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ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 4 November 2026

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 4 novembre 2026

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

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

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

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Further debate? I recognize the member for Scarborough–Guildwood.

MPP Andrea Hazell: Good morning, everyone. It's a beautiful day. Speaker, I rise today to continue my debate from yesterday on Bill 143, the Plan to Protect Ontario Act.

Speaker, this year's fall economic statement reveals that planned health care spending is $500 million lower than what was projected in the spring budget. This government decided to cut more than 1,900 registered nurses' positions across Ontario. It means 1,900 fewer positions to support overwhelmed hospital staff and even greater pressure on an already strained health care system.

Patients are now paying the price for these cuts, Speaker. Last year, 10,000—listen to this number: over 10,000. Let me be specific: 10,634 patients died waiting for surgery or diagnostic scans. These are real families that are being impacted. Hospitals are still seeing over 2,000 patients that are being treated in hallways and other unconventional spaces in Ontario in 2026. Speaker, this sounds like a Third World experience.

For our young people, average wait times for intensive and youth mental health treatment have increased from 94 days to 105 days. That is more than three months for a child in crisis. This is really shameful on this government.

The Canadian Mental Health Association and Addictions and Mental Health Ontario have already sounded the alarm over a substantial funding gap in the spring budget, but this government continues to do what it does best, which is to not listen to the people that voted us in into this chamber.

This government's fall economic statement shows planned health care spending is $500 million lower than the spring budget. Speaker, when mental health services are already underfunded and children are waiting more than three months for intensive treatment, how can this government justify planning to spend even less on health care? This government can find $117 million to spend on ads to advertise themselves, but not one new dollar for children's mental health.

And it gets worse. A survey of Ontario students in grades 7 to 12 has revealed some alarming statistics. I want to put this on the record: One in six students reported serious thoughts of suicide; 4% reported attempting suicide; 15% reported intentionally harming themselves.

These are not just statistics; these are our children. These are young lives at risk, crying out for help. Our children should not have to reach a breaking point before they receive the help that they need. Their mental health cannot continue to be overlooked. This government must make children's mental health a priority because our children deserve more than promises by this government—for eight years, the same promises that are not being kept. They deserve action.

Let's look at education, Speaker. In this year's fall economic statement, it shows that planned education spending is $600 million lower than in the spring budget. So really and truly, nothing in this fall budget is new. Nothing at all is new for the families in Ontario that are going through this horrible affordability crisis.

Speaker, our schools are already struggling with overcrowded classrooms, staff shortages and a growing backlog of repairs. The FAO estimates that Ontario's schools already face a $6.5-billion infrastructure repair backlog, with almost 2,000 schools falling below a state of good repair. If this government continues to underfund our publicly funded education system, which it is doing right now, the backlog is projected to balloon to $22.1 billion over 10 years.

Speaker, in my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood, I have constituents calling in to my office to speak with me because they're complaining that the school sizes have gone from between 35 to 40. Speaker, how can one teacher possibly give 30 to 40 children the individual attention that they need to learn and succeed? I don't know how. How can one teacher manage that amount of students, each with different learning abilities, needs and challenges? And how can this government talk about investing in our children's future when our classrooms do not have the resources to support them?

Under this government's watch, the TDSB projected cuts to 289 teaching positions, including 145 elementary teaching positions in model schools. Shame on this government. Our children are being asked to learn in overcrowded classrooms, our teachers are being asked to do more with less and our schools are being left to deteriorate. Speaker, how can this government claim to be building a stronger Ontario when it is failing to invest in the very children who will build Ontario's future?

Ontario is facing an affordability crisis with a high unemployment rate at 7%, and youth unemployment rate at 15%.

But I want to share with you a new report from the Daily Bread Food Bank with alarming stats, and I want this to be on the record. Children account for 25% of Daily Bread's client base despite only representing 18% of Toronto's population. Food bank clients are left with a median of only $8.33 per person per day after paying for housing. That's barely enough for one round-trip TTC fare or a single load of laundry.

0910

Speaker, are we aware of how many families are struggling under these eight years of this government being in power? And each year, our young people, our families, our seniors—their opportunities are just decreasing year over year.

It continues. One in four clients spends their entire income on rent, leaving nothing for food or essentials, and 82% of clients live in unaffordable housing—82%. Some 59% of clients missed a rent, credit card or loan payment in the past month. One in eight Toronto children lives in a household relying on food banks. Thank God for the food banks. There were 4.1 million food bank visits for the second consecutive year, a staggering 333%—I'm going to repeat this again: Since this government came into power in 2018, from 2019 there's a record 333% increase in food bank visits. Some 67% of parents using food banks have sacrificed their own food so their children could eat.

The case I'm trying to make here is that the Daily Bread Food Bank has done their survey and come out with their stats. We've got a fall economic statement from this government telling us what they're doing, but the results are not showing. Results matter, Speaker—results matter.

I also want to put this on the record: In Scarborough, 46% of food bank users would go to bed hungry if it wasn't for the food banks. In my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood, 34% of children—more than one in three—live in poverty. In Toronto, there are—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but pursuant to standing order 50(c), I am now required to interrupt proceedings and announce that there have been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader directs debate to continue.

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, please continue the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I turn back to the member from Scarborough–Guildwood.

MPP Andrea Hazell: Thank you very much, House leader.

Speaker, I believe that no child should go to school hungry, no parent should have to choose between paying rent and feeding their children and buying medication, and no family should have to sleep in their car because they've just lost their jobs and they cannot afford to pay their rent.

The government has mismanaged another file and froze OSAP from private career colleges. I have received hundreds of emails in my inbox from parents that have lost their jobs, and they want to go back to school to upskill or reskill and to get back into the job market so that they can now provide for their families, so they can buy food and they can pay rent.

But the sad part of this is, on this side of the House, we kept hearing the government saying, "Four years, four years, four years." I am assuming that you've had four years to deal with the situation and refused to do anything about it.

Speaker, when a budget is presented in this House, when a budget is presented to the people in Ontario, it's about choices. This government chose the luxury spa over the hospital bed. It chose the private jet over the classroom. It chose $117 million in self-advertisements while students are struggling to access their OSAP and families are lining up at the food bank.

This fall economic statement shows a government spending a record $247.3 billion, running a deficit of about $17 billion, and now paying $47 million every day in interest alone.

I've got to ask: If we are in a deficit of $17 billion, why aren't we seeing the results? Why do the people in Ontario, the families, continue to suffer, the students continue to be punished, the seniors continue to be punished on a fixed income? Young people cannot even graduate from school—well, now education is gone from them. Now they are going into the workforce because they cannot afford to pay tuition, and so they can't find jobs. What are we really doing to our young people in Ontario?

Speaker, the people of Scarborough–Guildwood and the people of Ontario are not asking for luxury. They are asking for a family doctor, a classroom with enough support, an education they can afford, a job that pays the bills and a safe place to call home. They are asking for a government that can give them an equal opportunity to thrive in Ontario, a government that invests in its people, not in itself.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Time for questions.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I just want to ask: Who do you think is benefiting most from this budget? We see a lot of big slush funds with no strings attached and very limited transparency on how these decisions are made about who gets what money and for what. What do you think will happen with these big multi-billion-dollar slush funds?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Thank you to my colleague for that question. And for me, when I review this fall economic statement, one thing that keeps popping out at me: The

rich are going to get richer while the families and the young people in Ontario suffer.

I want to go back to all the high-priority transit projects. All those projects are delayed and overrun on budget. We don't know who's benefiting from that. We do not know who's benefiting from all these high-priority projects and the overrun dollars being spent. And do you know who is suffering? The taxpayers' dollars are paying for the wealthy.

Thank you for that question.

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

Mr. John Jordan: To the member opposite: Back in 2018, our health care budget was—well, I should say your health care budget was $62 billion. It's now over $100 billion.

One of the success stories within that is the primary care action plan and increasing access to primary care. So 511,000 people have been attached to primary care because of those investments, and those investments will continue as a result of this budget.

So my question is, are you going to support the expansion of primary care in Ontario by supporting this budget?

MPP Andrea Hazell: To the member, that's a great question, and I really welcome that question.

Primary care—you've really brought in that a bit too late, okay? I welcome the investment and I welcome what you're trying to do, but I can't go to the hospitals in Ontario and in Scarborough and up north and talk to the people who are actually waiting for diagnostic results. They're dying. That's one chair less of someone being at the table with their families. And so while I welcome that, you've got so much work to do, and I think you're being behind time. There are over three million people without a family doctor. Our population is growing, so please help me to understand: When are we going to fix the problem? Because you had eight years to fix the problem.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member for Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: This government's current debt is stupefying. It's $500 billion. It's a number you can't even get your head around, so I looked it up. If this was in seconds, 500 billion seconds is about 15,850 years. It's longer than recorded civilization. It's completely jaw-dropping.

0920

During that time, let's be clear, these are taxpayer dollars that this government is spending. And the choices that they continue to make are to vote down our motion to support students, to vote down our motion to take the tax off groceries and to continue to underfund our hospitals, to underfund all the things that people think that their tax dollars should be going toward supporting.

My question to the member is: These choices are deeply hurting people in Ontario and the debt and the deficit is staggering. Why do you think the government is making this choice today?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Thank you for that question. I appreciate that.

It's really difficult for me to stand here and try to start this question of where I think this government is going wrong, because this government continues to mismanage all the files, all the services to help give opportunities to all the families and the young people and the seniors in Ontario. Unemployment alone for the people is over 700,000; young people, it's over 15%.

As I said before, in this fall economic statement the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer—

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: Thank you for your eloquent remarks this morning.

As we know, the government is running the largest deficit in 20 years. Unemployment and youth unemployment is extraordinarily high and, as you articulated in your remarks, food bank usage is through the roof and families are suffering.

I might note, Mr. Speaker, the last time that the deficit was this high, Conservatives in Ontario actually fought against saving the auto industry, calling it "corporate welfare." And while they were not able or willing to support auto workers during the great recession of 2008-09, they're demonstrating the same thing now, not able to support families through this affordability crisis.

My question to my colleague is: What kinds of measures do you think the government should be undertaking to help the families of Scarborough get through this affordability crisis?

MPP Andrea Hazell: I want to take this question as two-prong. I want to talk about the businesses first.

During the summer, I spoke to, I would say, over 60 manufacturing SME businesses—that's the small and medium enterprises—in Scarborough and they are crying out for help. They've got over 10,000 employees. One business has about 1,500 employees, all employing Scarborough families. They do not know how long they can keep their lights on. They are talking about the high rent that they're paying. They are talking about the taxes that they need to see decrease. They are talking about tariff supports; they're not seeing that. The process that is laid out for them is not properly laid out for—

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Guildwood for her comments.

I know one thing that has been of importance to us on this side has been the increasing disability supports since 2022. We know that people who rely on disability assistance need the support, that response to the rising cost of essentials. We increased the ODSP rates from more than 22% since September 2022. It certainly dwarfs the past number of years prior and tied future increases to inflation.

So my question to the member is whether she'll commit to maintaining those annual adjustments. I'm wondering if she may also be able to explain additional changes that the third party would make in how to fund them.

MPP Andrea Hazell: To the member across the floor: Thank you for your question.

I'm looking at Scarborough and I'm looking at seniors. I'm looking at people with disabilities that are accessing these services. They are crying out that the financial support that they are getting from the government is not even helping them to buy groceries after they've paid their rent. That's the financial pressure that I'm hearing from families in Scarborough that are using the services that the member across is speaking about. I spoke to two families in Scarborough; the moms had to quit their jobs to now take care of their family members, because they're not getting the support from this government.

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

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I want to thank my colleague for her debate.

Speaker, families across Ontario are being told that children need mental health support, and yet 28,000 of them remain on a wait-list, some waiting up to two and a half years for care. As a church minister, one of the darkest days I ever had was a funeral for someone who was waiting for care as a young person and died of depression.

So to the colleague across the way: When we talk about the funding, the small bit of investment, and then we see the hundreds of millions going out into advertising how great this government is, and yet they are letting children die of depression, I wonder what my colleague would say about the way we should invest in youth mental health.

MPP Andrea Hazell: Thank you for that question. Let me make it clear: This government is investing in all the wrong priorities in Ontario and talking about building a tunnel under the 401. I didn't even have that in my debate speech because there is so much more I could add in this debate speech—so many materials. You can stand here for two hours and talk about the horrible priorities that this government is—

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

Further debate?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: It's an honour to rise and represent the people of Kitchener Centre today. I do want to thank the government; we do see an investment in primary care, we see new schools and cuts to fees to build new homes. So there are some good bits in this budget, but it misses the mark in serving the vast majority of Ontarians.

When I go door to door, I tell folks every day that I will hustle in this place to make sure that everybody in Ontario has access to a roof and food. I know that the member from Cambridge and I bond often about the needs in our community—the growing number of people who find themselves homeless and are in downtowns, living in tents—and this is not acceptable in the province of Ontario, where there is affluence. There is enough to go around and we have to make sure that everyone has access to these things.

When I look at this budget, I see the markings of a silver-spoon Premier, someone who has an us-and-them approach to funding. That's why the homelessness crisis continues on, with 85,000 people homeless, and that's set to rise to 300,000. Stats show that the number one reason why people end up homeless is eviction. One thing this government has done more than anything else is made sure more people are evicted, made it easier for folks to get evicted and provided no alternatives on where they can live.

Yet they're willing to spend $4 billion on jails. This is their solution to mental health and addiction. This is their solution to homelessness, is to build more jail beds. But we know that when folks get out of jail—guess what? They're more likely to be homeless than before. Instead, there's $53 million for supportive housing, which—guess what?—is one sixth of the amount that we're spending on a parking garage for a spa that is owned by a private foreign company in downtown Toronto.

There's always money for slush funds. There's always money for vanity projects in Toronto. There is nothing—if anything, scraps—for folks who find themselves struggling with mental health and addiction and homelessness. And seniors as well: Those in the Waterloo region saw the number of seniors who are homeless double in one year in our area.

And why is that? We see legislated poverty. Ontario Works has not gone up; it is frozen. If you measure for inflation, it has gone from almost $12,000 to almost $8,000 under this government's watch. How can anybody survive a whole year on $8,000? There's about $380 per month for housing allowance. Tell me which riding in Ontario anyone could even rent a room for $380 a month? And that's why 20,000 people on Ontario Works and ODSP have no fixed address. There is nowhere to go, and that is our responsibility.

0930

I am tired of looking at folks in my office and talking to them and wiping their tears because they have developmental disabilities and they can't afford to eat. That is a moral injury to me and to everybody in this province. It's unacceptable.

We need to give the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services more money because the cost of living has gone up and the cost of poverty has gone up. It costs us more to stand by and watch while people starve in our streets, and it's unacceptable. It is a moral injury to all of us.

In our schools, we see crowded classrooms. We see a lack of and burnout of support staff, but there's not enough money for sick days. I heard that the Peel board saves $1 million a month because they do not replace EAs and ECEs when they call in sick. And those kids who need an EA—guess what? They don't get to go to school that day. It is time that we make sure that the funding for special ed matches the demand.

We are seeing an increasing need in our schools because of the impact of the Internet. What has this government done to address the impact of the Internet in Ontario? Nothing. We see countries across the world setting legislation, putting protections in place, holding big tech accountable for the horrible impacts they've had on our society, and we laugh at Toronto school boards when they take these companies to court. It is not a laughing matter.

This government ought to do better. There are serious needs in our school, in our kids, in their development, and it's time that we start to pay the support staff that are dealing with this and have a plan to address the impact of screens from birth to death.

We don't even pay enough for CPP. Schools have to literally do bake sales to pay for CPP—pay your bills. It's like saving money when you go out for dinner with a friend by passing the bill to the friend sitting next to you. We're forced to make difficult choices in education, but there is a slush fund, there's a 3P that makes every project, whether it's hospital or transit or other things—nuclear—go over budget again and again and again.

Nuclear is the most expensive energy in the world. These SMRs, they're an American plan. They use American-enriched uranium. This is the plan we have? What about buy Ontario? Why are we not investing in renewables and batteries, which are the cheapest form of energy? It means buying a home instead of renting. IESO just bought fuel from America—just bought fuel. What happened to buy Ontario?

We could generate our own energy if we invested in clean, renewable technology. Let's expand batteries. Let's use our steel locally and make sure that we can create our own energy right now, not in 10 years, because we are going to keep burning Ontario, not protecting it.

You want to blame the poor for the problems in our communities. You want to blame kids and teachers and education staff workers, but I hold you accountable for this travesty because there's always a slush fund and there's never enough for everybody else. That's why we see crowded classrooms and crowded—

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

Questions and answers?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Kitchener Centre. I really want to applaud the local focus. I know one thing that the region of Waterloo, and Kitchener particularly, is great at is research and innovation. Businesses need to invest in research—and we see that; I'm a BlackBerry fan forever—equipment and new technologies to remain competitive. The proposed changes in the fall economic statement are to Ontario's research and development tax, through credits, to provide more than $50 million in additional support over three years to approximately 700 businesses.

I'm hoping the member for Kitchener Centre can indicate whether she supports these specific changes to encourage innovation and to help companies develop new products right here in Ontario, and particularly in Waterloo region.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: Thank you to the honourable member from Windsor–Tecumseh. Yes, we are good at doing the economic development, trying to fund companies. We are good at investing in innovation and incubator space. Do you know what we're not good at? Buying our own products. Every health care innovation product we create, almost 95% of their sales in my community are abroad. And now they're going to leave because of tariffs, because our health care system, our hospitals, do not buy our own technology.

Talk to your Minister of Health and tell her to fix the OHIP system, fix the funding for hospitals so they can actually innovate. These innovations save our care systems money so they're not just pissing money away; they're actually making it cheaper and more effective to provide health care. But you don't buy from our own companies, and that is a disgrace. Instead, Staples gets money—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I will go to further questions, but before I do, I will caution the member on her parliamentary language.

I recognize the member for Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, I appreciate the comments that were made by the member from Kitchener Centre. Clearly, she's had an opportunity to review the bill and the fall economic statement itself. As she is well aware, climate change is a huge threat to the future of this province. Could you detect anything in this bill that will actually take on the climate crisis?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I think this is the reason I'm here: because I see a train barrelling quickly into a wall with a driver putting on the gas. We can't even say the words "climate change."

Do you know what they say if you're talking to folks who are trying to predict what the economy of the future will be? The economy of the future will be fresh water. If anything, we're just polluting the water. We're polluting the air. We talk about investing in fire, but it comes at the very last minute. That's not good planning.

I know that there's been an investment recently in flood mitigation, but when I talk to the folks in Bracebridge, they talk about how that Building Faster Fund, that extra 15%, saved them from the disastrous effects of flooding this year. But that money is gone, so St. Catharines doesn't get the Building Faster Fund. We don't build back better. because we're not—

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

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Thanks to my colleague from Kitchener Centre. You want to be positive, but every time you sit here, you hear another negative story from my colleague from Scarborough–Guildwood, about poverty and children going hungry in Scarborough. We're hearing in my own riding about seniors in NORCs being deathly afraid of being evicted because of the affordability issues.

We're hearing this morning—just this morning—how we have the Association of Early Childhood Educators here in Queen's Park advocating for better care in the media studio, talking about provincial funding guidelines that are flatlining the pay for ECE workers, the lowest-paid and perhaps some of the most important workers in this province.

I want to ask the member: You just referred to a silver-spoon Premier. I couldn't agree with you more. What's it going to take for this government to see that things aren't working? There is a huge example just south of the border that people are catching on.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I see a lack of accountability, and I think it's going to take all the people of this province to rise up and demand better. We saw the former Minister of Tourism get a pay bump after egregious behaviour, yet our ECEs aren't good enough for $1 an hour. Folks who are taking care of the next generation don't have enough to pay for a roof and food, and that is a mandated situation, because they don't get a living wage across Ontario.

It shows a lack of respect for the cost of living, and we've only seen the cost of living go up under this government's watch. We see subsidies—Galen Weston gets his energy subsidized; Drake gets his energy subsidized—yet we can't afford $1 an hour for ECEs. That is a travesty, and we need to be more fiscally prudent and stop giving dole-outs to the mega-rich.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I'll go to further debate.

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: It is an honour to rise here today in this chamber to speak to Bill 143, the Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2026. Firstly, I would like to thank the people of Newmarket–Aurora who elected me to be their representative and have their voice here at Queen's Park. My goal is to ensure that I reflect their voice in my comments today.

What a different world we are living in. It was just under two years ago when we initially launched our plan to protect Ontario workers, given the challenges we were encountering with our friends to the south—and I would like to reiterate: our friends to the south. I do not believe we, or anyone, could have predicted the roller coaster upon which we were embarking: turbulent times for businesses, for workers, for the entire economy. Why? Due to the initial threats of tariffs made by the US, followed by actual tariffs, which seemed to constantly fluctuate depending on the flavour of the day.

But Ontario committed to protecting our workers while investing in strengthening our industrial base and growing the economy. And, Speaker, the plan is working. Yes, it is working by investing to fortify specific tariff-impacted industries while improving Ontario's competitiveness so that we can attract good-paying jobs. This is in strategic sectors, including advanced manufacturing, critical minerals mining and refining, artificial intelligence, defence and more.

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Nous avons su répondre aux défis actuels tout en faisant preuve d'une gestion budgétaire responsable. Nous traçons une trajectoire vers l'équilibre à l'horizon 2029 à 2030 tout en conservant la discipline nécessaire pour disposer de la marge de manoeuvre financière requise pour réagir.

And respond we have indeed. From the $30 billion in tariff relief we made available to our continued pursuit of new opportunities through our international sales missions, we are using every tool at our disposal to protect Ontario workers and bring home new job-creating investments.

As recently as September 8, just less than two months ago, Canada's counter-tariffs on $28 million worth of goods took effect. And yes, President Trump continued his complaints and his threats.

Ontario has a well-rounded, diversified economy, and we are taking every action to diversify our trade, create the conditions for companies to succeed, and build on the $235 billion in investment that we have attracted since taking office.

From our Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit to the Trade-Impacted Communities Program to the Ontario Together Trade Fund, these programs are providing the support needed to weather the Trump tariff storm. Let me give you some examples, Mr. Speaker, of what these programs have done.

The Ontario Together Trade Fund has seen 90 companies invest nearly $1 billion, creating and protecting 10,000 jobs. In my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, I was thrilled to make that call to Tony Denham, President of Bramden Precision Ltd.—this was back in January—to advise him that his application to the OTTF grant was approved. Bramden offers complete turnkey manufacturing of complex CNC-machined components and associate assemblies to the aerospace and defence sectors.

Only one year prior to that phone call, when I met with Tony, he advised me that the tariffs that President Trump was threatening would shut down his business within 12 months. This was not a good situation in my riding. Thanks to this grant of $263,250 and Bramden's investment of a total of $1.3 million, Bramden was able to move forward with a project that allowed them to add a production cell to accommodate a new Ontario-based customer. They invested in advanced manufacturing technologies to enhance their competitiveness to develop a new market within Ontario while meeting customers' domestic content demand. With this investment, Bramden was able to retain 14 good-paying, local jobs in my community, and they created eight new jobs. This is a true win for my community.

Exco Engineering, another Newmarket-based leading tool and die manufacturer, and one of the only North American firms capable of designing and building large, high-pressure die casting tooling for the automotive components—another business who knew the threats of tariffs would have grave impacts on their business, consequently jobs. How humbling it was to call the CEO to advise them that their OTTF application was approved for $1.7 million, and this allowed for their project entitled bringing tooling home—establishing Ontario's capacity to improve and replace offshore supply chains.

This is precisely why our government invested in the OTTF program, so companies like Exco Engineering could adopt new capabilities that would allow them to reshore advanced tool and die production from China to address three urgent risks: firstly, rising threats of the US tariffs on automotive tooling; secondly, costly and unpredictable international shipping; and thirdly, the loss of control over proprietary designs. This project enabled Exco to pivot into tariff-free nuclear and advanced manufacturing markets in both Canada and the US.

What an amazing morning. Employees were all gathered in the plant. The Exco CEO and I were able to celebrate Exco's major $4,252,000 investment with our government's support of $1.7 million through this Ontario Together Trade Fund.

It is this type of project that strengthens Ontario's supply chain resilience. It grows our advanced manufacturing capacity, and it ensures that we stay competitive in a rapidly changing global economy. And, importantly, this investment protects 140 existing jobs, and it created four new good-paying positions for the people of Newmarket–Aurora. With investments like these, we are reshoring critical supply chains, finding new export markets and helping companies hire new workers.

We understand that different sectors need different supports. That is why our fall economic statement puts such a strong emphasis on fortifying Ontario's industrial base.

Il y a tout juste deux semaines maintenant, nous nous sommes tenus aux côtés du gouvernement fédéral pour annoncer notre plan d'action doté de 8,7 milliards de dollars.

Just two weeks ago, we stood alongside the federal government to announce an $8.7-billion action plan.

Dans le cadre de ce plan, nous avons engagé plus de 5 milliards de dollars pour soutenir notre secteur sidérurgique par l'entremise du Fonds d'action conjoint pour l'acier.

In this plan, we pledged more than $5 billion in support for our steel sector through the Joint Steel Action Fund. This will help steelmakers diversify production and support growing industries like defence and energy while opening up new markets.

We are also leveraging our buy-Ontario policy to prioritize the use of Ontario-made steel in public procurement, strengthening domestic demand. At the same time, we are working with steelmakers like Tenaris and Algoma to build the products that the Ontario and Canadian market needs.

In Sault Ste. Marie, Tenaris, a steel pipe maker, invested $300 million in its operations, creating 200 new jobs and helping them reduce their reliance on the US market.

Just down the road from there, we continue to work with Algoma on a plan to build I-beams for infrastructure and plate steel for the defence sector.

These projects are critical not only to our industrial strategy but to our national security, helping us be less reliant on foreign actors to build what we need right here in Ontario.

Another sector I would like to highlight is health care. This falls under our build Ontario for growth plan. Firstly, our plan to connect everyone in Ontario to primary care by 2029 through the primary care action plan is supported by a $3.4-billion investment over four years. This includes creating and expanding more than 300 primary care teams to connect approximately two million people to primary care.

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I do not have to look far to see the success, because it's right in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora. With more than $2.8 million invested in two new primary care teams, we are attaching 6,500 residents to primary care providers.

I was excited to hear directly from Dr. Makary. Dr. Makary is with the Southlake Academic Family Health Team. Just three weeks ago, we talked. Dr. Makary advised me that they have achieved their patient target. This is an important and meaningful achievement, and it shows the care, the commitment and the collaboration that this team brings to our community every single day. The impact of their work is felt not only in the numbers, but in the improved health and well-being of the patients and families that they serve. A big shout-out to the Southlake Academic Family Health Team. Thank you for what you do.

Another critical investment is the $64 billion in health infrastructure over the next decade, including nearly $50 billion in capital grants to support more than 50 hospital projects. And in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, we had the great opportunity to announce the new location of the acute care hospital, just a 15-minute drive north. This announcement included a $10-million planning grant for the next phase of this massive project, which also includes the renovation of the Davis Drive campus. My constituents, along with those in the entire catchment area, including in my neighbouring York–Simcoe riding, are the direct beneficiaries of this exciting project.

Just yesterday morning, I had the opportunity to attend the UHN as they updated their progress on their surgical tower project at the UHN Toronto Western Hospital. It is a 15-storey surgical tower. It's the largest project and the first of its kind in Canada, and I should mention that UHN is the number one hospital in Canada, and I should also mention that it's number two in the world. I mention this project because it is a $1.1-billion total cost for a 380,000-square-foot new clinical space. Our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford and the Minister of Health, has committed $800 million for this project.

The work this hospital performs every day is nothing but outstanding, from lung transplants to brain-computer interface implants—imagine that. They are revolutionizing surgeries for the next 100 years using robotics, AI innovations and real-time intelligence. Their team are the experts; they make the magic happen for people. Our government is supporting these amazing health care wizards to ensure that they have the infrastructure where they can perform this high-quality care for Ontarians close to home.

Speaker, I'm not even halfway through my speech here. I'm going to have to move it on up a bit here.

Un autre volet essentiel du plan pour protéger l'Ontario, bâtir l'Ontario pour la croissance, consiste à alléger le fardeau financier des familles et des particuliers, grâce à plus de 12,5 milliards de dollars de mesures de soutien en 2026-2027. Cela comprend des investissements dans le logement, l'éducation, les transports en commun et les infrastructures de transport, l'accessibilité financière à l'énergie, les services de garde d'enfants et les prestations familiales, ainsi que des mesures de soutien destinées aux populations vulnérables.

Well, Speaker, I'm going to fast-forward to some other sections.

Another action I'm extremely proud about is, under the leadership of Premier Ford and the Minister of Finance, our government has never raised a tax. Think about that—never raising a tax. You don't hear that too often. By respecting the taxpayer dollars through responsible fiscal management and continuously looking at how to improve government efficiency, strengthen oversight and reduce administrative burden, this is how a government can set the stage for businesses to come to this province and invest—invest in their businesses and invest in a highly skilled workforce.

Through this fall economic statement, we are planning more than $8 billion in additional tax relief over five years to help businesses write off qualifying capital investments sooner. Combined with accelerated write-off measures announced earlier this year, that is more than $12 billion in Ontario capital investment tax relief over five years. This means more room for businesses to buy equipment, modernize their operations, expand production and hire workers—to grow their business. This is what the government is doing: ensuring we set the conditions for businesses to grow their business here in this great province of Ontario.

Lowering costs is only part of the plan. We must also compete for the industries and jobs of tomorrow. Ontario is already a leading destination for artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing and other emerging technologies.

Speaker, since I'm running tight on time, I'm going to go straight towards my end to conclude.

We want to strengthen protections for Ontario's data and ensure our province can benefit from investment in critical digital infrastructure—digital sovereignty. This is critical, because if we don't build them here in Ontario, they will be built on foreign soil. We have been clear: Our data should be stored on our soil. Digital sovereignty is more important than ever.

There is a common thread throughout this fall economic statement. Whether we are supporting tariff-impacted manufacturers, strengthening the steel and automotive supply chains, reducing the cost of investment, building health care infrastructure or preparing for new technologies, we are following one clear plan: Protect Ontario's workers and businesses today while creating the conditions for jobs and opportunities tomorrow.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Now is the time for questions and answers.

Ms. Fatima Shaban: Thank you to the member for Newmarket–Aurora for speaking about the budget and health care.

The government frequently points to the nearly $100 billion being spent on health care, but Ontarians deserve to know not just how much is being spent, but how effectively that money is being used.

Hospitals across Ontario have relied on expensive private staffing agencies to fill vacancies, with some agencies charging several times the hourly rate of directly employed nurses.

My question to the member of Newmarket–Aurora is, why isn't this government investing more effectively in recruiting and retaining permanent health care workers up front instead of leaving hospitals to pay a premium for private agency staff to fill the gaps? Wouldn't it make more fiscal sense to invest in a stable health care workforce rather than continuing to pay higher costs to address staffing shortages after they occur?

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Thank you to the member opposite—my first question from her—and welcome to the chamber.

Your question—I think it's interesting, because you may or may not be aware that our government has been investing significantly in the Learn and Stay program. That is specifically to ensure that we have more health care workers, specifically nurses, specifically PSWs.

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We are also investing in new medical schools. We talked the other day about TMU, also York University in York region—so important. There will be seats there for, specifically, primary care physicians. And I speak with my local hospital often, because they are going to be taking the residents of that hospital.

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

M. Stephen Blais: Merci pour votre présentation ce matin. Monsieur le Président, le gouvernement prévoit un déficit de 16,9 milliards de dollars, mais en même temps, il réduit les moyens des organismes français et francophones. Comment le gouvernement peut-il protéger nos communautés franco-ontariennes quand il coupe les services offerts aux organismes communautaires qui desservent la communauté franco-ontarienne?

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Merci beaucoup, monsieur le député, pour la question. Je ne suis pas sûre de cette question parce que je sais bien que notre ministère des Affaires francophones vient d'annoncer plus d'argent pour la communauté francophone. Juste ce week-end passé, j'ai fait une annonce avec ma communauté francophone en région de York. On a annoncé des fonds pour la communauté, surtout pour les programmes d'âgées.

Je sais bien que ce n'est pas juste la région de York. C'est d'autres régions aussi. Je sais bien qu'il y a des fonds pour Windsor et Ottawa aussi. Donc, j'entends la question; cependant je sais bien qu'il y a des fonds maintenant pour la région de York pour la francophonie.

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

Mr. Brian Riddell: My question is to the member from Newmarket. I was very intrigued by your statement today—the fact that the government has helped companies keep their employees going. I know in Cambridge, with nuclear technology—BWXT and Eclipse Automation—wonderful things are happening. I was just wondering if you could elaborate more on the companies you spoke about, and how they're saving jobs in this crazy time we live in today.

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: To my colleague: Thank you very much for the question. I think it is a great question, and that's why I used just two examples in my community. I will go back to some of the initial conversations I had with both those businesses—Bramden Precision and Exco Engineering—when Trump was first elected.

Those conversations were like, "This is going to kill our businesses. What can we possibly do?"

Businesses want to ensure their businesses can thrive and that their workers can thrive. That is why, as I noted, I am so happy our government came up with the Ontario Together Fund, because this has helped spur on—

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Speaker, there is nothing in this fall economic statement that will help steelworkers in Hamilton. The Conservative government must know that right now 500-plus steelworkers are being laid off in Hamilton. The steelworkers in Hamilton have an 80-year history, so Ontario-made steel is critical. It's critical to our national sovereignty and to our industrial sovereignty. So far, this government has been missing in action when it comes to making sure that we don't lose this important source of sovereignty in our province.

Will this government be prepared to commit to some bold action to save those jobs, including public ownership of a sector that is so vital to our economy?

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I thank the member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas. Our government understands the challenges that are facing workers, especially in Hamilton. Having grown up there, I recall many, many years, even when I was younger, when jobs were threatened. And this is really a time in our history that is unprecedented.

But this is why Ontario and the federal government recently announced an $8.7-billion action plan, and that is specifically to strengthen our steel, our automotive and our critical mineral sectors. These investments are intended to support the industry modernization as well as strengthen domestic supply chains—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you. I recognize the member from Toronto–St. Paul's.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: To the member from Newmarket–Aurora: You said at the end of your speech that the common thread here is protecting Ontario workers, protecting jobs and the opportunities of tomorrow.

But this clearly, Speaker, does not extend to early childhood educators in this province, who will not be getting a $1 increase in pay in 2027. This is already a profession that is often undervalued, under-recognized, disrespected. That $1 increase could have maybe given some hope for what the future would look like for ECEs, and without it, recruiting, retaining those workers who look after our children, our most precious resource—so I want to ask the member: Is this the one sector you just don't seem to care about, early childhood educators—a dollar-a-year increase?

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. Look, this comes down to affordability, cost of living. We all know that that has been increasing. And these are some of the changes and things the government has done to help with these increasing costs, everything from looking at the gas tax, how we can reduce that gas tax and what we've done to make it permanent beyond what we said was a temporary fix. A lot of those caregivers have to get to their work by vehicle. This is helping them.

We are looking at measures that will help reduce costs, put money back in people's pockets. If they're taking the transit, they would be saving with the One Fare program, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): For a quick question, I recognize the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Mr. Steve Pinsonneault: Thank you, Speaker, and through you to the presenter: As a former small business owner—I know you've talked a little bit more about the big business. Small business is the backbone of our economy. We cut the corporate business tax by 37%, and it has saved $5,000 annually.

You mentioned that we never raised a tax; we grow our GDP. Can you elaborate on the importance of small businesses and how we're working to improve them?

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Thank you to my colleague for the question. Small businesses are the backbone of our communities, and especially in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, where more than 60% of the businesses are small business. I was a small business owner myself.

Mr. Speaker, yes, the reduction—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Thank you very much. It is now time for further debate.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Good morning. Thank you, Speaker. As always, it's a privilege to rise in this House and be the voice of the good people of Parkdale–High Park. Today, I'm going to speak to the fiscal updates.

But before I do, I want to recognize that we have a gallery full of educators and young people here today. Yesterday, I spoke about the cuts to them in a number of areas, and I just want to recognize that they are here and I'm grateful for them in the House today. Thank you.

Speaker, I'm going to say something that might be a surprise. I'm going to say that this bill gives me hope. Yes, you have heard it right. I know it's probably not what you expected. I'm sorry to my colleagues, but it is true. This bill gives me hope, and here is why this bill gives me hope: Maybe, just maybe, this fall economic statement will finally put to rest the myth that Conservative governments are prudent stewards of our provincial economy.

Never has a government spent so much money and delivered so little for the people of Ontario. For months, we have had one story after another about taxpayers' dollars wasted by this Conservative government on private jets, on five-star hotels, on sushi-rolling classes—$10,000 at Toronto's premier tapas bar—that is a lot of tapas—and all the while doing insider deals, shelling out big bucks to lobbyists and developers.

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If you are thinking that that doesn't sound very fiscally responsible, well, just take a look at the government's report card in this fall economic statement. We have a ballooning deficit of $17 billion—yes, billion—up 3.1% from this year's budget; interest and other debt-servicing charges that are rising faster than projected. And this is not the result of increased spending on public services, Speaker—no. Funding for Ontario's public services remains frozen below inflation, with no increase to reflect the cost and pressures on families. That is already after massive

cuts to education, to health care, to social services in this year's budget and eight years of chronic underfunding by the Ford Conservative government.

Ontarians are paying the price for this government's fiscal mismanagement. Conservatives have had opportunity after opportunity for eight years to invest in our public health care system, to create good jobs and bring measures to make life more affordable. Instead, they have delivered backroom deals for wealthy insiders.

Here is what everyday Ontarians are facing, while the ministers eat steak and lobster dinner on taxpayers' dimes:

Children are going hungry. One in eight children living in Toronto now rely on the food bank. That is up from one in 15 just a few short years ago. People are working multiple jobs and relying on food banks because the housing costs are so high and the incomes haven't kept pace. After paying for housing, food bank clients have a median of $8 a day left for food and other essentials. One in four food bank clients are spending their entire income—can you imagine?—on housing, with nothing left for basic necessities. What good is a government if it is not looking after these individuals?

Unemployment is soaring. There are 800,000 Ontarians currently out of work while these ministers eat steak and lobster dinners and live in five-star luxury hotels. One in two young people in our province are unemployed and looking for work. Two of them live in my basement. These are hundreds of thousands of Ontarians who are falling behind, and they are getting no help from this government.

The Ontario NDP under Marit Stiles's leadership has brought common-sense solutions, like stabilizing the rent, lowering the cost of groceries and creating good jobs for Ontarians, that the Conservative government has voted down over and over again. And then they have the gall to tell us with $100 million in advertising dollars—our taxpayers' dollars—that they are providing relief for families and individuals. They have the gall to say that they are fiscally responsible. Spending money on advertising dollars does not make that so. And all the while, the deficit continues to grow, and the people of this province—with as much collective wealth as ours—are struggling to put food on their table. Many Ontarians are struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

Conservative governments have given developers and big landlords everything they asked for, and yet it hasn't worked. Housing starts have fallen every year in Ontario since 2022.

Speaker, I am the official shadow minister for women's social and economic opportunities. I would be remiss not to stand up for them because this government continues to invest in manufacturing and skilled trades—we need it. But it completely ignores health care, child care, education, community services—in other words, the care economy, which is the invisible foundation of our entire economy. It is the space largely dominated by women and gender-diverse people, and this government doesn't seem to notice or care.

This government's refusal to invest in our social infrastructure weakens our province and it reflects deep fiscal irresponsibility—

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

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. John Jordan: It's been almost two weeks, but I want to welcome all my colleagues back to Queen's Park, especially the three new members, and I would like to congratulate the mayors and reeves that were elected and acclaimed in my riding in the recent municipal elections. Their willingness to serve and lead is vital to building strong, vibrant communities.

There were six newly elected mayors and reeves among the 12 regions in my riding: Nicki Gowdy, mayor of Central Frontenac; Scott Cameron, reeve of Drummond/North Elmsley; Wesley Pugh, reeve of Lanark Highlands; Ed McPherson, mayor of Perth; Chris Cummings, mayor of Smiths Falls; and RoxAnne Darling, reeve of Tay Valley.

I'd also like to congratulate the six returning municipal leaders: Richard Kidd, reeve of Beckwith township and warden of Lanark county; Toby Randell, mayor of Carleton Place; Christa Lowry, mayor of Mississippi Mills and Chair of ROMA; Karen Jennings, reeve of Montague township; Gerry Litchy, mayor of North Frontenac; and Ron Vandewal, mayor of South Frontenac.

I look forward to working with all our elected mayors, reeves, deputies and councillors in the coming months and years on local constituent and stakeholder concerns and continued collaboration on improving and growing the communities that we mutually serve.

Congratulations and best wishes to all our newly elected and returning municipal councillors.

QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL

Ms. Chandra Pasma: This year, the Queensway Carleton Hospital celebrates its 50th anniversary. Since opening its doors on October 5, 1976, QCH has been the place our community has turned to for care, compassion and support.

This milestone is about much more than a building. It is about the people who have made QCH what it is today: the physicians, nurses, health care workers, support staff and volunteers who have spent the past five decades caring for our families, friends and neighbours. It is about the stories of the thousands of patients and their families who found the help, the advice, the tests and the treatments that they needed, who welcomed new babies to the family and said goodbye to beloved family members within its walls. It's about the innovations that have changed how care is provided, from the first locker for lady doctors to the opening of the Acute Care for the Elderly Unit to the newborn primary care pilot project.

But as we celebrate this remarkable anniversary, we also have to acknowledge the challenges. The hospital was

built to serve 100,000, and now it serves 500,000. Underfunding from the Conservative government has led to staffing cuts and patients being treated in the hallway.

As QCH enters its next 50 years, I remain committed to fighting for the necessary funding to right-size the hospital, reverse the cuts to nurses and health care workers and end hallway medicine.

Congratulations to the Queensway Carleton Hospital on 50 years of exceptional care, and thank you to everyone who contributed to this amazing legacy.

ORDRE DE JACQUES-CARTIER

Mme Lucille Collard: Il y a 100 ans, le 22 octobre 1926, dans le sous-sol du presbytère de l'église Saint-Charles-Borromée à Eastview, aujourd'hui Vanier, naissait une organisation qui allait profondément marquer l'histoire de la francophonie canadienne : l'Ordre de Jacques-Cartier, mieux connu sous le nom de « La Patente ».

À une époque où les droits des francophones étaient constamment menacés, des hommes ont décidé de s'organiser pour défendre leur langue, leur culture et leurs intérêts. Pendant près de 40 ans, cette société secrète a exercé une influence considérable, favorisant notamment la présence des francophones dans la fonction publique. Bien que ses méthodes fondées sur le secret et l'influence puissent aujourd'hui susciter des questions, son rôle dans notre histoire demeure indéniable.

Speaker, comme députée d'Ottawa–Vanier, je suis particulièrement fière que cette histoire ait pris naissance chez nous; 100 ans plus tard, nous pouvons mesurer le chemin parcouru tout en reconnaissant que la défense de nos droits linguistiques demeure un travail de chaque génération.

Je tiens à saluer le Muséoparc Vanier, qui souligne ce centenaire par une exposition consacrée à cette page fascinante de notre histoire. L'histoire de « La Patente » nous rappelle que les droits dont nous jouissons aujourd'hui sont le fruit de la détermination de celles et ceux qui nous ont précédés. À nous maintenant de poursuivre leur oeuvre ouvertement, fièrement et collectivement.

RIDING OF MARKHAM–UNIONVILLE

Mr. Billy Pang: Over the summer recess, I had the privilege of spending time across Markham–Unionville, connecting with the people I'm proud to represent. From cultural celebrations and community events to meetings with seniors, students, families, local businesses and community organizations, every conversation reminded me of what makes our riding so special.

1020

I was especially pleased to recognize the achievements of our young people, honour dedicated senior volunteers and celebrate residents who take pride in beautifying our neighbourhood through our annual landscaping awards.

Above all, Speaker, these visits were about listening. Residents shared their experiences, ideas and concerns about health care, education affordability and community safety. Their perspectives helped me better understand local priorities and guide the work I do on their behalf.

To every resident who took the time to speak with me, and to every volunteer and community organization working to make Markham–Unionville a better place: Thank you.

As the fall session gets under way, I remain committed to bringing my constituents' concerns to Queen's Park and continuing to serve the people of Markham–Unionville wholeheartedly.

CAREGIVERS

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Right now, a mother has quit her job to take care of a child facing a chronic illness. A son has dropped his work hours to part-time to take care of his dying father. A wife is barely keeping afloat as she cares for her young children and now her husband, who is unable to work as he slowly recovers from a terrible accident. Parents are caring for a child with autism. Children are caring for parents with dementia.

They are all caregivers, and the emotional, physical and financial costs of their efforts are back-breaking. Dollars are stretched thin. Many begin to struggle keeping a roof over their heads and to put food on their table. Their hard-earned savings are drained away. Eventually, their own health is affected under the stress.

But who can they reach out to for help? We can help them. That is why the people put us here. We, the NDP official opposition, have introduced a bill to give caregivers sustainable financial relief that they desperately need while they support their loved ones.

Thank you to my colleague from Niagara Falls for again tabling this important motion.

Other provinces have a caregiver benefit, but not Ontario. Well, it's time to change that here. We are calling on this government to vote for our motion and create a caregiver benefit here in Ontario.

KIDSABILITY

Mr. Brian Riddell: Good morning. I rise today to recognize a wonderful community organization in Waterloo region, KidsAbility.

I recently had the privilege of touring the Cambridge facility where I saw first-hand a team of dedicated and compassionate professionals working together to provide children with the specialized care and support they need to reach their full potential.

KidsAbility not only helps children overcome challenges in learning and development but also supports their transition into the public school system, giving them greater opportunity to participate, learn and thrive.

One innovation that particularly stayed with me from my visit was seeing a new technology called brain-computer interface. This technology allows the children to turn their thoughts into actions, including communicating, painting and playing. For some children, it creates an opportunity to communicate in ways they never could before.

Madam Speaker, it is difficult to put into words what it means for a parent to finally be able to understand their children's thoughts, personality and their individual ca-

pabilities. Imagine going years without being able to fully communicate with your own child, then finally having the opportunity to see the humour, the wit, the intelligence you have never seen or expected from your own child.

I want to recognize the incredible staff, volunteers and supporters for their work that they do every day to give children new opportunities and help them show the world who they truly are.

RECYCLING

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, London is the Forest City, and Londoners are proud of our environmental leadership. We hold annual events like Earthfest and the Green Leader Awards. We participate in the Million Tree Challenge. We're ranked number one out of 30 Canadian cities for our environmental quality.

We also understand the importance of the three Rs as one of the ways that everyday citizens can make a difference, which is why the Ford government's botched blue box overhaul is so problematic. We all remember the rocky implementation of producer responsibility in January. Requiring the companies that make the packaging to pay for recycling was a good idea, but the new program eliminated blue box pickup for thousands of small businesses, non-profits, churches, and more. Now, after pressure from the companies about the cost of running the new program, the Ford government wants to cut it back.

For Londoners, at least with producer responsibility we were able to recycle flexible plastics. After less than a year, we are now being told that flexible plastics may no longer be collected, that bundles of cardboard and overflow recycling bags may no longer be allowed, and that unwilling communities may find themselves home to new dumps and garbage incinerators.

Speaker, we see the reality of climate change every day around us. We need to expand recycling and strengthen environmental protection, not weaken it.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. David Smith: As we begin a new session of the Legislature, I'm proud to share the work happening across my riding of Scarborough Centre to create opportunities for our young people and strengthen our community.

In July, I hosted my inaugural Youth Skilled Trades and Careers Expo, welcoming more than 500 young people in attendance and over 30 organizations. Minister Piccini, Minister Lecce, PA Firin and PA Sabawy were all in attendance. People explored skilled trades and connected with employers and training institutions. Attendees also participated in culinary workshops where they prepared food and learned proper kitchen techniques.

Madam Speaker, I will be hosting my second inaugural trade—this weekend, on the 7th and 8th. I have more than 50 organizations registered to date. Attendees will have opportunities to take part in hands-on activities and participate in on-the-spot interviews.

I was honoured to introduce the private member's bill that established Ontario's Skilled Trades Week, recognizing the 144 skilled trades that help build our province.

As we prepare for Remembrance Day, let us honour the courage and sacrifice of our men and women who served our country, Canada.

ROBERT T. JAMES MITCHELL

MPP Paul Vickers: Today I rise to recognize 20 years since the passing of Corporal Robert T. James Mitchell, a proud member of the Royal Canadian Dragoons from Owen Sound, who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in Afghanistan on October 3, 2006. Two decades have passed, but the memory of Corporal Mitchell and the sacrifice he made in service to Canada remains very much alive in our community. His courage, dedication and commitment to serving others are qualities that his family and community members will forever remember.

I want to take a moment to recognize his mother, Carol, whose strength and continued commitment to keeping Corporal Mitchell's memory alive is truly remarkable. The loss of a loved one in service to our country is something no family should have to endure, and her efforts to ensure his story continues to be told are deserving of our deepest respect and gratitude.

I would also like to recognize and thank the freedom riders for their work in preserving his memory and for hosting the 20th anniversary memorial in Owen Sound last month, as well as for all the work they do to help our returning veterans find a place in their communities once again.

As we mark this 20th anniversary and as we approach Remembrance Day next week, let us remember Corporal Mitchell and recognize all those who have served and have given the ultimate sacrifice in defence of our country.

Lest we forget.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, if I could direct your attention to the Speaker's gallery. Sitting in the Speaker's gallery, I am proud to introduce and welcome to Queen's Park some of the newly elected municipal councillors from Hamilton: Jason Farr, Matt Francis, Nicole Trombetta, Jonathan Stathakos, Mark Daly, Fred Bennink, Colleen Stewart and Rick Kunc. Congratulations, and welcome to Queen's Park.

1030

Hon. Kevin Holland: I would like to welcome three members from Thunder Bay. Joining us from Lakehead University are Dr. Gautam Das and Ben Hubbard, and from the Ontario Association of Radiologists, my good friend and neighbour Erin Arps.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Today, I would like to welcome my wonderful parents, Frank and Karen Quinn, to watch question period.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I hope we added a few extra seconds to the clock.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: Today is Take Our Kids to Work Day, so grade 9 students across Ontario are

going to work with their parents. And today, I brought my twins, Lily and Vi, to the Legislature to shadow me. So welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I would like to welcome my nephew Mason Ouellette to the House today for Take Our Kids to Work Day.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: I would like to welcome, from the great riding of Pickering–Uxbridge, my page Jai Khandan's parents, Preeyaunta Khandan and Khandan Sanmuganathan. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Rob Flack: I would like to welcome to the House Father Jim Mockler, upstairs there. He is the chaplain to the police services in London and also to the Aylmer police college. Welcome, Father Mockler.

M. Guy Bourgouin: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à l'ACÉPO, mais en particulier à quelqu'un qui vient de mon comté, Natalie Joncas-Raymond. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I would like to welcome some wonderful people from Windsor who gave us a great tour of Ojibway Prairie Provincial Park: lovely Laura Foy, and expert botanist—and her husband—awesome Andrew Campbell. Also from beautiful Beaches–East York: lively Lauren Guy-Cowan, who is an incredible young leader and former eco tiger.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I would like to welcome my son, James Fobel, here for Take Our Kids to Work Day, and his friend George Benham. Welcome to your House.

MPP Tyler Watt: It's my pleasure to welcome the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. We have Mayurika Chakravorty from Carleton, Daniel Paré from Ottawa University, Dwayne Collins from Trent University—my alma mater. We have Rob Kristofferson from OCUFA, the president, and we also have the fabulous Jenny Ahn, the executive director. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I would like to welcome my chief of staff today, Anthony Rizzetto. For bring your child to work, he's got his son Joseph with him. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: I would like to welcome the elected mayor of Mississauga, Mr. Alvin Tedjo. Welcome to the House.

M. Andrew Dowie: Je reconnais Emmanuelle Richez, conseillère scolaire du Conseil scolaire Viamonde. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Mme Chandra Pasma: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue aux membres de l'ACÉPO qui sont venus nous parler de l'éducation francophone aujourd'hui, particulièrement le président, Denis Labelle; la directrice générale, Isabelle Girard; et d'Ottawa, Samia Ouled Ali, Jacinthe Marcil, Christian-Charle Bouchard et Jean-François Bélanger. Bienvenue.

Mme France Gélinas: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue aux représentants de l'ACÉPO, Denis Labelle et Natalie Joncas-Raymond, qui sont du conseil scolaire du Nord-Est, ainsi que Francine Vaillancourt, Anne-Marie Gélineault—pas Gélinas, Gélineault—et Carl Dussault du Conseil scolaire du Grand Nord. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I would like to introduce legislative page Ramina Ramanathan from Haldimand–Norfolk, who attends Langton Public School. I had the pleasure of having lunch with Ramina last week and am proud to report that she loves to play football and she likes to swim. I know she is serving this Legislature very well.

Mr. Jeff Beattie: Speaker, it's my honour to join you in welcoming the members of the Hamilton city council. But in addition to all of the fine folks there, I want to offer a special welcome and congratulations to arguably the best constituency city office manager in the city. Jackie Coffey is in the House today.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's my honour to welcome representatives from OCUFA in London, including Ben Muller and Thomas Peace, as well as Jun Nogami, Ana Duff and Lucas Savino. I'm looking forward to our meeting.

I also want to welcome the Canadian Federation of Students. I'm also looking forward to that meeting.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Please join me in welcoming the Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Sciences, the professional association that represents Ontario medical radiation and diagnostic imaging professionals. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'll add 20 seconds to the clock.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park today the newly elected mayor of Clarington, His Worship Tom Dingwall. Welcome to the House.

Hon. David Piccini: I'm pleased to welcome legislative page Robert Kennedy, his family Brian Tinker, Alex Tinker and David Kennedy, who are here. It's a tremendous source of pride to see a young student from Trinity College School here serving as a legislative page. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, members, we're out of time. A reminder that you may come back at 3 o'clock for introduction of visitors.

OFFICE OF THE ASSEMBLY SERVICE FAIR

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I would also like to remind members that you and your staff are invited to the Office of the Assembly service fair today from 11:30 until 3 p.m. in the library event hall. This is a drop-in event, and it will highlight the resources and all of the services available to you and your offices. We hope you stop by.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Colleges and Universities couldn't get his story straight. He stood here; he talked about OSAP inspections and audits of private career

colleges but refused to make that information public. Then he said he would strongly consider making it public, as long as his laundry list of conditions were met.

Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars went to fraudulent institutions under this minister's watch. Warnings after warnings were ignored. He needs to be held accountable. Will the Premier direct his minister to table the inspection reports and the KPMG audit into the OSAP fiasco?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I said yesterday in the scrum, I don't want to compromise the integrity of the investigation that's taking place. I do not want to undermine the ongoing audit or criminal investigation. These bad actors must be held accountable, but if there is an opportunity to release information from the audit, I will absolutely do so.

I've been standing up in the House every single day ensuring there's transparency on this file as well as scrumming with the media outside of the Legislature. I will continue to provide regular updates both to students and to the taxpayers of Ontario.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, this is not transparency. Ontarians deserve answers.

The minister says that the KPMG audit might be made public, that he might consider accountability and transparency, but only if his very specific conditions are met. Speaker, "maybes" aren't enough when you're dealing with millions of taxpayer dollars and thousands of student lives.

The people of Ontario deserve answers. If there is nothing to hide, why won't the Premier make the OSAP inspection reports and the audit public?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I said, I cannot undermine the audit and investigation taking place. If that member is okay undermining the audit that is taking place, that's on her, Speaker. But ultimately, we have to go after the wrongdoers and the bad actors that have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer. I need to allow the audit to take place without political interference because, ultimately, they're gathering data right now and we want to ensure that we recover those taxpayer dollars, and I do not want to get in the way of that process.

1040

We have referred it to the Ontario Provincial Police and notified the Auditor General, and we will continue to ensure that there is compliance with OSAP moving forward.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It's not just bad actors. Thousands of students' lives have been upended because of this minister's incompetence. Lia was enrolled at a private career college to be a dental hygienist, an occupation we desperately need in Ontario. She already lives on a tight budget, and without OSAP, she says, she is heartbroken and distraught. Her future is now at stake because of this minister. Lia deserves to know what happened to her dreams.

If this minister can't commit to giving students like Lia some answers, will the Premier do the right thing and fire his Minister of Colleges and Universities?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I've clearly communicated to the general public that we have legislation coming forward this session to ensure that we have the appropriate guardrails on private institutions when it comes to OSAP usage. But I've also told the students that in the new year we will bring forward a new OSAP system that brings forward confidence and assurances to know that it's used for its intended uses, Speaker.

Wrongdoers have unfortunately compromised the OSAP system and that's why we're bringing forward legislation with urgency this session to ensure that we can bring back that confidence to the OSAP system, Speaker.

I truly, truly understand that there are a lot of good students caught up in this, but these are taxpayer dollars. I need to ensure that students—who are taxpayers—understand that we need to have confidence in where those dollars are flowing, because ultimately the students are taxpayers. We are bringing back confidence into the OSAP system with the audit taking place right now.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: ᒥᓄᑭᒐᐸᔭ

Yesterday we learned that this government is freezing early childhood educators' wages. Yes, Speaker: frozen wages in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, making it harder for parents to get daycare. There is no child care without ECEs. They work hard every day so parents can go to work, knowing that their children are safe and learning.

Will the education minister reverse the wage freeze and guarantee ECEs the decent work and pay that they deserve?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I absolutely agree on the importance of child care for parents across the province of Ontario. It was something, when we were elected back in 2018, that we were very concerned with. Of course, the previous Liberal government had ruled over a system that saw fees increase for parents to unimaginably high levels. They weren't creating new spaces. We knew that we had to do something a little bit differently. So we immediately set out to increase the wage floor so that our ECEs would see their wages increase by about 40% since our time in office.

That's good news, but of course there is more that needs to be done. That is why we've been so very challenging on the federal government to ensure that their program, the CWELCC program, delivers for the people of the province of Ontario.

We've recently announced an expansion of that, with many billions of dollars of new resources coming from the federal government, who were underfunding their part of the program. There is another ministerial meeting to be

held in Manitoba to discuss some additional aspects where the federal government has fallen short on its program.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I get that quite a bit, even in different files, that it's the responsibility of the federal government, but I think at this time, we know this is a provincial responsibility.

I know, right now, child care rooms across Ontario are sitting empty. We know that—not because there's no demand, but because this government is failing to staff them. Early childhood educators are being forced out because of low wages and parents are paying the price. Some parents might have to make the difficult choice to leave their jobs simply because they can't get their kids into daycare.

Again, to the minister: Will this government commit to ending the wage freeze so that families can access the child care that they need?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I don't disagree on the importance of child care. It's one of the reasons we moved so quickly back in 2018 to ensure that we were reforming a system that was literally left broken by the previous Liberal government. That is why we've increased the wage floor, as I said—an over 40% increase in the floor since we took office back in 2018.

Madam Speaker, you have also seen some of the largest decreases in costs to parents over the time period that we have been in office—a massive expansion of the child care system across the province of Ontario, a massive expansion, obviously, in ECEs at the same time. It is something that we have been working very closely with the federal government on. While child care is a provincial responsibility, absolutely, the CWELCC system itself, the member will know, is a program that the federal government brought in. It was billions of dollars underfunded. Ontario has led the federation in ensuring that the federal government steps up. To their credit, they have stepped up with billions of dollars in additional funding, but there is more work that needs to be done, and that's why we're meeting in—

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Speaker, this decision is not good. It's bad for families. It's not good for our economy. It's bad for our children. I know that the minister is making the situation worse. Child care rooms are empty, and families need the spaces now.

Today, the minister won't figure out how to hire more child care workers, and his only solution is to freeze the wages. It just doesn't add up for us.

Through the Speaker: What does the minister say to the families who are already making hard decisions and hard choices because they cannot access the child care that they require?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, that is why we moved so quickly back in 2018. I'll remind the member that when we brought forward the care tax credit, it was the opposition that voted against it.

But ultimately, we knew right from the beginning that we had to increase child care spaces across the province of Ontario and that in order to do that you needed to raise the wages of ECEs. That's why, of course, we increased those wages by 40% in our time in government. That's why we have brought thousands of additional child care spaces online during our time in government. That's why you have seen child care fees go down substantially year after year after year: because of the work that our government has been doing, not only on our own but with the federal government through the CWELCC program.

That work will continue because you can't have a growing economy if you can't have proper child care. That is why we have been so focused on ensuring that not only are we having more ECEs through our college and private college system so that they're available to us, but also that we have the spaces that we need to ensure that every parent has access to full, affordable child care across the province.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier. The Premier and the government know that it's in their power—they have the ability to ask the Auditor General to do a special report. All they have to do is ask. It's within their power. It's the right thing to do. It's in the public interest. Yet the government refuses to do it and insists on using their hand-picked auditors, KPMG, to produce a report that we know will never see the light of day.

We need to know why the government gave away hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars.

My question is really simple: Will the Premier and the government commit to asking the Auditor General to do a special audit on the government's handling of OSAP?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've already told the Liberal Party, we've notified the Auditor General about the ongoing investigation into career colleges and OSAP. We've also referred it to the Ontario Provincial Police, and I do not want to compromise the investigations that are taking place or undermine those investigations.

But this is an extremely serious matter. Wrongdoers have defrauded the Ontario taxpayers, and that is why we've brought forward KPMG—forensic auditors, the experts—to be able to ensure that we have confidence in the system and to ensure that it's not as widespread as we initially believe it is.

Our individual inspections and investigations had us realize that it was more widespread across the private institution sector, and that is why we put a pause on all OSAP payments to private institutions. We need to allow that process to take place without political interference, and we will ensure that the process takes place. I will release all information I can, as I have been doing on a daily basis.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Actually, the minister's actions have hung families out to dry.

1050

But do you know what? There is a difference between notifying the Auditor General and asking the Auditor General.

Speaker, don't fall for what the minister is saying. Under section 17 of the Auditor General Act, you can ask for a special audit. And the minister is pretending—it's like, "It's not up to me." Here's the thing: If the government, the minister, the Premier had nothing to hide, why are they not doing it?

KPMG is not auditing the ministry, Minister. We need a special audit.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Through the Speaker.

Mr. John Fraser: So I'm going to ask once again: Will the minister, the Premier, ask the Auditor General to do a special audit on the ministry's handling of OSAP?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, as I just articulated, we notified the Auditor General, and it's up to her to choose whether she wants to do an investigation into the OSAP process. We also referred it to the Ontario Provincial Police.

We understand the impact this has on the good students who are caught up in this. Ultimately, we need to bring confidence back to the OSAP system. That is why we have forensic auditors at KPMG: to look across the whole system and to ensure that we don't have as widespread of issues as we truly believe we do. Multiple internal investigations through ministry officials have brought us to this position today. Ultimately, once we realized that the individual inspections were realizing that it is more widespread, we understood that we needed to bring in a third-party auditor, KPMG, to ensure that we have confidence back to the OSAP system. These private institutions and these wrongdoers who have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer will be held accountable.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Somebody needs to pull the fire alarm because the dumpster fire that started yesterday with this minister's responses on the audit and KPMG—it's unbelievable. "No, we're not going to share it"; "Oh, maybe we'll share parts of it"; "There's an OPP investigation"—excuse after excuse after excuse. What's going on over there? It's desperation. The government is desperately trying to hide the fact that they gave away hundreds, if not billions, of dollars of taxpayers' money, of students' money.

I'll ask once again: Will the minister commit to asking the Auditor General to do a special audit of his ministry's handling of the OSAP file?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, as I've told the interim leader I think a dozen times right now, we notified the Auditor General, and it is up to her office whether the Auditor General wants to do an investigation. We also referred it to the Ontario Provincial Police. We've allowed the authorities to basically run with it if they want to.

But, ultimately, KPMG is being utilized because we need the forensic experts to get to the bottom of this, to ensure that we have confidence across the system. Wrongdoers have defrauded the system; they have defrauded Ontario taxpayers. This is a system in place to be able to support students with upskilling and training into their future careers. Unfortunately, those wrongdoers have taken advantage of Ontario taxpayers and Ontario students with the fraud that has been committed across Ontario.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: It's a dumpster fire. Bill 140 hasn't even passed, and they're burning garbage over there. Unbelievable.

The Premier is acting like he's a victim in this OSAP scandal; the minister is acting like he's a victim—they're not. The victims are honest, hard-working people who just wanted to do something for their family. They are victims of bad actors, and a Premier and a minister who failed to act. They created the loophole that started the party on the taxpayer dime. They ignored the warnings, and the party kept going. Last year, they even gave more money to Academy of Learning so the party wouldn't end.

Speaker, will the Premier and the minister stop acting like victims in this OSAP scandal?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I am not acting like a victim. I understand the impact on the good students who are caught up in this.

The only person ignoring is the interim leader of the third party. We did not ignore any tips that have been brought forward to the ministry.

In late 2024, we realized that there was an impact on OSAP applications at private career colleges. In January 2025, Career Colleges Ontario, a third-party agency, had the same concerns that ministry officials had and we worked with them through that. But in May 2025, the federal government released the results of their audit that they were doing internally to my ministry officials. We brought forward enhanced and targeted reviews in the summer of 2025. This year, we removed eligibility from six of those institutions because of the individual inspections that were taking place. But in August, we realized how widespread the fraud is with the wrongdoers at these private institutions.

We have paused OSAP across all private institutions until KPMG can give us the confidence we need with taxpayer dollars.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'm really glad the minister brought up those inspections, because it's a really important part of this next question.

The victims here are the hard-working people the minister has cut off.

We do know the Academy of Learning, two years ago, received $219 million. What we don't know is how much

money they received last year—we don't know, but the minister knows. And the minister knows that they failed to inspect on time and gave them money for another year.

So, Speaker, how much OSAP funding did the Academy of Learning receive last year? Was it more than the $219 million in OSAP funds or less?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Wrongdoers have taken advantage of Ontario taxpayers. These are very serious allegations. We are taking these allegations very seriously.

That is why we have done many OSAP investigations over the two years. That is why we brought forward forensic experts to be able to ensure we can have confidence back into the system.

As I already told that member yesterday, since 2020, we've done over 3,200 individual OSAP inspections into students. Every single tip we receive—we take them very seriously. I've already given them the time frame of our inspections and how we've taken this very seriously, but I will continue to repeat it to him if he needs me to. Ultimately, we have taken every single tip seriously, and we'll continue to take every single tip seriously.

They can trivialize this all they want. We'll continue to hold wrongdoers accountable.

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

Mr. John Fraser: The minister knows how much money Academy of Learning got last year; he's just not telling us.

Let's do the math. We know that Academy of Learning had 8,500 OSAP applications come from one location. So the simple math—on the low end, that's about $170 million; on the high end, that might be half a billion dollars. And if you followed the Academy of Learning's advertisements, even now, you'd know that it's probably on the higher end, Minister. That's a whole year of funding that the government allowed to happen because they failed to inspect on time. For 10 months, they didn't inspect. They only inspected after the money was allocated and sent out the door—hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars.

So, simple question, Minister: How much was it—$100 million, $200 million, $300 million, half a billion dollars? How much money was it? You know. Tell us today.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: These are serious allegations. One dollar going to fraud is one dollar too much.

We'll ensure that we bring confidence back into the OSAP system. I will not release another taxpayer dollar until KPMG finishes their audit, until we continue working with KPMG, until the Ontario Provincial Police bring forward criminal charges for these bad actors. The wrongdoers have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer. I take this very seriously, and we are seized with this. I will not sleep until these bad actors are held accountable.

WATER QUALITY

Ms. Chandra Pasma: This government's constant refusal to invest in our kids is causing them harm in so many ways. And now we learn that this government is failing to protect our kids from lead in the drinking water in schools because they don't want to pay for it. An FOI revealed that the government is refusing to adopt Health Canada's guidelines for lead because they think it's too expensive.

Why does the Premier have money for private jets and hotel bills but none when it comes to clean drinking water for our kids?

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

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: This type of question we welcome, because when it comes to clean drinking water for all and protecting our children, we are in this together.

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I can assure you that Ontario has among the highest standards in the entire world when it comes to clean drinking water and protecting our children. I can tell you that drinking water is carefully monitored regularly through testing by certified operators and water-quality analysts who collect thousands of drinking water samples each and every year.

In the very rare case, Madam Speaker, where a test result does not meet the standards or a drinking water system experiences an operational issue, immediate action is taken. Source protection plans under our Clean Water Act, 2006, are in place across Ontario's 38 source protection areas, and we work with our schools and school boards to protect our children.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: It was interesting to see that nobody wanted to be the one who had to answer that question, Speaker. Perhaps it's because the science is the same for the province as it is for the federal government. It doesn't change just because the Premier doesn't want to foot the bill.

The World Health Organization is clear that there is no safe level of lead, and the health impacts can be severe and lifelong. More than half of schools in the province have failed at least one lead test in the last five years. This is jeopardizing the health and safety of our kids.

Why is there no spending limit when it comes to a fantasy tunnel under the 401, but the Premier won't spend a penny when it comes to protecting our kids?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Specifically for determining lead in drinking water in our schools, we have the most comprehensive provincial testing system in Canada. We require every fixture used to prepare food or provide drinking water to children in our schools, private schools and child care centres to be tested for lead. Facilities are also required to flush their plumbing on a regular, weekly basis, depending on the most recent results of testing.

Where lead exceeds the drinking water quality standard, facility owners, such as school boards and owners of private schools and child care centres, must take immediate corrective actions to protect users as directed by the local medical officer of health.

Madam Speaker, we will stop at nothing to protect our children. We will continue with investing in this mandate and protecting our children for all.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Adil Shamji: Madam Speaker, most Ontarians have in some way been touched by cancer, and they know that it is cruel and heartless. What they don't expect is that their government will be the same. In Ontario, there's simply no reason to expect that in addition to battling cancer, patients should have to battle their Minister of Health as well. But for patients like Alex Shved, Kevin Nash, Holly Wardlow, Sabrina Apitz-Grossman and others, that's exactly what they're doing.

The courts have said the Minister of Health is wrong. The science has said that the Minister of Health is wrong. The doctors have said that the Minister of Health is wrong. Yet the minister is defying a unanimous consensus between the courts, the science and the doctors, and that is a political decision. Her only excuse now is that she's penny-pinching.

So will the Minister of Health stop trying to balance the books on the backs of cancer patients, and will she just get them the treatment that they deserve?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: As I've said many times, and I'm sure many of us think about it, it is incredibly challenging when people are facing cancer diagnoses in Ontario, in Canada—in fact, in the world.

But let's talk about what Ontario has been able to do with a fast-track program that has ensured eight additional cancer-treatment therapies are now available in the province one year faster than would have been the case under the previous administration. We have initiated a Health Innovation Pathway to ensure that innovative medicines and techniques that we are able to use in our world-class Ontario hospitals can come to market faster here in Ontario, accessing patients here in Ontario.

We are going to do everything possible to make sure that treatments are happening here in Ontario for Ontario patients.

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

Mr. Adil Shamji: Madam Speaker, I'm going to just call it like it is: All of us are tired of hearing the Minister of Health's excuses. For many Ontario cancer patients, they simply don't have time to wait. Her words are cruel, they're heartless and they're wrong.

The FAST program isn't fast enough. The innovation pathway hasn't delivered the drugs. There was no 2011 regulation change that justifies her rejections. There have been no consultations with the most qualified medical experts on her decisions. In many cases, her ministry has rejected patients before reviewing its own medical opinions anyway.

Regardless of any of these things, the Minister of Health is the Minister of Health. The buck stops with her. Will she choose to save these patients' lives, or will she choose to let them die?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I should be shocked that the member opposite is politicizing a clinical expert decision, and yet, unfortunately, I am not. Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research are world-leading research centres in the province of Ontario. Ontario has the shortest wait times nationally for lung cancer. We have the shortest wait times nationally for prostate cancer surgeries.

We are continuing to lead, both in pushing the federal government to make sure that we can expedite the approval processes for cancer drugs and all therapies, and we will continue to do that because we want these therapies to be made available to Ontarians in Ontario.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Deepak Anand: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. When President Trump took office in January 2025 and decided to target Canadian industries and workers, it became clear that our long-standing partnership with the US could no longer be taken for granted. Just to be clear, as Premier Ford always says, Canadians love Americans; Americans love Canadians. It's just that one person.

Speaker, while the idea of trade diversification may be new to some, our government has been doing the work over the past eight years to ensure we are not reliant on one single partner. Through international sales missions, our government has opened new markets, landed investments and built lasting partnerships with trusted allies and partners. So can the minister tell us more about Ontario's efforts to diversify our trade since 2018?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: When our government took office in 2018, trade with non-US countries was $210 billion. Last year, it was nearly $326 billion. That is a 75% increase in non-US trade and that's because we did the work. We did the work on the ground and we did the work in the air, meeting with global companies and business leaders, sharing our open-for-business message. And we've seen the results, Speaker: India, trade is up 88%; South Korea, it's up 94%; Poland, it's up 96%. But they're more than stats. These are opportunities for our families and our workers, and more Ontario goods that are sold now around the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Minister, for that response. International trade is about more than just buying and selling goods. It's about building trust, strengthening relationships and creating lasting partnerships. Under Premier Ford's leadership, our government has been working tirelessly to strengthen relationships with reliable partners around the world and open new markets for Ontario-made goods. When new investments are made or more orders are received, we create more jobs and we bring more prosperity.

Speaker, can the Minister share how our government's international sales missions are helping Ontario job creators reach new markets and diversify our trading relationships around the world, and how we're building a better, stronger Ontario?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Last year, we had 30 international sales missions that landed $35 billion here into the prov-

ince of Ontario. We've returned home, Speaker, with billions of dollars in investments, but more than that, we brought home something different: We brought home these partnerships around the world. Because when you build trust with international partners, you open doors for Ontario businesses to reach into those new markets and sell more Ontario-made goods all around the world.

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Again, the results speak for themselves, Speaker: Since 2018, our trade with Switzerland is up 132%. In Brazil, it's up 241%. In the ASEAN region—Philippines, Indonesia and others—it's up 120%. Through our efforts, we're ensuring Ontario businesses have more customers, more opportunities and more reliable trading partners.

AFFAIRES FRANCOPHONES

Mme France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre des Affaires francophones.

L'Association des groupes en arts visuels francophones a reçu les résultats de ses demandes de financement. Tous les organismes d'arts visuels francophones ont subi des coupures de budget, alors que du côté anglophone, seulement 11 % ont eu des coupures de budget. La Galerie du Nouvel-Ontario à Sudbury a vu une réduction de 31 % de leur financement.

Pourquoi votre gouvernement coupe-t-il le financement de tous les organismes d'arts visuels francophones en Ontario?

L'hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Merci beaucoup pour la question. Bien sûr, notre gouvernement travaille avec tous les organismes francophones. Aujourd'hui, on a l'ACÉPO et on va avoir ces discussions.

Au niveau du budget, je pense que ce sont les conversations qu'on peut continuer à avoir.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Member for Nickel Belt.

Mme France Gélinas: Les coupures sont faites; j'espère qu'on pourra les défaire.

Les membres de l'ACÉPO sont ici aujourd'hui. Ils ont besoin d'aide pour le recrutement de professeurs francophones qualifiés. Qu'est-ce que votre gouvernement fait? Il coupe le financement du Centre de recherches en éducation franco-ontarienne de l'Université de Toronto. Le seul programme de maîtrise et de doctorat en éducation offert en français dans le sud de l'Ontario va disparaître.

Pourquoi votre gouvernement coupe-t-il le financement du Centre de recherches en éducation franco-ontarienne?

L'hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: On a toute une gamme de programmes au niveau de l'éducation et l'éducation postsecondaire francophone. On est très fier de nos conseils scolaires francophones qui ont toujours de très bons résultats au niveau des taux de littératie, des mathématiques, etc.

Récemment, j'ai voyagé à Sudbury. J'ai parlé à l'Université de Sudbury. On va continuer de travailler avec nos partenaires—tous les partenaires postsecondaires—et je vais travailler avec le ministre des Collèges et Universités pour assurer qu'on a un financement stable et continu pour toutes nos institutions postsecondaires francophones.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Tyler Watt: I want to reiterate that this minister and this government let this OSAP fraud happen. They were warned about this since 2023. Repeated warnings: 2023, warned; 2024, told to call the cops; 2025, warned again. They didn't do anything until October 2026 when they ripped the carpet out from under innocent students who were just trying to better their lives. And this minister has the audacity to stand up here and try to spin this story and try to only focus on the bad actors, but they let the bad actors do this. They're the ones who created the loophole and didn't close it up. Other provinces closed it up; this minister didn't. He's the one who lost hundreds of millions of dollars.

To the Premier: How much money did this minister give Academy of Learning last year, knowing that they already were under suspicious activity of fraud?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I appreciate that member giving me the opportunity to re-explain the timelines of how we got here.

In late 2024, we saw increased application and enrolment at private career colleges with OSAP. But in January 2025, Career Colleges Ontario saw the same concerns that we saw in the previous year. In May 2025, the federal government finished their investigation into private institutions and provided my ministry with the results of that investigation. The ministry took those results, did enhanced and targeted reviews in the summer of 2025, which has brought us here, Speaker.

Because ultimately, this year, those enhanced and targeted reviews—we removed OSAP eligibility from those six institutions. But as we got further down the line in the investigations and inspections that were taking place internally in the ministry, we realized that we had to bring in forensic experts—auditors—to be able to ensure that it's not as widespread as we initially believed it was.

KPMG is working on the file to ensure that we can have confidence in the OSAP system and bring those wrongdoers to account. Ultimately, these are Ontario taxpayer dollars, and they need to be utilized for their intended purpose.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Nepean.

MPP Tyler Watt: Sorry, I'm a bit dizzy from all the spinning that this minister keeps doing with this story. It's so outrageous. They talk such a big game about being accountable, about being transparent, about respect—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The government side will come to order.

I apologize to the member. Back to the member for Nepean.

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you. I mean, they have a right to be upset. This is hundreds of millions of dollars—of taxpayer dollars—that have been scammed under your watch. You pretend to be the most fiscally responsible government in the history of Ontario. We know that is just such nonsense.

I can't believe this minister still has his job. Someone else needs to be put in his place. We need an Auditor General investigation to investigate that minister, this ministry and what happened to OSAP. Innocent students are suffering the consequences because of this government's mismanagement.

Speaker, to the minister: I ask you again, how much money did this minister give Academy of Learning despite repeated years of warnings that they were potentially defrauding the Ontario taxpayer?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I'm the one getting dizzy because last week you said I'm a wind-up doll that says the same thing, and today I'm just spinning, spinning, spinning.

But the dates have not changed. In late 2024, we acknowledged that we had concerns with increased OSAP applications across the private institution sector. In January 2025, Career Colleges Ontario had the exact same concerns our ministry officials had.

As I've already stated to him, in May 2025, the federal government had the exact same concerns we did, and they gave us the results of their own investigation into private institutions. We took those results and we did enhanced and targeted reviews of those institutions. Ultimately, we ran with the results that the federal government gave us. We took them very seriously, and this year we removed eligibility from six of those institutions.

I'm not sure how that is me changing my story here, Speaker. We've been very clear on the time frames—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

SPORTS AND RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Ric Bresee: My question is for the Minister of Sport. In my riding of Hastings–Lennox and Addington, we know just how important local recreational facilities and opportunities are in our communities. That is why I was so proud to see our government invest more than $9 million in the W.J. Henderson Recreation Centre in Loyalist township, including $8.4 million for a new aquatic facility and over $725,000 to upgrade the arena.

Speaker, with these now complete, families in Loyalist Township have improved spaces to swim, skate and stay active for years to come. This is a great example of what happens when our government works with municipalities to deliver real results for our local families.

Can the Minister of Sport please share how our government is building on investments like this one to improve sport and recreation infrastructure all across the province?

Hon. Brian Saunderson: Thank you to the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington for his steadfast advocacy on behalf of his community.

The member is absolutely right: Our government's plan to protect Ontario is working, and these investments are creating jobs, supporting our local economies, and they're making a real difference for Ontario families across the province.

In fact, just three of our recently completed projects will support over 400 full-time and part-time jobs. Collectively, these projects have employed more than 4,000 construction workers. That's thousands of skilled trades workers helping to build facilities for our communities and our residents, and hundreds of ongoing jobs supporting families. Speaker, that's just three projects.

Through our Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, we've already invested almost $200 million across the province, supporting 94 projects. These investments are about more than bricks and mortar. They're about creating good jobs, strengthening local economies, giving families more opportunities to stay active and making our communities and residents healthier and more resilient across the province.

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The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you to the minister for that response.

It was a tremendous honour for me to attend the grand reopening of the W.J. Henderson Recreation Centre in Loyalist township—the very facility I skated and swam at as a child and my children skated and swam at. I got to talk to the members of my community about just how important investments like that are for local families. The upgrades are something that our community can be incredibly proud of.

I know municipalities all across Ontario are eager to see similar investments in their own backyards, but we also know many communities are facing a tremendously growing demand for those recreation spaces. I am so pleased that our government is continuing to invest both in new facilities and in upgrades to existing infrastructure.

Speaker, will the minister please tell this House how our government is building on this success and what opportunities are available for other Ontario communities to benefit from this important fund?

Hon. Brian Saunderson: Thank you to the member. It was an incredible pleasure to go and join him for a tour of the W.J. Henderson rec facility in his riding.

Our government knows there's more work to be done. That's why, through our 2026 budget, we're investing an additional $300 million in the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, and that's bringing it, over a four-year period, to a total of $500 million. That's $1 million in new investment funding each year for the next three years to help our communities build new recreation facilities, modernize aging infrastructure and improve access to sport and healthy living across the province. The applications for our next intake are open right now, until December 22 of this year.

Speaker, through you, my message to this House and to every member is simple: Get the word out. Talk to your

municipalities, your local sport organizations and your community leaders, and encourage them to apply. Because when we invest in sport and recreation, we're investing in healthier families, we're investing in healthier people, we're investing in mental health and we're investing in good local jobs and stronger communities. That is a win for everyone across Ontario.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

MPP Catherine McKenney: Let's review this Conservative government's record on affordable housing: 85,000 Ontarians without a home, including 20,000 children; more than one million households can't afford their housing; and new housing starts are at their lowest level since 2009. And this week, we learned they will continue to decline.

This government is failing young people trying to save for a home, families at risk of losing their housing and people living in shelters and encampments.

Speaker, to the Premier: When is this government going to get back into the business of building homes and adopt the NDP plan to build the housing that people actually need?

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

Hon. Rob Flack: While I appreciate the member's question, the premise upon which she asks it is fundamentally wrong. Speaker, we are protecting our economy. We are building homes.

Here are the facts: Housing starts are up 93% in new sales since the HST has been dropped. We are protecting jobs while we're doing that: 27,800 jobs are being protected and $4.4 billion is being preserved through GDP and an income tax reserve of $1 billion to the coffers.

Speaker, we are negotiating with the federal government this coming week on the new federal-provincial-territorial agreement on the National Housing Strategy.

I've listened to the member opposite. She has some unique ideas. I'm happy to continue to share those ideas. At the end of the day, we'll get a new deal that will be good for all of Ontario.

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

MPP Catherine McKenney: Speaker, it's not just the NDP but mayors across this province who are asking for real action. When housing starts are desperately low, a 93% increase, quite frankly, is meaningless.

There is no city in this province where a moderate-income household can afford a mortgage, and no city where a family earning minimum wage can afford a one-bedroom apartment. This is what a crisis looks like. Just because you can't see it doesn't make it any less real for everyone else.

So, Speaker, back to the Premier: What is it going to take for this government to admit there's a crisis and start building the homes that people can actually afford?

Hon. Rob Flack: Part of our plan is indeed to protect Ontario and to protect our most vulnerable. That is why we continue to work closely with our municipal partners, all 47 service managers, to deliver key funding through multiple ministries in this government.

Again, Speaker, think about the increase in homelessness prevention funding we've provided, the Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hubs—HART hubs—in place, encampment support, new deal for Toronto, new deal for Ottawa, Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative. All of these items will be on the table next week when we meet with our federal and provincial counterparts. We're going to work to get a new deal, a new national housing strategy for the next few years. It's important that we get this done. Why, Speaker? Again, we're going to protect our economy; we're going to protect our most vulnerable, and at the end of the day, that is what our goal is, here. At municipal affairs and housing, we're going to stay on that course.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, Donna is a young mom who went to Trillium College to train for a better job as a community and developmental service worker. Programs were cut at the community college. She had quit her job and got a loan from OSAP so that she could study full-time. Then, this government abandoned her. Trillium was forced to pause classes.

Now, they've arranged a resumption if students can pay out of pocket. Donna might try to borrow money from family or friends to resume studies, but she would still be left with living expenses, lost wages and an OSAP loan to pay back—or she might be forced to return to work to pay the rent and groceries, give up her dreams of a better job. But she still would be left with an OSAP loan to pay back.

The minister knows that this OSAP scandal mess was not Donna's fault.

Will he direct his ministry or the OSAP office to begin drafting guidelines for loan forgiveness so that hard-working people are made whole?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've said, wrongdoers have taken advantage of students and taxpayers—a system that was designed to help the students, Speaker. I understand there are a lot of good students caught up in this. I truly understand. I've been reading the emails, responding to phone calls and seeing what they're saying online. I understand there's a lot of good students caught up in this.

But these are wrongdoers who have defrauded the Ontario taxpayer. One dollar flowing when we don't have confidence in the OSAP system across the private institutions is one dollar too many, Speaker. I need to ensure that I have confidence across the whole system before we release any more taxpayer dollars. Ultimately, that's why, after years of investigations, we realized we needed to bring in a third-party auditor, KPMG, to be able to do their work to ensure that this is not as widespread as we initially believed. We'll allow KPMG to continue doing their work

to ensure that they bring confidence back into the OSAP system and the utilization of taxpayer dollars.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, there's still going to be a mess to clean up afterwards.

Tyrese is an honour-roll massage therapy trainee, one month away from graduation. She has completed all clinical hours and only needs to complete a final comprehensive review and an internal exam.

This government's OSAP pause caused Trillium College to suspend classes. She said, "My training is essentially finished ... I am being held as collateral damage by a blanket government pause. I am stuck in absolute limbo, unable to graduate or challenge my licensing exams." She has extra living expenses while she is waiting to get to work.

The minister knows that this OSAP scandal mess was not her fault.

He knows there's going to be a mess to clean up, no matter how things turn out. So will he direct his ministry or the OSAP office to begin drafting guidelines—don't waste time; start thinking now—for loan forgiveness so that hard-working people are made whole?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've mentioned in the House last week and this week, we are drafting legislation to bring forward this session to ensure that we have the appropriate guardrails to be able to re-release OSAP dollars—taxpayer dollars—back to the hard-working students that deserve them, Speaker.

But I think it's worth reminding the member of the serious criminal and predatory allegations we're speaking about here. We found allegations of third parties completing coursework on behalf of those students, Speaker, with some entire courses completed in one single day. Final exams were completed as fast as six minutes. These supposed students unfortunately were working with the fraudsters, with the wrongdoers, and they defrauded the Ontario taxpayers.

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But, Speaker, I understand the serious impact this is having on the good students that are caught up in this. That's why we're working with urgency, and I know the Liberals and the opposition will support our legislation coming forward that have the appropriate guardrails with urgency so that we can bring forward OSAP back to these students.

RED TAPE REDUCTION

MPP Billy Denault: My question is for the Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

The economic threats coming from Washington are real, and Ontario workers and families are paying attention. Now more than ever, we need to protect Ontario by strengthening our competitive advantage, attracting investment and ensuring businesses can continue creating good-paying jobs right here at home.

Our government cannot control the decisions coming out of Washington, but we can control how we respond. That means cutting unnecessary red tape, removing barriers to growth and ensuring Ontario remains the best place to invest and do business.

Can the minister explain what our government is doing to protect Ontario workers, businesses and the economy?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: That member works so hard for his riding. He understands that when we get projects and approvals moving faster, it makes us more competitive and it allows industry to thrive.

On a day like today, where it's bring your kids to work day, I have Lana Barkan here, who brought her daughter Natalie Barkan to the Legislature today. It's their future, it's that generation of people that we're protecting Ontario for, to say, "We inherited an economy that punished ambition; instead, we're creating an economy that rewards ambition." When others say no, this is a government that will say go.

Speaker, just look at the record. We are reviewing 375 business-facing permits in this province. What does that mean in real time? It means we're saving 220,000 days of people who are being mired in bureaucracy. Instead, we're unlocking the economy and protecting Ontario for generations to come.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

MPP Billy Denault: Thank you, Minister.

When a business waits months for a permit, that is not just paperwork piling up; it is investment delayed, construction crews left behind and good-paying jobs put at risk. And we're hearing that message loud and clear. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce is calling for less red tape, and London has introduced one-stop approval services to help get things moving.

Speaker, we're listening. That's why our government has committed to reviewing all 375 business-facing permits. Yet some opposition members seem more concerned about the size of the bill than the cost of doing nothing.

Can the minister please explain how these changes will save time, lower costs and protect jobs for the people of Ontario?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I'm proud to stand up here and represent the constituents of Barrie–Innisfil every day, but I'm also proud of a government that works together through this whole complete enterprise exercise to get our economy the most competitive in the G7.

You've seen the great work by Minister Lecce, Minister of Energy, who has been able to reduce wait times by 31,000 to 41,000 business days when it comes to mining permits.

Our Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries has been able to reduce processing times by 29,000 days. This is getting projects energized and moving.

Our ministers of environment and transportation, working together, are saving industry $29,000 on permitting changes.

This is going to unlock the full potential of our economy, get projects moving, get people employed and give them that confidence. In an economy where businesses need certainty, this is a government that's providing certainty and acting in real time.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Angele Proulx is a 46-year-old mother from St. Catharines who went back to school to build a better life for herself and her son. She worked hard, made sacrifices and was just months away from graduating. Now she is living in a local shelter in St. Catharines after her OSAP was ripped away by this Conservative government's mismanagement.

Speaker, this is a real human cost of this Conservative government's failure to properly oversee OSAP. Students are facing homelessness, financial ruin, and the loss of years of hard work because this government failed to do its job.

My question is to the minister, and it's simple: When will this government stop punishing innocent students for its own mismanagement and provide immediate financial relief, especially for students like Angele who are just months away from graduating? Will you commit today to making sure these students can finish their university?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've stood in this House, I truly understand the impact this is having on the good students who are caught up in this. But wrongdoers have taken advantage of Ontario taxpayers and students. We had to put a pause onto the OSAP system until we have the confidence we need to ensure that it's being utilized for its intended purposes. I truly, truly understand the impact this is having on the good students who are caught up in this. But we need to ensure that the wrongdoers are held to account.

That's what we're doing, by bringing forward legislation this session to ensure that we are bringing the appropriate guardrails in place so that we can re-release OSAP in the new year. I hope that member will support our legislation that we're bringing forward, so that we can act with urgency to be able to re-release those funds to the students who need them.

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Thank you, Speaker, and to the minister—but maybe the Premier would like to answer this.

Premier, you need to understand what this means in real life.

Angele isn't asking for a handout. She's asking for the opportunity to finish the education she worked so hard to achieve. She is a mother. She is 46 years old. She has made sacrifices to create a better future for her and her family, and now she's living in a shelter through no fault of her own.

Every month this government delays, students are being pushed further into debt, further into hardship and further away from graduation.

Premier, will you stop hiding behind this minister's excuses, the government's bureaucracy and take responsibility for this mess, and guarantee that students who were relying on OSAP will receive emergency financial support to complete their education, today?

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

Hon. Doug Ford: My message to Angele: We're going to give her an opportunity. As soon as we get through these audits, she's going to have that opportunity. Do you know what she's going to have the opportunity for? She's going to have an opportunity for jobs. We've created over a million jobs. She's going to have an opportunity now that we saw the results of last night, through our hard work—and yes, your hard work too; everyone's hard work around Canada. Not only the American people won, but Canadians won across the board.

But let's make no illusion: President Trump will still tariff us. That's why we're deploying our ministers to go down to the US, go down to Washington, and build the relationships with the senators and congresspeople and governors, and create opportunity with their largest trading partners in the world—undefended border, largest trading partner. That's what we're going to do. We're going to focus on working with our American friends and create opportunities for Angele and—

Interjections.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

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

DEFERRED VOTES

CAREGIVERS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on private member's notice of motion number 20.

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

The division bells rang from 1139 to 1144.

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

On November 3, 2026, MPP Gates moved private member's notice of motion number 20.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Allsopp, Tyler	Ford, Doug	Quinn, Nolan
Anand, Deepak	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Racinsky, Joseph
Babikian, Aris	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rae, Matthew
Bailey, Robert	Gualtieri, Silvia	Rickford, Greg
Beattie, Jeff	Hamid, Zee	Riddell, Brian
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Hardeman, Ernie	Rosenberg, Bill
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Khanjin, Andrea	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lahey, Susan	Smith, David
Cooper, Michelle	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Graydon
Crawford, Stephen	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Surma, Kinga
Darouze, George	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Denault, Billy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dixon, Jess	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dowie, Andrew	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Downey, Doug	Piccini, David	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fedeli, Victor	Pierre, Natalie	Vickers, Paul
Firin, Mohamed	Pinsonneault, Steve	Williams, Charmaine A.
Flack, Rob	Pirie, George	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 38; the nays are 74.

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

Motion negatived.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

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

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

The House recessed from 1148 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Stephen Crawford: I didn't have the opportunity this morning to introduce two members of the Association of Management, Administrative and Professional Crown Employees of Ontario, Dave Bulmer and Cynthia Watt.

MPP Jamie West: I didn't have time during the introductions this morning, but I wanted to welcome Dave Bulmer, Cynthia Watt and Colleen Walsh from AMAPCEO.

As well, I had a meeting with OCUFA. I just want to welcome my friend Fabrice Colin for coming down from Sudbury and Laurentian University.

And, probably most importantly, I wasn't able to introduce my mom, Bev, and her friends Daphne Greene and Jane Chong. They were probably trying to smuggle something past security and got delayed.

M. Anthony Leardi: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à Emmanuelle Richez, qui est conseillère pour le Conseil scolaire Viamonde. Bienvenue à l'Assemblée.

Mr. Chris Glover: I just want to welcome to the Legislature Shinade Allder and Michael Torok from the wonderful city of London, Ontario—just over here—and also Adanna Nduagu, who's a legislative assistant for me.

I also want to thank the members of OCUFA, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, Daniel Ramirez, Dwayne Collins, Mayurika Chakravorty and Malika Dhanani for coming in today.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I didn't get a chance to do this this morning. I do want to welcome my executive assistant, Claudia Sallese, who's been with me over two years. Unfortunately, tomorrow is her last day, and she's moving on. I wish her all the very best and thank her for all the great work and all the support that she has provided to me and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BENJI'S LAW (ENSURING ANAPHYLAXIS, ASTHMA AND EPILEPSY FRIENDLY OVERNIGHT CAMPS), 2026

LOI BENJI DE 2026 POUR ASSURER LA CRÉATION DE CAMPS AVEC NUITÉE ATTENTIFS À L'ANAPHYLAXIE, À L'ASTHME ET À L'ÉPILEPSIE

MPP Vickers moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 147, An Act to enact Benji's Law (Ensuring Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Epilepsy Friendly Overnight Camps), 2026 / Projet de loi 147, Loi édictant la Loi Benji de 2026 pour assurer la création de camps avec nuitée attentifs à l'anaphylaxie, à l'asthme et à l'épilepsie

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

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Does the member wish to briefly explain the bill? I recognize the member.

MPP Paul Vickers: The bill requires the minister to review regulations governing recreational camps under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and to recommend regulatory amendments to strengthen protections for campers in respect of anaphylaxis and other life-threatening allergic reactions. The bill also requires the minister to consider updating guidance documents respecting allergy awareness and management at recreational camps and to consult specific stakeholders.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Steve Clark: I move that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet during the 2026-27 winter adjournment for the purpose of pre-budget consultations.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): The government House leader has moved that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet during the 2026-27 winter adjournment for the purpose of pre-budget consultations. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY 69

Mme France Gélinas: I'd like to thank Michelle Landry and thousands and thousands of people from northeastern Ontario that have signed the petition, "Four Lanes—Zero Excuses: 4-Lane Hwy 69 Now!"

You know, Speaker, that since 2018, the government has promised to four-lane the remaining 68 kilometres of Highway 69. But to this day, there has been no tender, no starting dates, no length of work that needs to be required—nothing concrete. In the meantime, families across northeastern Ontario continue to travel on this very dangerous highway. More and more people have been severely injured, and many people have died just this year alone. This has to stop.

The Minister of Transportation came to the Sudbury area three times, said that the project is going to be divided into six sections, four of them to go out this fall, with the shovels in the ground by fall of 2027. The people that signed this petition want to hold the government to their words. They want construction to start with definite time frames, and the sooner it will be, the better.

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

ENERGY POLICIES

MPP George Darouze: Good afternoon, Speaker. Today I'm pleased to present a petition related to an aspect of daily life that we often take for granted, and that's our electrical distribution system.

Electricity is at the core of most things that many Ontarians rely on daily, and it's extremely important that these systems are supported not just for today but for decades to come.

The petition, signed by constituents from Carleton, today call on the government of Ontario to strengthen electricity sector governance, long-term planning and more, by improving accountability and transparency within the local distribution companies, which would help with long-term infrastructure planning and procurement, making sure that consumers across Ontario receive reliable, affordable and dependable electricity service.

I support this petition. I'll add my name to it. I'm going to give it to page Sophie to bring to the table. Thank you very much.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Good afternoon, everyone. I have a petition signed by well over a thousand people, raising serious concerns about the decision to eliminate hybrid work for Ontario public service workers across the province without consulting those workers.

People are especially concerned about the increasing levels of congestion on our highways and transit systems and our streets and roads, and I think it's of special concern for those of us who work in and around Queen's Park due to all the increased traffic that will result from this decision.

1510

People have also raised concerns that this decision ignores the well-documented benefits of hybrid work, including improved productivity, morale, work-life balance, greater access and equity, reduced costs for workers and for government in terms of having to pay rent and more office space.

These petitioners are petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately halt and reverse the decision to end hybrid work, and to promote and support remote and hybrid work arrangements across the Ontario public service, and to encourage similar approaches in the broader public service to expand flexible and hybrid work arrangements that foster productivity.

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

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

MPP Lise Vaugeois: This is a petition that has come to the Legislative Assembly a number of times because it really affects people who are on ODSP and OW. If the government is interested in understanding why there are

such extreme levels of homelessness, they might look to these levels of funding.

This petition asks that the government double ODSP and double OW so that people can actually afford to put a roof over their head.

I want to thank Dr. Sally Palmer for her consistent, endless work on this. We must have presented thousands and thousands of signatures that she has gathered.

I will affix my signature to this with my full support and give it to page Sarvesh.

RED TAPE REDUCTION

MPP George Darouze: I'm pleased to present a petition signed by my constituents from my riding in Carleton, bringing their voice directly to the chamber today.

I have always felt that it is important for governments—all levels of government—to make sure that they reduce red tape and make government run efficiently for residents. Reduced red tape and administrative burdens benefit affordability, efficiency and save time for both residents and businesses across our province.

The petition I'm presenting today calls on the government of Ontario to modernize and improve Ontario's natural and cultural heritage framework through streamlined assessment, enhanced digital tools and clear decision-making processes that protect heritage in Ontario while reducing unnecessary delays.

I support this petition. I sign my name on it, and I'll pass it to page Anne to bring it to the table.

BILLY BISHOP AIRPORT

Mr. Chris Glover: This petition is entitled "Stop Jets at Billy Bishop Airport." It talks about the investment that all three levels of government—municipal, provincial and federal—have made in rehabilitating the Don and restoring the waterfront. Thirty years ago the waterfront in downtown Toronto was an industrial wasteland. The governments have invested billions and billions of dollars. Individuals have invested billions of dollars in condo buildings and in businesses down there. Most recently, the city of Toronto invested $1.4 billion in rehabilitating Villiers Island, which is now Biidaasige Park, and it is going to be home to 14,000 housing units.

This government, instead of respecting the work that has been done and the investment that has been made in the waterfront, passed Bill 110, seizing control of Toronto Island Park and Little Norway Park, and also of the Billy Bishop airport from the city of Toronto.

The petition talks about how this is a complete disrespect of municipal jurisdiction. The Premier also has said that he's going to declare the airport a special economic zone where he will apply Bill 5, which means that no provincial or municipal laws will apply to the Billy Bishop redevelopment. Environmental laws, heritage laws, safety laws, labour laws: None of that will apply to protect the people along the waterfront or the workers who are working there.

The final point here is that the Toronto Port Authority has confirmed that the estimated cost of this expansion is $5 billion, which is a complete waste of money when we're already expanding Pearson airport to accommodate another 20 million passengers, and that cost is only $3 billion, because at Billy Bishop, there is no land; it's surrounded by water. They're going to actually have to fill in the lake in order to build the land, whereas at Pearson, they've got 4,600 acres of property already, and they can just expand that airport far more cheaply to accommodate far more passengers.

The petitioners are asking the government to repeal Bill 110, the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, and rescind the special economic zone designation for the Billy Bishop airport and respect the authority of the city of Toronto and the voices of waterfront communities in all decisions affecting the Toronto waterfront and Billy Bishop airport.

I fully support this petition. I will affix my signature and pass it to page Kavin to take to the table.

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Deepak Anand: Speaker, I have a petition from a well-wisher of Ontario, a concerned Ontarian. He's talking about making sure that we have northern Ontario's critical mineral and forestry resources. Those are important to the economic future of our province, but we want to make sure that there is responsible resource development and processing so that the jobs can be created. It will help us to attract investment, strengthen our supply chains. Further on, this concerned and well-wisher of Ontario is saying that infrastructure and partnership with the Indigenous community is an important piece of the puzzle to unlock the economic opportunity.

He is, further, saying to all the members of this House that if you are concerned about the wishes of Ontario and Ontarians, if you want Ontario to prosper, please support the 2026 fall economic statement and its initiatives so that together we all can advance responsible resource development, we can strengthen the forestry sector and we can create opportunity not only for northern Ontario but for the whole of Ontario. By doing that, we will be able to build a better, stronger Ontario.

I fully support the petition from this well-wisher of Ontario and will give it to page Tyler. Tyler, thank you so much.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Peggy Sattler: On behalf of the people I represent in London West, I am pleased to bring forward a petition that is entitled "Stop the Attack on Tenant Rights."

Speaker, this petition was developed in response to the changes that were floated about a year ago by this government to allow the Landlord and Tenant Board to approve landlord evictions of tenants. The changes would have stripped away some of those tenant protections that renters rely on, would have made it easier for landlords to evict

tenants and would leave the door open to ending rent control as we know it in Ontario.

Now, those changes were paused, but we did not get a commitment from this government that they will adhere to rent control laws that we have in this province and, in fact, strengthen protections for tenants, because attacking tenant rights, Speaker, leads to more people becoming homeless. In London, we have over 2,000 people who are on the By-Name List for homelessness. Across the province, we have 85,000 Ontarians who are experiencing homelessness. When tenants lose affordable housing and do not have any other options, they end up unhoused.

The people who signed this petition are asking the Legislative Assembly to stop attacking tenants and to move forward with solutions that will protect renters and end the housing crisis that we currently face and the affordability crisis that so many people in London and across the province are struggling with.

I fully support this petition, affix my signature, and will send it to the table with page Neha.

HIGHWAY 69

MPP Jamie West: The petition is entitled "Four Lanes—Zero Excuses." It's about four-lane Highway 69 now. Many things in the petition are stuff that I talked about when I asked to withdraw schedule 4 from the previous omnibus bill.

The people on Highway 69 on that two-lane portion, the 68 kilometres in the riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka—there have been a lot of accidents leading to deaths and other tragedies. There's a really strong push to have this done. It's welcoming to have the Minister of Transportation come a couple of times to Sudbury to give us updates about what was happening and to have the support, as well, from the members opposite on four-laning Highway 69.

1520

I wanted to point out that my friend Kevin Boyd, who I haven't seen since I was at the smelter and he was on the train crew, probably 20 years ago, is at the top of the list here.

They're petitioning to have this immediately funded and tendered—the remaining 69 kilometres of Highway 69. They want construction to begin without further delay. They'd also like a clear public timeline for the completion so they understand what's going to happen for this going forward. This has been a promise that has been made for a very long time. They've waited eight years to have any progress. It's nice that there are conversations about it happening, but people want to see shovels in the ground.

Obviously, I support this petition. I will affix my signature and provide it to page Evie for the table.

CANCER TREATMENT

Mme France Gélinas: I would like to thank Denise Levert from Val Caron in my riding for these petitions. The Canadian Cancer Survivor Network members were at Queen's Park today, and the petition is called "Coverage for Take-Home Cancer Drugs."

The cancer drugs administered in a hospital or a similar setting are covered for all Ontarians, but the minute you take those drugs at home, then you have to pay out of pocket or through a mix of private insurance and, sometimes, if you're lucky, a provincial program.

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec all cover cancer drugs taken at home. The Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Cancer Survivor Network have called on the government to cover take-home cancer drugs, as the data supports. It makes it a whole lot easier for people with cancer to follow through.

For people who live far away, that means travelling when you're feeling quite sick; in my riding, it's often hours away to get to the hospital in order to gain access to the care you need. Being able to take the drugs at home would make it a whole lot easier for a lot of people, as well as easier for hospitals that would not be as crowded.

They petition the assembly to prioritize access to cancer treatment by developing a program that brings full coverage for eligible cancer drugs taken at home.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 4, 2026, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further debate? I recognize the member from Ajax.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Thank you, Speaker, and through you: Looking at the fall economic statement, A Plan to Protect Ontario, it's the same title that was copied and pasted from the year before. So now we're in year two of a plan to protect Ontario, but the question I have is who is being protected? Not families making tough decisions at the grocery store. Not young people who are looking for better job opportunities.

After eight years in power, this government, led by Premier Ford, is really great at making announcements, but not as good at delivering results. I don't see them growing Ontario's economy from within by scaling up investments into research and innovation. The only thing that's growing seems to be our record debt that future generations will have to bear the burden of.

I believe that Ontarians deserve a responsible government that understands the value of every single taxpayer dollar and spends that money responsibly. Provincial spending has reached a record $247.3 billion, while the deficit has now grown to $16.9 billion. That's about $3.1 billion more than what the government projected this spring and more than double last year's projected deficit for this time.

Now, we've heard some of the explanations. The government continues to point to President Trump's tariffs and global economic uncertainty. Now, Speaker, no one is denying those economic challenges, but there's a difference between the economic pressures that are coming from Washington and the fiscal decisions that are being made right here at Queen's Park. The trade war has put pressure on our finances, but it doesn't absolve the government of its responsibility for how it manages taxpayer dollars.

This government keeps telling folks that it has a plan to balance the books, but every year we keep on seeing that get kicked down the road. The projected return to balance has now been pushed back to 2029-30, like a mirage in the distance.

In September, Ontario lost 20,000 jobs. We've got unemployment at 7% or so. We're spending more, we're borrowing more and projecting weaker economic growth. Quite frankly, Speaker, the plan to protect Ontario isn't working. At what point does this government take responsibility for its own economic policies?

I believe responsible government is understanding and respecting the value of the dollar that taxpayers pay. And while our deficit continues to grow, we see planned health care spending at $500 million less than what was projected in the spring. Education spending is about $600 million below the spring budget, and post-secondary education is below targets from earlier this year as well. But at the same time, we've seen the government increase its contingency fund by $3.8 billion. Are they trying to sock that away to say, "Oh, we're doing better than what we planned," and use it in that way?

At the end of the day, I don't think people in this province feel as though they're getting value from the taxes that they pay. In some ways, we saw this with the most recent municipal elections that took place in our province. We saw incumbents get kicked out of office because the people were unhappy with the way that they were managing it. And we see over and over, now, folks are considerably more unhappy with how this government is managing its affairs.

We see major infrastructure projects face significant cost increases and delays. Speaker, being fiscally responsible doesn't mean refusing to invest; it means investing wisely, managing projects effectively and delivering what was promised. As my colleague the member from Don Valley West says, "Never has a government spent so much to deliver so little."

When I look at the fall economic statement, on page 7—about respecting taxpayer dollars; just because you say it doesn't make it true—there's one interesting quote that I found in here: "Efforts are focused on strengthening oversight, accountability and program integrity across government and the broader public sector to ensure resources are directed to priority outcomes for people in Ontario. This includes strengthening payment integrity, reducing fraud, error, waste and abuse, and reviewing key provincial agencies to assess operational efficiency, financial performance and long-term sustainability."

When I look at that excerpt on page 7 in the fall economic statement and we compare that to what's going on right now with OSAP and this growing scandal over private career colleges, I don't think the fall economic statement is worth the paper on which it has been written.

Speaker, protecting Ontario cannot simply mean reacting to the latest crisis.

Ontario is home to world-class universities, researchers, entrepreneurs, technology companies. We have the talent and the experience to lead in AI, advanced manufacturing, life science and emerging technologies. We've got world-renowned faculty at institutions across the province.

And when we see folks that are graduating, many of them are choosing to leave Ontario. I believe the government has an obligation to prevent that from happening—to make not just the economic conditions better, but focus on our students, focus on the businesses that these students are creating and how we ensure that those businesses can stay here in Ontario to help grow Ontario's economy from within. That means supporting research and innovation, commercialization, improving access to capital and creating more opportunity for government to purchase Ontario-made innovations.

The government could create a made-in-Ontario innovation fund to support and encourage the incredible ideas coming out of our colleges, universities and people working in business right now to address some of our most pressing challenges across government—whether it's in health care, whether it's in education, whether it's in public sector business services—to be more efficient, to save money and to deliver better value while creating new jobs.

Protecting Ontario, for me, isn't about protecting the jobs that we just have today; it's about creating the jobs of tomorrow. We've got to be able to do both. It's like walking and chewing gum at the same time.

1530

Speaker, another concerning pattern is how frequently this government looks to the federal government for solutions. Whether it's around economic development, infrastructure or health care funding, the Premier is quick to demand action from Ottawa. It's important that we've got that federal-provincial co-operation, and Ontario should absolutely pursue its fair share of federal investments. But co-operation isn't a substitute for provincial leadership. Ontario has its own responsibilities, its own tools and its own ability to act. We saw this with OSAP earlier this year, when the government pointed fingers at Ottawa and said, "Oh, it's international students, and that's why we've got to change the whole model around post-

secondary," while students were left facing uncertainty. It was actually the decisions of this government that resulted in that crisis. The Premier and his government can't spend eight years in office and continue acting as though every single challenge—or most challenges, at least, in fairness—facing Ontario is someone else's responsibility.

I want to turn to Durham region, one of the fastest-growing regions in our province. The Minister of Finance himself is from a Durham riding. In Ajax and across Durham, families are feeling the pressure on our health care system; I hear it in my riding, from my neighbours, all the time. Lakeridge Health continues to face growing pressures, with an operating deficit of $41 million. People are concerned. The proposed new Whitby hospital is an essential investment in the future of health care across Durham region, but once again we see this government delaying things. It will help relieve pressure on the Ajax Pickering Hospital. Yet when we look at the fall economic statement, there's no mention of the Whitby hospital. So I question when this government is going to get serious about health care and deliver the Whitby hospital that local leaders in Durham region are fighting for.

Speaker, I also want to acknowledge the importance of the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station. I support the refurbishment of Pickering nuclear because this project is for all of Ontario. It supports good-paying jobs, strengthens our energy security and helps provide the reliable electricity that our province needs to grow. I've had the opportunity to visit Pickering nuclear and some of the businesses that are working on that refurbishment. I think that's an important project.

Another major concern that we've got in Ajax and Durham region is GO Transit; I hear it almost every day in my riding. Durham region is growing, and people are relying on public transit to get to work, school and appointments. I have to drive to a lot of places where I need to go, so if we can get more cars off the road, that makes it better for myself and others who work in professions that do need to drive to where they need to get to go as well. We saw a reduction, though, just this past September, of GO train service across several lines—going from less frequent weekend service to every 30 minutes during affected periods, because additional time, Metrolinx said, was needed for crew training and certification. This comes after the failed GO expansion plans that are setting back electrification even further into the future. I'd like to see more of that within the fall economic statement so that my constituents, my neighbours, the people I work with and represent every day can get around Durham region much quicker.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Speaker, I want to thank the member from Ajax for his comments.

I can say, selfishly, that the Canadian Club Brand Centre in my riding has been closed for nine years due to, in effect, government regulation—when it didn't need to. Finally, the government is taking action to open up what was once Windsor's second-most-popular tourist attraction.

We know that lengthy and complicated approval processes delay investment and increase costs for businesses; we've noticed that, certainly, back home.

I know Ajax has a lot of thriving businesses that may be looking for the next level, and really, with some of our regulatory environments, it may not always be possible. So I want to understand whether the member supports the review of red tape that's put forward in the FES. And can he identify any specific permissions that he thinks could be part of that review?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: From time to time, I do agree with the government that we do need to be looking at red tape, regulations, and how we can help businesses be able to compete, be more efficient and be more effective. I think that's really important, but that also varies. That shouldn't come at the expense of our environment. I think on environmental processes, we can streamline that a bit. We can do that front work a lot sooner, Speaker.

I am in agreement with my friend from Windsor–Tecumseh that this is something that government needs to be doing. Governments of all stripes should always be looking at how we improve, how we do more and how we help businesses get ahead. I'd be more than happy always to have those conversations with the member on how we can do that. A good example yesterday was the Ontario Dental Association coming in with some of their proposals.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: This fall economic statement, the spending is astronomical: $500 billion—half-a-trillion dollars—in accumulated debt. I agree; never has the government spent so much to receive so little for the people that matter.

The people that matter the most are kids in our province. Right now, there are 70,000 kids on an autism wait-list, 28,000 children on a wait-list for mental health treatment and 12,000 children in Ontario waiting for scheduled services.

In Hamilton alone, at McMaster Children's Hospital, there are 1,400 children waiting for a scheduled surgery. Two thirds of them are beyond the actual clinically recommended timeline. They're missing surgery at a very critical time in their development.

Can the member please share how he feels about the government spending tax dollars but short-changing our kids in Ontario?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'd like to thank my colleague from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas for that very important question.

When I'm in Ajax talking to parents, almost not a day goes by that I don't meet a parent struggling with autism services, with support for kids with autism, families that have been on the wait-list for more than five years. Frankly, it's despicable. It's unacceptable. Because if we make those investments and do that upfront investment so that kids who are on the autism wait-list are not waiting five years—okay, maybe you wait a couple of months; that's fair, no problem—if we make those investments

right away, the amount of money that we are going to save in the long run as a government and as a society, to make our society stronger, will be exponential from that investment that we make up front today. We've got to clear that wait-list. The time is now.

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

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you to the member from Ajax for expressing his concerns about the fall economic statement.

We know that the economic statement is an expression of the government's priorities to take care of our communities. And while we may agree with some of the measures, I think that there are some important opportunities that were missed to try to improve the lives of Ontarians.

I would like you to explain for the people of Ajax what some of the economic measures are that would have been most helpful in consideration of the challenges that you see in your riding.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'll touch on transportation in particular. Folks in Ajax have been waiting for the restoration of Lakeshore East express service now going on just about six years or so. We continue to see delay and delay. That means, for somebody coming from Ajax to downtown who has to work, an extra 15 minutes that they would save, approximately, each way. That's 30 minutes that you get to spend with your family.

The other thing that I hear, in addition to autism and education supports that I was just speaking about earlier, is our small businesses. Small businesses are struggling. So while the government moving on cutting the small business tax rate in the budget was welcome, they didn't go far enough and meet the Ontario Liberal proposal that would have put about $18,000 back in a small business's pocket. That would have been real relief for businesses to reinvest in their people and in their business.

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

MPP Paul Vickers: Our government understands that Ontario families deserve access to high-quality health care close to home. That is why we continue to make significant investments in hospitals, primary care and long-term care.

Our government is delivering real progress in health care. We have completed 70 long-term care projects, creating more than 5,000 new beds and upgrading more than 5,000 existing beds. We are also opening new and expanded health care facilities to improve access to care across the province.

1540

With thousands of new and upgraded long-term-care beds already delivered, will the opposition support investments that are strengthening Ontario?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'll speak to a project in Durham region that is mentioned in the fall economic statement, the Bowmanville Hospital. Quite frankly, 32 extra beds in Durham region are not going to cut it at the end of the day. I'll leave it there.

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

MPP Jamie West: A lot of this fall economic statement has to do with people having to tighten their belts. It seems like the Conservative government is ignoring the fact that more and more people are going to food banks than ever before. Working families are going to food banks. Hallway medicine is growing exponentially since I was elected in 2018, all under their watch. Rent is more expensive than ever before.

Meanwhile, the Conservative government has no problem doling out money for luxury spas, buying themselves a private luxury jet, putting the taxpayer on the hook for $200,000 when they returned the luxury jet.

For some reason, there's a minister who can't go six blocks in one direction, but he'll go five blocks in the other direction to stay in a luxury hotel and give it to the taxpayers at the end of the day.

They signed 30-year contracts for the long-term-care facilities that were highlighted during COVID as having the worst service possible.

How are the taxpayers in Ontario supposed to buy the importance of tightening their belt" when the Premier has bought himself a private luxury jet?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I'll endorse the statement and the question made by the member from Sudbury. It shows the fallacy of what's going on here.

We have a government on one hand that says, "Oh, we're protecting taxpayer dollars," as I read out during my debate. But if we see through the actions, it's the exact opposite of that. It's no wonder why people don't trust government and, quite frankly, don't trust politicians, because you continue to see that repeated behaviour.

It's unfortunate, because I know that we can do so much better in our province, whether it's not wasting money on luxury spas or building the parking garages for that, or the extra money that it's going to cost to move the Ontario Science Centre from North York to downtown. It's going to make it harder for folks in Ajax and Durham region to get to, because guess what? You can't put a whole busload of kids on the GO train and bring them down; you've got to bring them on a school bus into there.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further questions? I recognize the member from Sudbury for a quick question.

MPP Jamie West: Very quickly: What is one thing you'd want to change in this fall economic statement?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: One thing is hard—

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Change the government.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: Yes, I think that would be good. And maybe not a copy-and-paste title.

I think the one thing I would want to change is—it's not in my critic portfolios, but it does refer to what the member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas was talking about: We've got to fix the autism wait-list. We have to do that. The measure of a government is, how does it help those that need help? For these kids, if we get them that help early, we resolve so many challenges down the road. We give certainty to those parents that are worried about what's going to happen later on in life for their kids. I think that's what we should be doing, Speaker.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: It's an honour to rise this afternoon on behalf of the people of Mississauga–Lakeshore to support Bill 143, the Plan to Protect Ontario Act, and our government's fall economic statement.

I want to begin by thanking the Minister of Finance and his team for all their work on this plan, at a time when President Trump's illegal, unjust tariffs have created unprecedented economic uncertainty.

Speaker, having worked at Ford Motor Co. for over 31 years, I understand how these tariffs threaten our economy. That's why I welcome our new $8.7-billion federal-provincial initiative to protect workers and industries affected by tariffs, including the steel, auto and critical mineral sectors.

We've also proposed the $8-billion Ontario competitiveness tax cut, which is expected to help create 30,000 jobs and attract billions in new investment. These measures build on the almost $30 billion in support of Ontario's workers and businesses since April 2025. These investments are essential, critical in Mississauga, where manufacturing is our largest employment sector, supporting thousands of local jobs and businesses.

Just last month, I visited Albesol, which invested $20 million in advanced manufacturing, producing electrical distribution equipment in partnership with Schneider Electric, expanding their workforce from 28 to 50 employees. Also, in October, I attended the grand opening of Powell Canada's new office in Mississauga, which will support electrical systems across Ontario. And just last week, I joined the Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth at Cymat Technologies in Mississauga as they signed an agreement with Kap Minerals. Speaker, this will help build new made-in-Canada supply chains, using critical minerals from northern Ontario to produce advanced materials for the aerospace, defence, auto and other industries across southern Ontario. These are just a few examples of how our energy and mining sector are creating new opportunities across Ontario.

I was honoured to be reappointed as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Mines last month. In this role, I've travelled across Canada and around the world to promote Ontario's leadership as a clean energy superpower. In February, I joined the minister at Darlington, where we announced a successful completion of the world's largest nuclear refurbishment project, four months ahead of schedule and $150 million under budget. Speaker, this $13-billion project will provide enough electricity for 3.5 million homes for another 30 years, supporting over 14,000 jobs, and 96% of this project's spending stayed right here in Ontario. In June, I joined the Minister in Vaughan to celebrate the refurbishment of the Bruce Power unit 3, completed seven months earlier and $150 million under budget. This unit will generate enough electricity for about 800,000 homes.

We're also moving forward on the refurbishment of the Pickering nuclear station. In September, I joined the minister in Pickering as construction began on this project, which is expected to support over 30,000 jobs. At the same site, we're building the first grid-scale small modular reactor in the G7. The first four SMRs will generate 1,200 megawatts, enough to power 1.2 million homes.

In June, I returned to Clarington for another historic announcement: a $700-million investment by the Williams Treaties First Nations in the Darlington SMRs. Speaker, this is the largest First Nations investment in nuclear generation in Canada, and it's the first time that the First Nations will be co-owners of a nuclear plant in the history of Canada. Moving forward, Indigenous communities will share directly in the ownership and the benefits of their projects in Ontario and across Canada.

Last month, I joined the Minister and Indigenous leaders at Kinectrics in Etobicoke to announce that the BWXT will help build a transportable, 50-megawatt nuclear power plant in New Brunswick. This Indigenous-led project is the first of its kind.

Speaker, with the IESO projecting Ontario's electricity demand will increase by as much as 90% by 2050, we're also planning the largest nuclear expansion in North America. In May, we announced a $300-million cost-sharing agreement on the Bruce C expansion with up to 4,800 megawatts of new capacity. This project will make the Bruce site the largest nuclear generation station in the world. We're also exploring up to 10,000 megawatts of new nuclear generation near Port Hope. And in August, I joined the minister in St. Clair township, near Sarnia, where we announced a plan to explore new generation opportunities at the former Lambton Generating Station.

But Ontario's energy expansion is not limited just to nuclear. In June, I travelled to Aylmer, where we announced the results of our second long-term procurement: 640 megawatts of new battery storage capacity at the lowest price in Ontario's history—36% below 2023 and 16% below 2024.

Speaker, our nuclear industry is also creating new opportunities in medicine. In January, I spoke at Kinectrics in Etobicoke about a new made-in-Ontario hot cell that's helping Bruce Power produce more cancer-fighting medical isotopes here in Ontario, supporting our goal to double production by 2030.

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In April, I joined Laurentis Energy Partners in Oshawa to recognize their contribution of $250,000 for new nuclear medicine equipment at Lakeridge Health.

We're also strengthening our international partnerships. I joined the minister in Ottawa for the signing of a historic agreement between OPG and the UK Atomic Energy Authority to co-operate on tritium technology and nuclear fusion.

And in September, I returned to Edmonton for the SMR forum. I spoke about how governments and industries can work together to deploy SMRs across Canada.

We're also modernizing our local electricity distribution. Last week, we announced a new measure to strengthen collaboration among the LDCs, cut red tape, improve consumer protection and support long-term planning. These reforms build on many conversations I've had with

municipal leaders, including over 25 municipal delegations at AMO in Ottawa in August.

Mining is equally important to Ontario's future. I know personally how important this industry is for our next generation of skilled workers. That's why we're investing $500 million through the Critical Minerals Processing Fund to help strengthen our local supply chain.

In September, I joined the minister to recognize $11 million in provincial support for Generation Mining's $410-million project in Marathon. It is expected to create over 450 permanent jobs and 800 jobs during construction.

We're also supporting initiatives through the Critical Minerals Innovation Fund and our $45-million Junior Exploration Program, supporting 280 companies.

In July, we promised a route for the Northern Shield Energy Corridor. This project could transport up to 800,000 barrels of Canadian crude every day from Alberta to refineries here in Ontario.

With support for new pipelines from the new government in British Columbia, there are real opportunities to work together to diversify Canada's energy exports, strengthen our energy supply chain and reduce our dependence on the US.

Speaker, our fall economic statement also provides over $12 billion in relief and supports this year, including our permanent gas tax cut, One Fare transit savings and many other measures to make life easier and more affordable.

We're also committed to a historic $210-billion capital plan, building hospitals, highways, transit, schools and infrastructure. One of the best examples is right in my own riding of Mississauga–Lakeshore. Our government is investing over $14 billion in the new Mississauga hospital. Construction is already under way. In June, concrete pouring began on the foundation, with eight tower cranes on site.

Just last week, I was honoured to speak at the Credit Valley Hospital to thank George and Rayla Myhal for their $10-million donation to the Trillium Health Partners Foundation. Their gift supports the foundation's $1-billion Built for Us campaign, helping to bring world-class care closer to home.

Speaker, we're also investing in primary care. In July, I visited CarePoint Health in Mississauga to announce another investment of over $5 million to connect 11,000 more residents to family doctors or primary care providers.

We're also investing another $29 million in Lakeview Village pier, helping to transform Mississauga's waterfront into a major cultural destination—

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

It's time for questions and answers.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, one of the things that I hear the most from people who contact my office in London West are concerns about the quality of health care that people have access to. We have seen, under this government, the number of patients who are treated in hospital hallways has spiked to a level that we have never seen before in this province.

We are seeing nursing positions cut at an unprecedented rate. In London, we lost 120 RN positions at St. Joseph's hospital last month; in the spring, 288 RN positions at London Health Sciences Centre.

My question to the member is, why does this government's fall economic statement include no new investments in health care to address the concerns that people are facing?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the member for that excellent question. When we took office in 2018, health care was funded at $59.4 billion. Do you know what's it funded at today? At $101 billion, and that is not including the 50 projects that are under way right now. That's a total of another $65 billion.

But not only that—I remember in 2018, the night of the election, George Smitherman, the former Liberal Minister of Health, said that the former Liberal government starved health care for many years. That's the reason health care is how it is today. But we are investing, on top, another $40 billion compared to 2018, just in health care, to reduce wait times and build out our health care system.

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

Mme Lucille Collard: To the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore, I know that the fall economic statement speaks a lot about investments in infrastructure. I'm sure, in your riding, you do have challenges with a growing population. You need more infrastructure. You need transit expansion. You need affordable housing. I would like you to explain or indicate how the fall economic statement is actually responding to the needs in your riding when it comes to those needs.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the member for that question as well. Look at Mississauga–Lakeshore: the BRT that will be going down Dundas, the BRT down Lakeshore, the LRT going up Hurontario. The investments in Mississauga–Lakeshore are probably the largest in this whole province that are going in one riding.

As well, we're investing in new hospitals. We're building the largest hospital in Canadian history in Mississauga–Lakeshore. It will be an investment of $14 billion going into one location. It will be the largest hospital. There are already eight cranes there going, and they're building it as we're speaking right now.

The investments are unbelievable in my riding alone, as well as the pier at Lakeview. We're going to have the longest pier into Lake Ontario. That's a $29-million investment from the province as well as from the region of Peel and Mississauga. We are building our riding completely—as well as affordable housing. We have affordable housing projects going on. We have the Indwell project in Lakeview, the Indwell project in Clarkson. We have another Indwell project going on that will be going on in Port Credit—

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

Questions, please.

Mr. Billy Pang: Speaker, Ontario families and businesses continue to face rising energy costs at a time when affordability remains a main concern. The government continues to emphasize major nuclear investments and natural gas generation as part of its energy strategy. How-

ever, the Green Party and the opposition have argued that Ontario should be placing greater emphasis on lower-cost renewable energy sources, including wind, solar and battery storage, to help reduce electricity costs and attract investment in emerging industries.

With other jurisdictions investing heavily in renewable energy, Ontario risks missing important economic opportunities. Can the member explain why the government's economic plan does not place a greater emphasis on expanding renewable energy to help lower electricity costs for families and businesses?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the member for that excellent question on our energy grid. As you know, our energy grid is probably the most diverse grid in the world, as we have nuclear, we have hydro, we have natural gas, we have wind, we have solar and we have battery storage. But if you look at the 1,200 megawatts that will come out of the new SMRs that are being built in the province of Ontario, we would need the same amount of land to build that same amount of power in wind and solar as the size of Toronto, and we would need the size of Lake Ontario just for battery storage.

A lot of people do not calculate the cost of land and the cost of battery storage when they calculate the cost of wind and solar. If you do the calculations, it would cost much more to build wind and solar than it would to build nuclear in the province of Ontario. Right now, we have our rates under control. They're going to be 7% lower this year alone, so we're going to continue to keep our hydro bills low in the province of Ontario.

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

Mme France Gélinas: We're talking about hydro, the plan to stop the subsidization and grant for people who use more than 1,200 kilowatts per month. I can tell you that in my riding, in the wintertime, there are many people who cannot connect to natural gas because there is none, who cannot get a propane or an oil furnace because the roads in the winters are too bad and they cannot deliver. The only option left is hydro and wood, but asking an 80-year-old man to get up twice a night to put wood in the wood stove is a little bit hard.

1600

Would the government consider looking at areas of northern Ontario that have no choice but to heat with hydro and exclude them from the 1,200-kilowatt limit?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I hear you very clearly there, but it's probably 80% of the province that will be using less than the 1,200 kilowatts per household. So 80% of the population will be getting the subsidy from the government.

But I'll be honest: If the Liberals did not sign the Green Energy Act back then, we wouldn't be in this issue that we have today. We are working with the people of Ontario to try to keep our hydro rates low, which we are keeping low. If we had kept the Green Energy Act in place, we would be paying $1,000 a month more per household in Ontario.

So that's what we're doing. We're keeping our energy costs low, and we're going to continue keeping them low for the people of Ontario.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'll be quick. I'd like the member to comment on the pipeline from Hardisty, Alberta to Sarnia–Lambton, the capital of oil and petrochemicals in Ontario.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the member from Lambton for that question. As you know, we need to build pipelines through the country, and they should go through Canada, not going through the US, especially with what's going on right now in the US with President Trump.

We have some great news that happened last night. So we hope we can resolve a lot of the issues that have been happening in the US.

But this is something that we should have been doing many, many years ago, because we have to be more independent and more sovereign and be able to export our product from coast to coast. That's what we're going to continue doing here in Ontario and through Canada.

I want to really thank you for that question.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch to the member. Thank you to the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore. When we talk about resources, funding, the budget for the upcoming year—I know, just last week, Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation put together a report and a video where the cost to upgrade those northern airports in Ontario operated by the government of Ontario would be in the amount of $1.5 billion. It's close to about 30 airports. Would you be interested in upgrading these airports so the Premier's jet can land at these airports?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the member for that question. As a government, we have a budget of $235 billion, way larger than when we did take office. It was probably approximately $150 billion, and we've been able to increase our budget $100 billion more. Yes, we're looking at everything in Ontario to make Ontario more competitive and easier to get around. So I respect that question, and we will continue looking at ways that we can make Ontario much better and much better to work around.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): It is now time for further debate.

Hon. Steve Clark: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Steve Clark: I seek unanimous consent that the member for Thornhill be added as a co-sponsor to Bill 147, An Act to enact Benji's Law (Ensuring Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Epilepsy Friendly Overnight Camps), 2026.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent that the member from Thornhill be added as a co-sponsor to Bill 147, An Act to enact Benji's Law (Ensuring Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Epilepsy Friendly Overnight Camps), 2026. Is there unanimous consent? Is it agreed? Agreed.

Further debate?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Under this government, homelessness has never been worse; the number of people using

food banks has grown exponentially; young people are facing 15% unemployment rates; hospitals are shedding front-line health care workers; rent gouging and renovictions are the norm, and there's nothing in this budget that offers relief on any of these issues.

This government is stealthily and deliberately dismantling public education, public health care, public conservation areas, and eliminating sources of public revenue by dismantling the LCBO. They are actively removing environmental protections and readying themselves to sell off water treatment facilities to their favourite corporate friends. This government likes to say they are innovating, but this is really just code for the sell-off of our public services; in particular, health care and education.

Marit Stiles and the NDP have very different priorities. We know that the government could be building homes that people can afford and could meet people's needs. We know that we need rent control. And we would prioritize funding public education and public hospitals.

This Conservative budget leaves schools with impossibly large class sizes, lack of support staff, inadequate funding for busing. And instead of letting boards make bulk purchases, they gave Staples a massive contract so they could overcharge individual teachers, and then left individual teachers running all over the place trying to pick up paper, pens and pencils for their classes. It's absurd.

Recent statements by the Conservatives' Minister of Education have been quite disturbing. He has said that elected trustees are not allowed to attend events, visit schools, or otherwise do the jobs they were elected to do. This is the kind of decree we expect from the despot south of the border. This minister clearly hates democracy and fears transparency.

The Conservative government's funding of post-secondary education is, shockingly, the lowest across the entire country, and not by a little bit—about $6,000 less per student than Alberta or BC. When the government talks about wanting to be competitive, I find it really puzzling that post-secondary education is so dramatically underfunded, as it's probably the most important level of education for jobs of the future.

In the meantime, with your changes to OSAP, you have turned students into indentured servants with debt hanging over their heads forever.

If you listened to the dentists who were here yesterday, you know that there is a severe shortage of dental assistants. Yet, because of the government's colossal mismanagement of OSAP, students studying to be dental assistants at private career colleges have been cut off midstream. The ripple effects of this bad fiscal management will be felt for years by students, but also by professional practices not able to provide services because they can't find qualified personnel.

Given how many billions of dollars this government has frittered away on vanity projects, partisan advertising and gimmicks, I want to challenge the false narrative that this government never raises taxes. Through their policies, they have forced municipalities to choose between raising taxes or cutting services, because they've downloaded so many responsibilities without providing any financial resources.

So, people, beware: Whatever the narrative they are spinning about themselves, it is this Conservative government that is making your life more expensive by gutting public services, gutting public education and health care, and sending public dollars to their friends and family.

I want to take the rest of my time to look at this summer's wildfire disasters in northwestern Ontario. The lack of preparedness of the MNR and the Ministry of Emergency Preparedness had tragic consequences for people in northwestern Ontario who lost everything during this year's wildfire season:

—Lac des Mille Lacs area;

—Cushing Lake;

—Thousand Lakes Resort;

—Open Bay;

—Pine Point;

—Wabakimi resort;

—Caribou Lake resort;

—Mattice;

—Clearwater Lake—18 out of 20 homes burned to the ground;

—Namaygoosisagagun, also known as Collins—completely burned to the ground, there's absolutely nothing left there;

—Whitewater Lake First Nation—almost everything gone.

And large swaths of Quetico and Wabakimi parks also burned to the ground. The losses were profound. Families lost their homes or long-standing family camps representing generations of memories. We also lost a major form of tourism and economic activity because it had to grind to a halt.

1610

For evacuees, the impacts continued beyond the fire itself through prolonged displacement, uncertainty, financial pressure, health impacts and difficulty beginning the recovery process. Because you know what? Those evacuations went on and on and on, and the best this government was able to offer was a staged photo op in Thunder Bay one week after most evacuations had already taken place and after community members from across the region had actually stepped up to support people who escaped a raging fire with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

The Premier, ministers and staff flew in on a private jet, made some vacuous comments about having people's backs, and then flew out again without calling a single First Nations chief or speaking with a single evacuee. And when Chief Wilfred King happened upon this press conference, the minister for the MNR had the gall to ask him if he wanted to talk about mining. This is when his entire community had been evacuated.

First Nations chiefs, along with the NDP, the Liberals and the Greens, have demanded a public inquiry into the way the fires were handled this summer. Sadly, the government does not have the courage to allow a public review.

I want to be clear on a number of issues:

Pouring limitless amounts of money into fighting forest fires long after the damage has been done costs far more and is an irresponsible use of public funds.

The 2026 wildfire losses exposed the cumulative effects of reduced staffing, declining institutional knowledge, inadequate compensation and the long-ago shift away from integrated forest and fire management, which began under the Mike Harris Conservative government—and, not to be ignored, the intensifying effects of climate change.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that the current Minister of Natural Resources is following in his father's footsteps by ignoring the advice given over many years by experienced firefighters, the Auditor General and Nishnawbe Aski Nation calling for a major overhaul of the wildland fire service.

Before the previous Conservative cuts, the Ontario service was one of the best in the world. Wildland firefighters participated in forest management activities, including timber cruising, wildlife surveys, slash pile burning, inspections of forestry equipment, fire-safety practices, checks for spark arresters, fire extinguishers, maintaining suppression equipment and providing worker training.

Public safety and wildfire suppression and a fully trained and outfitted service is a core provincial responsibility. Wildland firefighting requires specialized training, equipment and knowledge of boreal forest conditions. Anything less is trivializing the work of wildland forest firefighters and the communities they are tasked to protect.

A responsible government is serious about retaining an experienced workforce, yet when they raised the pay of seasonal workers, they left out about 100 full-time, experienced workers who are now making less than seasonal workers doing the same job. These are workers they probably trained themselves;

A responsible government prepares in advance, books helicopters before the start of the season, hires the minimum of 200 crews so that fires are stopped before they grow out of control, orders water bombers years in advance so that we aren't waiting until 2030 before the planes are even built and the government isn't paying inflated prices for all the things they failed to purchase in advance.

This is not just bad fiscal management; it is also downloading the costs onto the families, businesses and communities that lost everything, along with downloading those costs onto the general public as we saw swaths of Quetico and Wabakimi provincial parks burn to the ground.

We know that parts of the boreal forest burn every year, but this year, no warnings to any of these communities and no help until it was far too late created a disaster no one should find acceptable. Words and announcements do not put out fires. Resources, planning, proper funding and action do.

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

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you for your appreciation of the fall economic statement. We've been saying it again and again: The economic statement is an expression of the government's priorities. I'm myself very disappointed that some of the areas or some of the sectors that have real need for investments are being completely ignored by this government.

I'm particularly concerned about the crisis of mental health and addictions, which also leads into a homelessness crisis. What is your appreciation of the impact of the lack of investment in that sector for your riding?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Thank you very much for the question.

My riding has the highest number of deaths due to opioid overdoses in the province. We are short the housing; the housing does not exist. While we have the HART hub, which is helping some people, we also lost the safe consumption site, which was a critical part of the support network for people.

So the failure to really address this crisis at its root and bring the supportive housing that is needed is very, very disappointing in this budget.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member opposite for her remarks.

I know her community, like mine, is suffering greatly from US tariffs, the uncertainty and the trade disruptions. Now our government has announced nearly $30 billion in relief and support to protect jobs and to strengthen our broader economy. So I'm hoping the member can identify which supports that she sees in the document that are worth supporting.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Thank you for the question. I have to say I find it hard to look at that seriously in this current budget knowing that the government has allowed the WSIB to shed almost 700 workers and removed those supports from our northern communities and regional offices.

We know that the government is benefiting from this. They would like to pretend that it's arm's-length, but it's clearly not. Otherwise, the government wouldn't be boasting about returning billions of dollars intended for injured workers to employers.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to thank the member from Thunder Bay for her comments today.

We were talking about several communities that were absolutely devasted with forest fires this year and the government's lame response of holding a photo op the week after the evacuations had already happened. First of all, what should the government have done, and can you give us an update on those communities?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: First of all, the government should have reached out to my office. My office was unable to get anyone on the phone in either the MNR or the emergency preparedness ministry at all, ever.

What they should have done is they should have actually gone to those evacuation centres and helped. That's what community members were doing. They were sorting donated clothes. They were bringing in food. They were doing everything possible to help those evacuees. Instead, we had this staged photo op that was embarrassing and enraging.

Now those communities—everybody's having to fend for themselves. Collins is gone. Amnesty International is trying to raise funds for them. Clearwater Lake is gone. Those people are just trying to rebuild their lives.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Very quickly: On July 14, 2026, I released a video that came from the CN workers who were surrounded by fire. The pictures that we see from Collins where they're driving from the lake—those CN workers were there.

Was there ample notice of the fires?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Thank you very much for the question. There was no notice. There was no communication from the MNR.

The only reason those people got out of Collins was because a CN worker got in touch with them and said, "You've got to get out now. That fire is coming." Nothing from—

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

Further debate?

1620

Mme Lucille Collard: It's my turn to rise today to respond to the government's fall economic statement and, more importantly, to examine what it means for the people I represent in Ottawa–Vanier.

When a government presents an economic statement, it tells us a great deal about its priorities, and the best way to appreciate how much the government cares about people is to judge if they can access the services that they need.

When I look at this fall economic statement, I see a troubling disconnect between the government's priorities and the realities facing Ontarians. In Ottawa–Vanier, we face serious challenges: homelessness, an ongoing mental health and addictions crisis, housing insecurity and growing pressure on essential public services. What I see in this statement gives me little confidence that these pressures will be adequately addressed.

Speaker, for six years, I've been raising the mental health, addictions and homelessness crisis that continues to devastate lives and communities in Ottawa–Vanier. In 2025, the government forced the closure of nine supervised consumption sites across Ontario, including one in Ottawa, and then in June 2026, a year later, the government withdrew funding from two more service providers in my riding, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre and Ottawa Inner City Health. Both organizations have proposed alternatives without supervised consumption, consistent with the government's own approach, but the government has ignored their proposals, and the consequences are felt every day: more people in crisis, greater pressure on emergency services and growing frustration among residents and businesses—and we're talking about right downtown Ottawa and in the ByWard Market.

Our front-line organizations have the expertise and have offered solutions, yet this fall economic statement offers no meaningful response. Closing services does not eliminate the crisis. It simply shifts the burden onto our streets, our hospitals and our communities at a much greater cost. This is not fiscal responsibility.

Speaker, the government talks about efficiencies and controlling public service costs, but what does that efficiency look like for the people who depend on these services? In my constituency office, my staff are increasingly helping residents obtain basic documents from the Registrar General's office or get answers about their ODSP benefits. People are waiting too long for services they should be able to access without their MPP's intervention. To be clear, this is not the fault of the hard-working public servants—they are doing their best under growing pressure—but when the government limits staffing and fails to adequately resource essential services, the consequences are felt by residents.

The Financial Accountability Office has warned of billions of dollars in projected funding shortfalls across essential public services, yet this fall economic statement continues to emphasize spending restraint without adequately addressing the service gaps people are experiencing.

Speaker, efficiency should mean delivering better services at a reasonable cost, not making people wait longer, struggle harder or turn to their MPP just to get the help that they need.

Je souhaite également aborder une réalité trop souvent oubliée dans les décisions budgétaires de ce gouvernement. Ce sont les besoins particuliers de la population francophone.

En Ontario, l'accès aux services en français demeure un défi, particulièrement en santé, en éducation et dans les services sociaux. Prenons, par exemple, les soins de santé : pour une personne âgée qui doit expliquer ses symptômes ou un patient qui reçoit un diagnostic difficile, pouvoir communiquer dans sa langue n'est pas un luxe; c'est une question de sécurité, de dignité et de qualité des soins. Pourtant, trop de francophones doivent encore chercher des services qui devraient leur être accessibles.

Et le problème dépasse largement le secteur de la santé. Nos écoles de langue française font face à des défis importants de recrutement et de rétention du personnel. Nos organismes communautaires francophones doivent répondre à des besoins croissants avec des ressources limitées. Et trop souvent, les services en français demeurent une considération secondaire plutôt qu'une partie intégrante de la planification gouvernementale.

Le gouvernement a créé un nouveau Centre de planification des services de santé en français, dont le siège social se trouve dans ma circonscription. C'est une initiative qui peut contribuer à améliorer la situation, mais encore faut-il lui donner les moyens de remplir son mandat.

On ne peut pas prétendre garantir des services en français sans investir dans les personnes et les organismes qui les offrent. Alors, où sont les engagements concrets dans cet énoncé économique pour répondre à la pénurie de personnel francophone, renforcer nos institutions et améliorer l'accès aux services?

Les droits linguistiques ne doivent pas seulement exister sur papier. Ils doivent se traduire par des services accessibles, de qualité et offerts au moment où les gens en ont besoin. Un gouvernement qui ne prévoit pas les ressources

nécessaires pour respecter ces droits ne peut pas prétendre répondre adéquatement aux besoins de tous les Ontariens et les Ontariennes.

As a lawyer and the Liberal critic for the Attorney General, I am deeply concerned about the growing pressures on our justice system. Our courts and tribunals are struggling with delays that leave people waiting for decisions affecting their housing, their rights and their livelihoods.

In Ottawa–Vanier, where more than half of households are renters, timely access to the Landlord and Tenant Board is essential. Rights mean little if people cannot enforce them, yet the government's spending priorities offer little reassurance. The Ministry of the Attorney General's estimates show reduced planned funding for Legal Aid Ontario and Indigenous justice programs, while the fall economic statement announces a review of Legal Aid Ontario's efficiency, and I'm afraid that this will not end well. I support improving efficiency, but not at the expense of access to justice.

And we cannot ignore the crisis in our overcrowded jails, where too many people are being held on remand, awaiting trial and presumed innocent. Our correctional institutions are under enormous pressure, and incarceration comes at a significant cost to taxpayers, yet this government continues to favour punitive responses to problems that often have their roots in poverty, homelessness, mental illness and addiction.

Public safety matters, of course, and people who commit serious crimes must be held accountable, but we cannot arrest our way out of our homelessness and mental health crisis. When we fail to invest in housing, treatment and community support, we risk pushing more vulnerable people into an already overwhelmed justice system, and that is neither an effective nor economical solution.

Speaker, a responsible government should invest in preventing crises, not simply pay more to punish people after those crises have occurred. That is how we protect public safety, improve access to justice and make better use of taxpayers' money.

Whether we're talking about addiction services, disability support, health care or access to justice, the same pattern emerges: Ontarians' needs are growing while essential services are falling further behind. This government talks about efficiency, but efficiency isn't simply about spending less; it's about spending wisely. Preventing homelessness costs less than managing its consequences. Investing in mental health care reduces pressure on emergency services, and properly funded public services save money while improving lives.

Cet énoncé économique était l'occasion de démontrer que le gouvernement comprend ces réalités. Malheureusement, encore une fois, il passe à côté. On ne peut pas prétendre faire des économies lorsqu'on ne fait que transférer les coûts ailleurs en laissant les communautés en subir les conséquences.

Ontarians deserve an economic plan that measures success not just by what government saves but by what it delivers, because the true cost of this government's failure to act is being paid by Ontarians every single day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): It is now time for questions.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite for her remarks.

I was reading one of the statements from the stakeholders—from the Ontario Big City Mayors—and what they've said is Ontario Big City Mayors is "pleased to see continued investment in programs that … reduce housing costs for buyers and build the critical infrastructure needed to build more homes including roads, energy, transit and community infrastructure. These investments are so important as our municipalities continue to grow and" to be able "to provide the services our residents need."

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I was wondering if the member opposite agrees with the statement from Ontario's Big City Mayors, or has any comments about the programs that the government is doing to reduce housing costs?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Back to the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you, Speaker, and welcome to the chair.

I will say that the investment with the municipalities is welcome, but the municipalities have many needs. I think that they have identified those needs as well. While we welcome some investment in infrastructure and help to build more housing, there are a lot more issues that need to be addressed in our municipalities.

In the municipality of Ottawa, the mayor is very concerned with the crisis that's happening right in the ByWard Market with all those people that are homeless because they have a mental health issue, or they're in a crisis with opioids or others. He's committed to end at least youth homelessness. He's doing great progress, so I want to congratulate him on that. But a responsible government needs to invest where the needs are and listen to all the needs expressed by the municipalities.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I wanted to share with the member some of the issues that we are experiencing in London around the affordability crisis, which is something that is affecting everyone in Ontario. Affordability pressures manifest in increasing numbers of homeless people and increasing food bank use.

We have over 2,000 people on the by-name list who are homeless in London. We have 85,000 provincially.

We have growing numbers of families who are accessing the London Food Bank. One in three local children in London are now considered food insecure, which is double the number we had in 2022. More seniors and working people are having to access food bank services. Across the province, more than one million Ontarians went to the food banks.

So what in this fall economic statement responds to the urgent need that Ontarians have for some relief from the affordability pressures we're all facing?

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you for the question, because this is an important one. Unfortunately, in this statement, we see nothing significant to help the most vulnerable people.

In my riding of Ottawa–Vanier as well, we see a significant increase in the usage of food banks. We see families—even working people—that need to go to the food banks.

Two weeks ago, I launched the Snowflake Breakfast, which is an event that the Centre des services communautaires Vanier organizes every year to help bring money into the food bank, because they cannot get enough to supply the demand. And do you know what? It's the ninth edition. What I made them realize is that that's nothing to celebrate, the fact that we need to have those fundraising events to be able to support the more vulnerable people in our communities.

This should be the responsibility of the government. Nobody should have to go to a food bank and have to suffer the indignity that it may represent—when you have to show your kids that you can't pay for groceries. If the government would be responsible, they would make sure that everybody—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

MPP Paul Vickers: Our government understands that Ontario must remain competitive to attract investment and create good-paying jobs. That is why we announced an Ontario competitiveness tax cut, which would provide $8 billion in provincial tax relief to lower the costs to the people of Ontario.

Speaker, businesses need confidence to invest in new equipment and expand their operations. Our proposed Ontario competitiveness tax cut will provide $8 billion—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): The member for Ottawa–Vanier.

Mme Lucille Collard: It's great to support business; I agree. But we also need to support the most vulnerable in our province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Further debate?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: It's an honour to rise today and to affirm support for an economic plan to keep our country and province strong.

The backdrop of this discussion is—with the new Congress elected yesterday, it reminds us of the opportunity before Ontario to seize the moment, and often, as I hear members opposite speak about meeting the moment, it is always focused on the expenditure of the state.

While there's a need to invest, especially in times of economic distress—that's why we have invested $30 billion to provide that stability and that security to our employment markets, to our industries besieged by these unjustified tariffs. Be under no illusion: What contrasts this government from the members opposite is we choose also to pursue paths of economic growth that don't require, necessarily, a taxpayer investment.

The ultimate case study of that principle, which is laughed at by the members opposite, is to move faster on permits to actually get foreign investment deployed on the ground for the benefit of jobs, growth and sovereignty. And in the mines' ministry, it's the ultimate case study—although there are so many case studies across the government—where we can and should move faster to drive economic growth.

I don't want to pretend for a moment in this time, when the country and people are facing great challenge, we should not or ought not invest in them. That is at the cornerstone of the Premier's mission: Support the people, whatever it takes. But I think part of the wisdom of this government is we didn't wait for the crisis to unfold; we got ahead of the curve. We had the foresight to recognize: Whereas the federal government decided to reduce the excess tax on gasoline more recently, we took decisive action years ago and then made it permanent. That's 10 cents in the pocket of everyday families in rural Ontario, in northern Ontario, in the GTHA, in eastern Ontario, in the St. Lawrence region specifically, as the House leader would remind me.

The bottom line is we understand that in order to buttress this economy, we've got to, as Prime Minister Mulroney said, "look around the corner of history." We did that by pursuing a series of tax cuts and permit reforms that have helped to keep this economy strong.

And don't listen to me, Speaker; look at StatsCan data points when you see tens of thousands of people working as a consequence of that plan, even though we face an unprecedented attack on our industry and on our workers. How can both be true if not for—it's not luck and it wasn't a prayer; it was sound public policy to stand up for our sectors and to give them a bridge until we get past this insanity.

I found it interesting: Today, as I listen and reflect on the debate, thoughtful discussions from members opposite—I appreciate hearing from them all. But somehow, today, the mid-term election results yesterday have sort of been decoupled. It's as if we are an island unto ourselves; we are not part of a global economy interfacing with global headwinds much stronger and sometimes much more perverse than what we can control here at home.

I think most sensible Canadians recognize the global links of trade and commerce, and that we need to think through a big lens. So that's why I'm very proud: Part of this budget is the reaffirmation of a plan to build large-scale projects, to do the big things, the intergenerational lens to policy that was not here when the former Liberals were governing. This is a government, the party at the time, that was going to retire the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station—2,000 essential megawatts, 5,000 jobs—didn't give a hoot; was prepared to close it. I mean, it's this type of short-sightedness that really undermines public confidence.

So we're thinking long term, we're building nuclear. Often, people say to us, "How does that help me today?" Well, the nuclear build-out at Pickering, the largest clean-energy construction project to date in our country, as we speak—at least of the active infrastructure projects; the feds have announced many and commenced few. This government started the largest clean energy project in

Ontario, in Canada today, by saying yes to the refurbishment of the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station, creating 30,000 jobs for the people of Ontario.

That is the rhetoric. How do you build a resilient economy? Well, you double down on your strengths—tariff-proof, recession-proof, made-in-Canada nuclear technology, the IP.

The Speaker today hails from a region—like the House leader, like so many others—which literally conceived the Candu technology. It was birthed in Ontario, the IP remains in Ontario, the supply chain is 95% built with Ontario products and stamped with "Made in Canada." It's a 100-year asset, relative to 20 to 25 years for the renewable alternative, and so it begs the question: Why wouldn't we do more of that? There's nothing this President or this Congress can do to undermine that momentum to build this country strong, to get people working, to fire up the supply chain of Canada and secure sovereign power, which we need, because our economy is growing, our population is rising and electrification is on the rise. And thus, we're going to meet that demand forecast of up to 90% more power by doubling down on the made-in-Canada strengths.

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I do want to speak a bit about the leadership of the government when it comes to affordability, because talking about the principle of getting ahead of the curve, we decided, last year, to launch the largest energy savings program in the history of Canada. Mr. Speaker, this energy savings program is a sharp contrast to the former Liberals. I'll explain in three ways. The first: The former Liberals, by their design, constrained energy efficiency savings to communities in the province that had power constraints, so 30% of Ontario were eligible for energy efficiency savings. Our government brought forth a bill just two years ago to remove that prohibition so that every family in the smallest towns and the biggest cities of this province—everyone—could play a role in reducing the megawatts they use. Thus, their bills go down; we save power. It's a win-win for the ratepayer and for the province and for the families of Ontario. So the first principle is, we transformed how we do this by allowing everyone to be able to participate.

The second is we launched the largest energy savings program in Canadian history. Unlike the Liberals, who use short-term planning cycles for energy efficiency, we gave a 12-year road map, a 12-year guarantee, $10.9 billion of investment. It is larger when you add up all the provincial energy efficiency programs combined. That is ambition.

That $11 billion, according to the IESO—the Independent Electricity System Operator—will return a 2-to-1 savings for the system—$20 billion unlocked of power we didn't have to produce. It's as if we took 1.5 Pickerings off the grid of the power we're going to save.

We cut the gas tax, and then we made it permanent—10 cents: 5 cents on diesel, 5 cents on gasoline. Why did we do it? How could members opposite have opposed it, then or now? Pre-Trump, post-Trump, it actually doesn't matter. It comes back to the philosophy of the government: We think money should be back in people's pockets. We've never raised a tax. There are just not many governments in modern history that can say that with a straight face. We've cut taxes and fees, development charges, anything that aggravates or increases costs on people. That's, I think, a cornerstone of the government and the Premier's legacy, that we're trying to make life more affordable on issues of housing.

As I approach my 40th birthday, Mr. Speaker—I'm now officially an old person—

Interjections.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I'm not there yet, to be clear, so please don't celebrate that. I'm going to hold on to that thirty-something for the last few weeks here.

But when I was young, when I was elected at the tender old age of 31, I was elected in part because I felt, generationally, the government of the past—there was no one speaking for me, for us and now for your kids and grandchildren. Housing was the ultimate case study of the perversion of that government literally being so out of touch—increasing fees, development charges that sounded good and made them feel good, and yet the end effect was your kid couldn't own a home in the communities they were raised—a serious intergenerational undermining.

And what did we do? We cut the HST on every new home. We cut DCs, development charges, saving an average home in and around $200,000. That inspires confidence for young people that want to get a job, because somehow in this country there are people without jobs and, paradoxically, jobs without people. Our mission is to bridge that gap, through nuclear expansion, through mineral expansion, by moving fast on permits, by repatriating the critical mineral processing away from China, away from even America, away from Europe, back to this province, back to this country.

We've taken a series of reforms that make a difference, and the proof is in the benchmarks. We were the second-slowest on earth; we're now number one in Canada for attracting mining investment. We were the second-slowest in the OECD to open a mine; we're now number two, behind Nevada, in one year.

And so my point, Speaker, is our economic plan: prudent, cautious but focused on making life more affordable, thinking holistically of how to make this economy strong.

I'm proud of the cabinet, the caucus and the Premier for doing the tough things and working together for the benefit of Canada, working with the federal government in the interest of our country, and I hope that sense of unity could prevail in this House today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

MPP Jamie West: I won't miss an opportunity for the Minister of Energy and Mines to advocate for money and investment in my community, constantly talking about Dr. Mykytczuk and the MIRARCO project. But I think, more importantly, there is a lot of advertising money spent on the Ring of Fire—$12.2 million, I think, is what FOI brought forward.

That project, best-case scenario, it's going to be six years before they start work on a nickel mine. Vale in

Sudbury, they have two ore deposits they can get to surface within the next two years. Is that something you'd be in support of as well?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Thank you to the member from Sudbury for the question. It isn't an either/or proposition. As we often say to each other, Sudbury is an existing Ring of Fire, blessed with some of the best, most consequential geology on earth. We are absolutely supportive of mine expansions in Sudbury and across northern Ontario. That's immediate-term action to create jobs. But I also believe, medium term, we ought to be thinking about how to create the networks of roads and transmission to actually allow for responsible resource development, in partnership with the First Nation. We're doing a dual track: immediate action; medium term.

The one commonality is that the government has talked a big game with the Ring of Fire, and we actually have a credible path to build the infrastructure to improve quality of life on the ground but also to unlock resources that are currently dominated by the most authoritarian regime on earth. I want to believe all of us—as imperfect as any country may perceive them to be—this is the gold standard of human rights and environmental labour standards. We should be proud of Canada today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Mme Lucille Collard: Thank you to the minister for his presentation. You defend your portfolio very well.

But you said something very important during your presentation: You said, "Support the people, whatever it takes." I do agree with that, and I think it's great to support workers that are negatively impacted by the tariffs—the US tariffs, obviously—and I do appreciate your vision on energy. Of course we need a sound, long-term energy strategy.

I am glad you're devoting energy to that, but I would like to see your government devoting energy to the vulnerable people, because the vulnerable people have an impact on our economy. They are costly to our system, to emergency services, to hospital space. Why not devote energy to taking care of those people and saving money at the same time?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I have profound respect for the member opposite, so I do appreciate the question. The issue of how to support more vulnerable people in the economy is important for all governments, regardless of the economic circumstances, but it's especially important today.

I think about some of the most progressive tax reforms this government initiated out of the Ministry of Finance. The LIFT tax credit—the low-income tax credit—is the single-largest tax cut for low-income people in Ontario history. We didn't wait for a recession, a depression or an economic trade war; we did it within, I believe, the first 12 months of our government. We enacted that to help cut taxes for everyday people.

We increased funding to help create training and upskilling of people that wanted to get employment where the labour market was going. And, of course, we created energy efficiency programs. We enhanced the low-income and disability supports in electricity, intentionally targeting the very people you cited.

I think about tuition that was cut 10% and then frozen for the entire duration of government, up until last year. There's no government that did that. And—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Thank you, Minister.

The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Coming from Sarnia–Lambton, the headquarters of the petrochemical sector, the fuel sector, in the province of Ontario, I wonder if the minister could speak to that, to some of the plans he and his ministry have for expansion of industry.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from Sarnia–Lambton for his question and leadership.

I think, for many Canadians, it may be news to you that the first oil well in North America, actually, was in Oil Springs, Ontario, which is in the homeland of the proud member. This is a year before Pennsylvania and America discovered oil. The first in North America was right here in Ontario. It wasn't Alberta; it wasn't Saskatchewan; it was this province. So the leadership of extraction, exploration and responsible development is part of our lineage and our heritage for which we are proud. So it's not surprising that we have the largest petrochemical and refinery hub of Canada in Sarnia–Lambton.

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The one thing we don't have that every other G7 country does have is a strategic petroleum reserve, and we saw with the Strait of Hormuz that we need to have domestic supply. Our commitment is to build that reserve in addition to a sovereign pipeline that starts and ends in Canada, made by Canadian steel, Canadian workers and Canadian technology.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): The member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch to the minister for the presentation on the investments that are happening and speaking on the fall economic statement.

I know that there are lots of things happening in Kiiwetinoong and lots of things happening around the world. When you have nine-year-old girls committing suicide in our communities—there are things happening.

There are people protecting their lands—and, I know, with no proper free, prior, informed consent. Speaker, to those who want to destroy our lands, we will defeat you. To those who protect the inherent rights in the lands, we will support you. The strength of our people is in the power of our ancestors, is in the power of our identity. We've been doing this for thousands of years. We have the power in our ceremony.

How are you going to address this issue—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: It's so important fundamentally that we do these projects in partnership. I think one of the areas where the government has achieved success is that we've actually been willing, meaningful partners.

It's not just in the engagement, for which we, of course, discharge that duty, but we've actually taken this much further, where the equity partnerships are unprecedented to improve the lives of those very young people. The small modular reactor project in Canada and Ontario was the first time any First Nation of this country signed on as a willing owner of the SMR, creating transformations for the next 65 years, for three, four, five, seven generations.

We look at every transmission line. Every storage project we've authorized has been done in true partnership and with 50-50 equity because it's not just about the business case. It's about the effects on the ground to improve the quality of life; to provide the revenue and the resources to support more mental health supports, education, social infrastructure.

I believe all can win. Businesses, families, First Nations can have sovereignty if we do this together.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): The member from Scarborough Centre.

Mr. David Smith: Northern Ontario is home to some of the most significant critical mineral opportunities in the world, including the Ring of Fire. As demand for critical minerals continues to grow, Ontario has an opportunity to become a global leader in the development and processing of these essential resources.

Our government has committed $1 billion towards infrastructure to unlock the Ring of Fire, and the federal government has recently committed to matching that investment to advance critical mineral road infrastructure.

Can the member explain how these investments will help northern Ontario's economic potential, creating good-paying jobs and strengthening Ontario's critical mineral supply chain?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the parliamentary assistant for his good work on this file.

What I would simply conclude with is, the Critical Minerals Processing Fund was designed in part to end the ripping and shipping of Canada's resources and Ontario's minerals abroad. It offended us pre-Trump, and it is now entirely indefensible in the post-Trump world that we continue to export the raw materials for all the value-added investment to go anywhere but here. So we created a $500-million fund, a small upfront investment of the state, to catalyze significant private investment, and we're seeing jobs come back to the province.

The first project that has been designated is Generation Mining. We're talking about hundreds of good-paying jobs building a mine, a mill and the downstream conversion, meaning we've maintained the entire supply chain in the province for the benefit of Canada—so important as we repatriate investment and help develop allied, democratic supply chains.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Further debate? The member for Spadina-North York.

Mr. Chris Glover: Spadina–Fort York, sir.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Fort York, yes.

Mr. Chris Glover: North York is a nice community as well, but it's not the one I serve.

MPP Jamie West: It's a northern Ontario riding.

Mr. Chris Glover: Northern Ontario—North York, yes. Okay.

It's an honour to rise and speak to the fall economic statement. In my response to the fall economic statement, I just want to contrast and compare some of the things that Premier Ford has said to the actions and the outcomes, because you know one thing about this Premier: When he says something, you can take it to the bank.

For example, when he was elected in 2018, he decried "15 years of the previous government's mismanagement" and promised to "get Ontario's finances back on track," because he was "very fiscally responsible" and the Conservatives are "prudent fiscal managers with the taxpayers' money." Those are the words from the Premier.

So, eight years in government, and the new fall economic statement comes out, and the deficit is—what do you think it is, folks?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: The deficit is $17 billion.

Mr. Chris Glover: It's $17 billion. That's $3 billion higher than it was expected to be six months ago.

The debt is $483 billion.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Half a trillion.

Mr. Chris Glover: Next year we're going to hit half a trillion dollars, yes.

The interest on debt from when this government was elected, when they inherited the government from the Liberals—it was $12 billion a year we were paying in interest on debt.

What do you think it is today?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I know.

Mr. Chris Glover: What is it?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: It's $17 billion.

Mr. Chris Glover: It's $17 billion. Thank you to the member from Hamilton. You've got the numbers too, right?

So this is eight years of being prudent fiscal managers with the taxpayers' money. We now have $17 billion going to interest, and we're going to hit half a trillion dollars in debt.

Let's see. Before he was elected, the Premier said quite famously he was going to "stop the gravy train," and he said, "The party with the taxpayers' money is over." So let's do an update. How is that going? Well, let's see. I've done a list of some of the scandals and the wasted money here.

Last summer, the Ontario NDP exposed expense scandals by some of the government members there. There was one who spent $15,000 on hotels in Toronto, when he lived in Toronto, and another $100,000 on lobster, oysters, steak dinners with—yes, from his riding association, but that was also taxpayer-subsidized.

There was another one who spent $27,000 on hotels—not to outdo the first—$27,000 on Toronto hotels, and he lived in Brampton.

MPP Jamie West: That's far.

Mr. Chris Glover: Now, okay, Brampton is far; I know. The member from Sudbury says Brampton is far, but maybe you could drive home at the end of the day. I

don't know. Especially if you live in Toronto, I don't think you need the Toronto hotel. We've always been wondering, "Why did he need a Toronto hotel?" He's come up with different excuses, but none of them quite hold water.

Let's see. There was also $117 million in partisan advertising just in the last year.

These days, in question period, we're debating the billion-dollar OSAP fraud with the private career colleges.

Last year, there was the $2.5-billion Skills Development Fund—$800 million went to very low-ranking applications, most of them from Conservative Party donors.

There was $9 billion that this government has spent on private nursing agencies.

The list just keeps going here, guys—$5.1-billion taxpayer subsidy to developers. Now, this was Bill 23, a few years ago. They gave a $5.1-billion taxpayer subsidy to developers to build housing faster.

They even had the $8.3-billion greenbelt scandal, because they were going to build those homes faster on the greenbelt by developers that had recently bought land in the greenbelt. This government passed legislation to remove the greenbelt protections, and they stood to make $8.3 billion.

So how is that going? Do you know where Ontario ranks in housing starts per capita in the country?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Pulling up the rear.

Mr. Chris Glover: Not quite. No, no. We're not dead last. We're only second-last.

Interjections.

Mr. Chris Glover: Yes, yes. We're second-last in housing starts. That $5.1-billion taxpayer subsidy to developers—that has really helped us out, apparently. We have gotten good value for that.

1700

Let's see. There's also the $2.2-billion subsidy for the Ontario Place spa, because all of us know how much the Premier loves a good spa.

Then there are the cost overruns, where the government says, "Hey, we're going to build this thing, and it should cost this"—and then it seems to creep up a little bit.

For example, the Mississauga hospital is 16% higher than what was projected. Okay, 16%—it's $4 billion.

The Ottawa Hospital: The initial cost was going to be $2.8 billion. What do you think it is now? The Ottawa Hospital started at $2.8 billion. What do you think the projection is now? Anybody?

MPP Jamie West: Is it $5 billion?

Mr. Chris Glover: No, keep going. Five billion? No, not $5 billion; not $6 billion; not $7 billion; not $8 billion, not $9 billion. It's going to be $10 billion for the Ottawa Hospital—$2.8 billion, to $10 billion.

Interjections.

Mr. Chris Glover: Yes. This is the prudent fiscal management of this government, economic discipline of this government.

The Ontario Line started off at $11 billion. Does anybody happen to know what the estimate is now? It was $11 billion for the Ontario Line, going from what used to be the Ontario Science Centre—shame on you for ever closing it—down to Ontario Place. What do you think the cost is now? So $11 billion to—

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Is it $15 billion?

Mr. Chris Glover: That's nowhere near enough.

Mme France Gélinas: Is it $11.5 billion?

Mr. Chris Glover: No, it's way, way more.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Is it $25 billion?

Mr. Chris Glover: Keep going.

Interjections.

Mr. Chris Glover: It's $34 billion. It started at $11 billion. It's now going to be $34 billion. This is another cost overrun. That's a $23-billion cost overrun.

If you're building something and you're thinking, "Oh, I'll get out my pencil. I've got to figure out materials. I've got to figure out the land costs. I've got to figure out all the labour costs and stuff," and you come up with $11 billion and then it goes to $34 billion, I think you made a mistake; I think there was something wrong somewhere along the line, and maybe you need to have somebody else managing your finances.

And I think the people of Ontario really need to have somebody else managing our finances because this government is not doing too well, really.

Then there's the Eglinton Crosstown. Remember the Eglinton Crosstown? Their initial budget was around $4 billion. Does anybody know how much it went over and what the final cost of the Eglinton Crosstown was?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Is it open?

Mr. Chris Glover: I'll just say it was only six years late.

But how much was the cost overrun? Anybody? Give me a guess. It started at $4 billion. What do you think it ended up at?

MPP Jamie West: Was it $16 billion?

Mr. Chris Glover: No, no. You're overshooting because of the Ontario Line. No. It was only $12 billion. It was only three times the initial estimate. So it wasn't the full—no, much, much lower.

I'll tell you, all of these cost overruns don't stop the government from announcing new plans. They've got all kinds of plans.

You know the beautiful Toronto waterfront, Canada's number one tourist destination—last year 28 million visitors came and enjoyed it. Well, what people really want down there, apparently, is to have jets flying by every two minutes. That's what they want there. And we can do it. Premier Ford says he can put jets there, flying by every two minutes, for the low, low cost of only $5 billion. Remember, that's the initial cost—

Mme France Gélinas: Does it come with earplugs?

Mr. Chris Glover: Does it come with earplugs? I don't know. We're going to need something. Apparently, you're going to need a mask for the fumes, and you'll need earplugs for the jets flying over. But you'll still be able to enjoy the waterfront, I am sure, with the Premier's plan. And that $5 billion—that's the initial estimate, and we've seen what happens to their estimates.

And then, of course, there's the tunnel under the 401. Can I just say to the government in all seriousness, please—

I drive on the 401, so don't start tearing it up and trying to dig a tunnel underneath. Traffic is a nightmare already. Please don't do that. The estimated cost is starting at $100 billion. And it's not going to improve traffic. It's just going to create a traffic nightmare.

Let's see. There are just so many cost overruns.

The Premier said that the party with the taxpayer dollars was coming to an end, but what he really meant to say was that the party with the taxpayer dollars was just beginning—and it's all in the fall economic statement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I just want to be clear that $500 billion—that's half a trillion dollars—is the accumulated debt of this province. It's about $35,000 of debt for every man, woman and child. Even though the kids don't know yet, they've been saddled with a lifetime of debt from this government.

That $500 billion, I said this morning, because it's hard to get your head around—if those were seconds, that would be 15,850 years. So it's a big, big number. It's easy, when you hear these numbers, not to understand how significant this is and the kind of debt we're in.

Despite what this government says about trying to make sure we're sovereign and our industries are sovereign, when you owe this kind of debt to who knows where, we don't have sovereignty. We owe money, and we are beholden to whoever owns that debt. Do you believe, really, that we are a sovereign province when we have so much—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Thank you.

Member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: It reminds me of what the Premier said: "the good old days of Liberal fiscal mismanagement." It was only 15 years of Liberal fiscal mismanagement. They also increased the debt massively.

Their scandals, I think, were relatively minor compared to what this government has done. There was the $3-billion gas plant scandal; the $700-billion Ornge air scandal; the billion-dollar eHealth scandal; the cash-for-access scandal, where you would pay $5,000 to $10,000. There were 150 of those dinners in just a two-year period under the former Liberal government—cash for access, $5,000 to $10,000. Now, this government only charges $1,500 if you want to get some free tax dollars in exchange for a donation to the Conservative Party.

So yes, $500 billion: That's a hell of a big debt. We're paying for it now, and future generations are going to be paying for it. Really, we need a little bit of fiscal management and we need some honest government in this province. That's why I'm with the NDP.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Spadina–Fort York for his remarks. I know in his community, and certainly many across Ontario, we are finding it increasingly difficult to undertake trade. Our companies are looking for customers. Some of those relationships have been severed due to economic nationalism, tariffs and the general economic environment that we're in.

I think one of the struggles that businesses face today is liquidity, keeping their people employed and ensuring that they have a place to go to, a place to work at, when things pick back up.

Some of the measures in the FES—the competitiveness tax credit is among them—are there to support those businesses and keep those employees working and bringing home paycheques at the end of the month. I'm hoping you may be able to elaborate—through you, Mr. Speaker—on what measures you see that are worthwhile for industry to keep their people working.

Mr. Chris Glover: I would say one of the things this government needs to do is they need to look at their own procurement. One of the problems with the jobs is, our jobs are being farmed out to the United States, and this government is one of the worst offenders. We're losing 700 WSIB jobs in Ontario because this government is passing those jobs, contracted out, to an American corporation, Iron Mountain. They contracted those jobs out.

They closed down small businesses that were running ServiceOntario outlets and gave those contracts to Staples, an American corporation.

The government has a Buy Ontario website. The Premier actually said that if municipalities aren't buying and procuring their goods from Ontario businesses, he would punish them. But the Buy Ontario website is contracted out to an American company. This Conservative government contracted the website that's Buy Ontario to an American corporation instead of an Ontario corporation. So the government really needs to look at its own procurement and support—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Thank you.

Questions?

Mme France Gélinas: In the fall economic statement, they restated their intention of spending $50 billion for the construction and upgrading of hospitals. That would bring us 3,000 new beds over the next 10 years. There's $50 billion for the next 10 years. But now we know that the construction of the hospital in Ottawa took $10 billion.

How many of those 50 hospitals do you think we'll be able to do in the next 10 years?

1710

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Spadina–Fort York.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Oh, sorry. Time is up.

Further debate?

MPP Tyler Watt: It's good to be here debating another fall economic statement. Something I'm just trying to wrap my head around again is that repeated notion and message from this government about fiscal responsibility.

Every year, I hear about balancing the budget. We'll get there eventually. It seems to be a huge problem when the Liberals are in power, but the moment they get into power, it's just nothing but spending. We're not getting what we deserve or need when it comes to this historic spending every single year. After eight long years of this Ford gov-

ernment, Ontarians are paying more, they're waiting longer and they're still getting less.

This fall economic statement, it wasn't an opportunity to blame Donald Trump; it was an opportunity to fix the government's own mistakes. Instead, it ignores the issues that Ontarians and families are facing every single day.

I want to start off by talking about health care. I've been eager to talk about health care. We've been very focused on OSAP and that absolute disaster that's going on—hundreds of millions of dollars just flowing to a handful of private career colleges that are possibly going to be under investigation by the OPP.

Part of the reason why I ran in the first place was because I was a student who was studying to become a nurse. I was a part of that first gutting of OSAP back in 2019. It made life very difficult. But then I entered health care as a registered nurse back at the start of COVID, which was a very fun time to jump in as a baby nurse. As a registered nurse, I know that budgets aren't just numbers. They determine whether patients receive timely care. They determine whether nurses and health care workers are properly supported, that they have enough resources and people around them to work in a safe environment and to provide that quality care we want to provide to our patients.

Having had the opportunity to work and pick up shifts over the five-month—probably historically—long break from this Legislature, I have never seen hospitals this bad. We are bursting at the seams right now. And what are hospitals doing across Ontario? They're firing registered nurses, they're firing health care workers. They've been directed to pinch pennies, that there's no more money coming. We actually see a $500-million cut in health care than was actually promised in the last spring.

Hospitals are having to do the impossible. They've been dealing with the brunt of our health care crisis for a long time now. A lot of folks, a lot of people, a lot of families don't have anywhere else to go when they urgently need care. There's a ton of people who don't have a family doctor, a nurse practitioner. But when they urgently need care, even if they have that family doctor—walk-in clinics are readily available, usually full by 10 a.m. or noon, shutting their doors to anyone else who wants to go there, leaving the only place for them to go the emergency room, where they know they will be waiting an eternity, surrounded by a lot of other sick people, surrounded by people with varying degrees of urgency and emergency to get treated.

When our hospitals are bursting at the seams; when I walk into a patient's room that is supposed to be a room of two, but now there's a third bed in there; when I walk into a quad room, which we are supposed to get rid of, and now there are now five patients in there—those are patients in rooms. I'm not even talking about the patients that are in the hallways or the closets. But that has become the norm in Ontario.

We're spending $10 billion on the new Civic Campus, with no net new beds, mind you. Queensway Carleton goes on ignored by this health minister and this government. They're shovel-ready. They have a $600-million plan to expand the emergency room and double the size. But somehow, we've let the new Civic Campus, which we need, balloon from $2 billion to $10 billion. It's absurd. I don't understand how this happened. Where's that fiscal responsibility I keep hearing about? It's not happening.

Right now, we are just treating people at a point of crisis or emergency. There is next to no investment when it comes to things like community health, prevention, public health access, making sure that people have the opportunity and ability to stay healthy. It's much cheaper to treat someone who's pre-diabetic than someone who's in full-blown CKD. It's much cheaper to treat someone who's in stage 1 cancer than stage 4, let alone it being just ultimately better for that individual and their health. I was very disappointed to see there's basically no vision for our health care system in this FES.

To be honest with you, Speaker, I don't buy the numbers that this government has released about how many patients they have attached. The government won't release their methodology for how they came to that number. I know for a fact that we have people that have been attached, but they are not actually able to see those teams or family physicians. So what's going on here?

Emergency rooms are over capacity. The one I work at often is at 130% capacity. Imagine going to work every single day and you have to deal with 30% more than you're capable of. The shifts that pop up on my phone every single day where they need help hospital-wide—it's every day.

The solution here is to fire nurses, to fire health care workers. This isn't because the hospitals want to do this; it's because they have to because that's what this government has allowed and created for them. Residents in my riding of Nepean are not asking for miracles. They're just asking for basic health care.

I want to talk about education in my last few minutes here. We have ongoing negotiations right now between the teacher and education unions and the government. I'm not going to hold my breath on that one. But the teacher unions are advocating for very serious things. It's really shocking, what I hear about what's going on in classrooms—the violence, the chaos. Kids aren't learning. Kids can't read anymore.

What's going on? Ontario's public education system used to be something that we could be so proud of, but this government hasn't kept up with just how fast society has changed, and this education system has become something that no one can thrive in. Teachers, education workers, staff don't have the resources and support they need.

How is that teacher who has 30-plus students in his class supposed to provide a quality education to their students when they're dealing with someone who is potentially violent at the back of the room? They're having to deal with mental health crises. They don't have supplies. They certainly don't have time to log into that Staples portal and purchase $40 crayons. Their priorities are just all over the place.

If we're going to be going into this much of a deficit and spend this much, I expect—and I know taxpayers and Ontarians expect—for us to actually get something out of it. Ask yourselves: After eight years, nearly nine years, is your health care any better? Are your hospital wait times less? Is your kid getting a better education? Are there homes available to buy? Can you afford those homes? Has the cost of living gone down?

What actual, measurable cost-of-living measures has this government taken? We hear a lot about, yes, the gas tax cut, but what else have they done? They still brag about the licence plate sticker removal, which was years and years and years ago. That's not helping them anymore.

The cost of living has gone through the roof with inflation, and people are struggling. They just want to feel heard. They want to feel that their government is actually listening to them. So when you present a budget like this with a deficit like this, we certainly would expect more. I hope that the results from last night inspire this government to show the power of listening to real people on the ground, those voters who want to be heard and want their government to be actually fighting for them.

1720

With that, Speaker, it's tough to have to stand here and see these bills every day. It really goes to show to me just a government that's frankly out of touch, and it's time for some change.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I do want to thank the member from Nepean—like the Minister of Long-Term Care, front-line nurses. We're grateful for your service.

This will be the first question and maybe the only question I'll ask the member from Nepean, but appreciating your concern with our fiscal plan, I am curious if you have the same level of concern with Prime Minister Carney's government, who doubled the deficit under his tenure, and the federal Liberal government, who doubled the debt in the last eight years.

MPP Tyler Watt: That's the thing with this government, Speaker, is they love to point at the feds. They love to point to anyone else but themselves. They have had eight years—they have had eight years—and it's always someone else's fault.

You ran on balancing the budget. You ran on being fiscally responsible. So you can go ahead and point to the feds. You love to take credit when they do good stuff, and then when you screw up, you point the finger at them.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague for his debate. He mentioned several times the Conservatives took eight years, almost nine years to start fixing the problems that were happening under the Liberal majority government prior to that. I remember when I was running in 2018, that in Sudbury, we were leading the province in hallway medicine. That has grown under the Conservative government. We had issues with homelessness with the Liberal government, but under the Conservative government, it's visible. There are a lot more needs for homeless people and for affordable rent.

I'm just wondering if my colleague can reflect on this and what he would like to see moving forward.

MPP Tyler Watt: Again, we need to remember where we are today. I was elected in 2025. We have a new generation of Liberal MPPs here, an amazing caucus that I am super proud of.

So, yes, we can look back, but here's the thing: We actually look back and learn. We want to do better. I'm working on repairing and rebuilding relationships from the past. No government is going to be perfect. We have a new generation of amazing MPPs here.

What I want to see from this budget is I want to see us actually addressing what the provincial government is responsible for: better health care, better education, housing, mental health, long-term care. We're not seeing anything actually progress the way that we need to. I will talk your ear off all day about health care. There's a lot more that needs to be done, but again, it comes from actually investing in the community, in access and prevention, not just slapping band-aid solutions on hospitals, which isn't even happening anymore.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite for his remarks earlier. I heard the member talk about the importance of access to a family doctor, so I just wanted to share some of the investments that have been made in my community in Burlington. Under the province's primary care action plan, we have received funding to create a new community health centre in my community and to also expand the number of patients attached to the Burlington Family Health Team. They have effectively eliminated the wait-list in my community. I just did a quick search online through haltonregion.ca, and we have 27 patients in Burlington, in my riding, that are accepting new patients there.

I thought I would just share that information because you said you weren't sure how we were tracking how patients were attached to a family doctor. That's through Health Care Connect, and in my riding, that's through the Burlington Ontario Health Team.

I was wondering if you can tell this House why you wouldn't support those kinds of—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Member for Nepean.

MPP Tyler Watt: Why won't your government release the methodology for how you got to those statistics? The Minister of Health was asked and she won't release it. So you came up with a number out of nowhere, and we have some data that shows that these statistics just are not true. It's slightly bending the truth, which this government is absolutely famous for.

I support the notion of attaching patients, but they need a real person to be attached to. They need to be attached to a family health team—

Interjection.

MPP Tyler Watt: Release the methodology, member. Release the methodology.

When people don't have a nurse practitioner or a family doctor to go to, but they're just attached because they've

been removed from a wait-list, it doesn't actually mean anything. So again, you want to be transparent and accountable? Tell us how you actually got to those numbers. Talk to your constituents—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Thank you to the member from Nepean for your comments. I wondered, you touched a bit on post-secondary education, and we heard from the Minister of Energy about all of these high-tech jobs that are coming up, but I don't know. I had the chance to meet with the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations today. They were saying how impossible it is for students to actually take engineering anymore or take any of those degrees because they can't afford it. Do you see a contradiction in these plans—the spending plans and the lack of funding for post-secondary education?

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you to that member. It's a really important point, action versus words. We see a lot of that, a lot of really big words by the Premier and this government, but when it comes to the execution, it's just not there, or not necessarily what it should be.

When we are ripping the rug out from under thousands of students that are in the private sector right now, who are trying to get into a particular career, better their lives—I don't understand how that's helping people get into the workforce.

When it comes to those engineers—you have all these really brilliant people that are maybe thinking of leaving Ontario to go study elsewhere. We're not going to be able to keep that talent here.

I also want to mention, I had the privilege of visiting the university—I'm blanking on which university it was, but they have a great engineering program there. When I asked all the students, "What do you want to do after you graduate?" You know what they told me? "I want to go to Silicon Valley. There's nothing here for me in Ontario." We need to be investing here in Ontario to create—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Thank you.

The member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see you in the chair.

To the fine member from Nepean: Do you feel that this government is wasting a lot of taxpayers' dollars on ridiculous things versus spending taxpayers' dollars on services Ontarians desperately need?

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you to my fabulous colleague for that question. The answer is yes. It's the total lack of priorities here, right? When we have over $100 billion to go towards incessant Protect Ontario ads—every radio interview that I've done recently to talk about the billion-dollar OSAP scandal is always after a Protect Ontario ad, every single time—

Interjections.

MPP Tyler Watt: You're proud of that, eh? Wow. They're clapping because they love spending all that money. It's just wild.

Actually, the one that I just heard was about how they're creating jobs for young people, and then I went on to talk about OSAP and how they have thrown tens of thousands of students across Ontario out of OSAP, out of their programs, so they can't enter the workforce here.

This is all about patting themselves on the back. We're not focused on health care, we're not focused on education, post-secondary, cost of living—all the things that the provincial government is responsible for.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Questions?

Mr. David Smith: Thank you to the member from Nepean for his remarks. Sir, you speak about young people in the next generation. Ontario attracts new investment in advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and critical minerals. We need to make sure our workforce has the skills to hit these jobs. That is why our government is investing $1.7 billion to support 70,000 post-secondary seats annually in high-demand trades.

Will the opposition support these investments to prepare Ontario workers for the jobs of tomorrow, and can they explain to students and young people across the province why they would not stand against expanding—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): The member for Nepean.

1730

MPP Tyler Watt: Thank you to that member for that question.

Of course I support people getting into the trades. I'd like to see where this money is actually going, but when we look at access to post-secondary in this province, it's just going down. The mess with OSAP right now—it's nuts. Students' grants have been slashed. Their loans have been cut. People have been thrown off of OSAP entirely. So I apologize if I don't exactly trust the minister of MCURES to actually facilitate a goal like that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Further debate?

Hon. Steve Clark: It's great to see my neighbour in the chair this afternoon. I'm looking forward to you taking your normal rotation in your flowing robes in the future.

We're debating the province's fall economic statement, Bill 143. It's a very important bill for us.

I was extremely pleased, Speaker—through you to the members—that our Premier stood up at the end of question period today and talked about what happened last night. It was a solid rebuke, last evening in the House and in the Senate, of President Trump's policies.

I thought, given that historic election by the American people, our Premier so rightly acknowledged the fact that, come the end of January, when those Governors, senators and congressmen and women get sworn in, our ministers will be dispatched across those states and in Washington to continue to talk about our plan for the people.

The fall economic statement is an extension of the government's plan to protect workers, to help businesses and communities deal with President Trump's tariffs. It was interesting; I saw the leader of the third party respond to what the Premier said in the House, and he indicated that you need to have a plan.

I think we all acknowledge, on this side of the House, that we need to continue to fight for workers, to fortify key industries and sectors and to secure those good-paying

jobs in Ontario, both now and in the future. This plan, this bill, needs to continue to move forward, knowing that in January, our ministers are going to continue the fight to ensure that our message and our plan are put forward. So moving this bill forward in the Legislature is very, very important.

Speaker, I'd like to ask you to test the debate that's taken place for the fall economic statement, and I move that the question now be put.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): The government House leader has moved that the question be now put. There has been over nine hours of debate, with 27 members speaking to the bill. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Vote deferred.

PROTECTING ONTARIO'S STREETS AND COMMUNITIES ACT, 2026

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

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

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Jordan): Further debate?

Mme Lucille Collard: I'm happy to resume the debate on Bill 119. This is a Liberal lead-off, and my colleague from Kanata–Carleton had initiated it, so I'm going to continue. It's a real pleasure to stand up again and speak on behalf of the people of Ottawa–Vanier.

I want to start by stating that passing a law is not the same as delivering justice. It sounds obvious, but the fact is, a bill can pass this House and receive royal assent, but that alone does not help a victim, make a community safer or improve access to justice if the legislation is not supplemented by effective implementation measures. Often, those are developed in regulations.

The other important element is that adequate financial and human resources are allocated for the implementation of the bill because, without those things, even legislation with good ideas and good intention is only words on paper.

Bill 119 is an omnibus bill with 16 schedules, and I will not address every one of them today—I wouldn't have time anyway. Some of those measures, I have to admit, are relatively straightforward and easy to support, but some of them need to be looked at more closely, not necessarily because we disagree with their stated objective, but because the real test is whether or not the measures being proposed will actually achieve them.

That is the lens through which I want to examine this bill today. Will it work? Is it properly resourced? And will the people who are supposed to benefit from these changes actually see a difference in their lives?

Bill 119 is titled the Protecting Ontario's Streets and Communities Act, but does it really do that? I'm the Liberal critic for the Attorney General, but I'm also the representative for the people in Ottawa–Vanier, a mother of four wonderful children and a former school trustee. Because of these roles, I have been actively working on ways to protect vulnerable people in our community and in our schools, and so I will acknowledge that there are some good provisions in this bill. There are measures that help survivors of human trafficking escape coerced debts, measures to improve the enforcement of restraining orders and measures to provide additional legal remedies for victims. They are all good to support.

But, Speaker, we also have a responsibility to look beyond the title of a bill and ask whether the provisions contained in the bill will actually achieve what the government promises. Because a government can introduce legislation, announce tougher measures and claim it is making our streets safer, but just saying it doesn't make it so.

Real public safety depends on effective laws, properly functioning institutions, prevention, enforcement that respects constitutional rights and meaningful support for victims. This is where I have serious concerns about the bill, because too often, this government appears more interested in demonstrating that it is taking action than in ensuring that its actions will actually deliver lasting results. That distinction matters enormously to the people who depend on our justice system.

I want to spend some time discussing the human trafficking provision in this bill because the issue is something I've devoted significant time and energy over a long period of time and, despite the personal legislative achievement, it remains unfinished business. It is something I've worked on since I was first elected six years ago. I can't imagine that it's been that long, but I have to say that it's been a remarkable learning experience, both personally and in my role as a member of Parliament, to get this legislation through. In fact, I consider this one of the most meaningful legislative initiatives I have undertaken, mostly because of the people who inspired it.

I started with conversations with survivors of human trafficking; women who had endured unimaginable exploitation and who, even after escaping their traffickers, continued to suffer the consequences. I learned about coerced debts, which are financial obligations imposed on victims by their traffickers, often through fraud, threats or manipulation. These debts could follow survivors for years, damaging their credit, limiting their ability to secure housing, find employment or rebuild their lives. Imagine finding the courage to escape an abusive and exploitative

situation, only to discover that your trafficker still has a hold on your future through debts you never freely agreed to incur.

1740

I also learned something that deeply disturbed me: Human trafficking was happening much closer to home than I had imagined. It was happening in our communities and even in our schools—the very schools my own children attended. Once I understood the extent of the problem, I just simply could not look the other way. I felt a responsibility to act, so I began researching the issue, consulting with survivors and organizations working on the front lines and collaborating with legislative counsel to develop a solution. That work led to the introduction of my bill, Bill 99, in March 2022.

Unfortunately, when the Legislature was dissolved ahead of the June 2022 election, the bill died on the order paper, but I wasn't prepared to let it end there. I knew the issue was too important, and I also believed that protecting survivors from coerced debts was something every political party should be able to support.

So I decided to approach things differently. Rather than reintroducing the bill on my own, I reached out to colleagues from across the political spectrum. I listened to their concerns, worked through potential obstacles and sought their support. That is how Bill 41 became a co-sponsored bill.

It was the result of considerable research, consultation, negotiation and above all a shared determination to do something meaningful for survivors. And despite the many hurdles of the legislative process, we succeeded: Bill 41 became law.

Speaker, that was a proud moment for me. It demonstrated what the Legislature can accomplish when members put aside partisan differences and work together toward a common goal.

But there is another side to this story. Passing a law is not the same as changing someone's life. And despite having received royal assent back in 2023, Bill 41 was never fully implemented. The mechanisms needed to provide survivors with the relief promised by the legislation were never put in place.

I have raised this issue repeatedly with the government, including with the Attorney General, because every month of delay represents another month in which survivors continue to face financial barriers that this Legislature agreed should be addressed.

I have to admit that this has been deeply frustrating. I take pride in what we accomplished legislatively, but I also feel a profound responsibility towards the survivors who shared their experiences with me and placed their hopes in this legislation. At times, I've even wondered whether we have let them down, because they did not come forward simply to help us pass a bill. They came forward because they needed change, they needed relief and they needed a genuine opportunity to rebuild their lives, and they are still waiting.

That is why I welcome the government's decision to incorporate these protections into Bill 119, even if it means that Bill 41 will be repealed. I recognize that this represents another opportunity to finally deliver on the commitment we made to survivors, but I want to be very clear: I will measure the success of these provisions not by their passage through the Legislature, but by their implementation and the tangible relief they provide to survivors. We cannot afford another legislative achievement that remains only on paper.

There is also a broader dimension to this work, Speaker. Through my role as Ontario's representative on the women's network of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, I have had the opportunity to share our legislative approach with parliamentarians from other jurisdictions—I would say across the world. And there is considerable international interest in the measures Ontario has developed to protect survivors of human trafficking from coerced debts. Other parliamentarians are looking at us. They are looking at our experience, and they are considering similar protections in their own jurisdictions. They are following our progress. That has given me an additional reason to push for implementation. Imagine if we could see that kind of protection applied internationally, we could make a real difference for survivors.

Ontario has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership, not only here at home but internationally. But leadership requires more than good intentions or legislation that looks impressive on paper; it requires follow-through. And so, Speaker, as we consider these provisions in Bill 119, I want to emphasize that this is not simply a technical legislative exercise. It is about fulfilling a promise: a promise to survivors that escaping exploitation should also mean having a fair chance to escape the financial consequences imposed by their traffickers; a promise that our justice system will recognize the realities of human trafficking and provide meaningful remedies; and a promise that when this Legislature comes together to address an injustice, we will see that work through to the end.

I am proud of what we've accomplished with Bill 41, but I will be prouder still on the day the first survivor actually benefits from these protections. That is the outcome I have been working toward for six years, and that is the outcome I expect this government to deliver.

One issue deserves particular attention: Under Bill 119, a survivor cannot simply initiate the process independently, a designated organization must be involved. The minister will decide which organizations qualify, and those organizations must have experience working with trafficking survivors, receive Ontario government funding and satisfy government accountability requirements. That all makes sense.

There is good reason to involve organizations that understand trauma and human trafficking because survivors should not have to navigate another complicated legal process alone. But we also need to ask whether this requirement could inadvertently become a gatekeeper. What happens to a survivor in a rural or northern community where there is no designated organization nearby or to a francophone survivor who cannot access services in French—those are highly sensitive services—or to an

Indigenous survivor who wants culturally appropriate support? And we know, unfortunately, that Indigenous people are very much targeted by those traffickers.

What happens if the organizations doing this work simply do not have the staff or funding to take on these additional responsibilities? Access to a statutory right should not depend on your postal code or on whether the nearest community organization has enough capacity to take your case. Funding must follow the responsibility.

And that brings me to funding. Bill 119 gives designated organizations substantial responsibilities. They will review cases, assess whether debts appear to have resulted from trafficking, notify creditors and help survivors navigate the dispute resolution process. That is specialized, sensitive and potentially time-consuming work. The government cannot simply assign those responsibilities to front-line organizations without providing the resources to do them properly. If organizations face months-long waiting lists because they have not been adequately funded, then we will technically have created a remedy while practically denying survivors access to it.

I would, therefore, urge the government to provide dedicated, predictable funding for organizations that are expected to administer this process. Regulations cannot become another delay.

There is another lesson from Bill 41. Passing legislation is only the beginning. Many important details of this new framework are left to regulations, including aspects of referrals, the review undertaken by designated organizations, agreements concerning coerced debts and the operation of the adjudication process. Schedule 9 itself comes into force on a date proclaimed by the government, and that makes implementation timelines critically important. Survivors have already waited years. I would therefore like the government to provide a clear implementation timetable. When will the regulations be completed? When will organizations be designated? When will adjudicators be appointed? Most importantly, on what date will survivors actually be able to use this process?

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I particularly welcome the government's commitment to a trauma-informed dispute resolution process. The government's own description of Bill 119 says the new framework is intended to provide such a process for coerced debt with designated survivor support organizations assisting victims.

But "trauma-informed" cannot simply be a label. A survivor should not have to repeatedly recount their exploitations to different officials, they should not have to prove a criminal offence occurred, and they should not be forced into unnecessary confrontation with a creditor.

The evidentiary standard must recognize the reality that trafficking frequently occurs without documentation. That is why the provision explicitly stating that a police report or investigation is not necessary is so important. The regulation must preserve that principle.

Speaker, I am proud that an idea that began as my private members' bill will now become part of a broader framework to protect survivors of human trafficking. I don't mind seeing Bill 41 repealed, almost, if what replaces it is stronger and actually works. That was always the objective: not ownership over a piece of legislation, but helping survivors rebuild their lives.

But after three years of waiting for implementation, I will be watching very closely. A right that exists only on paper is not much of a right. The organizations responsible for delivering this program must be properly funded, the process must be accessible everywhere in Ontario and in French, the regulation must be completed without further delay, and survivors must know where to turn for help. Passing Bill 119 should therefore not be the end of this work; it must finally be the beginning of delivering the protection we promised survivors two years ago.

Let me now briefly turn to the measures to improve victims' rights. Schedule 4 proposes to improve the recognition and enforcement of restraining orders issued in other Canadian jurisdictions. I agree with this. I mean, who wouldn't? People fleeing violence should not lose their protection simply because they cross a provincial boundary. For someone escaping an abusive relationship, delays and legal complication can create very real safety risks.

I also welcome the intention to provide additional civil remedies for victims of harassment in schedule 16, but we must recognize that having a legal remedy on paper is different from being able to exercise it. Civil litigation can be expensive, time-consuming and emotionally exhausting. What does a new legal remedy mean to someone who cannot afford a lawyer? What does it mean to someone who fears retaliation or lacks the resources to pursue a claim? And what does it mean if obtaining a judgment does not result in meaningful compensation?

The government must ensure that victims have access to legal information, legal assistance and appropriate support services. Otherwise, we risk creating rights that are more accessible to people with financial resources than to those who are more vulnerable. Justice should not depend on a person's ability to pay.

I'm going to turn now to another subject in this bill that raised some concerns, which is schedule 3. It relates to the government's proposed expansion of ministerial authority over police service boards.

We've seen a pattern with this government. We see that, when they're faced with complex problems, its response is often to concentrate more decision-making authority here at Queen's Park. We've seen this in education, and now we are seeing it in police governance.

At committee, the Solicitor General defended provisions that would allow him to direct police service boards to incorporate provincial priorities into their strategic plans. He argued that some boards had failed to align their priorities with those of the government but did not identify specific boards when he was asked.

Speaker, the role of police service boards, composed of civilians, is to ensure that adequate and effective policing is provided in the area for which it has policing responsibility. Communities across Ontario do not all face the same public safety challenges. All of our communities are

different. The priorities in downtown Ottawa may be different from those in a small northern community or a rapidly growing suburban municipality. Of course, there is a legitimate role for provincial standards and coordination, but there must also be room for local decision-making.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has raised concerns about the human rights implication of these changes, particularly in the context of systemic racial discrimination in policing.

Speaker, let me give you a concrete example from my own riding of Ottawa–Vanier. In the ByWard Market and Lowertown, public safety is a serious concern. Residents and businesses want action against drug trafficking, violence and criminal activity, and they are right to expect it.

But we also know that many of the situations police encounter involve people struggling with homelessness, addictions or mental health challenges—I feel like I speak a lot about this in this House, but it is a reality, and a reality that needs to be addressed. Our local police services boards must be able to consider these realities when establishing policing priorities, including community policing, partnerships with social services and measures to prevent discriminatory enforcement. Our police service in Ottawa is doing a great job.

Now imagine a provincial government stepping in and overwriting those locally developed priorities or replacing board members because their approach does not align with the government's preferred strategy. Who would be accountable to the residents of Lowertown? Who would ensure that the concerns of racialized communities, Indigenous residents and vulnerable populations are heard? This is precisely why civilian oversight matters.

Speaker, I know I won't have time to get through all my notes, so maybe I'm going to turn to another subject, about public safety, which is a fundamental responsibility of government. But I want to say that protecting communities also means protecting the rights and freedoms that define our justice system.

During committee consideration of Bill 119, concerns were raised about the proposed public disclosure of information concerning high-risk offenders. I understand why communities want timely information about individuals who may present a serious risk, but Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner raised legitimate concerns about the information that could be published, how long it would remain available and the possibility of inadvertently exposing victims and their family. The Criminal Lawyers' Association also raised concerns about disproportionate consequences for Black and Indigenous communities.

These are not arguments against public safety; these are arguments for getting the legislation right. We must ensure that information is accurate, that disclosure is necessary and proportionate, and that appropriate review and correction mechanisms exist.

Speaker, what concerns me most about Bill 119 is not that every provision is misguided—some are constructive and long overdue. My concern is the government's approach to justice reform. It introduces broad legislation, announces new powers and presents these measures as evidence of progress.

My experience with Bill 41 has demonstrated why these questions matter. It is simply not enough to pass a law and assume that the problem has been solved. We have a responsibility to examine whether the law works in practice. We also have a—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but the time is now 6 o'clock. It's time for private members' public business.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

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Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
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Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
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Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
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Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
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Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
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Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
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Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
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Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
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Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
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Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
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Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Hon. / L'hon. Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (IND)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaban, Fatima (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
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Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
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Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

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Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Artificial Intelligence Adoption / Ministre associé de l'Adoption de l'intelligence artificielle
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
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Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	