Day of Mourning for workers who have been killed or injured as a result of work, over 500 people, including myself and several members of this Legislature, gathered at Toronto's Villa Colombo memorial gardens to pay tribute to the victims of workplace accidents. There is now a permanent Italian Fallen Workers Memorial at this site, consisting of 11 metal columns engraved with the more than 1,000 names of the victims, which will forever remind us of these lives that were taken too soon.

1510

The Italian Fallen Workers Memorial is the culmination of a six-year effort to formally recognize the enormous sacrifices of Italian workers in Ontario's construction and industrial development for more than a century. Many of them came here—to Sault Ste. Marie, to Toronto, to Welland—to work in the mines and on the hydro projects, canals, railways, roads, bridges, subways and skyscrapers.

Through the committed work of volunteer researchers, led by the project leader, Mr. Marino Toppan, the committee continues to uncover the names of victims of workplace fatalities of Italian origin.

I wish to thank Mr. Marino Toppan for his tenacity, and the entire committee, the volunteers and the donors for making sure that future generations know about the price paid by their fathers and grandfathers in building our beautiful province.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Randy Hillier: Speaker, I'm glad the Minister of Children and Youth Services is here.

I was both astonished and disturbed when I was informed that the partnership between my local school board and the Cordick treatment program was arbitrarily terminated. The Cordick treatment program helps at-risk youth gain the foundational skills they need to return and thrive in the classroom, and has helped over 600 students and is a model of success.

The Cordick program is a private company which receives its funding via student referrals to their program. However, it was revealed this week, during Children's Mental Health Week, that the funding for this successful treatment program has ended and the funds will instead be spent by another mental health agency to cover its operating deficit. They are balancing agency budgets on the backs of at-risk children. This is atrocious and shameful and happening in Ontario. What is also disturbing is that the director of the Upper Canada District School Board, Mr. Sliwa, and the mental health agencies refuse to meet with either myself or the Cordick program director to find a solution.

Speaker, I'll continue to fight to keep this treatment and therapy available for the children in my riding so that they receive the help they both need and deserve.

DOWNTOWN MILTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Last week I had the pleasure of welcoming Premier Wynne to my riding of Halton, and it was a wonderful visit that gave local residents a chance to speak directly with the Premier. For me, the highlight of the visit was sitting down for a

round-table discussion with our local downtown business improvement association. Members of the DBIA were able to discuss issues of importance to our community, including transportation, business challenges, and ways to grow the local economy. It was a fantastic conversation and gave everyone there a glimpse of the thriving arts and business communities in our growing town and the dedicated people driving our local economy. It was a great way to share ideas, and it really helped to show the DBIA that our government, all the way up to the Premier, is listening.

Thanks to the Sixteen Mile Arts Photography Gallery in downtown Milton for allowing us to use their beautiful space. The gallery's amazing photo exhibit was shot entirely on mobile phones, and it was amazing to see what can be done with a little talent and cellphones.

Mr. Speaker, the meeting was positive, and members of the Milton business community were very happy with the discussion.

Thank you to the Premier for engaging our community, and thank you to the Milton DBIA for their valuable contributions.

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Soo Wong: This month marks the 14th annual celebration of Asian Heritage Month, and I rise today to honour and recognize Asian Canadians who have enriched our province and our country with their achievements, contributions and vibrant cultures.

Notable Asian Ontarians who have made valuable contributions include Dr. Tak Mak, whose significant work in microbiology and immunology has influenced public health worldwide; Jean Lumb, the first Chinese Canadian woman and the first restaurateur to receive the Order of Canada for her community work; Raymond Moriyama, an internationally renowned architect whose designs are recognized locally and internationally; Tanya Kim, co-host of CTV's etalk; Charles Chi, an entrepreneur and the current chancellor of Carleton University; Wei Chen Yi, president of the Confederation of Toronto Chinese Canadian Organizations; Scarborough–Agincourt resident Jonathan Lai, a star badminton athlete and Quest for Gold recipient; and Wayson Choy, an award-winning author.

Throughout the month of May, Ontarians will have an opportunity to participate in various Asian Heritage Month festivities. This annual celebration preserves the rich Asian culture and heritage as well as promotes a better understanding between the different cultural groups. At the same time, it recognizes that Asian Canadians support Canadian values: mutual understanding, respect for diversity and multiculturalism.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of my Asian heritage, of having the privilege to serve my beautiful riding of Scarborough–Agincourt as MPP, and to be the first Asian woman to be appointed Deputy Speaker.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr42, An Act to revive 790186 Ontario Inc.

Bill Pr43, An Act respecting the Ismaili Centre, Toronto, the Aga Khan Museum and the Aga Khan Park.

Your committee further recommends that the fees and the actual cost of printing at all stages be remitted on Bill Pr43, An Act respecting the Ismaili Centre, Toronto, the Aga Khan Museum and the Aga Khan Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

Report adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Grant Crack: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on General Government and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas / Projet de loi 172, Loi concernant les gaz à effet de serre.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Carried.

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (HELMET EXEMPTION FOR SIKH MOTORCYCLISTS), 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (EXEMPTION DE L'OBLIGATION DE PORT DU CASQUE POUR LES MOTOCYCLISTES SIKHS)

Mr. Smith moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 194, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to exempt Sikh motorcyclists from the requirement to wear a helmet / Projet de loi 194, Loi modifiant le Code de la route pour exempter les motocyclistes sikhs de l'obligation de porter un casque.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Todd Smith: Currently, section 104 of the Highway Traffic Act requires persons riding or operating a motorcycle or motor-assisted bicycle on a highway to wear a helmet. The bill exempts members of the Sikh religion who have unshorn hair and who habitually wear turbans from the requirement to wear a helmet.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

SEMAINE DE LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES ENFANTS

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I rise in the House today to recognize that this week is Children's Mental Health Week. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work, caring and understanding of those who love and care for children and youth with mental health challenges—their parents, siblings and other family members and friends—and I want to recognize the dedication and compassion of our mental health providers and partners, who diligently support young people with mental health problems, including our mental health service providers.

While efforts and inroads have been made in reducing the stigma around mental health challenges in recent years, there remains a reluctance in society to accept that many of us face mental health challenges throughout our lives. That creates a very real barrier that prevents young people from seeking help. That's why Children's Mental Health Week is so important, and why we need to keep talking about mental health in our communities, in our cities and across the province.

Across the province, our mental health and addictions strategy is making a difference as we provide faster access to quality services, identify and intervene earlier, and close critical service gaps for children and youth.

1520

In the first three years of the strategy, my ministry, together with the Ministries of Health, Education, and Training, Colleges and Universities have done the following:

We supported the hiring of 770 mental health workers in schools, communities, and courts.

We provided more than 2,800 psychiatric consults through video conferencing this year alone to benefit children and youth in rural, remote and underserved communities.

We launched Good2Talk, a free, confidential and anonymous helpline providing professional counselling, information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario.

We've established School Mental Health ASSIST, a provincial support team designed to help Ontario school boards promote student mental health and well-being.

But one of the most important changes we are making is to modernize the way mental health services are delivered to our children and youth in the province. We are working towards a stronger system that will get them the core support they need when and where they need it.

Nous travaillons à mettre en place un système plus fort qui va leur donner le soutien fondamental dont ils ont besoin, quand et où ils en ont besoin.

Recently, to support our Moving on Mental Health system transformation, we invested an additional $6 million to hire more than 80 mental health workers across the province. That investment marks a milestone, and it was the first time our mental health lead agencies across the province were responsible for identifying and addressing the local needs in their communities.

For example, in Oxford county, the Oxford-Elgin Child and Youth Centre provides immediate access to single-session counselling services to children, youth and their families. Clients have had positive things to say about their walk-in services, with one family stating, "The clinic has provided an amazing source of support, understanding, and education, not only for the children, but for our family."

In London, Craigwood Youth Services and Vanier Children's Services have partnered to offer services in the form of walk-in clinics. Youth and family are able to attend a session in their home communities without the need for an appointment and can schedule further sessions on an as-required basis. This service was expanded through Middlesex county because of our investment. A weekly clinic will occur in Strathroy, and biweekly sessions are planned in Dorchester, Glencoe, Parkhill and Lucan. The response to the clinics has been very positive, and by the end of last year, Speaker, the clinic had served 1,455 children and youth, aged three to 18.

New programs like this are coming into action across the province because of the $6-million investment. Because of the work of our lead agencies to consult with local partners, we find out where new mental health dollars could do the most good and then take action. They are doing fantastic work, and I'm confident of their ability to transform our community-based mental health system for the better.

Ils font un travail fantastique, et je suis sûre qu'ils pourront améliorer notre système communautaire de santé mentale.

It's also important that families whose son or daughter is having a mental health challenge find that information they need and get that quickly and easily. Our government's latest effort to support young people with mental health concerns and their families is the launch of a child and youth mental health directory as part of Health Care Options/Ontario.ca. This directory helps young people and their parents find information on local, government-funded mental health services and supports, so they can take the first step they need in getting help.

I'd also like to address what we're doing for indigenous communities around the province. A few weeks ago, with my colleague Dr. Eric Hoskins, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, I travelled to Attawapiskat.

While we were there, we spoke with community leaders and youth about the challenges they face and how we can support their mental and physical well-being. We are working urgently with indigenous communities and leadership on short-, medium- and long-term solutions to address the serious challenges facing indigenous communities and indigenous youth. Mental health workers are in the community right now, addressing immediate needs.

We're also investing in a youth regional coordination unit for Mushkegowuk Council, which will provide 24/7 mental health support and evening and night nursing clinical support.

Mr. Speaker, as individuals, as families, as communities, we all need to keep talking openly about mental health, to change the conversation and eliminate the stigma associated with mental health issues.

Our government will continue to work together with mental health workers, doctors, educators, indigenous communities, mental health associations, community leaders and so on, to make sure young people enjoy the bright futures they richly deserve.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's time for responses.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's a pleasure to rise on behalf of my leader, Patrick Brown, and the PC caucus to recognize the first week of May as Children's Mental Health Week, but I do so with a bit of a heavy heart. I don't know how many of the members have read the Children's Mental Health Ontario 2016 report card that just came out a couple of days ago, but it tells a pretty disturbing story about children's mental health in the province of Ontario.

One in four children will experience some form of mental illness before they turn 18—one in four. It's critical that we identify the signs as soon as possible. I think some of the anti-stigma campaigns that we've all been involved in—Bell Let's Talk, Walk so Kids Can Talk—are very important, but quite frankly, as stigma decreases, access to care is decreasing, and we need to do something about that.

The report card said that since 2006-07, in the last 10 years, there has been a 54% increase in emergency department visits and a 60% increase in hospitalizations. I'm not sure how many of us have direct experience with individuals who have mental illness—I would suggest that many of us do—but emergency rooms are not where people need treatment and certainly are not where our children need to access treatment.

The Children's Mental Health Ontario report also talks about how there needs to be a comprehensive provincial plan for quality improvement within the children's mental health system—and I would add to that, the mental health system.

A number of us in this chamber sat on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, and the number one recommendation that we made was to have an overarching organization, similar to Cancer Care Ontario, that would allow people who are looking for service, who are looking for treatment, the ability to access it regardless of where they live in Ontario. We still have a very disjointed system, and we still have a system that is not serving our children well.

I want members on all sides to read that report—because it's not from the Tories, it's not from the Liberals, it's not from the NDP. This is an organization that is helping children across Ontario, and they have some very important statistics and issues that they want to bring forward. We need to take this kind of information and transfer it into action.

There are a number of improvements. The demand for treatment centres has increased by 10% per year as mental health stigma falls. We're doing a great job on talking about it. Now we need the action side of it.

A youth's mental state actually deteriorates while they wait on a waiting list, causing hospital visits to skyrocket. I don't need to remind people that in the last number of weeks, we've been talking a lot about wait-lists; we've been talking a lot about access to care, and removing children over the age of five from access to IBI.

There are so many things that we, as a government, can do to make the system better, and I would suggest to you that two reports we can start with are the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions—look at some of those all-party recommendations and start acting on them—and the Children's Mental Health Ontario report that just came out two days ago, which talked about where we're failing and where we can do so much better. It would take a long time to go over all of the recommendations that they're making. The point is, we have the data, we have the information; now let's act.

1530

Miss Monique Taylor: As the NDP critic for children and youth services, I am pleased to rise today to recognize Children's Mental Health Week. On Monday evening, along with other MPPs, I had the great pleasure to attend Change the View, at the Royal Ontario Museum, hosted by the Youth Action Committee of Children's Mental Health Ontario.

I want to take my hat off to those youth who produced the powerful videos we saw. Through their art, they demonstrated the excruciating pain of mental illness. But they also offered a strong message of hope and belief that things can get better; that things will get better.

Conversations like this would never have happened when I was a teenager, but thankfully, we have a younger generation who are not afraid to speak the truth openly. Through their work, these youth are providing an invaluable service that breaks down the barriers. They set us loose from the stigma that has been historically attached to mental illness.

I offer my thanks to the organizers of this inspiring event and congratulate the winners, as well as everyone who submitted a video.

We should celebrate these achievements in Children's Mental Health Week, but there is a bigger picture, and there remains very much to be done, as CMHO's report makes very clear.

One in four children will experience a mental health issue by the time they are 18. Last year, CMHO spoke

about the growing wait-lists of our youth who are trying to access our mental health services. That problem hasn't gone away, but this year, they put a different focus on their report, and it's worth repeating today.

Since 2006-07, there has been a 54% increase in emergency department visits and a 60% increase in hospitalizations for children and youth seeking treatment for mental health issues in Ontario. This is a startling figure for our health care system, which we constantly hear is unable to meet the needs of Ontarians: hospitals—feeling forced to make cuts because of budgets that have failed to keep up with the increasing costs of health care. But it doesn't have to be this way.

The report card points out that with the proper investment in community-based mental health treatment, we can redirect 40,000 children away from hospitals. In fact, $65 million put into community-based children's mental health centres will reduce wait times and ensure that kids receive timely access to the treatment they need At the same time, this investment would save the province up to $145 million in hospital costs. That is a powerful statement, and I sincerely hope that the government and, in particular, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Children and Youth Services, are listening.

The tragic circumstances in our First Nations communities are immensely disturbing and need to be addressed. Youth suicides and attempted suicides are of epidemic proportions. A recent newspaper article reported that governments are slow to respond when a state of emergency is declared, a situation that seems to be worse on reserves in Ontario.

Currently, there are 28 active states of emergency in Ontario. One was declared by the tribal council for the Attawapiskat area on June 1, 2010, six years ago. The most recent state of emergency was also declared in Attawapiskat on April 9 this year, after a suicide pact involving 13 youth was thwarted.

Vulnerable youth and children all across Ontario are in desperate need of help, and those who work for them are struggling to keep up. I constantly marvel at the work done by those who work with our children and youth struggling with mental illness.

The demand on their services, coupled with the shortage of funding, makes each day a challenge that stretches their resourcefulness to its limits. But somehow their dedication to those kids allows them to pull off miracles.

We can't continue to rely on workers going way beyond what should be expected of anyone. It isn't fair to them, and they are burning out. More importantly, it isn't fair to our kids, who so badly need the care and treatment that will allow them to build healthy, fulfilling lives. They certainly deserve better.

PETITIONS

SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

Mr. Jim McDonell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas demonstration schools in Ontario provide incredible necessary support for children with special education needs;

"Whereas the current review by the government of Ontario of demonstration schools and other special education programs has placed a freeze on student intake and the hiring of teaching staff;

"Whereas children in need of specialized education and their parents require access to demonstration schools and other essential support services;

"Whereas freezing student intake is unacceptable as it leaves the most vulnerable students behind; and

"Whereas this situation could result in the closure of many specialized education programs, depriving children with special needs of their best opportunity to learn;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately reinstate funding streams for demonstration schools and other specialized education services for the duration of the review and to commit to ensuring every student in need is allowed the chance to receive an education and achieve their potential."

I agree with this and will pass it off to page Faiz.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, as you can see, petitions just continue to pile into my office, reading, "Don't Balance the Budget on the Backs of Children with ASD.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention...; and

"Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

"Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

"Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

"Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

"Whereas some families are being forced to remortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy"—

Interjections.

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, I don't think I've been heckled through a petition before.

"Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation."

I couldn't agree with this more. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Samantha to bring to the Clerk.

LUNG HEALTH

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I've been getting these from all over Ontario. This particular one is from Freelton and Cambridge.

"Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children;

"Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

"In the Ontario Lung Association report, Your Lungs, Your Life, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than $4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and that this figure is estimated to rise to more than $80 billion seven short years from now;

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

"To allow for deputations on ... private member's bill, Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a Lung Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario Lung Health Action Plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

"Once debated at committee, to expedite Bill 41" through to third and final reading.

I agree with the petition, affix my name and give it to Julia to bring to the table.

1540

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the provincial government is creating a privatization scheme that will lead to higher hydro rates, lower reliability, and hundreds of millions less for our schools, roads and hospitals; and

"Whereas the privatization scheme will be particularly harmful to northern and First Nations communities; and

"Whereas the provincial government is creating this privatization scheme under a veil of secrecy that means Ontarians don't have a say on a change that will affect their lives dramatically; and

"Whereas it is not too late to cancel the scheme;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario immediately cancel its scheme to privatize Ontario's Hydro One."

I approve of this petition. I will give it to page Laura. Thank you for the opportunity, Speaker.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Ms. Catherine Fife: This petition is entitled "Ontario Needs to Fund Family-Created Housing."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government's 2014 budget included a commitment to address the wait-list of more than 12,000 adults with developmental disabilities awaiting residential funding, and some of whom have been waiting more than 20 years; and

"Whereas since the spring of 2014 the number of adults with developmental disabilities awaiting residential funding has grown to more than 14,000; and

"Whereas there is currently no available funding to plan for a respectful transition from the family home to a home of choice in the community; and

"Whereas more than 1,450 Ontario parents over the age of 70 continue to provide primary care to their adult child; and

"Whereas currently adults with developmental disability must go on the crisis list before they receive residential funding, often resulting in a loss of choice, dignity and community; and

"Whereas family-created housing prioritizes dignity, choice and community inclusion for the resident living with disability as well as providing long-term cost savings for the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Minister of Community and Social Services to address the growing wait-list for adults with developmental disabilities awaiting residential funding and provide stable funding opportunities for family-created housing."

It is my pleasure to affix my signature and thank the parents for signing these petitions.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a petition that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that community water fluoridation is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations, including the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Ontario Dental Association; and

"Whereas recent experience in Canadian cities that have removed fluoride from drinking water has led directly to a dramatic increase in tooth decay; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care urges support for amending the Fluoridation

Act to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory; and

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing urges support for the removal of provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

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

"That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario before the end of the first session of the current Ontario Parliament."

I agree with this petition, will affix my name and send it to the table with page Benjamin.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Todd Smith: "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I'll sign this and send it to the table with Isabela.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I would like to read a petition called "Better Mental Health Services."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas mental illness affects people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures; and

"Whereas one in five Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime and only one third of those who need mental health services in Canada actually receive them; and

"Whereas mental illness is the second leading cause of human disability and premature death in Canada; and

"Whereas the cost of mental health and addictions to the Ontario economy is $34 billion; and

"Whereas the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions made 22 recommendations in their final report; and

"Whereas the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, seeks to implement all 22 of these recommendations;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario Act, 2015, which:

"(1) Brings all mental health services in the province under one ministry, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;

"(2) Establishes a single body to design, manage and coordinate all mental health and addictions systems throughout the province;

"(3) Ensures that programs and services are delivered consistently and comprehensively across Ontario;

"(4) Grants the Ombudsman full powers to audit or investigate providers of mental health and addictions services in Ontario."

I support this petition and give it to page Julia to deliver.

TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

M^me^ Marie-France Lalonde: Il me fait un plaisir au nom des résidents d'Ottawa–Orléans d'apporter cette pétition.

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu qu'il y a un besoin criant en infrastructure de transport routier dans la province de l'Ontario;

« Attendu que d'offrir différentes alternatives ou options dans le choix du mode de transport aux citoyens aide à réduire le nombre de voitures sur les routes;

« Attendu que les transports en commun contribuent à améliorer la qualité de vie des Ontariens ainsi qu'à préserver l'environnement;

« Attendu que les résidents d'Orléans et de l'est d'Ottawa ont besoin d'une plus grande infrastructure de transport;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Soutenir le plan Faire progresser l'Ontario et la construction de la phase II du train léger sur rail (TLR), ce qui contribuera à répondre aux besoins criants en infrastructure de transport à Orléans, à l'est d'Ottawa et à travers la province. »

Il me fait un plaisir d'appuyer cette pétition, de la signer et de la remettre à la page Emma.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Victor Fedeli: "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician

services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I agree with this petition, sign my name to it and give it to page Julia.

ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Mr. John Vanthof: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the provincial government has cancelled the Northlander passenger train which served the residents of northeastern Ontario; and

"Whereas the provincial government has closed bus stations and is cancelling bus routes despite promising enhanced bus services to replace the train; and

"Whereas the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC) has been given a mandate that its motor coach division must be self-sustaining; and

"Whereas Metrolinx, the crown corporation that provides train and bus service in the GTA ... is subsidized by more than $100 million annually; and

"Whereas the subsidy to Metrolinx has increased annually for the last seven years;

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

"To direct the Minister of Northern Development and Mines to reverse the decision to cancel bus routes immediately and to treat northerners equitably in decisions regarding public transportation."

I wholeheartedly agree and give it to page Isabela.

TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

M. Shafiq Qaadri: J'ai une pétition ici qui m'a été fournie par ma collègue honorable la membre de l'Assemblée législative d'Ottawa–Orléans, intitulée « Faire progresser l'Ontario et appuyer la phase II du train léger sur rail (TLR) à Ottawa. »

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu qu'il y a un besoin criant en infrastructure de transport routier dans la province de l'Ontario;

« Attendu que d'offrir différentes alternatives ou options dans le choix du mode de transport aux citoyens aide à réduire le nombre de voitures sur les routes;

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« Attendu que les transports en commun contribuent à améliorer la qualité de vie des Ontariens ainsi qu'à préserver l'environnement;

« Attendu que les résidents d'Orléans et de l'est d'Ottawa ont besoin d'une plus grande infrastructure de transport;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Soutenir le plan Faire progresser l'Ontario et la construction de la phase II du train léger sur rail (TLR), ce qui contribuera à répondre aux besoins criants en infrastructure de transport à Orléans, à l'est d'Ottawa et à travers la province. »

Maintenant, je vous l'envoie avec le page William.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's a pleasure to join the debate this afternoon on time allocation that has once again made its way to the Ontario Legislature thanks to your Ontario Liberal government.

Speaker, the government has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on advertisements for the ORPP. That's the bill that they have decided, once again, to introduce time allocation on to stifle debate in the Legislature, yet they're using hundreds of thousands of dollars to get their message out. They're not Liberal dollars; those are taxpayers' dollars that they're using to talk about the ORPP, which is the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. In those advertisements—you may have seen them—a man is staring at a creek and he's wondering how he's going to leap over it. We're told that there is a large gap between retirement savings and what people are used to living on.

The funny part is that there's an expert who has actually said that people only need an income at 70% of pre-retirement levels to maintain their standard of living. The reason for that, the expert wrote, was that retirees would have lower expenses than they had when they were working. Retirees typically have paid off their mortgage, their kids have left home; and they're not driving to work, which means they're spending less money on gas. We know all this because, prior to this expert entering politics, he was the head of one of Canada's largest human resources and benefits firm. Now this expert is the federal Liberal finance minister.

In his book—which I recommend that everyone in the House get a chance to read because it's the most articulate argument against this lousy program that one could read.

Hon. James J. Bradley: It's out of date.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's not out of date.

Bill Morneau, who is the federal Liberal finance minister, outlines that people—through their investments, their real estate and through government programs—have the necessary means to fund their retirement. The title of

the book is actually The Real Retirement: Why You Could Be Better Off Than You Think, and How to Make That Happen.

What some analysts have pointed out, and what the government has actually ignored in saying that there's a retirement crisis, is inheritance as well. That's another aspect. According to the Bank of Montreal, the baby boomers who have either recently retired or who will be retiring in the next few years stand to inherit approximately $1 trillion over the next 20 years. The average inheritance in Canada is actually about $56,000, which is more than those boomers—many of whom will never qualify for the ORPP—would ever receive under this program.

That's the amazing thing to me about this government. They ignore facts that they find inconvenient and then they spin a narrative totally divorced from the facts to try and make their argument. They actually ignore their own confidential cabinet notes that our finance critic, the member from Nipissing, was talking about during debate on this time allocation bill earlier this morning. The government runs around telling people who are soon to retire that the ORPP will leave them better off when the government knows that they'll never qualify for the ORPP—or the latest payroll tax.

The government ignores the fact that the biggest impact of this plan isn't going to be on big business. They're either going to automate their minimum wage jobs that big business has, they're going to move out of the province or the ORPP will factor in as a rounding error on their bottom line.

If your argument is, as the member from Timmins–James Bay's was earlier this morning, that the big guy is screwing the little guy, this won't actually hurt the big guy. The impact on this is wage growth for small and medium-sized businesses. Since the recession, that's where the wage growth has happened: in these small and medium-sized businesses.

There is a multitude of evidence out there that demonstrates no connection between executive compensation and the performance of a company—none. What the CEO of Salesforce said last week was that the next generation of successful CEOs is going to be caring more about consumers and employees than about their stockholders. In other words, they're going to be doing what small business owners do every day now: They're going to be paying their employees more, they're going to be working hard to retain good employees, and they're going to be more concerned with return customers than with the bottom line.

We've heard in this place that small business owners are the most opposed to the ORPP and that many employees of small and medium-sized businesses don't have a workplace pension.

By the way, for those who do, the most common workplace option in small and medium-sized business is in a group RRSP, which isn't considered a comparable plan under this legislation. So if your argument is that we're doing this to protect the little guy, I would respectfully submit that your heart is probably in the right place; this legislation, though, isn't going to achieve that.

I'm a guy who believes that an honest day's work deserves an honest day's pay. What this is going to do is result in a smaller day's pay for every employee who is impacted. As has been well documented throughout the debate on the ORPP previously, your pay is going to be docked by 1.9% in a time when electricity rates are rising through the roof. People need every last bit of their paycheques, because it's getting more expensive to live in Ontario, thanks to this Liberal government.

If you want that honest day's pay, you're more likely to get it at a small or medium-sized business than you are anywhere else. This bill is the greatest tool devised by this government to suppress the wages of people who work in small and medium-sized businesses.

According to the Canada Revenue Agency, there were 11.7 million TFSA holders in Canada in 2014. That's up from 4.8 million in 2009. We're already seeing people taking control of their retirement future. All of these numbers, though, are inconvenient to this nanny state government that we have here in Ontario. I understand that.

Here's another one: 17% of Canadians with a TFSA max out their contributions. Among the income group making between $20,000 and $25,000 a year, over 124,000 of them are maxing out their contributions every year. That's 30,000 more than max out their contributions in the $150,000-to-$300,000 income bracket.

Some 60% of those who max out their TFSA make less than $60,000 a year. If you suppress their wages, they'll stop saving to fund their own retirement, because they can't afford it. If you suppress their wages, they'll be unable to afford things that they need to live now, like hydro in their homes. They control how much they contribute to a TFSA, but the government controls how much they would contribute to the ORPP.

I'm a Progressive Conservative member of provincial Parliament. That means that I understand that consumers and employees dictate the success of a company, not the boardroom.

I know what this is going to do to the businesses who are pushing wage growth in this country. I know what this is going to do to employees who are already planning for their own retirement.

I know that the government's homework on this bill has been subpar—or, as we heard from the member from Nipissing earlier this morning, they've actually ignored their own studies that they've done into the effects of the ORPP, which indicate that they are going to be seeing job losses, in the area of 50,000 jobs lost.

For that reason, as well as many others, I'm opposing time allocation on this bill. That's why I'd like to move an amendment to the time allocation bill that we're debating here today, Bill 186.

1600

I move that the section beginning, "That the Standing Committee on Social Policy be authorized to meet at its regularly scheduled times" be struck out and replaced by:

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy be authorized to meet at its regularly scheduled times on Monday, May 16, 2016 and Tuesday, May 17, 2016, and on Monday, May 23, 2016 and Tuesday, May 24, 2016, Wednesday, May 25, 2016 and Thursday, May 26, 2016 in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, London and Kingston for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and

That the section beginning, "That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the Committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 186" be struck out and replaced with:

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the Committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 186:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 1 p.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2016; and

—That the Clerk of the Committee provide a list of all interested persons to the subcommittee following the deadline for requests; and

—That a subcommittee member or delegate provide their selections of witnesses based on the list of interested persons received from the Clerk of the Committee by noon on Friday, May 13, 2016; and

—That each witness will receive up to 10 minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 26; and

—That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on Friday, May 27, 2016; and

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Okay. Mr. Smith—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always a pleasure to stand in this House, but not so much on a time allocation motion. I understand we're debating the amendment, but still, time allocation on a bill about pensions? We're in favour of stable pensions, but rushing this through—which is basically a long-term-planning exercise for people's retirement—without listening to anyone, although it's par for the course from this government, is just bad government. It's completely bad governance.

I certainly hope that this government has very little to do with actually designing this pension plan, because their governance standards are very, very low. And they'd better book an appointment with the OPP.

We've had examples of this in the past. We were in favour of the Green Energy Act, the principle behind it. But a government like this rammed it through and voted against amendments that we put forward, and now we see the shambles that the Green Energy Act—not in principle, but the way it was implemented—has caused.

One of the biggest issues with the Green Energy Act—we voted in principle for the Green Energy Act but our amendments were voted down. The biggest problem with the Green Energy Act is that it was allowed to supersede all other acts. Municipalities had no power over it, so basically these wind turbines and solar farms are plunked willy-nilly wherever this government sees fit.

In the middle of the negotiations, all of a sudden this government sees that, whoa, this is maybe not a good idea for some of their friends, and they changed the game in the middle. This is a kind of game that we can't play—we shouldn't play it at all, but certainly not with people's pensions.

I always come back, whenever this government talks about pensions, to their ad, the ad with the guy who's facing the stream and the bridge, and he has to jump for the bridge. Again, it's a perfect picture for what they're doing here, because instead of taking the time to actually build the legislative, regulatory bridge so people can actually bridge over to their pension years, this government is again pushing something through, and there is no guarantee that it's actually going to work. That is an incredible shame. It's a crime.

We have the ability to do things right here. That government won a majority. They have the right to push forward their agenda, but there is the expectation that they push forward their agenda responsibly. There's time allocation after time allocation after time allocation of bills of which there are parts that we can agree to and that we can work together on, but even when you try to work together with this government on issues where we could come to some agreement, it's all for naught. That is the most egregious part of this whole thing.

When people elected the Kathleen Wynne government, they were electing a Premier who they believed was progressive, transparent and open, and was going to govern in a different way. Actually, she fulfilled that promise: She's governing in an even more tight-fisted way than Premier McGuinty ever did. But it wasn't the difference that people voted for, and this is a prime example.

She ran on pensions, something that should be done responsibly and that people could actually put their faith into. Again, they're shutting the door on debate and shutting the door on working with people who actually study this stuff and actually know the pitfalls. They're shutting the door. That's an incredible travesty, and that's why we will be voting against this time allocation motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm honoured to join in the debate after my colleague from Timiskaming–Cochrane, who raised some very important points. This is a principle that our leader not only supports, but she has introduced legislation in favour of presenting or creating an Ontario-based pension plan. So, absolutely, we support the idea, but very much like the member from Ti-

miskaming–Cochrane pointed out, this government has a very bad track record of rushing through legislation, not addressing serious concerns and creating additional problems. Closure motions and time allocation motions are not the appropriate way to govern. This government should learn.

Today, we've learned that there is an additional OPP investigation of a government scandal, and it all points, again, to this government's lack of thoughtful, principled and evidence-based due diligence with respect to making a decision. Instead, they make decisions based on their own self-interest.

What do we find when a government makes decisions based on self-interest? In the case of the Liberal government, self-interest leads to police investigations. This is not the right way to govern. This is not an appropriate way to deal with legislation. This is not an appropriate way to deal with the honour and dignity of being the governing party of a province.

Now, I would expect any governing party to understand that the majority that you have is something you wield with great care and diligence, and with great thoughtfulness when it comes to something as important as the ORPP.

The government is going to claim there is a delay tactic here. First, let's understand the fact that this implementation of the ORPP is not going to be within a couple of months; it's not going to be within a year; it's going to be many years in the future. So the process in and of itself, the way the government designed it, is going to take a long time. Any suggestion that additional hours of debate are going to delay a law which is already set to begin many years in the future is a very weak argument. It's an argument that does not hold up to a logical scrutiny. So, first, that criticism is a bad criticism. It's inherently flawed.

When it comes to the benefit of debate, we know that this government has rushed through legislation. Very recently, I was the Chair of a committee where we were dealing with a government bill, and the government had introduced numerous amendments to address mistakes that they found in their own bill. I'm glad the government took the time to address those mistakes, but that's the reason why you don't rush through legislation. You can find mistakes before you rush it through to the next stage. Let's take the time to make sure things are done in a thoughtful manner. And much like the Chair of committee had mentioned in the past, when other governments brought forward time allocation, time allocation is the ceasing or the stopping of democracy. It arrests democracy. It prevents discussion from happening in this chamber.

1610

It's very curious that this same member is now saying, "No, time allocation is the way to go. It's the appropriate way for us to deal with legislation. It's the right way to govern," but at another time it was considered very anti-democratic by the very same member. That's very curious, Mr. Speaker. It causes one to wonder, maybe laws or rules are different when you're in power and when you're not in power. That is not a very principled way to conduct oneself. If that's the belief of the member, I would say that is also not a very strong argument to make.

I am proud to share my time with my colleague to very proudly indicate our intention to vote against time allocation on this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? Last call for further debate.

Seeing none, Mr. Naqvi has moved government notice of motion number 65.

Mr. Smith has moved that the motion be amended as follows—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Dispense. Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry? I believe the noes have it.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed?

I think the noes have it.

This will be a five-minute bell—a 10-minute bell.

We're now going to defer this until tomorrow after question period.

Vote deferred.

HEALTH INFORMATION PROTECTION ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LA PROTECTION DES RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR LA SANTÉ

Mr. Hoskins moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 119, An Act to amend the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, to make certain related amendments and to repeal and replace the Quality of Care Information Protection Act, 2004 / Projet de loi 119, Loi visant à modifier la Loi de 2004 sur la protection des renseignements personnels sur la santé, à apporter certaines modifications connexes et à abroger et à remplacer la Loi de 2004 sur la protection des renseignements sur la qualité des soins.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Mr. Hoskins.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Halton.

It gives me great pleasure to lead off third reading debate of Bill 119, the proposed Health Information Protection Act, 2016, but before we get started, I'd like to acknowledge that I will be sharing my time with my colleague the member for Halton. I specifically want to thank her for her dedication and hard work on this very important piece of legislation. I also want to thank all of the stakeholders who took part in the public hearings and who provided their feedback on the proposed legislation before us today.

We listened very carefully to what they had to say and made changes where necessary to strengthen the proposed bill. Bill 119 follows up on a commitment that I made to the people of Ontario last June to protect the

personal health information of patients while also increasing transparency and maintaining quality in Ontario's health care system.

The proposed legislation, if passed, will create stronger and more comprehensive protection of health information privacy, it will renew our provincial e-health privacy framework, it will provide for greater accountability and transparency in the health care system when it comes to privacy breaches and, finally, it will improve patient care and safety.

Our government made a commitment to the people of Ontario through our Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care. We made a commitment to put people and patients first, and this bill is one more way we are keeping that commitment.

Taken together, these legislative amendments would reinforce Ontario's position as a leader in the protection of health information privacy. The old days of being able to lock away health records in a filing cabinet have long since passed. Increasingly, the health care system has been moving to electronic records, and for good reason. Electronic health records help us to modernize our health care system and lead to better care.

Our current privacy laws have done a great job of protecting patient privacy, but as we enable the sharing of electronic health records between health providers in a patient's circle of care, we need new rules in place to safeguard patient privacy. Quite simply, we need to update our health information privacy rules for the 21st century. This is what these proposed amendments will do. If passed, this bill would make it mandatory for health information custodians to report privacy breaches to the Information and Privacy Commissioner as well as to relevant regulatory colleges under certain circumstances.

Ontarians want to know that their personal health records are private and safe, and it is my expectation that all health information custodians who are in possession of personal health information are doing everything they possibly can to ensure that that privacy is protected. By mandating that privacy breaches be reported to the Information and Privacy Commissioner and to regulatory colleges, the individual health information custodian, and indeed the entire health care system, will be able to benefit from the IPC's review and recommendations for avoiding future breaches and identifying suspected privacy offences.

We also need to ensure that we're prepared to address the issue, should a breach of privacy offence occur. Currently, there is a six-month limitation period from when an offence is alleged to have taken place to when a prosecution must commence, which may prevent people from being charged for all the privacy offences they may have committed. That's simply not right. The bill before us today proposes an amendment that, if passed, will completely remove that six-month limitation period.

The Personal Health Information Protection Act, or PHIPA, would also be aligned with other provincial offence statutes that require the Attorney General to consent to the commencement of a PHIPA prosecution, rather than requiring the Attorney General to actually start the prosecution herself.

Another way we propose to deter privacy offences is by strengthening the punishment for offenders. If passed, there's an amendment that would double the maximum fines for PHIPA convictions from $50,000 to $100,000 for individuals and from $250,000 to $500,000 for organizations.

Finally, we propose to reintroduce privacy protections for electronic health records, as were first proposed in 2013 as part of Bill 78. These proposed protections were endorsed by the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and we agree that they would help us further strengthen the protections that are already in place for the sake of all Ontarians.

But privacy is just one side of the health information coin. The other side of that coin is how we go about ensuring transparency in the health care system itself. That means ensuring that key information should be appropriately shared with the people who matter most: the patients. For this reason, our government is proposing to replace the Quality of Care Information Protection Act, 2004, with a new act of the same name.

The act as it exists right now was put in place to provide health care workers an opportunity to share information candidly regarding a critical incident and to promote continuous quality improvement. But we have come to understand that health care providers are often unsure as to what must be disclosed to patients and their loved ones following a critical incident review. There is also a lack of understanding as to when and how providers should apply QCIPA—the legislation—in those particular circumstances.

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It was for these reasons that I convened a QCIPA review committee and committed to implementing all of their recommendations. I recognized that all of the committee's recommendations were intended to help ensure consistent, high-quality, safe and patient-centred care.

Our government understands that it's important that health care providers are able to review information following a critical incident for quality improvement purposes. But this should be done in a manner that respects the rights of patients and the rights of families to know about critical incidents in hospitals and other health care settings.

The new QCIPA legislation, if passed, would maintain the existing quality information improvement framework, but, at the same time, would provide greater clarity and help encourage better communication with, and engagement of, patients during the investigation of a critical incident itself.

If passed, the amended legislation would:

—clarify the purpose of the legislation, of QCIPA, and reaffirm the right of patients to access information about their health care;

—clarify that certain information and facts about critical incidents cannot be shielded from affected patients and their authorized representatives;

—allow the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to make additional regulations that would require health care organizations to adopt a uniform approach when using QCIPA to review critical incidents;

—clarify that QCIPA does not interfere with health care facilities' legal obligations to disclose information required by law, or to interview patients involved in a critical incident as part of an investigation; and finally,

—require that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care review this act every five years.

If passed, Bill 119 will provide, on one hand, more security and protection for the personal health information of Ontarians and, on the other, ensure the necessary transparency and access to information that they deserve, and that we have the obligation to provide, to make the right decisions about their health care.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all members to support our proposed amendments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Halton.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I rise today to speak further on what the Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, has said about our proposed Health Information Protection Act, 2016. I want to start by thanking the minister for the opportunity to speak to this very important piece of legislation for the people of Ontario.

Among the points I am going to speak to today is the importance of protecting patient privacy. A person's personal health history is among the most personal information about them. It is of the utmost importance that we do everything we can to make sure that it is protected.

As Minister Hoskins just outlined, one of the goals of the bill before us is to safeguard and protect the health information of Ontario patients. That is a direct reflection of the commitment our government has made to the people of Ontario to put patients first.

We know that Ontarians expect their personal health information to remain private, and we believe that the privacy of personal health information is paramount to a high-quality health care system in which people are held accountable. There is a clear understanding between a patient and a doctor that the information they share is strictly confidential, and trust that the information will only be shared in accordance with the law and when it is in the best interests of the care of the patient.

However, in recent years, we have seen instances where this has just simply not been the case. We have seen it happen that personal health information has been illegally breached for financial gain or, in some cases, just to satisfy someone's personal curiosity. Regardless of the reason for the breach, it is unacceptable. Not only is it an invasion of privacy, but it's scary what can be done with stolen medical information. It also jeopardizes the delicate balance of trust between a patient and their health care provider.

Health care providers see patients when they are at their most vulnerable. Health care providers see patients when they're in need of care for an injury, illness or disease, and health care providers see patients when they need a helping hand. I know that when I'm seeing my doctor, I need to be able to trust her, as well as her staff, in order to feel comfortable. All Ontario patients need to know that the information they share with their health care provider is going to be kept confidential and secure and will not be used inappropriately. I'm sure all of us here would be terribly upset to find out that our health care records, or those of our loved ones, became lost or stolen.

The government is taking strong action to put an end to this possibility. Bill 119, as proposed, is intended to help protect the personal health information of patients. The Health Information Protection Act would amend the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, and several other pieces of related legislation to strengthen and clarify the privacy rules that protect the personal health information of individuals. This includes amendments to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991; the Drug Interchangeability and Dispensing Fee Act; and the Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act, 2010.

The amendments to these acts support the appropriate collection, use and disclosure of personal health information. They would enable the sharing of that information by means of the electronic health record, a province-wide system that allows certain information and health records to be shared among health information custodians. This would allow medical records to be shared between health care providers quickly and timely, but within a strictly controlled and secure system. An e-health record would definitely bring our health care system into the 21st century and make Ontario a leader in health technology and services.

If passed, these amendments would make it mandatory to report certain privacy breaches to the Information and Privacy Commissioner and to the relevant regulatory college of the person responsible for the breach. It would also strengthen the process to prosecute offences under PHIPA by removing the requirement that prosecutions must be commenced within six months of when the alleged offence occurred. This allows more time for a proper investigation and closes a loophole that would have allowed those who commit a security breach to go unpunished.

I spoke moments ago about the vulnerability of patients when their personal health information is breached. When that happens, it damages the trust that exists between the patient and their health care providers, and that is when the patient expects action to be taken. Failure to do so would only damage that relationship of trust and their faith in the health care system even further. We have a responsibility to take action to better protect patient privacy. These proposed amendments effectively give the government the tools to do just that.

In my riding of Halton, the new state-of-the-art Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital opened its doors just a few months ago. This amazing facility is able to provide care to as many as 180,000 people in Oakville

and surrounding areas. That's a lot of people, Mr. Speaker. And the changes the government is making to Bill 119 will allow me to assure them that their private information will, in fact, remain private.

I'd like to point out that the Information and Privacy Commissioner was an essential partner in the development of these amendments. The commissioner fully supports the legislative changes to strengthen privacy protections and improve Ontario's ability to pursue prosecution. In fact, the commissioner has stated that he is strongly in favour of the mandatory reporting of certain privacy breaches. He was also one of the key stakeholders that Minister Hoskins was referring to who were instrumental in helping us refine the proposed bill through the standing committee process. We thank him and his office for their valuable contributions and their continued support.

We know many hospitals and other health care providers have voluntarily and proactively contacted the commissioner's office when they discovered that a privacy breach has taken place in their organization. It speaks to how seriously hospitals and health care providers treat breaches. It also speaks to how important that relationship of trust is between a patient and their health care provider, and their commitment to putting patients first. Our government thanks them for their dedication to their patients and their privacy.

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But reporting is just the first step in protecting the private and personal health information of patients in Ontario. We need prevention measures. We need to actively discourage people from even considering violating the privacy of someone's personal health information. That is why Bill 119 proposes to create stronger deterrents against the unauthorized protection, use or disclosure of personal health information.

To do this, the amendments would double the maximum fines for offences under the Personal Health Information Protection Act. Penalties would increase from $50,000 to $100,000 for individuals and from $250,000 to $500,000 for an organization. By increasing the maximum fines, we are sending a clear message that it is unacceptable to unlawfully access anyone's personal health information.

We are also ensuring that those who are convicted of a privacy offence face significant consequences from the court for their actions.

One of the key pieces of Bill 119 that I want to elaborate on today is that it proposes to reintroduce and update the electronic health record privacy framework, initially introduced in the Electronic Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2013, or EPHIPA. As many of us may recall, EPHIPA had reached second reading but had not passed when the Legislature was dissolved on May 2, 2014. This is our chance today, and we have an opportunity to finish what we have started.

Not only does the proposed legislation incorporate the work begun on EPHIPA, but it also builds on its privacy protections to create a stronger and more comprehensive health information privacy framework. We know that most Ontarians who receive health services have some form of electronic medical record. In fact, over 12,000 health care providers either have implemented or are in the process of implementing electronic medical record systems for patient management. This includes 80% of Ontario's family physicians, who represent over 10 million people. It encompasses many different types of medical records, including diagnostic types of images, immunization records, lab reports and hospital discharge reports. This will modernize health care and ensure that records are passed on to the appropriate people quickly and with security. It will help ensure that health care providers are fully informed so they can provide and give patients the best care possible.

What Bill 119 proposes to do is build a strong foundation for enabling records to be shared among health care providers in a safe and secure fashion. It is something that the Information and Privacy Commissioner has endorsed, and it will help us to protect patients' personal health information and preserve the relationship of trust. This is vital to good health care. Patients need to know that when their records are being shared, they are being done so in a way that does not place their personal privacy at risk. As Minister Hoskins mentioned earlier, the ability to share electronic health records plays a big role in helping to modernize our health care system, leading to better care for patients. It enables us to share information faster and help patients get the answers they need sooner, and leads to a better health care coordination and integration.

That is why this bill also proposes to allow information about a patient's narcotics and monitored-drug prescriptions to be available to their health care practitioner. This would help to ensure that health care providers have all the information they need about a patient so that they are fully informed as they work to provide the best care possible. It would improve patient safety by reducing negative drug interactions with monitored drugs and support more informed health care decisions. In addition, it could also reduce instances of patients obtaining multiple prescriptions for monitored drugs or multiple pharmacies filling the same prescription. I think that most Ontarians would agree that those are worthy goals.

Our government is committed to taking action to protect the personal health information of Ontarians and to ensure that we have a safe and secure way of sharing that information to offer the best care possible to all patients. It is an important part of our commitment to transform our health care system into one that puts the needs of patients at its centre. People in Ontario deserve to know that they are protected by a health care system that is transparent and keeps their personal health information private.

While the protection of health information is important, the aspect of privacy around personal health information is but one side of the coin when it comes to the proposed bill before us. The other side of the coin is how it speaks to the proposed health information act and

how it would help us to make great strides in improving transparency and patient safety in Ontario's health care system. The proposed legislation before us would enable us to do just that, while ensuring that we maintain the high quality of health care Ontarians have come to expect.

In 2004, this Legislature passed the current Quality of Care Information Protection Act to encourage health care workers to share information candidly regarding a critical incident. The idea is to promote continuous quality improvement by encouraging health care workers to share their experiences with other providers and work together to improve patient care.

The reason for the act is to encourage health care providers to be as forthcoming as possible when a critical incident occurs. It does this by ensuring that opinions, speculation and information specifically prepared for discussions about quality improvement, which may include information from investigating critical incidents, are protected from disclosure in legal proceedings. They would also be protected from most other disclosures—subject to appropriate exceptions—to ensure transparency to patients.

Speaker, the proposed bill before us today seeks to replace the existing act with a new act of the same name. After all, it can sometimes be unclear to health care providers what they must disclose to the patient following a critical incident review, and when and how they should be applying QCIPA in these instances.

Again, this speaks to this very important commitment that our government has made to the people of Ontario: our commitment to put patients first. We cannot meet that commitment if health care providers are unclear about what information they are required to share with patients.

There is confusion among some health care providers about how to use QCIPA effectively. But there is also a lack of clarity about the greater need to share experiences and lessons learned about quality improvement opportunities across organizations. That is why it's so important that we put in place this proposed new act. Not only will it provide greater clarity for health care providers, but it will also improve the sharing of information between those providers, so that we can, in turn, improve the quality of our health care system, because that is the ultimate goal: to provide better care to Ontario patients. So we need to get this right; in fact, we must get this right.

If passed, the Health Information Protection Act will replace the existing QCIPA with a new act of the same name, which would clarify the purpose and appropriate application of this legislation. It would maintain the existing quality improvement framework, while providing greater clarity to health care providers. It would help to encourage better communication with, and engagement of, patients during the investigation of a critical incident. Just think about how important this is.

It would also reaffirm the right of patients to access information about their own health care. It would make it clear that QCIPA cannot be misused to shield information from patients and their authorized representatives, by linking the act to proposed amendments to the Public Hospitals Act's regulation 965. These proposed amendments, if approved, would spell out for everyone what information and facts about critical incidents in hospitals must be transparent and shared with affected patients and their authorized representatives.

Our government believes that the default in our health care system with respect to critical incidents should be to disclose the essential information about the incident to the affected patient and their family. That includes the facts of what occurred, whether the causes were known and what steps are being taken to prevent such an incident from ever happening again.

To our proposed amendments: This will help to make it clearer that QCIPA can never be a barrier to such disclosures. What the proposed new QCIPA legislation will do is clarify the purpose of QCIPA and reaffirm the right of patients to access information about their health care.

Patients have a right to know about what happened, and this bill will clarify exactly what information and facts about critical incidents must be available to be shared with affected patients and their families. It will allow the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to make regulations that will keep the approach to using QCIPA consistent across the provinces.

These regulations would require health care facilities to adopt a uniform approach when using QCIPA to review critical incidents. Patients need to know that when a critical incident is under review, it is being done to the same high standards, regardless of where they live or where the facility is located.

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The proposed act will also facilitate the investigation of critical incidents that involve multiple health care facilities. It will clarify that QCIPA does not prevent health care facilities from properly disclosing information as required by law or from interviewing patients involved in a critical incident as part of an investigation.

I want to point out that the proposed amendments are only part of the picture of how our government is taking steps to implement the recommendations of the QCIPA review committee. We are also proposing to amend the Public Hospitals Act, regulation 965, and we are working with the Ontario Hospital Association and Health Quality Ontario to provide guidance and training to health care facilities on reviewing critical incidents, including those under QCIPA.

Our government is also working with Health Quality Ontario to create a way for public hospitals and health care facilities to share their experiences with critical incidents and improve learning to prevent future incidents.

We are creating an additional way for patients to file complaints. This will be available through the office of Ontario's first-ever Patient Ombudsman. Patients will be able to submit complaints about the health care received to the Patient Ombudsman.

The proposed QCIPA amendments before us are just one part of our government's commitment to address the recommendations, but they represent a significant improvement for patients in Ontario.

Ontarians need to be able to trust their health care system. They need to know that it is working for them. That is why this proposed legislation is so important. It is a message to the people of Ontario that when you have questions related to the quality of the health care you are receiving, you can get answers. It is a message to patients and their families that they will be kept informed and have their voices heard when an investigation is required as a result of a critical incident. That's what patients want. It is what they expect; it's what they deserve.

Today, I ask this House to pass this proposed legislation to help our government improve transparency and strengthen accountability in our health care system.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'll be splitting my time with the member from Oxford and the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington. I got that one right; that's great.

I'm proud to stand up and give a little bit of discussion regarding Bill 119 during third reading today. Hopefully, my remarks will be listened to by the government. The member from Oxford and the member from Lanark will follow with some great remarks.

What astounded me throughout this process of Bill 119 was that we brought forth amendments and had quite a bit of debate in this Legislature and at committee, raising red flags to fix gaps and/or problems that have arisen. We heard from many groups and stakeholders, who gave their insight into how they thought this bill could be improved. As members of the opposition, we brought forth those amendments in committee to be voted upon. In fact, there were 33 amendments brought forward during committee, which is a good number considering the average bill that I am a part of in discussing at committee. Fifteen of those passed.

What's discouraging is that the 15 that were passed were put forward by the government. Not a single opposition amendment was passed at all during the committee process. That's quite discouraging, considering we're trying to deal with the bill and ensure that the gaps are fixed so that we don't have to come back and fix the bill again, like we're having to do right now with Bill 178, the smoking legislation out there. The government missed a section of Bill 45 because they rushed through legislation. They didn't seek the proper input and forgot a section that needed to be dealt with. It was going to turn into a problem throughout the province once Bill 45 was enacted, so they had to come forward with Bill 178.

It's concerning that this is typical of how this government is operating. They listen to themselves and that's about it. They don't listen to the opposition parties—their amendments brought forward. They're not even listening to stakeholders who are at committee to make changes so we don't have to return to this House and either fix this bill or replace it because of a court challenge or because they're finding that what they've created is in itself causing many problems.

We do so to ensure that the people of this province have trust in what this government, this body, is producing as legislation in the province. I heard that quite a bit in the discussions from the government side over trust in the system, trust with the doctors. It's concerning that today they speak about building trust with the health care professionals, but two weeks ago, the health minister stood in front of many cameras and tried to erode that trust between patients and doctors by negotiating through the media over their impasse with regard to billings, and trying to either split the profession or put the profession in a poor light so that patients would, in fact, be less trustful of their doctor. That's unacceptable behaviour, the fact that today they talk about trust and two weeks ago they didn't talk about trust.

In fact, we even could go even further down the road. I think we're all in agreement with regard to the doctor who lost his licence due to his sexual abuse, sexual touching of patients and the fact that he's going to get his licence back in six months, even though it was flagged by the government over a year ago that the College of Physicians and Surgeons wanted some legislative authority in order to deal with that situation so that doctor would never get his licence back. In 14 months—I understand they had a task force struck. I'm not sure what the mandate is, but it's interesting that the government can act quickly when it feels like it and it's a priority to them, but when it's not, it's not a priority for them. It's the same issue with trust. Today they talk about the trust they have with patients with this bill; however, they challenged the trust of doctors two weeks ago.

I don't think that is the proper way to go forward as a government. I don't think it's the proper way to create legislation. The fact that not a single opposition amendment was given due consideration at the committee level speaks volumes that this government thinks that it got the legislation right. It would probably be one of the first times.

We already heard about the Green Energy Act and the problems that that has caused with regard to rural Ontario. We've got wind turbines being set up throughout southwestern Ontario where, Mr. Speaker, you and I are from, and Lambton–Kent–Middlesex is from, and Sarnia–Lambton and Oxford. Municipalities are saying no to these wind turbines, but because of the act the government put forth without having true consultation or listening to the amendments—because the third party mentioned in their speech that they put forth amendments to the Green Energy Act, to make changes to ensure that what's happening today wasn't going to happen. I don't know why they still voted for the Green Energy Act after the government said no to all of their amendments, but that's something we can't fix right now—possibly until a new government is in place to actually deal and bring

back support to rural Ontario and incorporate them as part of Ontario in making decisions on legislation.

While at committee, I found it was quite a frustrating process to hear the different groups come forward, first of all saying that they weren't consulted in the first place in the drafting of this legislation, which I found very interesting, and then, after the drafting of the legislation, coming to committee, sharing their concerns, their points, and the government completely ignoring the fact that this is going to affect them in a negative light.

This isn't going to make the health care system operate any better than it is today. I also believe that this legislation, although they speak big on accountability and transparency, is not going to add the accountability that patients in our health care system are asking for today. Unfortunately, they had the opportunity to make the changes, make the amendments, and they didn't listen to what the opposition parties were saying, let alone the stakeholders.

I could go through a little bit of the amendments that we put forward, just to put on the table here in the Legislature; they are in Hansard and committee.

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Our first amendment that we brought forward dealt with HIPA. In the event of a breach, our amendment would have given a prescribed organization the responsibility to notify the individual if it happened at their level. The OMA brought that concern forward. They wanted to ensure that doctors and health care providers aren't going to be the ones to have to notify patients of breaches that they didn't have involvement in. If a breach happened elsewhere in the system, they wanted to ensure that it wasn't the doctors who had to call up the patients and say, "Hey, look, there was a breach." Even though they had nothing to do with it, they're going to have to take the fall for it.

I think that's a valid point that the OMA brought forward. The comment from the government side is that the amendment wasn't necessary, in their point of view, and, "Let's move on," and "We're okay having the doctor make the phone call for someone else's mistake down the road." Our doctors, I think, are hard workers in this province. We want them to be seeing patients and dealing with health care services in this province. We don't want them to become the secretaries for somebody down the road who has made a mistake with a breach of information. I don't think they have the time of day to do that. If they made the mistake, if they had the breach, definitely, they need to make the call and tell the patient, but if it's someone else in the system making that, I don't believe the medical profession needs to do that.

Just look at how privacy breaches are increasing: In 2014, there were 439 cases that were reported to the privacy commissioner. That doesn't mean that's all there were; those were the ones that got reported. As information technology continues, the ability to breach information is going to increase, and I imagine there will be more of an increase in the amount of breaches going forward.

Our next amendment aimed at ensuring that the language in the bill is consistent with the reporting provisions in the Health Professions Procedural Code of the Registered Health Professions Act and the Public Hospitals Act. The College of Physicians and Surgeons brought this up, saying that we need the same language in this bill to match the other laws that are in place. It actually makes the workings of this legislation a little bit easier for the health care system, especially our colleges, as long as the wording is the same.

However, the government, again, believes that they're dealing with the situation without amending it and that it would interfere with the reporting of professional misconduct. If we have the College of Physicians and Surgeons concerned about this issue—they're the ones that deal with professional misconduct, and deal with it day in and day out. The Ministry of Health doesn't, and they'll say so, day in and day out, that it's a hands-off organization, which it should be, but they should also at the same time be listening to the concerns brought forward by that body who is dealing with it day in and day out.

We had another amendment to ensure that a multidisciplinary advisory committee can raise issues from various aspects of the health care sector to ensure that, on changes of direction that the ministry may be headed in, it is hearing all sides of the story. It doesn't make sense to keep coming back and fixing things. If the minister creates this advisory committee but only includes certain groups at the committee, they could be making regulations and changes to this law when it's in place and having to come back because they missed a health care professional body that this negatively affects.

The government's comment was that it was vague and undefined—what our amendment was about. Our amendment spelled out "multidisciplinary," but it was too vague. So we came back with another amendment, because we know they don't listen to our amendments at all. We said, as a minimum, to have the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Nurses, the OMA and members from the public, and then you could add whoever you want afterwards. At least that gave you a basis to cover. Then they said it was too specific and we'd left out groups. The government is obviously—their whole point at committee is finding the ways to argue against our amendments and not include them, instead of trying to make a stronger bill. Unfortunately, that's not the way we need to go.

One amendment we had put forward which we had concern with—the OMA flagged it for us, as well—was the fact that with the passage of this bill, the Ministry of Health bureaucrats, or whoever the Minister of Health decides, will have access to our personal health information. To me that's a concern. I know they said it will be modified in a way so that you can't connect the dots, but with computers today, I'm sure you could find a way to fix that.

The privacy commissioner himself said he's okay and he's going to be part of the system, but he could not

guarantee 100% that a breach would not occur. Our question is, why create that chance? We only have to look at what occurred—the access to health information is out there—with the late Rob Ford, who obviously had his personal medical information broken into.

I'm not saying that anybody in the bureaucracy or the government here today is going to utilize that personal health information from any Ontarian that they can now get access to in a bad light, but we can't guarantee that that's never going to happen. I think that if the people of this province realized that government in general—especially this government—has access to your personal health information, that's going to be a concern.

The OMA's point, which they clarified, is that that might deter someone from discussing their issue fully with the doctor. It should be in confidence, to ensure that their information is not shared. We only have to look at the stigma that's out there for mental illness today. We're trying to fight to end that stigma. We do not want any barriers put in place to people accessing the health and treatment that they need. There's a trust between a doctor and a patient that this government is trying to erode, but there is no trust between government and patients with regard to medical health information.

It's a concern. There have to be other ways. There's a lot of bureaucrats in the Ministry of Health; I'm sure they could probably come up with a different way to collect the information they need other than actually accessing the personal health information of somebody, and having that opened up in the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Health and/or whoever the minister appoints. We were quite concerned about that.

When the government commented on that amendment, the government messed up their talking points and read us the wrong response. We know that they sit there and find ways to argue why we—the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington was the one who called them out on it. They immediately backtracked and found the right page to read about why they won't support that amendment. It's very, very concerning.

You'll hear from this government that the privacy commissioner is on board, but as I said earlier, he cannot guarantee 100% that there will be no breaches or misuse of the information once the government has their hands on it.

Another amendment we had was to add some oversight and to give the privacy commissioner some leeway in order to ensure that when they review any matter before them and decide to act on a possible contravention, a review can take place and those who have been involved are notified of what occurred during the decision related to the activities. It could undermine the trust in confidentiality.

They just finished saying that patients are now going to have access to find out what's going on and what's wrong, but in actuality, they're still going to be blocked. We had a member of the public come in who wanted access to medical information as to why their loved one died. They're in the courts fighting it. This was an opportunity in this bill to allow them some more access than what they're getting today. The government says that they've made that access, but in fact, they voted down the amendment that would have given that access to those family members.

1700

As I wrap up my comments and let my caucus mate speak: So many stakeholders came in to speak after the fact. Again, we have another bill brought forward from this government who didn't pre-consult. We had at the table stakeholders who brought us well-thought-out amendments. The government rejected every single amendment from those stakeholders brought forth by the opposition members.

It's frustrating to go to committee when dealing with these members. We believe the amendments that we put forward would have strengthened the bill. We imagine that down the road either a court challenge will overturn this bill and/or we'll be back to fix problems and gaps that this process created due to the lack of co-operation from this Liberal government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Before we continue debate, I recognize the Minister of Energy on a point of order.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Thank you, Speaker. I do rise on a point of order. I'd like to clarify a comment made in the House earlier today, in question period.

During this morning's cut and thrust in the course of answering a question in question period, I used a word that might be interpreted to be an offensive slang word, Mr. Speaker. Hansard has corrected their draft transcript, and if my pronunciation was unclear and it appeared as though I said something I did not, I would like to offer an apology to the leader of the third party. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): It is a point of order and members do have the opportunity to correct the record. Thank you.

Point of order?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: No.

Interjection: It's Ernie's turn.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Sorry. I thought it was someone else.

Continuing with debate, I recognize the member from Oxford.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 119. When people go to their health care system for help, they should be confident that their information will be protected. Someone who is struggling with a major disease shouldn't have an additional stress of worrying that their personal and private information could be released. People who need help shouldn't avoid the health care system because they're worried someone will find out there was a problem. But in Ontario, under this government's watch, it is happening.

This bill actually creates new opportunities for that to occur, Mr. Speaker. This bill will give the Minister of

Health and the Ministry of Health access to our personal health information. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has already said that the safeguards they are proposing for this information may fail. Our caucus put forward a number of amendments in committee to make this bill better and ensure that personal health information was protected. We heard about a number of those amendments from my colleague the previous speaker. But the government voted down every single one. They also voted down every amendment put forward by the New Democratic Party. The people of Ontario want us to work together, but this government is more interested in politics than our ideas to make the health care system better.

Privacy of medical information is a real issue in Ontario. In 2014, there were 439 cases of health information privacy breaches reported to the Information and Privacy Commissioner. And those are just the cases we know about, because it isn't mandatory to report when there have been privacy breaches. This bill would amend the Personal Health Information Protection Act to require mandatory reporting. It is a change that has been needed for years. Ontario is one of the last provinces to update the legislation to require mandatory reporting of the breaches.

In fact, the Information and Privacy Commissioner has been ringing alarm bells for years. Two years ago, he issued an order in response to two breaches of patient privacy involving allegations that hospital employees disclosed the personal health information of mothers for purposes of selling registered education savings plans. According to the articles, contact details for about 8,300 patients had been given to private companies to sell RESPs. In that order the Information and Privacy Commissioner said, "Personal health information is considered to be among the most sensitive types of personal information, deserving of the highest protection. Yet, in Ontario, we have seen a growing number of cases of agents inappropriately accessing the personal health information of individuals." That was over two years ago. How many more people have had their information released since then?

And that wasn't the first warning sign. In 2011, Cancer Care Ontario had a number of packages containing personal test results go missing. In one office alone, the missing package contained personal information of almost 2,400 individuals. The doctor reported in April that they hadn't received the packages, but it wasn't until June that the privacy commissioner was informed.

In 2008, health records were found on the street outside a medical centre which contained a medical laboratory. The pages contained names of patients and doctors, health cards and the results of laboratory tests. The Information and Privacy Commissioner was notified not by the laboratory who had the breach, but by a member of the media. It turned out that the records had been put in recycling instead of shredding and had then fallen out of the recycling truck when it was leaving the parking lot.

Clearly, there's a problem, and the government has been ignoring it for years. Over that time, thousands of Ontarians have had their personal medical information accessed inappropriately. In fact, when the government ignored all of the warnings last year, the Information and Privacy Commissioner launched his own campaign, called Is It Worth It?, aimed at educating health care professionals on the impact of privacy breaches.

In the release, he said, "Whether out of curiosity, personal gain or simple concern about the health of friends and family, snooping through medical records can have devastating consequences for patients, health professionals and the health system as a whole."

Mandatory reporting should have been put in place years ago. It took thousands of breaches, warnings from two Information and Privacy Commissioners and a Toronto Star series to get the government to take action, a fact that was made clear in the newspaper article which said, "Following the series of Star investigations into PHIPA, Health Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins vowed sweeping changes to the act in June."

The government has consistently mismanaged the health care system, from people's personal health information to the services they depend on. They need to act to put patients first when it comes to protecting their information and when it comes to providing quality care. Putting patients first means providing the services that are needed and ending the mismanagement that is draining dollars away from patient care.

We need a system that is efficient, effective and focused on providing the best health care services when people need them. Part of having an efficient system is using updated technology. This bill not only updates the rules regarding privacy breaches for electronic records, it also contains changes to the electronic health record privacy framework.

As we all know, eHealth is not an area that has been managed well by this government. In 2009, the Auditor General released a report that said $1 billion had been spent on eHealth and very little had been accomplished. It was said in earlier debates on this bill that the total is now up to $2 billion—$2 billion—and what do we have to show for it?

In his report, the Auditor General found that millions had been paid out to consultants in questionable circumstances. One million dollars was paid to an external recruiting firm for help in filling 15 management positions. It was a sole-source contract given out by the CEO. Only five of the positions were filled when the contract was terminated, but the company still got paid the full $1 million. A consultant hired by the ministry was involved in giving $1.4 million in contracts to his own company. The ministry subdivided contracts to keep them below the level where they would have had to put them out to public tender.

People may not remember this, but when eHealth was created in 2008, the agency's mandate was to have electronic health records in place for Ontarians by 2015. Well, Speaker, it is now 2016, and eHealth progress reports make it clear that there are still many Ontarians who don't have electronic health records.

According to the eHealth Ontario website, "Eventually, EHRs will include data from hospital information systems, community care clinics and other providers as well"—eventually.

We still don't have the efficient system we were promised. I heard from one person recently who went to a hospital for a test. On her first visit, she provided her health card and all her information. They issued her a white hospital card. On the day of the test, she expected to check in and go quickly, since they already had all her information. Instead, it took 40 minutes because she was required to provide all the information again to get a blue hospital card in addition to the white hospital card and her health card. It took a health card, two cards from the same hospital and a hospital bracelet to track one patient who was in the hospital for three hours. That's the reality in Ontario today, more than $1 billion later. People may not be able to comprehend $1 billion, but they understand the impact. They see the cuts to the services and health care. They know how long they and loved ones are waiting.

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I hear often from my constituents that the system just isn't working. Necessary surgeries are being postponed because there isn't enough funding to pay for them. Delays are having a real impact on people like the senior in my riding whose cataract surgery was delayed until four months after her driving test—obviously, she didn't have her licence any more, Mr. Speaker—or the people in constant pain who are given the news just before Christmas that they would have to wait until April, because of the new fiscal year, before they could get their surgery. I've heard from qualified surgeons who are frustrated because state-of-the-art operating suites are sitting empty but they aren't allowed to perform more surgeries.

We need to do better to make the health care system work for the people of Ontario and to make sure that their information is protected. This government has had an opportunity to do that by supporting our amendments, and it is now an opportunity missed, to the detriment of the people of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 119 today. But, first, I do want to comment, reference and recognize that I appreciated that the Minister of Energy came down and was attempting to either correct a record or to make some sort of apology for some of the comments during, as you say, the "thrust" of question period—

Interjection: "Cut and thrust."

Mr. Randy Hillier: —the "cut and thrust" of question period this morning. It is interesting, though. In correcting the record—many of us heard a word, and it supposedly was a different word than what we heard. "Pee" and "she" may sound similar, but the minister did say that his pronunciation maybe was not proper, and "she" sounded as "pee." But we take him for his word.

But I find it disturbing that these single-syllable words cause the minister such trouble in his pronunciation, especially when his name is Bob, as well. I don't know how often he gets the pronunciation of that name incurrect, as well.

But, anyway, it is nice to see that there was some sort of backhanded apology to the leader of the third party. I'm sure that she appreciates that. But I'll have to go back and listen. I know that I saw the video. David Reevely, the reporter from the Ottawa Citizen, has a nice video clip on his Twitter feed—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member is really—how would I put it?—getting personal. I would suggest that he get back to the bill and lay off the present approach. Thank you.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Speaker. Your guidance is always appreciated and well-known and recognized in the House.

Speaker, back to Bill 119: I listened to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care in his 10-minute address. There is much of it that I agree with. I think that the government has made tremendous strides in one part of the bill, and that is on the privacy side of the bill. We know that there has been a host of breaches of privacy, especially with medical records, and it does need to be fixed up—of course, the big case with Rob Ford. But there have been many, many cases of a breach of private medical information. I think that they've done a pretty good job on that section of the bill.

However, they—both the minister and the parliamentary assistant—like to use the term "the flip side of that coin." They used the term "transparency." I would say that it is better to use "determination of fact." That is where they have missed out on this bill substantially. I know the parliamentary assistant, the member from Halton, was at the committee. She was the talking head for the Liberal Party on that committee and had her prep notes. But I know that she heard, significantly, from delegations to that committee about where the bill fails and where it will have negative consequences and, indeed, harmful ones, and that is on these critical incident review committees and the QCIPA, where patients, and the counsel for patients, will have difficulty getting information about a critical incident. It may be impossible to get.

That's the message we heard at the committee hearing—if the member from Halton remembers—that this will be a significant disadvantage for any individual who may unfortunately have a critical incident, an injury, during a medical procedure. Their ability to find out what actually happened has been prejudiced by Bill 119. Bill 119 is very much prejudicial to those people.

I remember speaking at that committee hearing. The member for Beaches spoke out and said, "Go away, go away. This is all good. Don't worry about it."

I said to him, "I hope nothing serious or detrimental ever happens to you or your family and you need to seek remedy through the courts for something that may happen."

The development of public policy and the drafting of law is serious business. It's not just about talking points. It's about people's lives. It requires significant deliberations, significant and thoughtful conversations, and diligence and attention to detail, to get it right. If we don't get it right, people get hurt. People get harmed. People are reduced, without remedies, for failings.

That's what we have seen time and time again with this government. They view the legislation, they view the law, as a photo op, as a plaything, something that they can just advance and talk about, and have somebody parrot a few lines, a few bullet points, a few slogans. But at the end of the day, it affects people, and we need to get it right.

We saw, this morning, time allocation on the ORPP. We saw time allocation on cap-and-trade. We see time allocation all the time. We also see a refusal by this government to accept honest, forthright representations at committee.

Our critic for health, Mr. Yurek, was speaking about the amendments that were advanced—amendments from the Ontario Medical Association, amendments from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, people whose business it is to conduct themselves under these laws. We heard their concerns. Amendments were drafted. Each and every amendment offered up and discussed was rejected out of hand once again by the Liberal government. If they don't bring the amendment in, if they don't bring the legislation in, it's no good. It is irrelevant, it's insignificant, it's unimportant.

We know that this bill, Bill 119, is the result of court decisions that said the existing legislation was faulty. It did not provide enough protection. We owe it to the courts, we owe it to the public and we owe it to ourselves to get it right so it doesn't come back again and again and again for review, which we see so often.

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But this government seems to have this absolute fear of any scrutiny, and they miss scrutiny. Scrutiny provides understanding. That's what it does: It provides knowledge and understanding of what the legislation means. They also have this absolute fear of criticism, but we know that no government succeeds—no democracy succeeds—without scrutiny, without criticism. That's what makes us better. That's what makes our legislation better. That's what makes our laws better: criticism and scrutiny.

We know what types of governments don't like scrutiny. We know which governments don't like criticism. We can't allow that attitude and that culture to take root here in our province and here in our Legislature.

Bill 119 has some good elements, but I do not feel comfortable supporting Bill 119, Speaker, because of the prejudicial aspects of it for those people who need remedy in the courts for a critical incident or a serious incident that happens to them in our health care system.

There is much that needs to be fixed in health care. I fear that this one is just going to add another problem. It's going to take one problem away and add another problem in. We're going to see the courts come back and condemn some of the aspects, because that QCIPA aspect of this bill is contrary to what the courts are looking for. It's absolutely contrary to where the courts are telling us that the law and justice are found.

There needs to be transparency. There needs to be able to be a determination of fact. It can't be shielded; it can't be hidden. But Bill 119 will shield and hide facts from those who have been injured.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? Questions and comments?

Seeing none, further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: This is an incredibly important debate that we're having here today. It may be eclipsed by some other drama in the House, but what we need to be focused on is that this piece of legislation, if we don't get it right, will have a devastating impact on the people we're elected to serve—in this case, those people who have to make use of our health care system.

Our critic on this, the member from Nickel Belt, spoke at length about the importance of getting Bill 119 right. She made the strongest point around how this piece of legislation is connected to us. She said, "The problem is that each and every one of us will be impacted by this bill. We have to get it right. If we get it wrong, we will do immense damage to our health care system."

This all goes back to trust. It goes back to trust in the system in many respects, actually, for those of us who have been following the legislation. Its first reading was September 16, 2015, second reading was February 18, 2016, and its third reading is before us. The amendments put forward by both the NDP and the PC caucus were not received well by this government, which is disappointing, because there are long-standing issues around privacy in the health care system.

It is important to do our due diligence and to craft a piece of legislation which is responsive to the needs of the population. We have many examples, actually, of not getting pieces of legislation right. In fact, the Smoke-Free Ontario Act has to come back to the floor of this Legislature because the government failed to put in four words. Those four words are "and other prescribed substances." They didn't do their due diligence, they didn't do a thorough consultation, and it means that you crafted a flawed piece of legislation.

It was disappointing that the amendments were not received as they should have been. I think in good faith that we're trying to make sure that the interests of patients, the system as a whole and the integrity of the health care systems are maintained. This piece of legislation is playing catch-up, because right now the way that our Personal Health Information Protection Act is written is way back from 2004.

In 2004, electronic health records were in their infancy. You could get your name, your OHIP number and your address electronically, but everything else was on paper. We've seen a massive change in the way that information is stored, the platforms information is stored on and the amount of personal information that is out

there in the health care system. A lot of it is very personal. If you've ever experienced a breach of trust, a breach of information around your own personal health, it's a complete violation for you, for your family and for your children.

Here we are. We are in 2016 catching up from a very dated piece of legislation going back to 2004. We need to move forward; we need to get it right. What can we do to better protect the health information that is shared between patients, caregivers, clients and health providers, and how do we do that better? This act takes a number of steps to bring us there and it will talk about who is responsible for keeping the information safe, but how can we as clients, as patients, decide who has access and who does not have access? Quite honestly, I've heard from the government side of the House two of the speakers, including the minister, mention that information should be shared with people who matter most, and that would be the patient, the client of the system, if you will. Having access to this information is key to continuous improvement.

We have so many examples. As I was researching to speak to Bill 119, I was genuinely surprised to see how many breaches of privacy have actually happened in the province of Ontario. Some of them have been well known. Former speakers have talked about the privacy commissioner calling for prosecution over the Rob Ford privacy breach; this is from the Toronto Star on March 25, just over a year ago. Obviously, it made the news because it was Rob Ford, but ultimately, at the time—this was a father. He was a husband. He was well known in the community, but he was a patient of the system and he had rights that were violated.

Ontario's privacy commissioner called for the two health professionals who had allegedly snooped into former mayor Rob Ford's medical records to face prosecution. "If the duo is convicted, this would mark the first successful prosecution under the province's health privacy law, which came into force more than a decade ago." That's the part that I want to focus on. It took 10 years to make a piece of outdated legislation actionable. Why was that?

I think the weaknesses that were contained in the first QCIPA should resonate with all of us. Really, it's a call to action. Let's get this right.

"The only other health privacy breach case to have reached the courts in Ontario's history was effectively dismissed recently, after a judge ruled the delay getting to trial was unacceptable for the accused." This was justice denied because it took so long to get to the court system.

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So you have breaches of privacy in the health care system; you have justice denied because it takes so long. It's really interesting because the Ministry of the Attorney General, "the sole authority with the power to launch a prosecution under the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) said the government would not comment 'unless and until a charge has been laid.'"

Really, there is a delay in having justice followed through on, quite honestly. Yet the flip side, which is fairly interesting as well, is that you have people who want access to the data and the stats around health care. This most recent article was just published by the Toronto Star. Of course, a lot of this came about because of the investigative reporting that was done by the Toronto Star into hospitals that were refusing to reveal the critical incidents that happened in their hospitals. Some of them actually did a very good job. I think it was Toronto East General that came forward and revealed everything—because when you investigate critical incidents, you have an opportunity to learn from them. When you learn from them, you have an opportunity to strengthen your system.

What we have now—this story was just from last week, from Diana Zlomislic, who is a news reporter. She's done an evaluation of "Cancer Care Ontario 'Covering Up' Casualties by Hiding Stem Cell Data, Critics Charge." This raises the question: What sort of information should the public have access to and what should they not? In this instance, "Critics decry a 'cynical abuse' of privacy law to avoid revealing how many people fell off the transplant list because of a system breakdown."

Why is it important for us to be raising this issue in today's debate? It's that we are trying to get a sense of how the system is responding to the health care needs of the people in this province.

The article goes on to say, "Just how many of Ontario's sickest patients fell off a controversial, $100-million waiting list for life-saving stem cell transplants in US hospitals is a secret Cancer Care Ontario said it is 'committed' to keeping." The question is, does Cancer Care Ontario have the right to keep this information from us as legislators, or from the general public who pays for the system? This is a perfect example of that tension that exists in the health care sector.

There are some people, including some lawyers, who feel very strongly that this information is ours to have. It doesn't reveal personal, private medical records, but it will tell us the story of how Ontario's system is not responding to cancer care, in particular, allogeneic stem cell transplants.

Amir Attaran, who is a professor in the faculties of law and medicine at the University of Ottawa, says very clearly, "They're covering up. It is a cynical abuse of privacy law, to shield a callous and incompetent agency from disclosing how many Ontarians its inattention and bad management have killed. Simple as that."

This is somebody who feels very strongly that Cancer Care Ontario has no right to hold onto this data. But right now, Cancer Care Ontario is protected by a government that gives Cancer Care Ontario the right to withhold this information. That's why getting Bill 119 is so important.

"Ontario's privacy commissioner also took issue with Cancer Care Ontario's rationale." And you have to remember Ontario's privacy commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislature. This is what Brian

Beamish told the Star: "'It is not apparent to us how patients would be identifiable from a raw number in these circumstances.'

"Beamish consulted with Cancer Care Ontario before the government agency doubled down on its decision to withhold statistics on patients who relapsed or died while waiting for an American stem cell transplant."

Most people are incredibly surprised to find that citizens in this province have to go to the United States to access this life-saving treatment—they genuinely are—because of the costs associated with going to the United States, but also the bigger question—and having access to the full data would help us figure out why Ontario hospitals are not able, not funded, not resourced or don't have the mandate to fully respond to this particular kind of treatment.

"An ongoing Toronto Star investigation revealed that since the fall of 2015, more than 200 Ontario patients with various forms of blood cancers, such as leukemia, and immunologic disorders were referred by Ontario hospitals for out-of-country care because of a systemic capacity crisis in the province." That's the key piece, Mr. Speaker.

"There are too many patients in need of" these "stem cell transplants—new immune systems, essentially, delivered through donated bone marrow or stem cells—and not enough beds, staff or funding to offer equal-access urgent care."

Having the full dataset, though, and all of the information to holistically look at who these people are—what communities they come from; how long they have been on a wait-list; what kind of cancer they have; how long they have been in treatment; what costs they are bearing themselves, as patients, within our so-called universal health care system—this is the information that I would be interested in, not to point fingers at this hospital or that administrator or even this ministry. It would be to solve the problem, to bring a policy in place that actually is responsive, so that people do not have to travel to the United States, including children. Tomorrow we're going to be debating the terrible experience that children have when they suffer through cancer.

The holding-on of the information, the power that some organizations have to protect or to put up a wall around information, is a very important democratic discussion and debate that we are having in the province of Ontario. Certainly, for those of us who want to have this information, to inform policy going forward, that wall is very thick, and those walls are very high.

Then you have, on the flip side, information that is revealed without the appropriate protection and support—clinical, personal health information, like what happened to Rob Ford, where there was no system in place to protect the integrity of that health care experience for that patient. That is why Bill 119 is a personal story. That's what I'm trying to bring to this debate today.

It's interesting, on the stem cell data: "International standards dictate that patients requiring such a transplant generally get one within three months of their initial diagnosis, for the best chance of success." This is from the same article, Mr. Speaker. "Canada's largest cancer centre, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, formally shut its doors to new stem cell transplant patients in March" of this year—last month—"because its wait-list for treatment had grown to eight months.

"A spokeswoman for the hospital confirmed that 147 of its patients have been referred for US transplants in the past seven months."

We need to get to that information. It's just not good enough that we know that it's 147. We need to know the circumstances as to why the system is not responsive.

"The Ontario government has approved 191 patients for funded transplants in Buffalo, Detroit and Cleveland at a cost of roughly $500,000 (US) per patient. Only 19 people have received the treatment so far."

This story is a very sad story, because one of the patients, Sharon Shamblaw, had to wait so long that, really, she got bumped off the list again. She wasn't able to get the treatment in the US—or in Ontario, where, quite honestly, she should be able to get the treatment. She shouldn't have to wait on a wait-list to go to the United States for this kind of surgery.

"The government's contract permits US hospitals to treat only patients who are in remission from cancer"—the only way you get into remission from cancer is that you at least have some quality treatment to hold the cancer back—"even if doctors believe a transplant is still a curative option. Shamblaw was ordered back to Ontario. She is in palliative care at home," and obviously the prognosis is not good.

What you have here is Cancer Care Ontario, funded by the Ministry of Health, able to not give us the full dataset that we all deserve to fully understand. We agree with Ontario's privacy commissioner, Brian Beamish. He has, for good reason, challenged this decision.

Bill 119 will not rectify this situation. When you read through this piece of legislation—I've called it, and several other people here have called it, "selective transparency and accountability" associated with this.

The stats that we have, unfortunately, are somewhat anecdotal because these are doctors who finally came forward. One of them was from Hamilton. Three doctors finally said, "You know what? It goes against our oath of ethics to continue on this way." They spoke out, and I commend them for doing so. For more than a decade, physicians at Princess Margaret, Juravinski Hospital in Hamilton and the Ottawa Hospital, the only three Ontario centres equipped with highly specialized staff and space to provide these kinds of treatment, have warned Cancer Care Ontario that this crisis would happen without immediate intervention. The crisis is here. Why deny the information? Let's look at all the data. Let's find a solution. Let's make sure that people in Ontario have the access to universal health care that they're supposed to have.

I mentioned the investigation which prompted the review that has been going on for almost—I think it started two years ago. When we were on finance, we had a woman come in—and the thing is, the human side of

these issues is so painful. The woman who came in—her mother had passed away very quickly, very suddenly. She suspected a breach of treatment. She is still, five years later, fighting to find out what happened to her mother.

That's part of the grieving process which never ends. It never ends because you need answers so you can have closure. You need answers and you need the data so that you find justice. We need access to some information about the system so that we can move forward and change the system because I think we all agree that this health care system in Ontario can be stronger and more responsive.

Sending patients to the United States at half a million US dollars does not make sense. There has to be a solution. The legislation is so old that we have to acknowledge that this will address some issues. But unfortunately the amendments we put forward were not well received, as I mentioned, by the government. There was a time when legislation could be made stronger at the committee level because there was a genuine interest in shaping legislation which was actually strong. I think that those days are gone. It's unfortunate, though, because there's no doubt in my mind that Bill 119 will be coming back to this Legislature, and we will have to fix it at that point.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? Seeing none, Mr. Hoskins has moved third reading of Bill 119, An Act to amend the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, to make certain related amendments and to repeal and replace the Quality of Care Information Protection Act, 2004. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I thought I heard a weak no there.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

Those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

This will be a 30-minute bell.

We have a deferral. This will be voted on tomorrow after question period.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Attorney General has moved adjournment of the House. All in favour?

Is it the pleasure that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1744.

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Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	

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Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Randy Hillier, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri
Laurie Scott
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Steve Clark
Granville Anderson, Robert Bailey
Steve Clark, Vic Dhillon
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Monte McNaughton
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Chris Ballard, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
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