Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

No. 83A

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Nº 83A

1st Session
44th Parliament

Wednesday
28 October 2026

1re session
44e législature

Mercredi
28 octobre 2026

Speaker: Honourable Donna Skelly
Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

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

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

ISSN 1180-2987

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 28 October 2026

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 28 octobre 2026

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO FASTER ACT, 2026
LOI DE 2026 VISANT À BÂTIR L'ONTARIO PLUS RAPIDEMENT

Ms. Khanjin moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 140, An Act to enact two Acts and to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 140, Loi édictant deux lois et modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): To the minister.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I'd like to start off by acknowledging that I will share my time with the great Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism; the member for Scarborough–Agincourt; and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

As I rise today, it brings me great joy to know the amount of people who have contributed to this particular piece of legislation from all walks of life, through all parts of this province. If you read the 118 pages and 23 schedules of this bill, you will see ideas that come from every corner of this province, from the main streets to the industrial parks, the farms to the innovation hubs across this province, the small businesses. What you'll see is the spirit of hard work and resilience that defines who we are as Canadians and defines the Ontario economy.

This work wouldn't have been possible without the great team that I get to work with every day at the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction.

I want to thank my deputy minister, Maud Murray, who is a staunch champion for red tape reduction. She really drives the team, and we have the motivated team to work across the government enterprise to get ideas from every ministry and combine them. She is a great champion for this government to really move the pendulum forward. It's thanks to her work and the work of her great team that Ontario has been able to be as successful as we are in reducing red tape.

I want to acknowledge assistant deputy minister Alex Wood, who has joined us and is very familiar to me, as he has helped me with a lot of different files in the past, including the Ministry of the Environment, and now at red tape reduction. He's a man who is a great thinker. He always has a great policy solution for any problem and is a really good motivator to drive his team.

Next is Morella, the director of our strategic policy and research branch. Morella is excellent and always has updates for any types of decks or technical briefings. She's always there to ensure we're moving the KPIs and moving the metrics and demonstrating it visually, as well. So I want to thank her for her work.

Michelle, as well, the director of the regulatory modernization branch—I couldn't do the work without you and our entire team at red tape reduction, from my chief of staff, Evan Holt; Sebastian Bonham-Carter; Emily Dahlgren; Mike Pew; Rolando Ong.

Again, this is a team effort approach. I'm really lucky that I am supported by a very strong team, including this entire government. That is the Team Ontario approach. This is something that Premier Ford has instilled in us—working together as a team for one common goal: how to make Ontario the most competitive in the G7. It is a very competitive environment, with the headwinds that we have inherited. Currently, this economic climate makes us think a little bit harder in terms of how we work better and smarter for Ontarians. Every day, Ontarians make tough decisions and they make trade-offs, and government should rise to the challenge and do the same.

At its core, what you'll see in this bill is that it's all about giving businesses the confidence and predictability they need to invest and create jobs here in Ontario. I know my colleagues share this sentiment, as well.

There is no chamber of commerce event, there is no Canadian federation of business event that I haven't been to this summer, or a grand opening of a business—a dream of a local business owner who has always wanted to have a shopfront. They just want government out of the way. They want a government that supports them. And what we hear across this province is that they want predictability in an unpredictable time. They want certainty in an uncertain time. And they want a government that has their back, a government that stands behind them, pushing them forward to do better. We've demonstrated that, not only by our record on reducing red tape reduction, but also the lowering of the small business tax, thanks to the leadership of our small business minister, Nina Tangri, and Premier Ford, acknowledging that small businesses are the majority employers in so many of our communities across the province.

We can't deny the predicament that President Donald Trump has put us in and the tariff situation, so we need to do everything we can to protect workers and build the most competitive economy in the G7. This means we have

to make choices. We have to update outdated processes, remove unnecessary duplication that causes lengthy approvals. We need to reduce those lengthy approval timelines that slow progress, delay opportunity and keep a system that forces workers and businesses to wait endlessly.

That's why we are rolling up our sleeves to modernize how government works by eliminating the barriers and red tape that get in the way of productivity and innovation. To put it in perspective, to date, this government has a Team Ontario approach, working with all ministries of this government, with people from all walks of life, from shop floors to school floors. We've been able to save Ontarians 1.8 million hours in red tape hours that they would have spent on paperwork. That is something governments can do. We can buy people time. It's the most valued commodity we have in our society. If people have more time, they're able to spend more time with family, they're able to do their extracurricular activities, and, more importantly, they're able to think and innovate. This is what's going to drive our economy. This is what's going to help us get the economy moving in the direction we want, which is being the most competitive in the G7.

This bill, if passed, would support our Ontario economy, would support our growth, would transform how we respond to people's requests when it comes to permits, when it comes to processes that increase infrastructure development and improve our energy systems efficiency.

Ontario is already recognized as a leader in reducing regulatory burden and improving government services. You will recall, in 2026, Ontario earned its first-ever A grade, the first in Ontario's history, from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, for regulatory reform. But how did we get there? Back when Premier Ford formed government in 2018, Ontario, unfortunately, was the regulatory capital of this nation. We had a grade from the Canadian federation of businesses that was an A-. It was deplorable. Small businesses were shackled with red tape. As a result of our work of listening to businesses, listening to folks from all walks of life across this province, we have been able to reduce that number—have an A grade—but also save businesses and industry $1.3 billion in red tape reduction.

Speaker, these are meaningful changes that affect the day-to-day business of people, the day-to-day lives, and give them that time back so they can do what they want to do best, whether it's hire employees, innovate in their business or expand.

Through the ongoing action of the cutting-red-tape ministry and our government, we're making Ontario the best place to invest. We're opening up the door, rolling out the red carpet for businesses so that they can employ and invest here. It's about reshoring those jobs. It's about building our province. This province used to build many things, we used to make many things, and we have to keep doing that.

0910

The Building Ontario Faster Act represents ideas from the shop floors to construction sites to our favourite local restaurants, coffee shops and businesses. We heard the same message consistently: When approvals take too long, projects get delayed, investments go elsewhere, and people wait longer for the services they need. We listened, and now we're taking action, because they can't afford unnecessary delays. We need a regulatory system that helps get things done while continuing to uphold the safe standards and high standards that Ontarians expect.

Speaker, that is why our government launched a comprehensive review of every permit that affects businesses in Ontario. This is led by the team at red tape reduction. The government-wide permit review supports faster starts, lower administrative costs and greater predictability for businesses and investors in key sectors such as mining, transportation, energy, agriculture and infrastructure. In the fall of 2025, the government committed to a full review of all business-facing permits, with the goal to eliminate or transform 35% to 50% of them by the end of 2028. This review is unlike any done in Ontario's history; in fact, it's the first. Before we started this review, Ontario did not know, collectively, how many economic permits we held.

We are pleased to identify that for the first time ever—we've identified 375 business-facing permits; 192 permits have already been reviewed to date, and we're already exceeding our original target for this year. This is success in the making. This is a successful part of tracking to ensure that we are moving as fast as businesses need us to move. We are moving to create those opportunities as fast as the people ready to seize those opportunities.

We're taking a practical approach to permits. Ontario is removing unnecessary permit requirements that are making projects stagnant and moving slower. We're looking at low-risk activities—that will look at standard practices across the board and that don't require stronger oversight and are low-impact.

We're finding in this review things that have been outdated, that have never been—say, they were permits we had on the books that actually have never had anyone apply for them, so why are they there? There's outdated language, things that are ambiguous and don't give businesses the certainty that they need and they have asked for.

There are many opportunities to improve service delivery. That is what every Ontarian expects of their government. They want a government that eliminates overlap, reduces processing times, while maintaining the standards that people expect. Across government, processes remain that need to be eliminated, that are too complex, duplicative or outdated.

This is why we are here today, speaking about a bill that is going to transform how we review permits and how we move the economy forward.

Once the permit transformation is complete and fully implemented, the permit process timeline will, in this bill, reduce the time by 220,000 days. Let me say that again, Speaker: There are about 220,000 days that this bill is actually going to shave off, in terms of time for individuals who interact with those business-facing permits. This is, again, government moving fast so that we can move as fast

as the people ready to seize these great opportunities in our province. It's more than a number; it's a competitive advantage that helps Ontario attract investment, build critical infrastructure sooner, and lower unnecessary costs. It represents months and years of waiting, for businesses, municipalities, infrastructure builders and job creators. For businesses, this means owners would have more time to focus on what matters most to them and less time navigating red tape.

When businesses are waiting for government decisions, it means they can't move forward with their plans, and this often means higher costs and wasted time. Faster decisions from government create stability and certainty, which allows businesses to make faster decisions about expansions, investments and job creation.

Speaker, a key component of the bill focuses on permitting and approvals, but it also contains several key initiatives to build a more efficient regulatory environment to ensure the province is resilient and ready for economic opportunities. This is how we protect Ontario. Amid rising global uncertainty fuelled by unprecedented threats to our economy and to our sovereignty, it has never been more important to cut red tape, to remain competitive, and to ensure that we keep pace.

This legislation proposes changes across a number of sectors, all united by one common objective: helping Ontario move faster while maintaining appropriate protections.

This bill includes measures to transform archaeological approvals—led by the great Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism—modernize environmental oversight and service delivery, and build a strong electricity distribution system.

Taken together, these proposals and proposed regulatory changes across a wide range of government services and sectors will boost our provincial economy. They will create a stable and predictable business climate, attract investment and ensure businesses can secure approvals quickly and easily. They will help ministries focus resources on the approvals that matter most while reducing administrative burden for applicants. In practical terms, this means fewer delays that were standing in the way, greater predictability—that was standing in the way—and better outcomes for Ontarians.

One of the greatest challenges faced throughout the province today is the need to build. We need a regulatory framework that supports those actions. When we build, it creates jobs, it creates ripple effects in our community, and it creates hope for those individuals who know that they have a job site to wake up to the next day. They're able to feed their families, and they're able to do the things that they enjoy. They're able to contribute to the economy. They're able to make their mortgage payment. And they're able to do the things that they always dreamt about.

Far too often, we had governments that weren't responsive to people's dreams, their hopes, and increasing those opportunities in the province.

Those days are gone, since Premier Ford was elected. Instead, every moment, in every part of this province, when we go, we're doing what we can to get government out of the way so that we're giving businesses that climate to create more opportunity. We're keeping the taxes low so we create that economic place where investors can come and are able to have a home-team advantage, being from Ontario. Instead of moving their business somewhere else, they can actually expand here in Ontario.

Whether it's the Minister of Economic Development, who travels the globe, bringing more of those investments—I will tell you, since Premier Ford got elected in 2018, this is a Premier who has been able to secure $235 billion in investment into this province. But you can't secure those investments if we have too much red tape. Now, more than ever, we're challenging every individual in this province and all of our government, as a team approach, to drive more efficiency, reduce red tape and create that predictability so, again, not only can we reshore our Canadian businesses, but we can attract businesses here—but for the ones that are already here, we're getting out of the way so they can do what they do best, which is expand.

Speaker, on that note, what you'll see in this proposed legislation is improving efficiency and predictability when it comes to Ontario's heritage framework, which my colleague the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism will speak on shortly. He's very excited to speak to this bill.

You'll also see addressing of road safety concerns and transportation needs in northern Ontario by accelerating critical infrastructure projects, including cutting construction timelines for Highway 69; that is going to shave five years off that project. If you look at a map of this project, it really shows you how this government is continuing to unite, connect communities across this province and create those economic opportunities. For far too long, people going from Sudbury, from Parry Sound or even from Barrie had to always drive around to get to where they need to get to. If we're going to be building, again, more infrastructure, if we're going to be developing our critical minerals, we need direct roads that unite families and connect workers to job sites. And this is exactly what Highway 69 is going to do, thanks to the hard work of our Minister of Transportation. He is truly getting it done.

Part of building highways to unite families and to get workers to sites—we also need to ensure we have labour mobility in this province.

Thanks to the great work of our Minister of Health and Deputy Premier, we are now reducing those barriers so that health care workers can move from Saskatchewan and can work here in Ontario in as little as two business days. This is real action in real time, again allowing people to work right away.

Certainly, we know that when we talk about health care, this government is committed to continuously breaking the status quo and ensuring that we put patients above paperwork. This labour mobility action in the bill is no different. We want to be able to say, "If you want to come to Ontario because it's a great place to live, because we're a bountiful province, and if you are in the health care

sector, please, come work in Ontario, and we'll recognize your credentials"—real-time action. Certainly, we welcome any individuals to come and choose Ontario; it's a great place to live, work and raise their families. For far too long, when you did want to come to this province, you were mired in paperwork and red tape. Of course, this is what this is eliminating.

0920

I will note the responsibility that is also in this bill, which is our responsibility to work with Indigenous partners. I will say that our commitment to responsible oversight and working with the crown and their duty to consult remains in place throughout this particular piece of legislation, because this is what responsible development and respect for rights means. It means businesses don't have to navigate and have to comply with complex requirements, but it also means we are being respectful of our commitments as a province.

Speaker, taxpayers should not have to bear the costs of inefficient government. And this is what this bill responds to.

Before I pass it on to my great colleague to talk about his changes, I will also add that, if passed, the Building Ontario Faster Act will help reduce timelines and speed up approvals for places that are growing across our province, from the agricultural sector to growing businesses.

I've heard from many farmers in my community that what they want to do is create food security in this province, but for far too long, there were permits and regulations getting in the way.

Working with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and many across this province, we've had first-hand ideas from them—not only in this bill, previous bills, but in additional bills to come.

Speaker, it shows you that from every walk of this province, we are getting ideas to protect the people of Ontario, and they know that we have their backs. This bill honours that spirit by ensuring that government becomes not a barrier to success but a partner in prosperity. Policy should reflect people's lives, not complicate them. And that is what the Building Ontario Faster Act does.

People deserve a government that comes to them—and that is what we are doing. We are building a province where government meets people where they're at, not where it's convenient for government. Gone are the days when we inherited lots of red tape; instead, we are cutting that red tape and continuing to make Ontario the most competitive in the G7.

I will now pass it on to my colleague the great Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism to talk about the great elements in this bill that he has been working very hard on for a number of months—consulting across this province; working with great partners, including our Indigenous partners—to make a lot of projects a reality and much-needed changes.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

Hon. Graham McGregor: I don't think we gave the Minister of Red Tape Reduction enough applause after her speech. It's absolutely groundbreaking work that she's doing to set our economy on the right track.

Interjections.

Hon. Graham McGregor: I'm pleased to speak today to the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026. I'll be speaking about the heritage framework transformation—as well as the parliamentary assistant to the ministry, the member for Scarborough–Agincourt.

The amendments before the House today represent an important milestone in Ontario's Heritage Framework Transformation initiative, a multi-year initiative intended to improve heritage policies, digital tools and service delivery across the province. The proposed amendments before us today intend to make the archaeology process faster and easier to navigate, while continuing to protect Ontario's archaeological heritage for future generations.

Speaker, last week, myself and the member for Scarborough–Agincourt stood alongside Grand Council Chief Linda Debassige; Riley Brockington, president of AMO; Scott Andison, CEO of the Ontario Home Builders' Association; and Paul Racher, managing principal at Archaeological Research Associates Ltd., one of the largest archaeology firms in Ontario, to announce this next phase of Ontario's heritage framework transformation. What struck me was the broad agreement between everyone about the important role that Ontario's archaeology system plays. We heard that archaeological heritage must be protected. However, at the same time, we heard that the system could be more predictable and easier to navigate for Indigenous communities, municipalities, homeowners, archaeologists and sector partners. And those conversations reinforce the importance of the legislation that's before us today.

It's important to set the context for this work. Ontario's archaeology framework has not undergone a significant review in 15 years, and during that time, our province has changed dramatically. Communities across the province are growing. Demand for homes, transit and other critical infrastructure continues to increase. And yet, much of the process supporting archaeological assessments today was developed for a very different environment.

Today, archaeological assessments play an important role in supporting responsible planning and development across Ontario. However, the current four-stage archaeological assessment process can take up to 64 months to complete for complex projects. Lower-risk projects may be required to navigate requirements that were not designed with today's pressures in mind. Stakeholders have told us that these timelines can create uncertainty while increasing costs and delays for projects that families and communities rely on.

The volume of archaeological assessments has also grown significantly. Since 2020 alone, my ministry has seen a 30% increase in archaeological assessments. In 2025, we received approximately 3,800 archaeological assessment reports for review. As part of our government's plan to protect Ontario by cutting red tape, attracting

investment and building the most competitive economy in the G7, we are taking action to help communities keep pace with that growth. And Ontario needs the housing, infrastructure and economic development to support that.

The proposed amendments before the House today build on the important progress that we've already made through the Heritage Framework Transformation initiative. Over the past few years, my ministry has worked to improve service delivery, address long-standing operational challenges and work collaboratively with Indigenous communities, municipalities, archaeologists and sector partners. Through that work, we heard several recurring themes: (1) reduce unnecessary complexity; (2) improve clarity regarding requirements; and (3) make processes easier to navigate. I'm proud to say that because of this work, we eliminated the archaeological review backlog, which once exceeded 3,000 reports, while 80% of reports are now being entered into the register within 10 business days.

Ontario's archaeology framework plays an important role in preserving archaeological sites and supporting responsible project planning. Archaeological assessments help identify and protect important archaeological resources before development proceeds. What we are proposing is a system that protects archaeological resources while working more effectively for the people who rely on it.

We heard from municipalities and others about the important role archaeological assessments play in planning and development across Ontario. We also heard that clear, predictable processes are important for communities, project proponents and others who rely on the framework. These processes will support informed decision-making and help ensure that archaeological heritage is appropriately considered as communities grow.

As archaeology activity has increased, partners in the process have identified opportunities to improve how the framework operates. One theme that emerged is that existing requirements can be complex to navigate. In some cases, projects with very different levels of archaeological risk can be subject to similar requirements. As a result, time and resources are not always focused where they can provide the greatest benefit.

Through the Heritage Framework Transformation initiative, my ministry has taken steps to address operational challenges. Those efforts have demonstrated the value of reviewing existing processes and identifying opportunities for improvement.

The proposed amendments before the House are intended to create a framework that is better aligned with current and future needs, while continuing to preserve archaeological sites and cultural heritage resources.

The proposed amendments have been informed by extensive consultation and engagement undertaken across Ontario. Since the launch of the Heritage Framework Transformation initiative in 2024, my ministry has engaged with Indigenous communities, municipalities, archaeologists, development proponents and many other sector representatives. Consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities have been an integral component of this work. To date, this has included more than 100 consultation meetings and other engagement discussions with 68 First Nations communities and organizations across Ontario. These discussions have provided important perspectives on processes, consultation approaches and the protection of archaeological heritage.

We've also heard directly from municipalities, archaeologists, planning professionals, home builders, and other sector partners. While discussions were approached from different perspectives, there was significant agreement on several issues. What we heard repeatedly was that people are not asking for less protection of archaeological resources; they are asking for greater clarity. They're asking for processes that are easier to understand and navigate. They are asking for timelines that are more predictable. They are asking for a framework that focuses oversight, expertise and resources where archaeological risk is greatest. Municipalities emphasized the importance of certainty when planning infrastructure projects and community growth. Archaeologists identified opportunities to reduce administrative burden while maintaining professional standards and conservation outcomes. Home builders spoke about the need for a process that is more efficient and predictable. And Indigenous communities emphasized the importance of meaningful engagement and protecting archaeology, sacred sites and culturally significant places. I'm proud to say we listened to these concerns, and they are clearly reflected in the amendments before the House today.

0930

Speaker, I would now like to turn to the changes proposed though this legislation. The proposed legislation focuses on three key areas. First, it would establish a new risk-based framework for archaeological activities, which will reduce approval timelines by up to 80%. It's pretty damn good, Madam Speaker. Second, it would support advanced digital services and tools to improve service delivery and efficiency. And third, it would strengthen qualifications and introduce new compliance and accountability measures to improve sector oversight. I want to spend a bit of time on this last pillar.

These changes would establish a new graduated compliance and enforcement framework that takes a tough-on-fraud approach to protecting the integrity of Ontario's archaeology system. The proposed framework would introduce stronger oversight tools, including proactive risk-based inspections, administrative monetary penalties, compliance orders, enhanced guidance and training, and maximum fines of up to $3 million for serious violations. By focusing compliance efforts where risks are highest, we can better protect archaeological resources and uphold professional standards. Ultimately, stronger compliance will lead to streamlined approvals, strengthen trust with our Indigenous partners, and improve public confidence throughout the sector.

Speaker, I have explained why these changes are needed, the feedback that helped inform them and the progress that has already been made through the Heritage Framework Transformation initiative. The proposed

changes before the House build on years of engagement, collaboration and work already under way.

We will be building a system that is tougher, faster and fairer—tougher, because we will hold bad actors accountable. We'll make sure that we get compliance into a much better state, and, frankly, when people are malicious in their intent—to mess with the archaeological resources in Ontario or to subvert the rights of First Nations communities to their own cultural resources and identity—we will lay the hammer on them. This legislation gives us the ability to do exactly that with increased fines, administrative monetary penalties, and a compliance framework much stronger than the one that we have currently. So it's going to be a tougher system; it's going to be faster, because we're reducing approval timelines by up to 80%; it will be fairer, because it will provide certainty, predictability and transparency for everyone who interacts with the system, be they First Nations communities, municipalities, archaeologists, landowners and proponents.

I hope that the House supports this bill and the amendments I've spoken about.

I know my parliamentary assistant from Scarborough–Agincourt will speak further to the proposed amendments before the House and how they are intended to improve Ontario's archaeology framework.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Scarborough–Agincourt.

Mr. Aris Babikian: I am pleased to continue speaking about the proposed amendments under the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026.

As the minister has outlined, Ontario's archaeology framework plays an important role in preserving archaeological heritage while supporting responsible development.

I would now like to speak about the proposed amendments before the House and the outcomes they are intended to achieve.

Pillar one: risk-based archaeological activities. Specifically, the bill proposes a new approach that, if passed, would apply different requirements based on the level of archaeological risk involved. For instance, for some lower-risk activities, the proposed amendments would allow exemptions from archaeological assessment requirements. For certain activities, the legislation would introduce a permit-by-rule approach. This would allow proponents to proceed once specified requirements have been met. For higher-risk activities, such as those involving known archaeological sites, ministry oversight and authorization requirements would apply. This approach is intended to focus oversight where it is most needed, while creating a clearer pathway for lower-risk activities. This is expected to deliver meaningful results. If passed, the proposed framework is expected to reduce archaeology approval timelines by up to 80%. For many projects, approval timelines could be reduced from approximately 29 months to between four and six months. For more complex projects, timelines that can currently extend to more than five years could be reduced to between 12 and 18 months. These changes would help support the timely delivery of homes, infrastructure and other community-building projects across Ontario.

For municipalities, greater certainty means infrastructure projects can move forward with more predictable timelines. For homeowners, it can mean simpler pathways for lower-risk projects. For archaeologists, it can mean spending less time navigating administrative requirements and more time applying their expertise where it is most valuable. For Indigenous communities, it can mean earlier engagement opportunities and more transparency throughout the process. And for Ontario, it means a framework that is better positioned to support both preservation and growth.

Pillar two: qualifications, compliance and accountability. The second area of reform relates to qualifications, compliance and accountability. The proposed legislation would replace the current archaeological licensing framework with a qualified-person framework. It would provide authority to establish qualifications and other requirements through regulation for individuals undertaking archaeological work. The legislation would also establish a compliance and enforcement framework. This would provide additional tools to support compliance and accountability across the sector. Taken together, these changes are intended to support a framework that maintains professional standards while providing greater flexibility, increasing sector capacity and strengthening oversight.

Pillar three: digital services and tools. The third area of reform involves digital services and information management. The proposed legislation would support the continued modernization of archaeology-related services and tools. This work includes improvements to archaeology-related information and digital service delivery. These improvements are intended to make information easier to access, improve transparency and support more efficient service delivery. They are also intended to help users better understand requirements and navigate the archaeology process.

Together, these proposed changes are intended to create a more transparent and responsive archaeology framework.

Speaker, while the proposed amendments address processes and service delivery, archaeology is ultimately about the protection of resources that hold deep cultural significance. It is about more than processes and approvals; it is about understanding, protecting and preserving evidence of the people who lived on these lands before us.

We heard that for many Indigenous communities and others, archaeological sites are not simply places of historical interest. They can include sacred sites and other places that hold enduring cultural significance. Archaeological heritage in Ontario is deeply connected to the histories, cultures and traditions of Indigenous communities and forms an important part of how those histories are understood from generation to generation. Throughout consultation and engagement on the HFT initiative, Indigenous communities have consistently emphasized the importance of protecting ancestors' sacred sites and culturally significant spaces and places. They have also

highlighted the importance of ongoing dialogue as archaeology policies and processes continue to evolve. These perspectives have informed the ministry's work throughout this initiative. They have helped shape discussions about archaeology processes, consultation approaches and opportunities to support earlier and more consistent involvement from Indigenous communities.

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While legislative changes are an important milestone, they represent only one part of a broader effort that will continue over time.

That is why we are continuing to invest in long-term engagement and relationship-building initiatives. This includes ongoing engagement opportunities and continued consultations. It also includes the establishment of relationship tables, which are intended to provide a forum for ongoing dialogue and advice as future policy, operational and digital improvements are considered.

Should the amendments be passed, and as implementation work progresses, we will continue engaging with Indigenous communities, municipalities, heritage sector proponents and others. Their perspectives and expertise remain an important part of this work. Continued dialogue will help inform implementation planning and future improvements to Ontario's archaeology framework.

Implementation and looking ahead: There is important work ahead to support implementation across the province. If passed, the proposed framework changes will be implemented in phases. This approach will help support an orderly transition to the new framework and provide time for operational policy and regulatory work to proceed. If passed, the proposed amendments would allow the ministry to undertake the additional work necessary to support implementation. This includes the development of regulations, operational policies, guidance materials and supporting tools. It also includes ongoing work to support awareness, education and implementation planning across the sector.

The work before us today is part of a broader transformation initiative, and successful implementation will require ongoing dialogue, collaboration and careful planning. It will also require continued attention to protecting archaeological heritage while improving how the framework operates in practice.

Speaker, this legislation is ultimately about creating an archaeology framework for Ontario today and into the future—a framework that protects archaeological resources; a framework that recognizes the importance of Indigenous perspectives and participation; a framework that leverages the capabilities of digital tools and services of today; a framework that provides greater transparency and accountability; and a framework that supports the timely delivery of housing, infrastructure and economic development projects that communities rely on.

The objective is not simply to do things faster; the objective is to do them better, to focus effort where it matters most, to create clearer expectations, and to build a system that Ontarians can have confidence in for years to come.

The amendments before the House today represent the next step in Ontario's Heritage Framework Transformation initiative. The proposed changes are intended to make the archaeology process faster and easier to navigate. They support the delivery of homes, infrastructure and other community-building projects across Ontario. They continue to recognize the importance of preserving archaeological sites and cultural heritage resources. And they recognize the importance of ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities and others who have an interest in how archaeological heritage is protected and preserved. Ontario's archaeology framework plays an important role in supporting responsible planning and heritage protection. The proposed changes seek to ensure that the framework remains effective, responsive and capable of meeting future needs—a framework that protects our past while supporting Ontario's future.

I ask that all members of this House support the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026, at second reading.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I want to thank the member for Scarborough–Agincourt for his thoughtful remarks this morning.

It is my pleasure now to join this debate on Bill 140, the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026. This important legislation, introduced yesterday by my colleague the Minister of Red Tape Reduction, is about making sure that our province can build what our economy depends upon and build it on our own terms. For my ministry, that means taking on one of the most urgent challenges facing this province, and that's how we manage our waste.

This legislation would make it easier to build new landfill capacity here in Ontario and recognize energy from waste as a core part of our waste management system. We have been very clear that this work could not be more urgent. As the last few years have demonstrated, we cannot rely on others to keep Ontario's economy moving. There is no time to delay. Today, about 40% of Ontario's commercial waste is shipped to landfills in Michigan and New York. Meanwhile, here at home, we have less than 10 years of landfill capacity remaining. In the last 20 years, only one new large landfill has been approved in this province. As our own capacity runs out, Ontario cannot afford to risk relying on systems that we do not control, and we cannot risk relying on the whims of a foreign leader. That's why we have proposed changes to help reduce pressures on our waste disposal capacity here in Ontario and to reduce our reliance on landfill sites in the United States.

Last Friday, the fallout from the risks became clear. President Trump announced a new 50% tariff on some Canadian waste, and politicians from the state of Michigan lined up to celebrate it. This new tariff follows consistent threats in recent years from the governor of Michigan to hike tipping fees for Canadian waste, by 1,200% or more. For the industries, businesses and Canadian families that depend on those landfills, this is a grave concern. If a

business cannot manage its waste, that business cannot operate. It is that simple. We cannot leave something this important in the hands of a US administration that grows less reliable each and every day.

From the time an application is filed, landfills can take six or more years to get approved, meaning that applications for new landfill capacity are needed now to address our diminishing capacity down the road. While we're doing everything we can to divert organics waste from landfill and send other materials to be recycled, more must be done. The time to act is now.

That is why we are proposing legislative and regulatory amendments that would make it easier to establish new large landfill sites throughout the province, helping to increase domestic waste disposal capacity and reducing reliance on disposal facilities in the United States. The proposed change would give landfill proponents more certainty to start planning for new landfills that the province will need in the future.

Let me assure you, Speaker, that as new large landfill sites are considered, the public and municipalities will continue to be consulted as part of the strict environmental oversight applied to these sites. That will not change.

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Ontario will also consult on regulatory changes to improve diversion and streamline requirements for business and institutional recycling, as well as clarify policies for organic diversion to better support businesses and municipalities.

Finally, Ontario will review the Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario to ensure that we have identified the right initiatives to drive diversion and preserve landfill capacity over the long term.

Speaker, as part of our comprehensive plan to manage Ontario's waste, we have proposed another change in the Building Ontario Faster Act, and that is to build the infrastructure our province needs. Ontario has a one-window approval process for renewable energy facilities, to help projects receive approval more efficiently. It is estimated that the residual municipal waste that these facilities produce energy from contains 45% to 55% biogenic content, which is a renewable resource. However, unlike other Canadian jurisdictions, there is currently limited recognition of the biogenic components of municipal waste as a renewable energy source in Ontario. As a result, new energy-from-waste incineration facilities with integrated energy recovery currently must go through a two-step approvals process, including an environmental assessment and a separate environmental compliance approval. Uncertainty regarding how long these processes take to complete creates barriers for investment in these facilities. With the current economic uncertainty created by tariffs and other measures enacted by the United States, we need to do everything in our power to provide certainty when and where we can.

That's why our Ontario government is proposing legislative changes that, if approved by this House, would recognize energy-from-waste facilities as a core part of Ontario's waste management approach. This approach would align our province with other jurisdictions that properly recognize the renewable content of municipal waste. This includes British Columbia, Alberta, the federal government, and the European Union. This is important because at facilities like the Durham York Energy Centre in my own community, waste that cannot be recycled is being turned into enough electricity to power more than 10,000 homes. Our government wants to build on that success. But under the current rules, facilities like these need two separate approvals to get up and running, and the uncertainty that creates can hold back critical investments in our economy.

With additional regulatory amendments, the proposed changes would allow eligible new energy-from-waste incinerator facilities to apply through a one-window approvals process while still meeting the strong standards that protect our shared environment. By providing access to the clearer, more predictable renewable energy approvals process, these changes would help encourage investment in waste diversion and alternative waste disposal while reducing pressure on Ontario's landfill capacity and, of course, reducing our reliance on US landfills.

One of our best tools for waste diversion is Ontario's Blue Box Program. As you know, on January 1 of this year, producers became fully responsible for the Blue Box Program province-wide, representing a significant shift in how recycling is managed across the province. Under this approach, producers, including the companies that supply packaging, paper products and packaging-like materials to consumers are responsible for funding and operating the collection and recycling system. By transferring responsibility from municipalities to producers, Ontario is creating a more accountable system that places the cost of recycling on those who generate the packaging, rather than on local taxpayers. The producer responsibility model also encourages innovation and supports Ontario's transition to a circular economy. Because producers are responsible for managing their materials at end of life, they have a strong incentive to reduce excess packaging, improve recyclability, and invest in more sustainable product design.

Blue box services are currently funded and delivered by the private sector, with operational and financial decisions made by producer responsibility organizations—or PROs—and service providers.

Producers of paper, packaging, and single-use items have expressed their dissatisfaction about a lack of transparency from producer responsibility organizations. Producers have asked for more insight into what factors are driving cost increases. And they have expressed their concerns about minimal advance notice of cost increases and challenges leveraging the competitive market between PROs due to a lack of transparency over fees paid to collect and process recyclable material.

PROs are responsible for system design and delivery but have struggled to generate meaningful savings for producers.

PROs have also pointed out that there are opportunities to improve regulations to allow for operational efficiencies, which could promote cost savings.

Speaker, we have listened carefully to the concerns of both producers and PROs. That is why we are proposing legislative amendments that would allow government to regulate the contracts, fees and costs paid by producers within the blue box system. These changes, if passed, would mean producers would have more predictable fees, could plan better for their costs, and would have greater transparency into what is driving system expenses. Producers would have confidence that their fees are subject to consistent rules about how fees are set and how increases are charged. PROs would also have greater structure in how they work together, with rules requiring more inclusive and transparent co-operation, and fair resolution of disputes.

To make sure we get the best possible outcome for everyone involved, Ontario will also consult on changes to regulated service requirements, including what materials are collected and how they are collected, to maximize the efficiency of the blue box system.

While much of the focus of my remarks has been on our comprehensive plan to address Ontario's waste, I'd like to take a few moments to speak to some other items that we have put forward with this proposed legislation. That starts with our practical approach to how environmentally significant decisions are made.

Ontario's approach to public engagement on environmental proposals is unique in Canada. It includes several procedural mechanisms, many very rarely used, that are vastly different than those used elsewhere. The fact is, many of the processes we rely on have been largely unchanged since the 1990s, and, over time, these requirements have become duplicative with other measures, such as the Ontario Regulatory Registry.

By proposing updates to Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights, we are aligning with best practices across domestic and international jurisdictions, while retaining critical environmental protections and processes, including public consultation through the Environmental Registry, meaningful input on environmentally significant decisions, and the ability to report violations of Ontario's environmental laws. This would create predictable conditions for businesses and ensure that our ministry's experts can spend more time and resources on delivering front-line services and protecting our air, land and water.

We are also proposing regulatory changes to enable the use of new drone technology in the application of federally approved pesticides. This change would bring our rules in line with Health Canada and with six other Canadian provinces, to help Ontario farmers in this period of global uncertainty and unwarranted tariffs, while reducing pesticide usage.

Speaker, Ontario's agriculture sector generates billions of dollars in economic activity while supporting thousands of jobs in rural and urban communities alike. Ontario is home to one of Canada's largest and most diverse agricultural industries, producing everything from grains and livestock to fruits, vegetables and greenhouse crops, as well as the raw materials that support food processing, transportation, retail and export industries across the province. The numbers back this up. The agri-food sector in Ontario contributes almost $53 billion to our GDP, supporting one in nine jobs in our province.

Through no fault of their own, Ontario farmers face economic uncertainty due to the unreasonable tariffs on Canadian agricultural goods imposed by the United States. We want to make sensible changes that will support our farmers in these challenging times—changes that reflect the new realities of modern farming, which would allow our farmers to embrace new technologies.

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Ontario's current pesticides licensing and training frameworks address the aerial application of pesticides by plane or helicopter, but not specifically with respect to drones.

While agricultural spray drones can reduce overall costs for agriculture, just as importantly, they can also significantly reduce pesticide use, because they apply products with much greater precision. That's good for our environment.

Under our proposal, then, a drone-specific pesticide application licence and training process would allow qualified operators to apply pesticides via drones. Tasks can be completed faster, more accurately, and with fewer resources. Drones are helping organizations across sectors modernize operations, increase competitiveness, and achieve better results at a lower overall cost. This proposed change would help businesses and farmers take advantage of these benefits.

Strengthening accountability and transparency in the blue box system, as I indicated, is a key feature of the proposals in this bill.

Overall, then, this bill is designed to deliver practical results for the people of this province.

Speaker, we cannot control what happens in Washington, but we can control the decisions we make here in Ontario. There are numerous schedules to this bill that can and will, if passed, achieve important results, encourage resilience, bring about a Protect Ontario model that we need in these challenging times. As I said, while we can't control the whims of the current President of the United States, we can control the decisions we make right here in Ontario. When it comes to protecting Ontario's workers, our economy, our shared environment, our government is committed to delivering results.

With the Building Ontario Faster Act, 2026, we are speeding up the permits and we're speeding up the approvals that get projects off the ground.

When it comes to increasing our landfill capacity, let me make this perfectly clear: It will be willing host communities that decide if, when and where landfills go, in conjunction with proponents. My role as Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is to oversee strong environmental oversight when that choice is made by those municipalities.

We'll create predictable conditions we need to attract investment and well-paying jobs. That's how we have and will have the most competitive and resilient economy in the G7. That's how we protect Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleagues for the lead debate on this.

This is a very large bill; there are 263 pages, and it has 23 schedules.

Schedule 4 is the one that touches me the most because of Highway 69 and the number of people who have died in my community driving on that road. I know that the Minister of Transportation has been supportive; I know that the minister of Parry Sound—the majority of that highway is in his riding—is very supportive of this, but this part of Highway 69 is buried in with conversations about bees and farm implements and disability savings plans.

I wonder if the minister would agree to just pull out schedule 4—Highway 69—so we can pass it as quickly as possible, get shovels in the ground as early as tomorrow.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: It's typical opposition: They just don't want to get things done. They want to start pulling schedules already.

We want to build up Ontario. Part of that is our highway infrastructure. Part of it is a transformational permit reform.

What I hear from the member is that he doesn't want to build Ontario. What I hear from the member is—we have a proposal before the Legislature that shaves five years off a highway for his own residents, in addition to getting the permits approved.

This is a whole-of-government bill; you can't just start pulling sections from it. I encourage you to support the entirety of the bill, support the Ontario economy. And let's get moving to get Ontarians connected, projects built, Ontarians employed and moving the economy to the most competitive in the G7.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Ted Hsu: I'm always interested in following technology, and I was interested in the remarks by the Minister of the Environment about waste-to-energy conversion. So it was really interesting, but I'm just wondering what he means by that. For example, has he been talking to the people who work on plasma gasification?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: We always consult widely at the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

What I can say is, I know in my own community how the people have embraced energy from waste. The Durham York Energy Centre is a great success story. It stands alongside, on the other end of the GTHA, in Brampton, the Emerald energy centre. The operations of that facility have been expanded in Brampton.

Again, this is new technology that is important because we can produce both electricity and heat from waste. Europe and Great Britain have long embraced this technology with great success because they don't have the landfill capacity that we need to build.

So when it comes to addressing all of the challenges of waste management, we must have a multi-dimensional approach—increase landfill capacity, energy from waste, and diversion.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, also on the topic of technology.

I'm really, really pleased to see limited drone use being allowed now for agriculture. I want to give a shout-out to a constituent of mine, Gord Thompson, who has delivered multiple handwritten letters on this topic to my office. They're really, really pleased to see this moving forward. We know the concerns of soil compaction—that this will allow to be limited. Can the minister just explain a bit more about the important environmental safeguards that still surround this usage?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I thank the member for that thoughtful question.

We are proposing regulatory changes to enable the use of the new drone technology in the application of federally approved pesticides. This simply brings us in line with Health Canada and six other Canadian provinces. This is to help farmers in this period of global economic uncertainty and unwarranted tariffs, while reducing pesticide usage.

Speaker, Ontario's agriculture sector generates billions of dollars in economic activity. As the Premier often has said, we don't create jobs; we create the conditions for jobs to be maintained and created. That is very important in the agricultural sector, as one in nine of the jobs in our province are due directly or indirectly to the agricultural sector.

This is about creating the conditions for success in a balanced way.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I want to bring the GFL Stoney Creek dump to the minister's attention. MPP Khanjin will be familiar with this because I've written to her several times about this, and it might be something that the new MPP for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek should be paying attention to.

In 2019, the GFL dump that was supposed to have been at capacity was given the ability to expand. Since that time, residents have been dealing with a stink that—no one can imagine how pungent it is and how toxic it has been. In fact, they kept calling it the "summers of stink" in Stoney Creek.

GFL was identified as a repeat offender by the Auditor General. There was a total number of 4,500 complaints from residents; 130 lawsuits have been filed—including the city of Hamilton, who wanted intervenor status when GFL was fighting those, finally, penalties.

From 2019 to 2026, the government did not help the residents of Hamilton East–Stoney Creek—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Response?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I appreciate the question from the member. This is not about partisanship or politics. We take the concerns of her community very, very seriously. We're all in this together. We depend on protecting our air, land and water together.

That's why we continue to ensure GFL complies with regulatory requirements and makes further improvements to reduce impacts on the surrounding community.

My ministry has issued two provincial officer's orders, two environmental penalties totalling over $375,000, and charged and convicted GFL under the Environmental Protection Act, resulting in fines of $775,000.

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We've also issued environmental compliance approvals for a new, fully enclosed leachate treatment plant. Once operational, the facility will reduce leachate strength prior to discharge into the pond, and that is anticipated to improve odour management.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It was music to my ears to hear the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks say quite strongly how this government is doing everything they can to get organics out of landfill sites.

My question to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is, how soon will you pass my private member's bill on phasing out organics from landfill sites?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I always appreciate the excellent member's contributions to the debates in this House, and her suggestions. There is no monopoly on a good idea or a good policy plan.

Our plan is multi-dimensional when in comes to a made-in-Ontario solution to waste management. We have no choice but to expand landfill capacity, because we are going to run out in 10 years. We have no choice but to embrace the energy-from-waste technology that can and will be transformational. And we have to find ways to thoughtfully ensure that as much waste—organics or otherwise—is diverted from landfill.

At the same time, we've got to grow our landfill capacity, because the dependency on Michigan and New York for our commercial waste—40%. That is no longer something that we can continue to rely upon.

It will be a made-in-Ontario solution, and I welcome thoughtful input from all fronts.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

MPP Paul Vickers: This bill includes a lot of good and common-sense changes—and the proposed amendments to certain energy-from-waste incineration facility is no different. Streamlining processes for these facilities supports a stronger waste diversion effort from landfills, something my constituents support.

Can the minister please explain why this is important for Ontario?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: This is all very important because, again, we create the conditions for success. A made-in-Ontario solution to win the race for capital on all fronts, whether it's on expanding our landfill capacity, whether it's energy-from-waste—this is what we need to do to protect Ontario.

This is a comprehensive piece of legislation. It's about streamlining, it's about faster approvals, and it's also about environmental protection, second to none.

The House can rest assured, the member can rest assured, that we will maintain strong environmental oversight while maintaining and enhancing the conditions for growth and economic prosperity.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOUSING

Mr. Anthony Leardi: We are lowering the cost of building new homes in Essex county. Our government has collaborated with the federal government and with municipalities to introduce the Development Charge Reduction Program. This program is going to lower the cost of building new homes in Essex county. Under this program, the town of LaSalle will be eligible for over $25 million in grants. The town of Essex will be eligible for $8.8 million in grants. The municipality of Lakeshore will be eligible to receive $11.8 million. The town of Kingsville can receive up to $8.4 million. And the county of Essex level of government is eligible to receive $51.2 million. That is a total of over $105 million that is on the table to build new homes in Essex county.

I am calling upon the municipalities of Essex county and the great home builders of Essex county to take advantage of this great opportunity that is now on the table. Go out there and build new homes for the people of Essex county.

HOTEL DIEU SHAVER HEALTH AND REHABILITATION CENTRE

Mr. Jeff Burch: Earlier this month, I met with Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre's CEO, Dr. David Ceglie, to learn more about the hospital's exciting new expansion plans in my riding. The proposed expansion includes a new, purpose-built hospital on existing property that will be three times the size of the current in-patient building. Hotel Dieu Shaver is currently operating within aging infrastructure dating back to the 1930s, making it one of the oldest operating hospitals in Canada. This new facility will include 190 in-patient beds, with capacity to grow further as Niagara's population grows; expanded therapy areas; and modern spaces designed to support rehabilitation and complex care.

The need for this expansion is only growing. Niagara has one of the oldest populations in Ontario and Canada, with nearly one in four residents aged 65 or older. As our region continues to grow and age, demand for specialized

rehabilitation and complex care will only increase. This project is about ensuring our health care infrastructure can meet those needs, both today and for generations to come.

Dr. Ceglie tells me they submitted the functional program back in March of this year, outlining how our future rehabilitation hospital will operate. Currently, they're waiting for the Treasury Board to approve the plans so they can move on to the next phase of the project. I'm calling on the government to approve the functional program without delay, to help get it moving.

This expansion will help ease pressure on the local hospital—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Nepean.

EVENTS IN NEPEAN

MPP Tyler Watt: It is such an honour and a privilege for me to be here. Every day, I walk through the front doors of Queen's Park so I can take in the absolute beauty and privilege of being able to work and represent my riding of Nepean.

One of my favourite things in my riding is to get to spend time with the incredible people and organizations that make our communities so special. And believe me, I've had a lot of time to do that over the last five months.

I had a fantastic time hosting our very first Nepean Fall Fest, celebrating our community at the Indian food festival in Barrhaven, and joining the fun at the Barrhaven carnival, where I even got dunked in a dunk tank to help raise money for CHEO—a special shout-out to Nihaal and the Singh family for their incredible efforts in bringing people together and supporting such an important cause.

I was proud to participate in many community walks, supporting Lupus Ontario, ALS, and Diabetes Canada, and to host a booth at Capital Pride.

One of the most meaningful moments was meeting a brave little warrior named Samy, who is living with limb-girdle muscular dystrophy, a rare genetic condition. His parents, Azeddine and Wisal, with their unwavering advocacy, love and determination to give their son the best possible future, are truly inspiring.

These are just some of the many moments that remind me how special Nepean is.

I want to thank all the volunteers, organizers and residents who make Nepean such a special place.

I'm incredibly grateful for the trust the people in Nepean have placed in me, and I'll never take this privilege for granted.

EVENTS IN MISSISSAUGA EAST–COOKSVILLE

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: Speaker, I am grateful to be back in the House representing the wonderful riding of Mississauga East–Cooksville.

It was a busy summer. During Seniors Month, in June, we hosted our second Annual Seniors Living Expo, and I thank our 25 exhibitors and nearly 200 attendees for making it a success. I also welcomed the Pakistani Christian community to a meet-and-greet celebrating leaders John Gill, Yeshwa Younas and Peter Bhatti.

In September, over 500 residents joined our Family Fall Fair at Burnhamthorpe Community Centre. From a read-along with the MPP to fun games, henna and caricature artists, young and old enjoyed the day together.

Yesterday, this House heard views from both sides of the aisle on my private member's motion on advancing consumer transparency in a changing digital environment. Today, I welcome here my staff, community organizations and AI leaders who have supported me in this motion that seeks to make residents in Mississauga East–Cooksville and beyond confident in adopting AI, with policies from this House that protect them.

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STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Post-secondary students across the province are in limbo. The Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security had to call the cops on his ministry's own mismanagement of the OSAP file. He has ignored warnings from the Auditor General and from Career Colleges Ontario, who sounded the alarm years ago. He blamed students instead of managing his own house, and now students no longer have the financial assistance they need.

Brittany is enrolled in a program, but because all OSAP got cancelled, she found out she would unexpectedly have to come up with six grand by November 2, and now she can't start her program.

Jennifer is pursuing her bachelor of education, through Tyndale, in a program that this government accredited. And we need teachers. Jennifer wants to know about timelines and wants to know how an accredited institution gets lumped together with bad actors. She wants to know, where did all the funding go?

Dani shared, "I'm doing everything that is asked of me. I am preparing for a career in community mental health. I am raising two children. And I am trying to do all of that without putting my family further into debt. As a parent, OSAP is not a luxury for me; it is part of what makes pursuing this degree possible."

Josy said, "I have no OSAP funds, no Ontario Works support, and no other income, savings, or family support. I am now struggling to pay for rent, food, and basic needs, and the situation is becoming urgent."

No OSAP, no certainty, no information—and now, no path forward.

This minister mismanaged the system, and now every student in Ontario is paying the price for his gross incompetence. Ontario students deserve answers and deserve better.

SHAH FAMILY FOUNDATION

Mr. Deepak Anand: Ontario has been built by people across the world who have made our province their home,

pursued opportunities, and given back to their communities—like Kris Shah. Giving back is part of what makes our communities strong. Nearly three in four Canadians volunteer or help others in their communities.

Today, I rise to recognize the Shah Family Foundation, established in 2022 by Kris and Neelam Shah to strengthen communities through investments in health care and education. Its work focuses on expanding access to education and health care, reducing barriers to opportunity, and supporting initiatives that improve well-being and create lasting benefits for communities. The foundation has committed over $61.7 million across 52 projects, supporting hospitals, universities and community organizations across Ontario and globally. Here in Ontario, its partnership with Trillium Health Partners is helping advance the Shah Family Hospital for Women and Children in Mississauga–Malton—and Sai Dham Food Bank's children's breakfast program provides nutritious breakfasts for children.

To everyone across the globe: If you're looking to come and build your home, Ontario is open.

Thank you to Kris and Neelam Shah for embodying the Ontario spirit of generosity and commitment to improving lives. Thank you for everything you do.

ONTARIO WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

Ms. Catherine Fife: The 2025 Ontario elections saw 771 candidates, of which only 32% were women. Only 46 women or gender-diverse people were elected as MPPs, representing 37% of this Legislature. These are not encouraging numbers, but there is hope.

Today, we welcome 124 young women and gender-diverse people from across the province for the Ontario Women's Parliamentary Forum: Pathway to Parliament. Participants will gain an immersive, behind-the-scenes look at Ontario's parliamentary process, with opportunities to engage directly with female leaders and discover the possibilities and potential of public service. Designed to inspire the next generation of leaders, the forum encourages participants to consider careers in politics and public service.

As Ontario's political landscape evolves, it is critical that women and gender-diverse candidates are part of the fabric of the electoral process. This is how we build a strong democracy.

Participants applied by sharing their leadership experiences, commitment to their communities, and passion for civic engagement. Some 245 young women applied to be part of this program; I can confidently say that there is a strong interest among young women in leadership and public service.

On a personal note, I just want to say that I find this day incredibly inspiring. Seeing the energy, determination and potential of our future leaders gives me tremendous hope for Ontario's future.

Thanks to all who made this day possible.

CHARLOTTE ELEANOR ENGLEHART HOSPITAL

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'm thrilled to share with the Legislature a historic milestone for rural health care in Sarnia–Lambton and another example of our government's investment in and commitment to public health care.

Last week, I was honoured to join the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, municipal leaders, and officials from Bluewater Health to celebrate the groundbreaking of the long-awaited capital redevelopment of the emergency department and diagnostic imaging areas at Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital of Bluewater Health. This project represents years of dedication, advocacy and collaboration across Petrolia, Sarnia–Lambton, and the province of Ontario. Supported by an investment from our government of $17 million, this project will renovate over 8,200 square feet of existing space and help deliver on our goal to connect every family in Lambton county to high-quality health care close to home. This is part of our government's plan to protect Ontario's health care system by investing over $64 billion in more than 50 major hospital projects across the province.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the residents of Sarnia–Lambton, I want to thank the Premier, the Minister of Health, Bluewater Health, and our dedicated community partners for continuing to champion health care close to home.

Shovels are in the ground today, ensuring Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital will continue providing world-class health care for generations to come.

DANIEL THRASHER

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Madam Speaker, the tragic fire at Canadian Forces Base Wainwright claimed four lives, injured many others, and forever changed families across our country. Today, I rise to recognize one of those injured: Private Daniel Thrasher, a proud son of Tecumseh, who remains in critical care.

Daniel joined Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry as an infanteer in December 2025. Before answering the call to serve in Canada, he distinguished himself through service, teamwork and determination. He played varsity football with Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Windsor Lancers. He coached young athletes at école secondaire l'Essor and worked as a wildland firefighter in Alberta.

Daniel is a courageous and hard-working young man who has always given back to others. Now, Tecumseh and communities all across Windsor and Essex county are standing together for him.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with Daniel; his parents, John and Carmen; his siblings; and every family affected by this tragedy.

To Daniel: Everyone in your community is behind you. Keep fighting. We look forward to seeing you come home.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Lorne Coe: Peter Devlin, the president of Fanshawe College, and Maureen Adamson, the president of Colleges Ontario, are here at Queen's Park this morning to support the Poppy Project, a project by Fanshawe College in partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Speaker, I'd like to welcome a constituent from my riding, Patrizia Simone.

Welcome to the Legislature of Ontario.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: I'd like to welcome and recognize, on behalf of Minister Paul Calandra and the beautiful riding of Markham–Stouffville, page Kavin Mahesan, page captain today; his mom, Kasthuri Mahesan; his dad, Shayanthan Mahesan. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MPP George Darouze: I would like to welcome an amazing constituent from my riding, Billy Woods, who has dedicated so much time to volunteering for things such as the Metcalfe Fair and other causes to make Carleton better. He's a true leader in our community through the best and the worst of times. I'm so glad to see him here today.

Welcome to your House, Billy.

MPP Catherine McKenney: It is my pleasure to introduce Grace Craig, a constituent of Ottawa Centre, who is here to take part in the women's parliamentary forum.

Congratulations, and welcome to your House.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I'd like to introduce and welcome, from my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Negin Talebi. She is here as well to participate in this wonderful women's parliamentary forum today.

Welcome to your House.

1030

M^me^ France Gélinas: She's making her way in—Erin Ariss, who is the ONA provincial president, as well as Natalie Mehra, the executive director of the Ontario Health Coalition.

MPP Silvia Gualtieri: I would like to welcome my staff from Mississauga East–Cooksville, community leaders, and AI representatives to support my motion today.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'd like to welcome two community builders from Forest Hill Rotary Club: Oksana Danylych and Marvin Graf. Welcome to your House.

REMARKABLE WOMEN AT QUEEN'S PARK

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Colleagues, in 2025, I launched the Remarkable Women in the Workplace initiative to recognize the outstanding women who contribute to the work of the Office of the Assembly. Through this monthly initiative, we celebrate the dedication, the professionalism and the contributions of women across our organization whose work supports the operations of our Legislature.

Today I'm pleased to draw your attention to the Speaker's gallery, to recognize our honourees for the months of July, August, September and October.

Katie Mcilwaine, legislative information coordinator for the procedural services branch and the honouree for July: Katie's technical expertise, collaborative approach, and commitment to continuous learning have strengthened the work of the procedural services branch. By improving House documents processes and contributing to research and writing projects beyond her core responsibilities, she provides thoughtful, practical solutions that strengthen branch initiatives and advance the assembly's work.

Bryony Livingston, research librarian for the legislative library and the honouree for August: Bryony's expertise, professionalism, and commitment to service excellence strengthen the work of the legislative library. A valued member of the reference team, she consistently provides MPPs and legislative clients with thorough research and reliable information on a wide range of topics. Through her leadership within the legal library community, she fosters collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Albena Bakalov, senior project management consultant for the precinct properties branch: Drawing on extensive experience in architecture and architectural conservation, she brings a thoughtful and detail-oriented approach to complex projects, ensuring key considerations are carefully addressed and positive outcomes achieved. Known for her collaborative spirit, and dedicated to mentorship, she generously shares her expertise and supports those around her. A valued colleague, her professionalism, kindness and commitment to excellence leave a lasting impact on both the projects she undertakes and the workplace culture that she helps foster.

Ellen Wankiewicz, research officer for legislative research services and the honouree for October: Drawing on her strong background in law and health policy, she provides insightful research and analysis that support members and committees in addressing complex issues. Known for her willingness to assist colleagues, mentor others, and contribute to accessibility and workplace initiatives, Ellen consistently goes above and beyond in service to the assembly.

On behalf of all members and staff, I extend our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to Katie, Bryony, Albena and Ellen. Thank you for your remarkable service to Ontario's Parliament.

Applause.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Now I would like to introduce another group that is working for us today, our pages, if you would like to gather in front of the dais, please.

From the riding of Oakville, we have Shreya Bapatla; from Guelph, Anne Dyck; from Don Valley West, Sophie Edwards; from Eglinton–Lawrence, Jessica Goldfarb; from Simcoe North, Evelyn Johnstone; from Scarborough Southwest, Isabella Jung; from Northumberland–Peter-

borough South, Robert Kennedy; from Pickering–Uxbridge, Jaittran Khandan; from Toronto–St. Paul's, Oliver Linden; from King–Vaughan, Kate Ruoxi Liu; from Markham–Stouffville, Kavin Mahesan; from Don Valley East, Julien Morische; from Niagara West, Tyler Mous; from Mississauga–Malton, Hajar Mughal; from Whitby, Neha Navin; from Haldimand–Norfolk, Ramina Ramanathan; from Essex, Marcus Reaume; from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas, Andrea Reyes Martinez; from Flamborough–Glanbrook, the best riding, here in Queen's Park Legislature—if you want to be acknowledged today, we'd all agree—Gavin Roberts; from Oakville North–Burlington, Sarvesh Sathish Kumar; and from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Penelope Upper-Smith.

Welcome, pages.

Applause.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Earlier this year, this government made a choice that turned the lives of so many people upside down—when they cut OSAP. They handed young families and people trying to build a better future a lifetime debt sentence. The Premier repeatedly blamed students for fraud, but now it is clear that they knew all along that the real bad actors were fraudulent private career colleges.

So let's get the story straight, shall we? Did the Premier blame students even though he knew that the real issue was private career college bad actors?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I think the Leader of the Opposition is compounding two different conversations.

The changes we made to OSAP were to make it more sustainable for the next generation of students behind these students. The Auditor General, in 2018, said the changes that the Liberal government made were unsustainable—and we have changed it back to 25% grants, 75% loans.

When we're referencing the private career colleges, we're talking about serious criminal allegations of misuse of OSAP dollars and fraud, so we will not apologize for referring that to the Ontario Provincial Police. These are serious allegations of criminal fraud against the taxpayers of Ontario. And we will ensure that we have respect of taxpayer dollars before we release any OSAP dollars moving forward.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it's pretty rich that this government is talking about criminal investigations when they are under criminal investigation right now.

We all heard the Premier stand up and blame students and student fraud; the whole province heard this.

The best way to get answers, though, about why this government makes decisions is always to follow the money. So let's follow the money, shall we?

In 2024, private college executives donated $151,000 to the PCs. The minister at the time, the MPP for Simcoe North, got $30,000 in donations just from private college executives alone. It certainly looks like students had the rug pulled out from under them so members of this government could keep cashing in. So my question back to the Premier is simple: Was this incompetence, or are students and families paying the price for your insider deals?

1040

Hon. Nolan Quinn: The system was working. We've done investigations; we've done inspections of many different institutions. Earlier this year, we actually suspended six career colleges with OSAP eligibility, moving forward. But in August, we recognized that this was pretty widespread and significant, so we brought in a third-party auditor, KPMG, to ensure that taxpayer dollars are respected. I need assurances from the auditor before I release any taxpayer dollars to students, to ensure that they are going to their intended use: towards students and ensuring that their education is looked after through OSAP. I will not apologize for reporting it to the Ontario Provincial Police.

We're respecting taxpayer dollars. We're ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used for their intended use: supporting students moving forward.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, students' lives are turned upside down. Families are paying for this government's incompetence. And that minister should resign.

None of this happened overnight. The government knew about these bad actors for years. The warnings, we know now, started back in 2023. Career Colleges Ontario themselves flagged suspicious activities with this government. There were also warnings from the federal government, who flagged potential fraud at the Academy of Learning's two locations. But instead of sending in inspectors, the government decided to approve them for a whole other year before they took any action. Let's talk about incompetence.

My question to the Premier is, did the government purposely delay inspections, or is your incompetence again costing us millions?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Both inspections at Bay and Brampton East began in October 2024. These inspections were multi-faceted and included reviewing data we had, data requested from the institution, and in-person inspections. This process is very technical, very complex and sometimes takes over a year, in some cases. But when it comes to these two institutions, once we had the evidence, we cut them off from OSAP in May 2026.

As I've stated earlier, we truly understand the impact this has on the good students—and rest assured, we're working as urgently as possible to ensure that we have confidence in our OSAP system, so we can release that

back to the students. But I will not release another taxpayer dollar until I have confidence in the complete OSAP system.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Marit Stiles: My next question is also to the Premier of this province.

Let's talk a little bit more about their failures and their selling out of the people of Ontario.

Eight years ago, this Premier ran on a promise to end the Liberal legacy of hallway health care. For years, under the previous government, we saw the trend of patients being treated in hallways in our hospitals, and it was getting worse and worse; he said he was going to reverse it. But here we are, and the problem is worse than it has ever been in the history of this province. In 2025, for the first time, we saw that the number of patients being treated in hallways surpassed 2,000 people per day.

Why has this Premier let hallway health care become the norm?

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Well, I will agree with the opposite leader on one issue, and that is, the Liberals definitely left our province in shambles, economically, and in our health care system.

Having said that, since 2018 we've actually added 3,500 net new hospital beds across Ontario. We are on track to add an additional 3,000 net new hospital beds across Ontario.

My colleague the Minister of Long-Term Care is working diligently to ensure our expansion of long-term-care beds, again, across Ontario.

We are doing the work that the Liberals refused to do when they were in power, and we are seeing the results. The results are that we are seeing the highest number of individuals who are getting access through primary care expansion. We are seeing Ontario leading Canada in many surgeries and many diagnostic procedures. We are making a difference in the province of Ontario, and we'll continue to do that work—something that the Liberals refused to do.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: If this is this minister's measure of success, oh, my goodness.

Right before the Premier got elected, under the Liberals there were 1,300 people being treated in hallways every day in this province.

Fast-forward to January 2025: An average of 2,088 Ontarians were treated in hallways on a daily basis. This is not a monthly average; this is over 2,000 people every day on gurneys, in chairs, in hallways, in broom closets.

The system was already on fire, and then this government came in and poured gasoline all over it.

Does the Premier think that having thousands of people—children, seniors—treated in hospital hallways every single day is acceptable?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Let's talk about some of the investments and the impact that they've had.

When we invested $134 million in our emergency departments, we have seen wait times and ambulance-off-load delays—how long it takes for an ambulance to transfer that patient to hospital care, to the expert, world-class clinicians we have working in Ontario hospitals. We've seen decreases in those off-load delays. Lakeridge Health, for example—an 81% improvement in consistently meeting provincial targets. Another example is the Niagara Health nurse practitioner pilot; it has reduced initial physician assessment times by nearly four hours.

That's the innovation that our hospital clinicians are making to ensure that people get access closer to home and faster in the province of Ontario.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, by any measure, this is a systemic failure of this minister—if you don't believe me, believe the nurses. ONA is here today. Yesterday, the nurse practitioners were here. They're all telling us that it's getting worse, not better. And let me tell you, they have solutions.

This is a 52% increase in the number of people getting care in hallways and broom closets. Our family members deserve better than that. Our taxpayers deserve better than that. They deserve dignity. The Premier promised them that dignity, after years of Liberal neglect, and instead he has become the very thing he was campaigning against.

Back to the Premier: When did this Premier decide to give up on fixing hallway health care altogether?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: There is no doubt that nurses across Ontario—a very highly sought-after, in-demand profession—are doing incredible work in our hospitals, in our primary care facilities, in our long-term-care facilities, in our home and community care facilities.

What we are doing is ensuring that we have that multidisciplinary team working together in our hospital positions—working with lab techs, working with respiratory therapists, making sure that that multidisciplinary team continues to be part of a critical assessment of our hospital system.

I know all members here understand the incredibly important work that nurses play in our facilities.

We have registered an additional 100,000 nurses in the province of Ontario, and we currently have 30,000 who are training in our post-secondary institutions. What does that say? We love our nurses, we want them to train here, and we'll continue to support them.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Speaker, every day, more and more Ontarians are falling farther behind.

And today, we learned that the Premier has taken hallway health care to new heights: You are 55% more likely to end up in a hallway if you're in hospital than you were in 2018. You ask yourself, how do we fix that? More

nurses, more PSWs, more health care helpers—but the Premier has made it harder to get those folks because of this colossal mismanagement of OSAP. He has made it harder—harder to get the training they need, harder for them to go to school.

The question is, why does the minister of training, colleges and universities, and all the other things that come after that, still have his job?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I'll say it again to the leader of the third party: These are serious criminal allegations.

What I am very proud of is the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant. We've had over 13,000 students go through the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant and commit to working in a rural area of Ontario.

1050

We've actually just rolled out the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant 2.0 for family medicine as well, and over 2,000 future family medicine doctors are part of that program as well.

Speaker, I will not apologize for ensuring that taxpayer dollars are well-respected, or my referral to the Ontario Provincial Police. These are bad actors. These are serious allegations. And we're bringing forward legislation this session to be able to put the appropriate guardrails in place so that the bad actors can't keep defrauding Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The leader of the third party for a first supplementary.

Mr. John Fraser: This government hasn't been respecting taxpayer dollars when it comes to OSAP for at least three years now, maybe more.

The minister has made it harder for every student in Ontario—college, university, career college, trucking schools. Every single student in Ontario—more debt, more hardship, more uncertainty.

Here's a story from Vycki from Essex: "I am a nurse and teach the PSW program. I have instilled work ethic and educational skills for hundreds of students who are now employed. This new OSAP ruling has devastated my current class of amazing students. There is no reason to destroy their lives for something they did not do." Speaker, through you to the minister: Why are you destroying their lives for something they didn't do?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: He has to remember that those students are taxpayers as well, and we're respecting taxpayer dollars to ensure that they're not used fraudulently.

Speaker, these are serious criminal allegations. These are bad actors that took advantage of Ontario taxpayer dollars. And I will not apologize for reporting it to the Ontario Provincial Police. But we understand the impact this has on good students.

That's why we're working as urgently as possible to bring forward a new OSAP system that will have the appropriate guardrails in place. The legislation we're bringing forward this session will ensure that we can release OSAP dollars with confidence to all students across the career college sector.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Final supplementary, leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: Approved, enrolled, abandoned—this Premier is abandoning hard-working people just trying to get ahead, to help their family get ahead.

Here's Genevie from the Premier's riding: "I have a PSW certification and paying $12,000 on OSAP right now. I wanted to continue to a registered practical nurse pathway program but I can't pursue it right now because there is no OSAP. Please help students like us who are really in need."

To the Minister: What's your answer to Genevie?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: My answer to Genevie is that I need assurances from the third-party auditor. Right now, the third-party auditor, KPMG, has not given me confidence that I can release OSAP dollars to career college students. I need that confidence and assurances from KPMG.

That is why we reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police. These are serious criminal allegations, and we need to ensure that the Ontario Provincial Police does their inspections on it. I will not apologize for ensuring that taxpayer dollars are well-respected.

We understand the hard-working students who are caught up in this, and that's why we're working urgently to bring legislation forward this session to re-release OSAP to the students, as well as working with third-party banks for low-interest loans. We understand the impact this has on good students.

But at the same time, I need to ensure that taxpayer dollars are respected and used as they're intended.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: You don't understand it, because you'd be doing something for all these hard-working people if you actually did.

So don't buy it, folks. Don't fall for it.

In 2020, the government changed the rules to make online-only courses for career colleges OSAP-eligible.

In 2021, the Auditor General warned the government about the serious vulnerabilities in the career college system.

In 2023, Career Colleges Ontario warned the government about suspicious activity.

In 2024, the career college people said, "Call the police. You're being robbed." Who doesn't call the police when they know they're being robbed? Why would they be afraid of doing that?

Minister, why were you afraid to call the police when you were warned? Are you hiding something?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I will remind members to direct their questions and the responses through the Speaker.

I recognize the minister.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police, so I'm not too sure why he believes I'm afraid of reporting it to the police.

Speaker, in late 2024, we saw a growing volume of OSAP applications at career colleges.

In January 2025—that member referenced—Career Colleges Ontario had the same concerns we did.

In May 2025, the federal government had their own investigation and gave us the results of that investigation.

My ministry expanded the reviews, did enhanced reviews, targeted inspections, and ultimately eliminated OSAP eligibility from these institutions. But in August, we recognized that this was more widespread and more serious than individual inspections.

That's why we brought in a third-party auditor, KPMG, to ensure that they can give us the confidence and assurances to be able to release OSAP and taxpayer dollars back to the students.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary, leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: I wouldn't trust this minister to mind my cat while I went to mail a letter.

In 2025, the government got a list of offending campuses from Career Colleges Ontario, and this minister continued to send hundreds of millions of dollars to those colleges—he knew, they knew, everybody knew. In fact, one offending college's scheduled inspection was inexplicably delayed after funding had been approved that year—hundreds of millions of dollars out the door, offending college, no explanation.

So, Minister, why don't you just do the decent, right thing to do and resign?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I will not be resigning.

Let me just explain that these inspections are multifaceted and include reviewing data that we have, data requested from the institution, and in-person inspections. The member of the third party, the third-time interim leader, may not understand, but the process is very technical; it's very complex. Inspections take over a year to be able to complete. When it comes to tips that we receive, we take them all very seriously. Since 2020, we've had over 3,200 OSAP inspections, and we'll continue doing those, moving forward.

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

Mr. John Fraser: One year—$385 million to seven colleges; $219 million to three campuses of the one college.

And then, in the spring of 2026, the Premier said, "It's the students. They're buying watches and perfume. It's unsustainable. We need to cut it." He knew that wasn't true—he had to know; the minister had to know.

And now they've stopped just about—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'll ask—

Mr. John Fraser: I withdraw.

And now they've stopped just about every provincial program that supports some hard-working person just trying to get ahead and just trying to get a job—honest, hard-working people, approved, enrolled and abandoned.

How can the minister respond in the way that he has this morning—and the caucus over there stand up and clap—when all these people are being punished? How can that happen?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I think it's worth reminding the leader of the third party that the people of Ontario do not trust them to be the government of Ontario.

I will not apologize. Again, I will say it: We reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police. There are bad actors that took advantage of Ontario taxpayer dollars, and we are acting swiftly to ensure that those taxpayer dollars are well respected. Any misuse of OSAP is completely unacceptable. And these are serious allegations.

With reference to that member, he was working for the previous Premier, Minister McGuinty, and at the time they only had 25% grants, 75% loans. For some reason, when he was working in his office, he was A-okay with the grant-to-loan ratio, but now he has an issue. I think he needs to look in the rear-view mirror himself.

ASSISTANCE TO FLOOD VICTIMS

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Four months after the Canada Day storm flooded more than 7,500 homes in Ottawa, residents are still trying to restore their homes and pay bills that are mounting into the tens of thousands of dollars. People are experiencing extreme financial pressure and stress, made worse by the shamefully inadequate response from this Conservative government. They didn't give us any help to clean up, and the vast majority of homes affected are excluded from the Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program.

1100

Will the Premier finally stop ignoring Ottawa and expand disaster recovery assistance to everyone affected by the Canada Day flood?

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

Hon. Rob Flack: I acknowledge that we had some difficult storms this summer, not only in Ottawa—Toronto, Niagara region, and in southwestern Ontario.

The bottom line is, we have to understand the difference between private insurance and DRAO—disaster recovery relief. That is the key. Insurance is the first line of defence; it always has been, and it always will be. DRAO is for overland flooding. Municipalities are key in this process. They need to help define where the disasters took place, what types of disasters. Our officials will support that. We'll make the determination whether DRAO is activated or not.

In Ottawa, parts of the city, as I've told the member opposite, were activated because there was proof that there was overland flooding. Overland flooding is not covered—if it's not covered by insurance, we will step in as a ministry, we will step in as a government.

Bottom line: Let's remember the difference between DRAO and private insurance. DRAO is not insurance.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Ottawa residents don't want your awareness, Minister. They want your help.

Neither the Premier nor his ministers set foot in Ottawa to talk to people affected by the flooding, so I've hand-delivered a report to them that shares the experience of my constituents. Speaker, 70% of them say the impact on their home was severe or catastrophic. People are remortgaging their homes and even looking at filing for bankruptcy.

In response, the minister just stands here and says that DRAO was never intended to help them. Well, do you know who can change that, Speaker? This government—it's their program. They can change the rules and help people today. Will they do that?

Hon. Rob Flack: Again, I appreciate the advocacy from the member opposite. We talked throughout the summer.

We worked very closely with Ottawa, our municipal partner, in determining whether or not to activate DRAO. It's a simple program that's defined clearly. It has been defined that way for many, many years—many, many years.

The difference is, private insurance, by far, covers the majority of these disasters. The bottom line is, over $1 billion, between Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara, and other parts of Ontario, has been paid out by private insurance. DRAO, when activated, kicks in. The fact remains that it will kick in when it's activated, when it's proven that there's overland flooding. It's a program that's in place. It's consistent throughout this province and the rest of the entire country. That's the reality. That's a fact.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

AIDE FINANCIÈRE POUR LES ÉTUDIANTS

Mr. Stephen Blais: My question is for the Premier.

Elizabeth is a single mom living in Sarsfield, a small, rural village just outside of Orléans, in the riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. She left her job to pursue medical office administration at triOS College, relying on the OSAP that she was approved to receive. Now, this government's failure to properly manage OSAP has left her next instalment suspended. Elizabeth is scrambling to cover tuition, rent and basic living expenses. She must arrange a payment plan by the end of the month—that's three days from now. She has been approved; she has been enrolled; and now she has been abandoned.

To the Premier: Why are students like Elizabeth and thousands more across the province being left to pay the price for this government's complete mismanagement of OSAP?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Ontario regularly reviews OSAP-eligible post-secondary institutions to ensure they're in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations. The ministry has a robust compliance and enforcement framework that includes monitoring, inspections, reviews, corrective action plans, restrictions, third-party oversight measures, financial recoveries, and decisions regarding OSAP participation where warranted, as we did earlier this summer. When the government has concerns, we've investigated and taken action to ensure institutions are in compliance with OSAP-related requirements, including appointing third-party compliance monitoring.

Speaker, I'll say it again: These are serious criminal allegations. These are bad actors. And we're ensuring that taxpayer dollars are well respected.

That's why we're bringing forward urgent legislation this session, so we can have confidence and re-release OSAP to the students at private career colleges.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Member for Orléans.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Madam Speaker, holding single moms accountable for this government's failure is a bit rich.

Les étudiantes comme Elizabeth ont fait leur part et respecté les règles du jeu et aujourd'hui, leur gouvernement les abandonne. Elizabeth a quitté son emploi et a emprunté de l'argent à sa famille pour survivre. Comme beaucoup d'autres, elle a été approuvée, s'est inscrite et puis a été abandonnée. Si ce gouvernement exige aux étudiants de respecter leur engagement, il doit respecter le sien aussi.

Madame la Présidente, ma question est pour le premier ministre : va-t-il offrir une aide financière immédiate aux étudiants touchés et leur dire clairement quand cette crise sera réglée?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Again, I truly understand the impact this has on good students. I've read hundreds of emails that come into my constituency office. I've spoken to many students.

But we needed to act urgently, because these are taxpayer dollars that are used by bad actors; we need to ensure that they are used for their intended use. We have reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police, because this is a serious criminal allegation of fraudulent use of taxpayer dollars, with OSAP.

We are working very urgently with third-party banking institutions to try to land low-interest payments towards the students.

Speaker, we're working towards legislation this session to ensure that we are able to have confidence before we release taxpayer dollars back to the students. We need that confidence, and I need the assurances from the third-party auditor, KPMG, before I have confidence to release taxpayer dollars to students.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Will Bouma: Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health.

Ontario has seen real success in expanding the scopes of practice for pharmacists, reducing pressure on emergency departments, easing the burden on primary care providers, and making it easier for patients to access timely care closer to home. Patients can now receive treatment for a growing number of common ailments through their local pharmacy, helping them get the care they need more quickly and conveniently. The success of

these changes demonstrates that expanding scopes of practice can improve access to care, make better use of the skills and expertise of regulated health professionals, and strengthen our health care system overall.

Given these positive results—Speaker, through you—can the minister provide an update on the government's plans to continue modernizing scopes of practice across Ontario's health professions to ensure patients receive the right care from the right provider at the right time?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member for that very important question.

Our government's approach has been simple: Ensure patients receive the right care from the right provider at the right time. The success of pharmacists' scope-of-practice expansion demonstrates that this approach is working. In fact, since 2023, pharmacists have provided more than 2.4 million assessments for common ailments, with over 99% of pharmacies participating. These services have improved timely care closer to home, while helping reduce pressure on primary care providers, walk-in clinics and emergency departments. Independent analysis by Public Health Ontario found that pharmacist-prescribing successfully shifted appropriate care to pharmacists without creating significant unnecessary prescribing, while also improving prescribing practices for certain conditions.

Ontario now has the lowest proportion of common ailment visits to emergency departments in Canada. The plan is working.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Brantford–Brant.

Mr. Will Bouma: Speaker, through you: Thank you to the minister for that response.

Optometrists are highly trained eye care professionals who provide essential front-line services in communities all across Ontario. They play an important role in diagnosing and managing eye conditions, helping patients access care closer to home and reducing the need for referrals when appropriate.

1110

My private member's bill would build on that work by enabling optometrists to provide samples and dispense topical medications, independently manage open-angle glaucoma, perform diagnostic procedures such as corneal pachymetry and ocular ultrasonography, and remove foreign bodies from below the surface of the cornea. These measures would help improve access to timely eye care, make better use of optometrists' expertise, and reduce wait times for patients seeking specialized services.

Given the government's commitment to improving access to care through scope modernization, will the minister consider supporting the measures contained in my private member's bill?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: The member from Brantford–Brant raises a really important issue. And as a practising optometrist, of course, he brings valuable expertise to discussions on scope-of-practice modernization.

Our government has demonstrated through other scope-of-practice expansions that we are prepared to remove barriers where and when there is evidence of improved patient access and outcomes.

The proposals in the member's private member's bill present opportunities to improve access to timely eye care closer to home and allow specialists to focus on more complex issues. As we continue modernizing scopes of practice across our health care system, I'm open to reviewing and considering the measures proposed by the member, including those related to the management of open-angle glaucoma, diagnostic testing, dispensing authority, and foreign-body removal. I look forward to continued conversations with this expert and sector partners as we examine how these proposals could be incorporated into our government's broader efforts to improve access to care closer to home.

GAMING CONTROL

MPP Wayne Gates: Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

The Toronto Star revealed that iGaming Ontario promised to publish a problem-gambling study, then they buried it. Even the gambling industry's own association says that undermines trust.

Look at what's public: Underage sports betting is up tenfold since 2019. Gambling-related ER visits are nearly twice expected levels. Gambling helpline calls have doubled. Gambling suicides—suicides—have tripled. Four warnings, all public.

The government's study? Still hidden.

Premier, has your minister read the iGaming problem-gambling study?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming.

Hon. Zee Hamid: Speaker, our government cares deeply about this issue. That's why I'm proud that Ontario is leading the country in responsible gambling. We have some of the strictest advertising guidelines for online gaming operators.

Since 2018, our government and online operators have invested more than $470 million in responsible gaming supports. Last year alone, there was nearly $85 million for education, outreach and addiction treatment delivered through partners like the Responsible Gambling Council and CAMH.

The AGCO sets strong standards across casinos, charitable gaming halls and the regulated online market.

We have banned celebrities and athletes from iGaming promotion.

And this year, iGaming launched BetGuard, a self-exclusion tool for players. Since the launch in May, 8,000 players have used it to self-exclude themselves from all iGaming operators.

Speaker, we will keep working with the Attorney General, our agencies and health care professionals to make sure that the people of Ontario have all the tools they need to game responsibly.

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

MPP Wayne Gates: The question was, did you read the study? Suicides have tripled.

Back to the Premier: The government's agency argues that releasing records could hurt the province's economic interests, but it won't say how. OLG says brick-and-mortar casino revenue fell by $136 million last year and 10,000 jobs have been cut across the province because of iGaming.

We're talking about children and youth exposed to gambling, families with loved ones dealing with addiction, and young people dying by suicide.

Will the Premier explain the economic harm that releasing these records would cause, and will he make the agency's justification public today?

Hon. Zee Hamid: I do want to acknowledge that we've heard from parents and health care professionals about the impact iGaming advertising has on young people. I'm a parent myself. I understand that.

That's why we went through moving operators from the grey market into the legal market so we can put guardrails around them and so we can support individuals who need help.

To be clear, as I repeated, Ontario has some of the strictest guidelines, and we're leading not just the country, but we're a lesson for all jurisdictions that are studying our approach now.

In 2024, the AGCO updated the registrar's standards for online gaming, iGaming, to restrict the use of celebrities who could appeal to minors and young people, particularly young men. That's why we banned them from advertising.

Speaker, by moving players from the grey market into the legal market, it allows us to put guardrails and protect these players.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Last spring, students and their families had the rug pulled out from under them when the changes to the OSAP program were made around the proportion that was grant versus loan. I have spent the last several months travelling the province, to just about every riding. Students, parents, grandparents are angry with this Conservative government about the changes that you made, when the financial pressures for families are so real. Last spring, the Conservative government blamed students. They mocked their choices in courses. They said that the students mismanaged the funds.

This past fall, many students made a decision not to go back to school. Some of them arrived and they had no idea what it was going to cost them, and then their funds were frozen. Now we know that it's because of the mismanagement of this program by the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

My question to the Premier: Will he reverse the initial decision on the OSAP program?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: No. I've made OSAP more sustainable, not just for today's students, but the next generation of students behind them.

I need to clarify a comment that that member made: that less students showed up at our colleges and universities. Domestic enrolment is actually up, both at our public colleges and our public universities, this fall. So the fearmongering of the opposition and the third party that the sky is falling—we're going to see less students want to enrol in post-secondary—is absolutely false.

These are serious criminal allegations when it comes to the career colleges, and we reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police. These are taxpayer dollars that we want to ensure are used properly.

When it comes to the sustainability of the OSAP system, for the majority of the Liberal government, they had 25% grants, 75% loans. Now they have an issue when our government brought back the exact same grant-to-loan ratio that the Liberal government had for their whole tenure in government. What changed?

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

Ms. Lee Fairclough: Speaker, I'm not hearing any remorse for the thousands and thousands of students who have been impacted by this.

We know the facts. Since 2023, the minister has received reports that said that something was very wrong, that hundreds of millions of dollars were being funnelled into private colleges. And yet, the Premier blamed the students. The government failed them—approved, enrolled, abandoned.

Premier, you said yesterday that you fired the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming over his hotel stays.

This is hundreds of millions of dollars that have been mismanaged by your minister.

Premier, will you have the courage to fire the Minister of Colleges and Universities for the mismanagement of the OSAP program?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I will not take any lessons from the third party, that Ontario doesn't even trust to be the official opposition.

1120

Ultimately, we took the allegations very seriously. For every single tip our ministry receives, we investigate it thoroughly, we do complex investigations to ensure that we have all the required data to move forward and report it to the Ontario Provincial Police, as we have done. These are taxpayer dollars. These are bad actors that took advantage of taxpayer dollars in the system. I reported it to the Ontario Provincial Police. We referenced it to the Auditor General. We are hiding nothing in this process.

We have received over 3,200 OSAP tips since 2020; we've investigated every single one of them. And we'll continue to do that, moving forward, because these are taxpayer dollars and we respect taxpayer dollars, and we want to ensure they're used for their intended use.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries.

Congratulations, Minister, on your appointment.

This government has announced record-setting projects and initiatives across the board that unlock jobs and economic benefits for Ontario workers, businesses and hard-working families.

With the demand for electricity expected to increase by up to 90% by 2050, your ministry is leading the way for energy affordability.

Recently, this government announced that the Pickering nuclear power plant—a plant that the previous Liberal government planned to close and lose thousands of jobs—is up for refurbishment.

Minister, can you explain how your plan is preparing the province for growth and long-term economic success, with the announcement of major infrastructure projects like the Pickering refurbishment?

Hon. Matthew Rae: Thank you to the great member from Whitby for that question.

It's an honour to rise today as the new Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries. I want to thank the member from Niagara West, our new Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, for the great work he had been doing in this role.

It is a great question from the member from Whitby on the refurbishment of Pickering. It's an exciting time in the province and for the people of the region of Durham, in particular, because the former Liberal government could not—

Interjections.

Hon. Matthew Rae: They're groaning because they know what I'm going to say next.

They would not refurbish the Pickering nuclear plant. They wanted to close the Pickering nuclear plant.

We're refurbishing all four Pickering B units, securing over 222 megawatts of reliable, affordable electricity to power 2.2 million homes. That will help create 150 jobs and contribute $800 billion to Canada's GDP.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): To be clear, that comes off his question time.

Back to the member for Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: To the minister: It was the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals' short-term electricity planning that resulted in electricity rates to be 71% higher under their watch, from 2008 to 2016.

Our government has reversed the unaffordable energy trend that was left behind by the previous Liberal government. The associate minister is leading the way in this initiative by powering Ontario into a reliable and affordable energy future. In addition to this government's planned nuclear expansion, which is the largest in North American history, our government is investing in the largest transmission expansion this province has seen in recent years. Can the associate minister please share more about how we're powering Ontario through this expansion and keeping costs down for hard-working families in this great province?

Hon. Matthew Rae: Thank you to the great member from Whitby for that supplementary question. As he has mentioned, we're not only investing in the power generation in this province; we're investing in the largest expansion of transmission in our recent history.

Since 2022, we have been working on 14 major transmission projects across Ontario—a combined $9-billion investment—bringing 6,400 megawatts of additional capacity to the system, and over 1,700 kilometres of new transmission lines.

We're fast-tracking the Barrie-to-Sudbury transmission line—a 290-kilometre, 500-kV transmission line, unlocking 1,005 megawatts of northbound transmission—because we know northern Ontario is vital to our future.

And unlike the former Liberal government, which said that northern Ontario was a no man's land, we will continue to invest in—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Taeko is a single mother who fled domestic violence. While living in a shelter, she earned her high school diploma. Wanting a better life, she enrolled in college to become a massage therapist. She committed no fraud. She is not a bad actor. But this government has taken her OSAP. She needs $13,000 five days from now to complete her degree. This government says, "Tough luck."

Will the Premier restore OSAP to students like Taeko so they can provide for their families?

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

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I've stated, I recognize the serious impact this has on the good students.

That is why we're urgently bringing legislation forward this session to add guardrails to OSAP for career colleges, with the new year as a focus for us to be able to bring this back online.

I need confidence from KPMG and the third-party auditors to be able to release taxpayer dollars to the students. I will not let a single dollar be released until I have confidence that the dollars are being utilized as their intended use and going towards training of students. I truly need those assurances from the third-party KPMG auditor to ensure that the dollars are going to their intended use.

That is why we are bringing forward legislation this session to add guardrails to OSAP for career colleges. We understand the urgency, and we understand the good students who are caught up in this.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Parkdale–High Park.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Speaker, this minister has had three years. Taeko has five days.

Yesterday, the Premier said he feels terrible for honest students who lost their OSAP. But students can't pay

tuition with the Premier's feelings. They can't feed their families with feelings.

Premier, the students didn't cause this problem; you did, through your failure to act. Will you stop turning dreams into collateral damage?

Last night, Taeko asked me, "If I come to Queen's Park, will it make a difference for us?" Premier, she is here. Will it make a difference?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order. Order.

And you direct your questions through the Speaker.

Back to the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, I've said it before and I'll say it again, and I'll say it again after this: Bad actors threatened the whole integrity of the OSAP system, and we had to act. Once we realized that it was widespread fraud across the private career college institutions, we had to act.

That is why, after months and months of individual inspections and investigations, we brought forward a third-party auditor. We needed assurances that the career college system and OSAP dollars that are flowing to the students at those private institutions are going towards their intended use. I need confidence; I need assurances from KPMG before I release another taxpayer dollar—

Interjections.

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

You may continue.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: We understand the urgency of this, and once I receive the confidence from the third-party auditor, we will release OSAP dollars in due course.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Speaker, Alex Shved is a 37-year-old father battling stage 4 melanoma. His doctors have recommended potentially life-saving TIL therapy, but this government has denied him funding. When Alex challenged the decision in court, he won. Instead of fixing the problem, this government changed the rules, erasing his win.

1130

Alex is fighting for his life. Speaker, through you to the health minister: What is the real reason that he is being denied funding? Is the government busy playing nickel and dime with the pharmaceutical companies?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: We're all moved by these stories. We all want to make sure that Ontario continues to provide world-class health care. We have done that by codifying something that has been in place since 2011. You may want to go back in history to see which government was in place in 2011.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Nepean will come to order.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: And to ensure everyone who applies for US treatment pre-approval through out-of-country knows what the rules are, we've codified that—something that has been in place since 2011.

We've also moved quickly to make sure that innovative medicines are more readily available and faster available in the province of Ontario through a FAST program that didn't exist before Premier Ford took office. We've now been able to assess, review and ultimately license and approve eight new cancer drugs. That's the innovation that we need to have in the province of Ontario, making sure all Ontario residents get access to these innovative medicines.

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

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I can't believe that the family will find comfort in that answer, going back in time—we're talking about right now, and time is of the essence.

Alex and others are being abandoned by their government, by their own health minister, and that is the simple truth right now. And what are they left to do? Start GoFundMe campaigns and beg strangers online for money to save their own lives? That's exactly the kind of thing Americans criticize about their deeply flawed health care system. That shouldn't happen here.

So, Speaker, through you to the health minister again: Is this really what Ontario's health care system has come to—a system where patients have to beg online for their lives, while their government won't help them and refuses to help them?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: These decisions to fund US treatment, out-of-country treatment, are incredibly difficult, which is why we have ensured that ethicists, clinicians, surgeons are making those decisions, not politicians. It has always been thus, and it is therefore a reason to make sure that those assessments are happening in the appropriate place, which is with clinicians, which is with surgeons, with these ethicists. We'll continue to do that because we want to make sure, through other programs like Health Innovation Pathway—again, a program that did not exist prior to 2018—that innovative medicines are happening here. We are growing, through our life sciences programs, innovation here in Ontario for Ontario residents to access—not to constantly be forced into making decisions about US-based treatment and out-of-country coverage.

HOUSING

MPP Monica Ciriello: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Across Ontario, families are looking for housing that is attainable and within reach. But one of the biggest barriers to getting more homes built is the cost of construction.

Our government has worked with the federal government to eliminate the HST on qualifying new homes, providing relief for families and putting new housing within reach.

However, taxes are only part of the equation. Development charges can represent a significant cost on new housing, making it difficult to get projects off the ground.

Development charges and other upfront municipal costs can add tens of thousands of dollars to the price of a new home, making projects harder to build and less affordable for homeowners and renters.

Speaker, can the minister share what our government is doing to help municipalities address these costs while supporting the construction of new homes in Ontario?

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

MPP Billy Denault: Thank you to the member for that great question.

Our government recognizes that if we want more homes built, we need to tackle the costs that make housing projects difficult to finance and deliver.

That is exactly why our government introduced the Development Charge Reduction Program. This historic investment of $8.8 billion is helping municipalities reduce development charges while ensuring they continue to have the resources necessary to support growth. By addressing one of the largest upfront costs facing new housing projects, we are helping improve project viability and encouraging more homes to move forward. This program is part of our plan to get more homes built, help build the critical infrastructure, and create the conditions needed to get more homes built across Ontario.

Speaker, lowering the cost of building means more projects can proceed, more housing can be constructed, and more Ontarians can afford a home that meets their needs.

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

MPP Monica Ciriello: Thank you to the member for that answer.

Speaker, reducing costs is an important part of the solution, but we know that cost is not the only barrier standing in the way of new housing.

Builders, municipalities and homebuyers all benefit when projects can move through the planning and approvals process more efficiently and more smoothly. Long delays add uncertainty, drive up financing costs, and make it harder to deliver homes quickly.

That's why our government has taken action to reduce red tape, streamline approvals, and provide greater certainty for housing projects across the province.

Can the minister explain how these efforts work alongside the Development Charge Reduction Program and the HST rebate to help increase housing supply and get homes built faster?

MPP Billy Denault: Our government is taking a practical, comprehensive approach to housing.

Through the Development Charge Reduction Program, we are helping address one of the most significant cost pressures facing new housing construction.

At the same time, we are continuing to reduce unnecessary red tape, streamline approval processes, and improve certainty throughout the planning system. Those efforts go hand in hand.

Lower costs help make projects viable. Faster approvals help get shovels in the ground sooner. And with the DCRP and HST rebate, we are creating the conditions to increase our housing supply and decrease the cost of new homes.

Speaker, our government remains focused on removing barriers to housing construction, supporting municipalities, and creating the conditions necessary to build more homes for families across this province, while keeping the dream of home ownership alive.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa West–Nepean has given a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding disaster recovery assistance for Ontarians. This matter will be debated today following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on private members' notice of motion number 72.

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

The division bells rang from 1138 to 1143.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On October 27, 2026, MPP Gualtieri moved private members' notice of motion number 72. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Gates, Wayne	Racinsky, Joseph
Anand, Deepak	Gélinas, France	Rae, Matthew
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gilmour, Alexa	Rakocevic, Tom
Babikian, Aris	Glover, Chris	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Riddell, Brian
Beattie, Jeff	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rosenberg, Bill
Bell, Jessica	Gualtieri, Silvia	Sabawy, Sheref
Blais, Stephen	Hamid, Zee	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Hardeman, Ernie	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bourgouin, Guy	Harris, Mike	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Bresee, Ric	Hazell, Andrea	Sattler, Peggy
Burch, Jeff	Holland, Kevin	Saunderson, Brian
Calandra, Paul	Hsu, Ted	Schreiner, Mike
Cerjanec, Rob	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jones, Trevor	Shaban, Fatima
Cho, Stan	Jordan, John	Shamji, Adil
Ciriello, Monica	Kanapathi, Logan	Shaw, Sandy
Clancy, Aislinn	Kernaghan, Terence	Smith, Dave
Clark, Steve	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, David
Coe, Lorne	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, Graydon
Collard, Lucille	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Smith, Laura
Cooper, Michelle	Lahey, Susan	Smyth, Stephanie
Crawford, Stephen	Leardi, Anthony	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Lecce, Stephen	Surma, Kinga
Darouze, George	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Denault, Billy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Tangri, Nina
Dixon, Jess	McCrimmon, Karen	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dowie, Andrew	McGregor, Graham	Thompson, Lisa M.
Downey, Doug	McKenney, Catherine	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dunlop, Jill	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.

Fairclough, Lee	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tsao, Jonathan
Fedeli, Victor	Pang, Billy	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Parsa, Michael	Vaugeois, Lise
Firin, Mohamed	Pasma, Chandra	Vickers, Paul
Flack, Rob	Piccini, David	Watt, Tyler
Ford, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Pinsonneault, Steve	Williams, Charmaine A.
French, Jennifer K.	Pirie, George	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Quinn, Nolan	

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 116; the nays are 0.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1147 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

M^me^ France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to introduce four members from the Royal Institute of British Architects. The first one is Emma England. She's from London in the United Kingdom. It's her first time visiting in Toronto. Welcome. Vera Tse as well as Effet Mosa are citizens of Toronto. They represent the Canadian chapter of the Royal Institute of British Architects—as well as Georgina Bencsik. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Chris Glover: I had introductions for the same group of people from the Royal Institute of British Architects, but I also have one other name. I've got Effet Mosa—I'll just read them in again. We've got Emma England from, of all places, London, England. I'm sure you get that all the time. Even in Canada, you're still getting that. And then we've got Vera Tse and Effet Mosa, as well as Georgina Bencsik. Welcome to your House, everybody. You got a double introduction.

M^me^ Lucille Collard: I'll make that a triple introduction because I was tasked by my interim leader to make sure I would introduce you on behalf of the Ontario Liberal Party, as well, and the whole House. Welcome here in Canada.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am delighted to welcome Chandra-Li Paul, who is director of women's rights at the Ontario Federation of Labour, along with Ahmad Gaied, who is secretary-treasurer. They are here today to support a PMPB which will be introduced shortly. Thank you for coming.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Before I get to reports by committees, pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given a 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 member's public business.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ONTARIO IN YOUR GLASS ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LES PRODUITS ONTARIENS DANS VOTRE VERRE

Mr. Hsu moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 141, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Board of Ontario Act, 2019 regarding Ontario-produced liquor / Projet de loi 141, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2019 sur la Régie des alcools de l'Ontario à l'égard des boissons alcoolisées produites en Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: Very briefly, what this bill does is it expands the mandate of the LCBO so that it is not only just trying to make money for its own bottom line but it is allowed to think about the larger Ontario economy as it operates.

MENOPAUSE AWARENESS ACT, 2026

LOI DE 2026 SUR LA SENSIBILISATION À LA MÉNOPAUSE

Ms. Sattler moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 142, An Act to proclaim Menopause Awareness Month and Menopause Awareness Day / Projet de loi 142, Loi proclamant le Mois de sensibilisation à la ménopause et la Journée de sensibilisation à la ménopause.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, thank you, Speaker. This bill would officially declare October as menopause awareness month and October 18 as menopause awareness day. I want to thank my co-sponsors, the MPP for Parkdale–High Park and the MPP for Waterloo.

Many other jurisdictions have already made these declarations, which are recognized by the International Menopause Society and the World Health Organization. This bill would make Ontario the first province in Canada to adopt them and is an important first step in advancing a provincial menopause strategy. I am pleased to say it has strong support from workers, employers, health care providers and advocates.

PETITIONS

BILLY BISHOP AIRPORT

Mr. Chris Glover: This is a petition on an issue that is near and dear to my riding, in particular. The title is, "Stop Jets at Billy Bishop Airport."

It talks about how Bill 110, the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, gives the Premier the power to seize control of the Toronto Islands, Billy Bishop airport and Little Norway Park. The Premier has said that he will declare the Billy Bishop airport a special economic zone, which means that he will be able to break any laws in the redevelopment of that airport—so environmental laws, labour laws, heritage laws. He'll be able to do whatever he wants without having to come to the Legislature to change the laws.

Bill 5 that allows him to declare these special economic zones is a real attack on our democratic right, our charter right, to rule by law. It's actually being challenged right now at the Supreme Court.

It's also a massive land grab. The Toronto Islands are a cherished public park, that were owned by the city of Toronto until this government seized control of them.

The Toronto Port Authority has said that expanding the airport to allow jets will require a 900-metre extension of the runway into Lake Ontario on the west side, which would stop the flow of water through the western gap and out the eastern gap. It would stop the flushing of the water through the Toronto harbour, and it means that the Toronto harbour would essentially become stagnant.

The other thing is, this expansion is going to cost $5 billion, when we're already expanding Pearson airport to accommodate another 20 million passengers a year, so it's a complete waste of money. The only reason that anybody wants to expand the airport at Billy Bishop is because J.P. Morgan bought the terminal building. They get paid for every passenger that uses the airport, so they want expanded passengers so that they can make more money. But in the meantime, the Toronto waterfront would be destroyed.

The signatories of these petitions have asked that the government repeal Bill 110, the Building Billy Bishop Airport Act, rescind the special economic zone designation and respect the authority of the city of Toronto and the voices of waterfront communities in all decisions affecting the Toronto waterfront.

I fully support this petition. I will be affixing my signature and passing it to page Tyler to take to the table.

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition from people in Kingston entitled "Realign Ontario's Electoral Boundaries."

They're petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to update the Representation Act, 2015, which concerns the riding boundaries, and to realign Ontario's electoral boundaries to match those that exist federally, without removing the extra ridings in northern Ontario.

DISASTER RELIEF

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'm honoured to rise on behalf of my constituents to table a petition entitled "Expand Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians."

1510

Ottawa was hit by a historic storm on Canada Day. In my riding, there were areas that received more than 150 millimetres of rain in an hour. That caused water to rush into people's homes in multiple ways—overland, groundwater, through sewage backup.

More than 7,500 homes were impacted by this flooding. People are facing serious financial impacts because of this flooding, rising to the tens of thousands of dollars. Some people are saying they're not able to repair their home and make it safe to live in again. Others are looking at re-mortgaging homes, paying the price for the rest of their lives or even filing bankruptcy.

This government, which failed to provide any support for cleanup in the aftermath, has also decided that only a very small number of Ottawa residents actually deserve any financial assistance from the provincial government. There are people who are being told that because of the street they live on, they don't qualify. There are people who are being told that because the water came into their home through the foundation or through the sewers, despite the fact that the sewers were overwhelmed because of the quantity of rainfall, they don't qualify for any help from the government.

Only people in two neighbourhoods have been offered any form of assistance from the government, leaving out Crystal Beach—one of the hardest-hit neighbourhoods—Queensway Terrace North, Britannia, Belltown, Briargreen, Centrepointe, City View, Crestview, General Burns. Everybody has been told that they're on their own.

More than 2,000 Ottawa residents have signed this petition calling on the government of Ontario to expand disaster recovery assistance to everybody in Ottawa affected by this one natural disaster regardless of what street they live on, regardless of how the water came in—one storm, one recovery.

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

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition entitled "Petition to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act." It's signed by a number of people from Kingston. They're petitioning this assembly to amend the Residential Tenancies Act such that rent control measures equivalent to those already in place for buildings first occupied before November 2018 come into effect two years after a tenant occupies a new unit.

This comes mostly from residents in Kingston and the Islands.

WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am pleased to present a petition to this Legislature in support of declaring October as menopause awareness month in Ontario and October 18 as menopause awareness day.

Speaker, we know that about half of Ontario's population will experience menopause. It's a natural stage of life, and yet it remains misunderstood, stigmatized, and there is a lack of supports. There can be a significant impact on health, quality of life, employment and economic security. About one in three women who experience menopause report that there is a negative impact on their performance at work. About one in 10 are forced to leave the workplace altogether. Others cut back their hours or decline promotions or other things. That comes with a big economic hit to our overall economy.

Public awareness and education are a critical tool to help reduce that stigma, improve access to information, expand health care treatment options and encourage workplaces to better support people who experience menopause. The signatories to this bill are calling on the Legislative Assembly to recognize the importance of menopause awareness and to pass the menopause awareness day act in Ontario.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition signed by people from Kingston and nearby communities entitled "Petition to Cancel Highway 413." I should give credit: This comes from the Green Party of Ontario, but my constituents have asked me to present it.

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: "to immediately cancel Highway 413, and invest in livable and affordable communities connected by transit that protect nature and crush climate pollution."

HEALTH CARE WORKERS

M^me^ France Gélinas: I'm glad to present this petition from OPSEU Local 276, the Owen Sound Family Health Team, that has been signed by 681 people from Grey and Bruce county.

The community health and service sector provides really important care and support. Workers in these organizations support some of Ontario's most vulnerable residents, but Bill 124 limited compensation growth for many public sector workers, although this bill was later ruled unconstitutional. Many workers in health and social service organizations did not receive the retroactive compensation increase that was due to them once Bill 124 was ruled unconstitutional.

There's some chronic underfunding and wage inequity that have contributed to recruitment and retention issues, as well as staffing shortages. The residents of Grey and Bruce county rely on those services, and the ongoing labour dispute at the Owen Sound Family Health Team highlights the urgent need for the government to act.

They ask the government to provide an immediate and sustained funding increase to stabilize community health and social service organizations. That would include a 9.5% retroactive wage increase for the Owen Sound Family Health Team, to go back to November 2019, consistent with the retroactive compensation adjustment provided to other public sector workers following the repeal of Bill 124.

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk with Neha.

CAREGIVERS

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition entitled "Support 24/7 Caregivers." This is a petition that was written by a constituent of mine quite a while ago, and these petitions keep coming into my office. These ones now are coming from across Ontario. I'm just looking—there's a bunch of Toronto addresses on the first page of many pages.

But the idea is they're calling on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to get the Ontario government to support 24/7 family caregivers, including through financial compensation. These are people who are spending a lot of their time caring for loved ones, and the reason why some financial support would go a long way, a little bit of financial support would go a long way, is because these 24/7 family caregivers are doing a lot of work for free, and so even a little bit of financial support could be leveraged to provide a lot of care.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'm reintroducing the petition "Justice for Sexual Assault Survivors (Lydia's Law)." Madam Speaker, did you know that last year, 1,639 sexual assault cases got dispensed before they actually hit the court system? This is really significant, because only 6% of sexual assault cases actually get to that place, which means that those women—primarily women—were denied justice in Ontario, which is why we introduced Lydia's Law, which is actually based on the Auditor General's 2019 recommendations, which will—perhaps I should rename the bill to have the Attorney General just do his job, Madam Speaker.

But right now, the petition stands that we want the Auditor General's recommendations to make legal support more accessible for survivors, to review the Victim Quick Response Program and to ensure that it's meeting its mandate, and remove the time limit for survivors, because many survivors of sexual assault in the Sloka case, where 47 women came forward and disclosed sexual assault and were denied justice—they waited over seven years, Madam Speaker.

So having a five-year limit for mental health supports does not make sense, does not meet the moment of sexual assault prevalence and cases in the province of Ontario, and the government cannot claim to be tough on crime when rapists keep walking free.

FERRY SERVICE

Mr. Ted Hsu: I have a petition entitled "Better Schedule, Better Service," and I'm hoping the Minister of Transportation hears what I'm about to say.

The petitioners are calling on the Ministry of Transportation to operate the Wolfe Island Ferry at the previous hourly schedule or better. The Wolfe Islander III—that vessel operated on a 60-minute schedule for decades. So what the petitioners would like to see is, they would like to see the Wolfe Islander IV operate at an hourly schedule or better.

Now, this is possible. The ministry officials know this, and so I'm trying to get the Minister of Transportation's attention with this petition to ensure that we get to that hourly schedule as soon as possible.

1520

HIGHWAY 69

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I have a petition here entitled "Stop Putting Lives at Risk," and it's in reference to Highway 69 in northern Ontario. I have the northern MPPs to thank for educating us who are not aware of the dangers of Highway 69, that the small amount—the 68 kilometres of Highway 69 have caused so many preventable deaths and tragedies, and that we need to be aware of this.

My colleagues—MPP West, MPP Gélinas, MPPs Mamakwa and Vaugeois, including an MPP who's not here right now in the House, MPP Vanthof—have been fighting so hard to get the government to understand that this is part of Ontario and this kind of inattention to the tragedies that they're suffering should not have been allowed to happen.

Later this afternoon, we're going to be discussing Bill 140. In Bill 140, there is a schedule—schedule 4—where the government is now, it looks like, purporting to address this issue. So what we have been recommending is that the government can take that schedule right now and pass it immediately, with a stroke of a pen, so that we can move on as quickly as possible to fix Highway 69 and prevent any more unnecessary deaths, injuries and family tragedies in northern Ontario.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO FASTER ACT, 2026
LOI DE 2026 VISANT À BÂTIR L'ONTARIO PLUS RAPIDEMENT

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

Bill 140, An Act to enact two Acts and to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 140, Loi édictant deux lois et modifiant diverses lois.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

MPP Jamie West: Before I forget, I want to note that I'm sharing my time with the member from Oshawa.

We're debating Bill 140, Building Ontario Faster Act. It has multiple schedules. This is a massive bill; there are 23 schedules, 263 pages, Speaker, and it's a bit ridiculous. It's a dog's breakfast in terms of the schedules. It was tabled yesterday after 3 p.m. I went to the table to get printouts, but the printouts weren't available until this morning, even though we were debating it this morning. So, with this massive, 23-schedule, 263-page bill—we were preparing all night, so if I yawn partway through, it's because I was up late going through this and reading this.

But I'm going to focus on schedule 4, and that's Highway 69. Very brief history of Highway 69: It's the two-lane portion that brings you from Toronto to Sudbury. So, basically, you get past Barrie, and then it's been two-lane for a very, very long time, so about 35 years. Every party in this room, I guess, except for the Green Party, has been government at some point while there's been work on it.

You fast-forward to 2005: Premier McGuinty is elected. He's the Premier from the Liberal Party. He promises he's going to complete 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound—that's the final leg. He announces it's going to be done by 2017. It doesn't hit the target, but credit where credit is due, he does all but 68 kilometres, so somewhere around 120 kilometres were done.

Fast-forward to 2018: Doug Ford becomes our Premier. The Conservative Party is in power. He promises to complete the four-laning in Highway 69, but unfortunately, for the next four years, there's zero dollars in the budget for this. In fact, I think there's been zero dollars every year, the last eight years, for this. But credit where credit is due because there were projects that had been tendered under the previous government, and the Conservative government did not cancel them. So, I'm thankful for that; we were able to move forward. But they didn't tender any new projects.

I worked in construction for more than a decade. The cost to remobilize the equipment you need to bring up there to install bridges to do that sort of work is incredibly expensive. We could have saved some money on this, but they chose not to do that.

You know, in Hansard, you can see that I asked multiple questions about this, trying to work with the government to move this forward. In fact, one of the first questions I had in question period as a newly elected MPP was following Suzanne Pharand and Aimé Giroux's deaths. I was at their funeral in 2018. These were two parents, and they had died on Highway 69, and I started talking about this and how important it was.

I'll just go through a brief history, because there have been three elections since then. In 2018, the Premier promises he's going to complete it, but there are zero dollars every single year in the budget, zero dollars every fall economic statement, towards this project. In 2022, the Premier says, "This time, for sure, I'm going complete the four-laning of Highway 69"—every year, zero dollars in the budget for this. In 2025, the Premier promises to complete the four-laning of Highway 69, and in 2025, zero

dollars in the budget; 2026, zero dollars in the budget for this. It just feels like a recording.

But in April 2026, something interesting happens. I'm going to say the dam bursts. Vinod and Shilpa Patel are killed on Highway 69. They're headed down Highway 69 for a medical appointment, and their vehicle collides with a transport truck on the two-lane stretch, right around Britt, Ontario. And I don't know why—because there have been countless deaths that have happened since 2018 on this road, and people have been upset and frustrated—but there was a bursting point with Vinod and Shilpa.

I think it's because, in 2025, the Premier was interviewed about this, and he said, "Have you ever (gone) from Sudbury down to the city?"—Toronto, I'm assuming—"That two-lane is like white-knuckle driving down there. If the transport is off by two inches ... you're done." Well, Vinod and Shilpa were off by two inches, Speaker, and they were done. So were the people of Sudbury. They got mad. They got frustrated in a way that I haven't seen before, and congratulations to them for mobilizing.

France and I, we recognized this was happening, and obviously, we asked the government—we had the normal routes of asking questions during question period, but I want to say the approach we took was very important. The member for Nickel Belt and I, we decided this can't be partisan; it's about getting it finished. We held the town hall, and we just told people to come and talk to us. It was open to everybody. You didn't have to be a card-carrying member of any party; anyone could come.

Our MP is a Liberal, for example; she came. She shared the information that she had about the federal government having the money in the bank for more than a decade now towards their portion of paying for this. We spoke with the Minister of Transportation: How do we get this done? Friendly one-on-one conversations. We spoke with the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka. That portion of the two-lane, it's in his riding. It's a Conservative-held riding. He should be fighting as hard as I am—he agrees with me on it; I'm not trying to throw rocks at my friend.

We started working together. We started a website. We had to flip a coin; it ended up on my web page, so jamiewestmpp.ca/4lane69, but just put "Jamie West, four-lane 69," and it will come up in your search. We just put all the information in there so people could share their stories there. You could sign our petitions—the petitions that were read earlier. We share facts about it.

One of the things we hear on a regular basis is that there's three First Nation treaty territories in that area. First Nations have rights on the area, and time and time again, people go, "Oh, it's because of them. Oh, they're so greedy. They're so"—so we share the information from the chiefs and from the council of those areas, saying, "We're in favour of this and we have been for a long time. We don't know what's holding up the government." We try to break the myths that are going on there, and we post the news. All the news that's happening, we put it there and we share it. We just tell people what's going on.

Then, we kicked off a campaign that's called Four Lanes, Zero Excuses—Quatre Voies, Zéro Excuse. We bought billboards, and it says, "Four Lanes, Zero Excuses" on them, and we have yard signs, and people are collecting them like crazy and putting them in the yard. If you drive down Highway 69, you'll see them on the side of the highway as well. We have stickers that people have. We have window clings. It's very, very popular because people just want this done, and they don't want it to be politicized. Basically, we said, "Look, it's your voice that's important. Let us amplify your voices." All of us have that ability as MPPs.

The reality is there are 444 municipalities in Ontario, and they all have important issues that they're going to be fighting for, so we need to keep polite and constant pressure on the government, because there are lots of things of distraction. There are lots of people vying for attention, but it's working, and I'm thrilled about that.

On June 4, the government announced a consultation in Britt, and the member from Nickel Belt, France, and I, we drove down to see it. It was a little bit soft. It was stuff people have seen before, but it was great to see, "Hey, we're working on this. Here's what's happening. Here are some maps; you can see the proposed plan."

Then, again, on August 26, the government announced that they were going to have six parcels. They're going to divide this area, the 68 kilometres, into six parcels, and then four of them will have shovels in the ground by the end of 2027. Surely, I hope it's not going to be New Year's Eve at 11:55, but by the end of 2027, four parcels with shovels in the ground, and that's a great sign, because people are dying on this road. We shared that, as well, with everybody.

Then, on October 23, the Minister of Transportation, along with some of his colleagues, they make an announcement: They're going to fast-track Highway 69.

1530

October 29, when we came back—remember we went home June 2 and we didn't come back till October 29? One of the first things the Premier said: "We're going to get Highway 69 done. We're going to get it four-laned." It's one of the first things he said.

Hon. Steve Clark: Fantastic.

MPP Jamie West: It is fantastic. The member opposite is saying it's fantastic. It is. Let's get it done, and let's keep those promises, right? Because the Premier has had a history of breaking promises, and we've got to keep them.

Here's the bad news. The good news: Highway 69 is a schedule in this bill. The bad news: This bill has 23 schedules, and there are not a lot of them that have anything to do with Highway 69, or highways in any way. So I eliminated the ones that you could even vaguely point to might being related to this, just to share with you an idea of this dog's breakfast. There's a section on animal health. There's a section on bees, courts of justice, a family member's authority to act on behalf of disability savings plan beneficiaries, farm implements, the Ontario Energy Board, regulated health professionals, resource recovery and the circular economy, retail sales act—that's nearly a dozen that have nothing to do with this. Honestly, this

should just be a stand-alone bill. It doesn't make any sense to be jammed in here.

And so I saw it; I was very excited. I said, "This is good." I talked to my colleagues and I said, "You know what you should do is just pull this out. We can go to second and third reading, get it to royal assent, and we could have shovels in the ground tomorrow." And so we did; we proposed it.

In fact, after the lead debate—I was here on House duty this morning; I'm here often on House duty—I said to the minister, "Thank you very much, Speaker.... This is a very large bill," and I talked about all the schedules. "Schedule 4 is the one that touches me the most because of Highway 69 and the number of people who have died in my community driving on that road. I know that the Minister of Transportation has been supportive; I know that the minister from Parry Sound—the majority of that highway is in his riding—is very supportive of this. But this part of Highway 69 is buried in with conversations about bees and farm implements and disability savings plans. I wonder if the minister would agree to just pull out Schedule 4—Highway 69—so we can pass it as quickly as possible and get shovels in the ground as early as tomorrow."

And I would expect: "What a good idea." Because the Premier wants to make this happen. But no, that's not what happened. The minister decided it would be partisan. The response was:

"It's typical opposition: They just don't want to get things done. They want to start pulling schedules already....

"What I hear from the member"—me—"is we have a proposal before the Legislature that shaves five years off a highway for his own residents"—and the rhetoric goes on and on.

So let's clear that up: my residents. My residents live 70 kilometres from there. Do you know who should care about this? The member from Parry Sound, because he has residents who drive it every single day. His residents live on that road. I welcome him to join me and fight for this as well.

Why are we doing this? Why are we doing this dance and this rhetoric? I'll tell you, Speaker, because everyone here knows, but let me explain it to the people over there: This is what's known as a poison pill. What they do is, they put in a bill and they put a couple of things that are good, and then they put in nonsense that they know we won't support. I don't know, maybe it's the bees; I have no idea. But they know: They're going to put some junk in there that we're not going to support. And then they're going to announce afterwards: "Did you know the member from Sudbury doesn't love Highway 69?" Like anyone in my riding is going to believe that. Like one single person will believe that nonsense.

They do this on a regular basis. They do it purposely. They pretend—honestly, Speaker, how we vote on this side has very little impact when you have a super-majority government. When they say, "This bill, if it passes"—I mean, come on. It's passing, right? Half your crew could stay home and it would pass. That's the reality. You have a majority government. It's going to pass.

But that's not the goal. The goal isn't fixing Highway 69 for the Conservative government. The goal is to say, "New Democrats don't want it fixed." They won't mention the poison pills. They won't mention the other 22 schedules in the act. They'll just pretend this is one bill on its own. And honestly, the people of northern Ontario are not idiots. They are smarter than you think, and they will see right through this.

So let's not be partisan. I'll give you an example of something that is partisan. Our researcher—we were talking about this bill, and he said, "I don't understand why the new legislation would be needed here anyway." The fast-tracking provisions implemented for Highway 413 were enabled in the Building Highways Faster Act. It designates Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass, the Garden City Skyway and "any other prescribed highway project" as a priority highway project to which the fast-tracking provisions would apply.

So that means the government could designate Highway 69 for fast-tracking today—or five years ago, right? Because this bill magically is going to shave five years off of this. And I've read the bill—it's thick, it's heavy. I can't hold it up because it'd be a prop, but there's nothing in here about building a DeLorean with a flux capacitor to go back five years in time. That claim is nonsense.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: That would be schedule 24.

MPP Jamie West: That would be schedule 24.

So in 2024, when Bill 212 passed—the one I was talking about earlier—we proposed an amendment to designate Highway 69 as a "priority highway project." That would be two years ago. The Conservative government, Speaker, they voted against it. That conversation is partisan politics. That's not going to put shovels in the ground. What's going to put shovels in the ground is actually doing the work. Let's pull this out. Let's pass it this afternoon—second, third reading, gone. Then we tender, then we get moving.

I know sometimes that the members opposite won't listen to me. I don't mean that as an insult. It's just that sometimes when you're in different parties, you tune other people out. So maybe they'll listen to some of the people who have lost family members.

Let me tell you about Jeannine Lacasse. She grew up, and they lived, on Highway 69. In 2000, there was a crash that killed three people, and one of them was her mother. Every accident after that, every close call when the highway was closed down—because sometimes they close it down because they're not sure if someone's died—every time it's closed down, she relives that tragedy. And I'm sure the family members of the other three people do as well. And Jeannine says, "What does the government have to gain? Why is this not being prioritized? We need to save lives."

Jack Snow—Jack, I've known for years, way before I was elected. Jack's wife was killed on Highway 69. She was travelling for work. She was one of two nurses that died on that trip. Jack has a granddaughter. Jack's known as Grampa Two. She's got Grampa One and Grampa Two. You know how she describes the difference? Grampa One

has a gramma, Grampa Two doesn't. So it breaks his heart because his granddaughter has never met his wife.

The Patel family—I talked about them earlier: pillars of the community. They're very involved with the Gujarati community. Their sons came down shortly before the funeral—came down here to talk to the government, to say that we have to get this done, right? Let's make this non-partisan. Do you know what one of the members said? Do you know why it doesn't get done? Because you didn't vote for a Conservative. That section is in a Conservative riding, Speaker.

I don't know—you could bypass against everything that is getting done in your riding by blaming us, but I tell you, when Marit Stiles becomes the Premier of Ontario, when we form government, we will get this done and shovels in the ground.

And then Erin—God, Erin broke our heart. Erin came to speak when we kicked off our campaign. She came to speak about her nephew Cody. I'm going to read part of what she said:

Today, I stopped at the side of the road.

The place where my world came crashing down. The place where my beloved nephew, Cody ... was killed in a car accident on June 5....

I stood there for a moment and reflected on the loss, the grief, the anger and the pain.

And then I saw them.

Pieces of a heat shield. Little fragments and bits of debris that could have been from Cody's car.

I cried....

Knowing that this tragedy may potentially have been avoided if the four-laning of Highway 69 had been completed as promised so many years ago.

Safety should never be compromised for profit. Lives matter more than bottom lines.

I have more of these, Speaker. Jenny who's a friend of mine—and I'll tell you, the member from Nickel Belt, France, and I—people will message us on Messenger and tell us that the car in front of them just got smacked and how terrified they are. The member from Nickel Belt and I, we drive that twice a week when the House is sitting. We know first-hand how dangerous it is. And when our schedules don't line up and we're travelling separately, you spend that four or five hours, depending on how long it takes, worrying about the other member. And when you hear the highway is closed, everyone in our communities, from Parry Sound north—every single person does a mental check of their friends and their family to find out where they are. Maybe it's my friend, maybe it's my family this time, because every time you drive, you roll the dice; because every time you drive, if that transport is off by two inches, you're gone. The Premier knows that, and he continues to play games.

1540

Jenny called me. She said, "I was on the two-lane portion of Highway 69 and came around a bend in the road when I noticed that an oncoming transport's trailer was taking up more than half my lane! I swerved and the next thing I knew, I was stopped on the shoulder and my friends and I were all crying. We sat there for a while to calm down before moving on. It was terrifying."

Marc talks about the extreme close calls he's had with oncoming transports, having to swerve to move away from them, how all the cars behind him hit the brakes so they don't run into the back of his car. He says on a very narrow two-lane street section where you have to share with oncoming traffic, especially during weather when visibility is low, there's no place to pull over and the signage is very poor. Think of that, Speaker: Right out here, there are more lanes headed to this building than there are to get to Sudbury from Parry Sound.

There are other people who've reached out and they want to talk about north and south travel and the stress they have.

Al Sutton travels regularly to SickKids on Highway 69. He uses it multiple times a year. Imagine the stress of travelling with your kids, hoping they're going to be okay by going to SickKids and getting the care they need, but also worrying that, like the Patel family, on the way back from a medical appointment, you'll be killed and your kids will be killed.

Al says, "The number of times I've had to ride on the shoulder and/or swerve out of the way of someone crossing the centre line and deal with aggressive drivers improperly passing are immeasurable. I've personally drove behind a transport weaving back and forth into oncoming traffic from Shawanaga to Parry Sound and called 911. I've never had a trip completed that there wasn't a thought that something may happen to me or my kids and hoping it isn't this time."

There are also parents who travel with their kids for sports. There are patients who travel for care, like the Patel family.

This person wanted to be anonymous: "I have to travel often to Toronto for medical treatment. I don't have a choice—this is life-saving care that I need that we don't have here. Every single time I travel on that highway, I'm scared. Do I die because I can't get medical treatment, or do I die trying to get there on this highway? It's a choice I have to make every time. It might to come to the point where I have to move to Toronto just because I need health care. It is not fair."

Gail says the flights are too expensive, so she drives to Toronto for her flights: "Flights from the north are not as frequent and so I had to drive to Toronto to catch the flight out. I had to drive in terrible winter conditions. I got stuck behind a plow and people were trying to pass the plow because they don't want to go 40 kilometres an hour and it created multiple near misses and put everyone in danger. It's the only road to travel. There is no other way to get here."

There are truck drivers, there are paramedics, there are police officers who are affected, and I'm going to read a comment from them as well.

An anonymous commercial driver didn't want his name shared because of his company: "I drove a commercial vehicle for my own business and ended up in an accident off the side of the road because of the bad road conditions on Highway 69"—the two-lane portion. "People need this highway for business and that accident has caused so many issues for me. It's affected my livelihood and my mental health."

Dr. Bota, who's an emergency room doctor, said it's incredibly emotional for medical professionals constantly dealing with severe medical cases or losing people in their care when they can't save them.

I mentioned that France, the member for Nickel Belt, and I went to Britt for an update on this project. Do you know what we heard most? When you turn to Britt, you come out onto 45, back on Highway 69, the two-lane portion, and there's a hill with a bridge. And so you basically guess when you're going to merge. EMS, the paramedics and the fire responders—the fire trucks don't have a lot of fires. They respond to people who have been in violent accidents on Highway 69, so imagine the mental toll of that. But you basically guess and hope for the best, and if there's a transport coming, because they can't stop in time, you just gun it and hope for the best or drive onto the side of the road. That's not the way we should be running our province, gambling with people's lives.

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board "wishes to express its strong and unanimous support for the immediate completion of the four-laning of Highway 69 between French River and Parry Sound." They sent this to the Ministry of Transportation.

"As an organization responsible for providing emergency medical response on part of this corridor, our paramedics and staff have first-hand and ongoing experience responding to motor vehicle collisions on this highway." They have a whole bunch of details, but I'll run out of time if I read everything.

"Our members continue to respond to serious and fatal incidents along this corridor. We also continue to witness the cumulative burden placed on families, communities, health care systems and emergency responders when these preventable tragedies occur....

"—Significant and repeated psychological trauma experienced by paramedics, firefighters, and other emergency responders attending fatal and catastrophic collisions;

"—Continued strain on local and regional health care resources due to severe trauma cases....

"In areas where Highway 69 has been expanded to a divided four-lane configuration, and in the four-laned section north of the French River, there has been a noticeable reduction in both the frequency and severity of motor vehicle collisions."

There is also a long letter—there are many letters from mayors up north and city councils up north. This one is from the Parry Sound Area Chamber of Commerce—the Sudbury chamber of commerce, of course, in support of this; they were at the announcement with the Minister of Transportation that just happened a few days ago. The Parry Sound chamber of commerce, they understand the importance because it's within the Parry Sound riding:

"We respectfully call upon the government of Ontario to prioritize the completion of the remaining sections of Highway 69 and to provide the necessary funding and resources to accelerate this project. Northern Ontario residents and businesses have waited long enough for this essential infrastructure investment.

"The completion of Highway 69 is not a partisan issue. It is a matter of public safety, economic development, and fairness for the communities that contribute so much to the province's prosperity. We stand alongside municipalities, businesses, community organizations, and residents in advocating for the timely completion of this critical route."

You have here several examples of why this needs to get done and why no one is in the mood for these silly games. People are dying, Speaker, on a regular basis, being killed on Highway 69. The members opposite know it, and they've known it since 2018—when they broke their promise in 2018, in 2022; when they broke their promise in 2025. The Premier knows it because the Premier said, "Have you ever driven that road from Sudbury down to the city, to Toronto? If you're off by two inches, you're gone."

Either the Premier starts caring about people who are gone on that highway, or he gets out of the way and lets us do that job for him.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm glad to stand in this Legislature and bring voice on a bill that was tabled yesterday. It's a 23-schedule bill. It weighs heavily, pun intended. It is the Building Ontario Faster Act—23 desperate schedules, many of which should be their own individual pieces of legislation.

I appreciate the thoughtful remarks from my colleague the member from Sudbury. He focused on one schedule and could have spoken longer on the importance of addressing Highway 69. That's just schedule 4. But we have everything from Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act, the Bees Act, Highway Traffic Act, Metrolinx, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ontario Energy Board, the heritage act, the Planning Act, Regulated Health Professions Act, Retail Sales Tax Act, Fuel Tax Act.

But what I'm going to spend some time focusing on today, we're dealing with infrastructure, energy, transportation and the environment. These are all big, important topics of conversation, but why are you ramming this into a 23-schedule bill on the first day back to begin debating? And many of these things have strong connections to municipalities—municipalities that just went through elections—and right now none of us have councils that can take this on. I would say that that's purposeful, but we'll come to that in a bit.

Right now, this Bill 140, the Building Ontario Faster Act, we're debating 23 schedules of an omnibus bill, ostensibly a red tape reduction bill, but it spans all ministries, it would seem. It is in fact a dog's breakfast. There is so much in here. It does not respect the process for us to

have to rush through this and not be able to be thoughtful and have the time to consult. I understand that the government had five months or so away from this place to put together all of their ideas into these big phone book bills, but the communities deserve a chance to provide comment. I really hope—flash forward—that after this debate, we do allow communities to participate in this process. I will not hold my breath.

1550

Speaker, this is a rushed process. We're on day 2. We have not had time to consult. I'm pleased to be able to be part of the lead in speaking to this, but really, in effect, it is a privatization-focused bill. It is an environmental destruction bill. It's a garbage bill—that sounds like I'm name-calling; it's a lot about landfill, incineration. It's about garbage and recycling, so I feel like that's fair comment.

My colleague spoke thoughtfully about schedule 4; asked thoughtfully to have that schedule removed so that we could pass it, get shovels in the ground, start this important work. He ended up with some political ridiculousness from the member who responded, and that's disappointing. So I will let his comments stand about the need to four-lane Highway 69. We should not be playing politics; we should be building transportation infrastructure that meets the needs of communities who have been begging to be able to be safe.

I've had the opportunity to serve as the official opposition shadow minister for transportation, although I'm no longer in that role. The Minister of Transportation probably had a party to celebrate that he doesn't have to deal with me anymore, but I still get to talk about it today.

Metrolinx and accountability are what I'd like to pull out from schedule 14. Schedule 14 actually confers some powers from Metrolinx to the minister, which is interesting. We have been criticizing Metrolinx for a very long time. The black box that is Metrolinx is not accountable. We've been criticizing them. The government has basically come to their defence, and yet here we stand.

So we're having this conversation and the government is actually pulling some of that power from Metrolinx and giving it to the minister. Well, the Minister of Transportation being responsible for regional transportation planning instead of Metrolinx is an interesting conversation, because Metrolinx is an agency that exists to provide regional transportation planning. So if the ministry is taking over regional transportation planning, why does Metrolinx still exist? Where does this come from? Is this because you've finally been listening when we've been critical?

But I don't know whether it's a good thing or not, because the black box that is Metrolinx versus the black box that is the Minister of Transportation—I don't know how to feel because I don't know what is behind this.

I will say, though, a cautionary tale. Folks at home could Google this, but we may recall a previous Minister of Transportation, the former Minister Del Duca. When he was the transportation minister, he faced a lot of scrutiny after pushing for new GO stations in his own riding, but initially, their technical assessments by Metrolinx had ranked them unfavorably. It was a fair bit of criticism regarding that political interference potential over independent agency evaluations. That's something that everyone was quite interested in at the time about how decisions are made.

So now, if the minister is going to be responsible for regional transit planning, is it for all, for some, for favourite projects? I don't know. We will look forward to learning more as we go.

But I would like to say that I haven't trusted Metrolinx to make decisions that are accountable. We've been asking repeatedly, demanding a public inquiry, and this government has not allowed that to happen, and yet here we are with that power conferred to the minister. So I guess we were right all along and maybe they were quietly listening. One can never tell.

A big part of this bill that's problematic is regarding the environment. This really is an environmental wrecking ball. It looks like the Building Ontario Faster Act is actually designed to gut the part of the Environmental Bill of Rights that actually matters. I think the environmental stuff is slowing down the large-scale destruction.

I think if the government wanted to have a real conversation about building housing, they would start building housing. I don't think that this is enabling legislation. I don't think we're going to see construction happening faster. What I think that we're seeing is a wish list from developers for how to make it easier to do harm—to literally bulldoze the protections.

Schedule 7 in this bill repeals the municipal veto on new landfill sites, requiring a comprehensive environmental assessment—which, by the way, this government itself introduced in 2020 with Bill 197 at the time. The then Conservative minister Jeff Yurek had stated, "We recognize the importance of autonomy in local decision-making and agree that a landfill should only be located in communities that are a willing host."

There are a couple of members on the government benches who are probably feeling quite uncomfortable. Think about the Beachville quarry, the member from Oxford, various other members. I wonder how they're feeling about the fact that now we're dumping dumps on municipalities without their voice, before an environmental assessment. This is a flip-flop, and it's reminiscent of this government's broken promise to require a full environmental assessment of the proposed York1 landfill in Dresden, which the government subsequently exempted altogether from the EA Act with Bill 5. This is bad.

Schedule 8, the Environmental Bill of Rights: This schedule amends the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993. This schedule amends the factors to be considered in determining the period for public comment on proposals under the act and makes various amendments to update language in the act.

This government is not interested in hearing from the public. When we're talking about their very limited opportunities to bring voice to important, consequential environmental matters, this amends the factors to be considered in determining the period for public comment—oh, great.

The schedule makes a consequential amendment to the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act.

Most of our communities have been thrown into chaos by this government's Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act. I think all of our communities have stockpiles of old tires literally piling up. Recycling has come to a standstill in a number of areas. I think that the government has realized that their plan is failing, but now they're going to have more control over circular materials. I guess it will allow the government to rip up that contract.

The Blue Box Program—all of us had a lot of emails regarding the changes to the Blue Box Program and recycling in our communities. I would be happy to share—here's something. The recently re-elected mayor of Whitby, Liz Roy, and the then council, regarding blue box collection—she had sent this to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. He and I share Oshawa. He's the north end of Oshawa. We're neighbours, but this is under his purview. They urged the province "to consider the following actions:

"(1) introduce exemptions or subsidies for registered non-profits and faith-based organizations to offset increased recycling costs;

"(2) ensure continuity and clarity in recycling pickup services for community-serving institutions;

"(3) engage directly with impacted sectors to co-design solutions that uphold both environmental and social sustainability."

I'll read this: "The town of Whitby urges the province to reconsider this decision related to eligibility and permit faith-based organizations and food security service providers to continue to be collected as part of the common collection system developed under the blue box regulation. Excluding these groups would impose an undue financial burden on a sector already operating with limited resources, an outcome that is neither practical nor justifiable."

All of us—well, I will assume all of us—were getting letters from churches, from food banks and community groups that prepare food and then have recycling, but they can't recycle because they can't afford it—because they haven't budgeted for these unanticipated costs that the government foisted upon them.

Schedule 9 is an amendment to the Environmental Protection Act. It basically allows the government to force incinerators on unwilling host communities, is the takeaway. There will be a lot of interest from municipalities, remembering that we just had an election—how many days ago?—two days ago and that those councils have yet to be sworn in. They're going to find out—one of the first things that they learn as new councillors and mayors—that they could get a dump dumped on them, that they could have an incinerator, that they don't have to be a willing host anymore. The government getting to redefine garbage is another fun part of this.

1600

MECP is proposing to repeal the provisions that allow members of the public to ask the government to review an existing law—that's a change. MECP is also proposing to eliminate the provisions that allow members of the public to request an investigation of alleged contraventions by submitting an application for investigation under the Environmental Bill of Rights.

We don't want the public to tell us what they think. Let me say that again because being sarcastic doesn't help: The government does not want people to tell them what they think. I very much would like the public to have a chance to participate in their democracy.

Schedule 9 fast-tracks approvals for garbage incinerators—this is happening while the government weakens recycling targets and allows stockpiles of uncollected recyclables like tires—including by allowing garbage to be defined as biomass and allowing energy from waste facilities to be fast-tracked using the exact same Green Energy Act provisions that the PCs hated when they were used to approve solar and wind energy projects. But I guess in this case, it's fine to use the Green Energy Act and make changes to get to redefine garbage so that more can be burned—it becomes biomass.

I understand that we have a real challenge ahead of us when it comes to waste disposal—I think everybody is aware of that—but then let's also have a long-term plan. Instead of strengthening our recycling or talking about meaningful producer-pay and making that happen, we're seeing less recycling happening.

Call me crazy. I was raised in the 1990s, I remember "reduce, reuse, recycle." That may or may not be the only answer, but this government is like, "Bulldoze, hide, burn, run." That's their plan, and I don't think that that is sustainable.

Schedule 8 guts the Environmental Bill of Rights, including by scrapping the public notice and consultation requirements for draft bills, regulations and policies and replacing them with the far weaker provisions of the as-yet-unproclaimed Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act, 2020. It hasn't even been proclaimed yet, and they're replacing it. This is far weaker even than that. It does not include statutory requirements for public notice or consultation in which focus is on regulatory burden with no specific regard for environmental impact. It also repeals the Environmental Bill of Rights requirements for ministry statements of environmental values, applications for review of a statute etc., etc.

I just want to say that the Environmental Bill of Rights, Speaker, was enacted by the NDP government and has served to protect the democratic rights of people to participate meaningfully in government decisions that affect the environment. This change is very bad.

I also want to raise—I have to find it first. There are so many notes. I think I've done pretty well, Speaker, considering they tabled this yesterday.

But we're hearing from the communities. The government might not want people to be participating, but people are paying attention because they're ready for this kind of manoeuvre, and they've been filling our inboxes.

Here is a thoughtful summary of key implications for Ontario First Nations, and I'm going to focus on the environmental pieces here. Key implications: While the

proposed frames its changes as administrative streamlining, what we're actually seeing is the structural removal of public oversight tools directly impacting First Nations communities, who rely on these transparency and accountability mechanisms to protect their traditional territories, treaty rights and their local environments—loss of independent legal and oversight avenues, reduced transparency on decisions, erosion of environmental accountability.

I want to flesh out here some of the specific areas of concern in the document. Here's the specific text. If folks go onto the Environmental Registry of Ontario proposal notice 026-1109, they'll see what I'm talking about. This is where I'm quoting that from.

"MECP is proposing to repeal the provisions that allow members of the public to ask the government to review an existing law, regulation, policy, or instrument by submitting an application for review.

"MECP is also proposing to eliminate the provisions that allow members of the public to request an investigation of alleged contraventions by submitting an application for investigation under the EBR," the Environmental Bill of Rights.

So why is this a concern, Speaker? These mechanisms historically gave First Nations a formal, legally recognized right to demand that the province investigate environmental violations—things like toxic spills, illegal dumping or non-compliant industrial activity—or review outdated regulations harming local ecosystems.

Another part that is problematic—the removal of third-party appeal rights: "MECP is proposing to repeal third-party mechanisms to seek leave (permission) to appeal under the EBR and third-party appeal mechanisms under the EPA in respect of decisions about renewable energy approvals.

"The change would provide greater certainty for project proponents that have already undergone a public consultation process and obtained government approvals."

Why is this a concern? First Nations frequently utilize third-party appeal rights to challenge industrial, energy or resource extraction projects that threaten cultural heritage sites, water or wildlife, especially when initial consultations fail to address community concerns. Eliminating these rights heavily tilts the playing field towards corporate project proponents.

Third major thing: notice of government proposals and decisions—this is a concern because moving key government policies and regulatory frameworks exclusively to a business-centric registry rather than the public interest Environmental Registry of Ontario fragments public oversight. It presents a barrier for Indigenous communities trying to monitor regulatory shifts that impact treaty lands.

This government is doing things so fast, it would make our head spin. We called for the resumption of the Legislature. We called for this government to allow us to come back when we were supposed to be here. Kids go back to school; we go back to the Legislature—except we hadn't. We didn't come back until just now, yesterday. We had lots of time to discuss these things and do it right. This government says there are real things in the way to getting things built and constructed. Nobody wants to see that we don't have housing built. But this government hasn't built housing.

Speaker, I want to tell you that I'm now the official opposition shadow minister for energy, which is new. I'm just getting my feet wet in that file—infrastructure as well, so I might be busy. Folks might get to hear me more often.

But I will say that schedule 16 is something I'd like to focus on here. It implements certain recommendations of the PULSE report—the PULSE report being the Panel for Utility Leadership and Service Excellence. That's the PULSE report. It just came out. The PULSE panel was asked to look at some of the challenges facing electricity distributors as the province decarbonizes and electrifies, which will require major investments in the electricity sector. There are real problems to be solved as Ontario's grid expands and modernizes. It is complex and complicated.

Some recommendations from the PULSE report seem to be reflected in schedule 16 of this government bill. I imagine we'll see more recommendations after this—who knows?—but there are a few in here. The changes include prescribed criteria for the board members of municipally owned LDCs; ministerial power to prescribe requirements for LDC capital plans and procurement processes; and the power to direct the OEB on rates that may be charged to finance these capital plans, including the power to charge current consumers for investments that will be delivered in the future.

1610

This is regulatory authority. LDCs have been regulated with the principle that benefits follow cost. There are small LDCs that are facing complex challenges, granted, but these municipalities are only going to get one non-voting member. That's a change. I'm sure that we can all agree that there are pros and cons to elected officials on different boards. We've seen things work. We've seen areas for improvement. Professionalization of a board doesn't sound like a bad thing until you look at Metrolinx, and that's a really bad thing. We want a skilled board, but that's not what this does. That's not what this guarantees. I guess we'll have to wait and find out.

In the PULSE report, there was a fair bit about consolidation. I will admit that I'm a bit worried that privatization is on the menu; I know that that is the wrong direction. I think the devil is going to be in the details. We would love to have time to unpack this and I hope the government gives it to us—again, not hopeful. I want to know, though, how this government is going to protect consumers from risky investments. Everybody is concerned about their bills, and I want to know what the government is going to do to safeguard consumers, ratepayers.

I'm going to circle back to some of the blue box stuff, because I'm looking at the time and it turns out I have a lot more than I thought I was going to. I was working at a fair clip to make sure I didn't leave anything out—wow. If I'm talking about recycling and the Blue Box Program, you used to get your recycling picked up by the munici-

pality. Then the government stopped that. Municipalities, they suggested, would then become flush with cash. The agency or the church group could work out a side deal or pay out of pocket. "Have a nice day." That was their recycling plan.

What we have heard from the Memorial Christ church in Oshawa—they wrote to my office and said, "Here are two quotes I received for recycling pickup." This is a church that has not had to pay for recycling. One quote he got for four to six bins once a month is $74 plus tax, and then three to four bins every other week is $131 a month; or a $200 one-time service charge, four bins once a month, is $134, and extra pickup, if needed, is $170.56. They have to have a two-year contract.

This is a small church that is looking for a way to deal with their recycling and they are looking at about $1,600 a year in unanticipated costs. Why are we doing this to Legions? Why are we doing this to churches? Why are we doing this to places that feed community members and then have nowhere to put their cans? Because the government, in this bill, redefining garbage as biomass—are we going to incinerate our cans now? What is the plan? I would be happy to have the government explain why we can't do this well. Explain why we can't do this right.

With 23 schedules, privatization is the wrong direction. This is the time that we should be having the public be more engaged, so that they can have more confidence, not just so that they can have a say. But instead, this government is making it so that the community cannot engage. The Environmental Bill of Rights mess—all of those schedules, schedules 7, 8 and 9—it's creating real problems for our future. This government is not handling things in a way that actually would make them accountable and accessible, so I am hoping that the government can answer whether or not we're going to have public consultations on this bill.

Twenty-three schedules—I'm not sure how many of those 23 schedules should be their own bill. Certainly, the Highway 69 part of this—so, schedule 4—absolutely should be its own. Actually, now that I have a bit of time, I am going to review that schedule 4 enables the fast-tracking of the long-planned and long-delayed widening of Highway 69, including by exempting the project from the Environmental Assessment Act and replacing its environmental assessment provisions with custom provisions specified in the schedule, including provisions for Indigenous consultation.

Remember, though, that this comes after government MPPs, including the now transportation minister, voted down NDP amendments to Bill 212 that would have fast-tracked Highway 69 by designating the project as a priority highway project. That was our amendment; they voted it down. It turns out they're listening to us again. They may spin it if we can't support this bill. There's so much in here that's a mess.

I want to thank the members for Sudbury and Nickel Belt, the northern members who did the northern roads tour. They brought voice to this. The communities have been very clear what is needed. It's disappointing that it's taken so long and that it's been about politics instead of people. This schedule has been asked to be removed from this bill and made into law that we could move forward—get the shovels in the ground, get folks moving. The government, in effect, said no.

So, a brief recap of all 23 schedules, we don't have time for. We don't have time to thoughtfully debate half of them, and yet this government has just shoved it all through, has been talking about how it's going to make things faster. I think it's going to make things worse. It's going to cause harm and damage. They are shutting off the public consultation.

I have raised thoughtful commentary, just on day one, of what we've looked at to figure out the First Nations perspective on this bill. They have provided very—well, "they"—looking at this, I worry that First Nations are not going to have the partner that they deserve with this government. You're making it harder for the public to engage in this process. You're making it harder for projects to be well done. You are gutting environmental protections, I would say, pretending that this is about housing or building.

There's a schedule in this bill. It is schedule 17, the Ontario Heritage Act. Let me find my notes. I think that this bill is conferring special powers or an archaeology degree to the minister. It may not quite be what it says. Hold on; don't let me—

Interjection: It probably does.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: No. Here we go—schedule 17, the Ontario Heritage Act: "The schedule makes various amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act ... the new section 48 sets out restricted activities that no person shall carry out except in accordance with ... or an authorization under the new section."

1620

Let's move forward. Here's what I'm looking for: "A new section 68.4 allows the minister to issue conservation orders requiring prescribed persons to take such steps as the minister determines"—as the minister determines—"are necessary to prevent loss of, damage to or destruction to one or more artifacts or damage or destruction to an archaeological site."

What qualifies the minister to be an expert on heritage and archaeology? Where is this coming from? I want to have that conversation, because if the government is sitting there quietly thinking, "Oh, how does she not know this? This comes from a really excellent place," let's go to committee and hear these stories, because I don't trust that this comes from a good place. I don't.

I think, if I had to hazard a guess—which I get to, because I have nothing else to go on because they tabled the bill yesterday—it's that this is about a developer who says, "Oh, these pesky heritage folks," or, "There's an archaeological roadblock for me. Get that out of my way, minister who knows so much about archaeology."

Ms. Catherine Fife: #sarcasm.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Yeah. I'm sorry; I shouldn't be facetious. I'm going to say I don't think the minister is

the expert on archaeology. I don't even know who the minister is in this case, but if I'm wrong, let me know.

Speaker, 23 schedules: We haven't even had a chance to talk about the Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act, the Animal Health Act, the Bees Act, the Construction Act, the Courts of Justice Act. What else didn't we talk about? The Farm Implements Act, the Family Members' Authority to Act on Behalf of Disability Savings Plan Beneficiaries Act, the Fuel Tax Act, the Highway Traffic Act. We talked about the Metrolinx Act. That's going to be fascinating.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Act, schedule 15, proposes to amend the Ministry of Infrastructure Act to require that information respecting underground infrastructure be supplied to the Minister of Infrastructure. I would like to have this conversation. I want to know what's the problem. I know that there's been good work done by Ontario One Call—I think the names have changed—and I know that it's complicated. I imagine that building a three-decker underground tunnel is going to require underground information. I hope they—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Ted Hsu: My question essentially boils down to this: Will this government keep us safe? The member for Oshawa said that she was raised in the 1990s. She's very familiar with refuse, reuse and recycle.

I was raised in the 1960s, before the first private member's bill for the Environmental Bill of Rights was introduced by Stuart Smith, the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, and before the Environmental Protection Act of 1971. It was a time when you wondered about drinking the water from the Great Lakes. You wondered about ever eating fish from the Great Lakes.

There's a danger that we're rolling back environmental protections in the name of progress and fighting trim. My question to the member is, does she think that this government will keep us safe?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I think they're going to talk a lot about that. I think we're going to hear a lot of rhetoric that would suggest that this is to build Ontario faster and to still be responsible. But I have not seen from this government the care that would reassure me that things are being done well.

And Speaker, I would say that even if I were wrong, if the government was being super-duper thoughtful and careful, we have no way of knowing because there isn't accountability. Because if I wanted to FOI something, jokes on me, right? We don't do that in the province anymore.

We can't hold the ministers accountable. There are other means that we have had to glean what the government is doing, but any report we ask for, we can't have. If the government wanted to actually reassure Ontarians that they have their best interests at heart, they would show the receipts.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Billy Pang: Last year, Premier Ford and our government were re-elected as a historic third consecutive majority, mandated to protect Ontario. With the chaos and instability being caused by President Trump, people knew we had the right plan to defend our sovereignty, fortify our critical supply chains and strengthen our economic resiliency.

This bill puts Ontario on the offensive. We are taking the fight to Washington because we will never become the 51st state. Does the member agree that it's important to stand up fast for our sovereignty and our economy instead of stalling our steps?

MPP Jamie West: You know what I would love for the Premier to do in order to protect Ontario? I'd like him to protect the nearly 750 workers that are being forced to lose their jobs at the WSIB. In every single circumstance, the Premier shows up and says he's going to fight. He doesn't win very often, but at least he says he's going to fight—he pours out a bottle of Crown Royal. But with these WSIB workers, he goes, "Oh, WSIB is arm's length. I can't do anything there." Well, he can do a high-five and a victory tour when they were giving employer rebates based on losing these jobs.

I don't know why the Conservatives come here every day and talk about Protect Ontario, but they won't protect 750 workers in Ontario that are losing their jobs, not because of Trump or tariffs, but because the Premier is too lazy to get up and work.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Nickel Belt.

M^me^ France Gélinas: Speaker, Highway 69 is the highway that links Sudbury to Toronto. It is used by all the mining companies, people getting health care, or going to see the Blue Jays, but 68 kilometres of Highway 69 is a two-lane road. With the high traffic, it is very dangerous. Most accidents are front-end collisions where people are severely injured and, unfortunately, many, many people die.

Those tragedies motivated me and the MPP for Sudbury to launch the "Four Lanes, Zero Excuses" campaign. So we were both so happy to see schedule 4 in Building Ontario Faster. Schedule 4 will fast-track the four-laning of Highway 69.

Speaker, I know that the MPP for Sudbury had the opportunity to ask the Conservative government that, since we all agree, could we fast-track schedule 4? How did it go?

MPP Jamie West: Unfortunately, it went very poorly. I want to thank the member for Nickel Belt, Speaker. It was her idea to remove this. She said, "I read this as quickly as I could. There's nothing really here to push against. Let's pull it out. Let's get shovels in the ground tomorrow."

I proposed that this morning, right after the lead debate. Unfortunately, the minister replied with, "We don't want to get things done. The member doesn't want to build Ontario. We have a proposal that's going to shave five years off." We want to shave a whole day off—vote it

through today, get it done tomorrow. The Conservatives don't want to work.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: This question is for the fine member from Oshawa: Do you think that if this government had us meet more often, more regularly, as other governments do all over the world, that we wouldn't have these God-awful omnibus bills?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I would like us to meet often. I would like us to meet appropriately so that we can debate thoughtful legislation.

I think this phone book bill that is super thick and full of poison pills is more of a political manoeuvre than it is a serious government's approach to good governance.

I wish that we were here so we could discuss, but also, I wish that we would have thoughtful and comprehensive committee hearings for this. You've got 23 schedules. That is ridiculous. This should be many different, separate bills, each deserving of attention and public consultation. This is strictly to confuse the public. That's disappointing.

Even on the ERO posting, there's such limited opportunity for people to comment. It is appalling, and they should have the sense to be embarrassed.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank both members for their comments.

I wanted to zero in on some of the remarks from the member from Oshawa. You mentioned—through you, Speaker—there's the worry about the collection from the small ICI sector, including the churches, Legions etc. The ERO posting, 026-1056, does in fact address that and it is certainly the intent of the government to consult through the ERO posting and through other measures to ensure that their voices are heard because there are a lot of benefits to bring them into the residential system. It's tough to decide what comes in. The way that the system works, it's tough to decipher which waste is which, so it actually helps to simplify the system to have a mechanism to include them, potentially.

1630

So I guess my question to the member opposite is whether that is a satisfactory outcome, given your remarks that you shared with us.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Response?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Thank you. I appreciate the question.

"Which waste is which" has really been brought into sharp focus right now because places that suddenly find that they have to afford—to find their own recycling pickup—people aren't recycling. They're throwing it into the garbage. It's becoming landfill. It's a missed opportunity and it's a problem that was created by this government. I appreciate the member's call for—now—consultation and engaging with community to figure out which waste is which. Well, why did you waste the opportunity to figure out which waste was which in talking to community groups before you did this?

Look, this government is giving itself more control over circular materials. It would allow them to rip up the contract. But if they do that, what comes next? I don't know where we're going to land, but throwing out what had been recycled—what are you going to do about the tires pilling up? We have so many questions, but we should be looking to a brighter future.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Reading schedule 17 was shocking. I didn't realize that archaeologists in the province of Ontario had become the evil, anti-housing obstructionists that are preventing us from building housing.

So, to the member from Oshawa, a group of whistleblowing archaeologists has raised many issues, but are they the cause for this government's lack of progress on building housing?

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Response?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm going to say no. It is not archaeologists, it is not preservationists and heritage-loving folks who are keeping us from having affordable, appropriate housing in the province of Ontario. We have been calling on this government to get back into the business of building homes, and they have refused.

If we—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Hsu: I am going to share my time with the wonderful—the marvellous member for Beaches–East York and other critics from the Ontario Liberal caucus will speak at later times.

This is an omnibus bill with over 20 schedules—a very diverse group of subjects—and all of these things will have to be discussed by our different critics. In fact, given the diverse set of things in this very large bill, I challenge the government House leader to not impose time allocation on debate on this bill until at least the government and opposition sides—all the official parties—have addressed in a substantive way every schedule of this omnibus bill.

I like to use the phrase to describe the scheduling of this bill as "18 hours from dump to debate"—literally 18 hours. After five months of this government hiding form the Legislature, hiding from the elected members of provincial Parliament in Ontario, they come up with this bill that's over 100 pages long, so they dump that in the Legislature at 3:07 p.m. yesterday. They dump a whole bunch of things on the regulatory registry of Ontario; they dump a whole bunch of things on the Environmental Registry of Ontario. I have not been able to read all of them, and yet I have to come here and debate. The debate was called at 9 a.m. this morning, only 18 hours after this big, omnibus bill was tabled.

So this omnibus bill, just to give people who are listening an idea of how diverse this is—how diverse is this bill that was dumped on our laps? Well, first of all, it

concerns garbage dumps, and then everything from bees to blue boxes, highways to heritage, labour to land use. It's a very, very diverse bill. You know, at second reading you're supposed to debate the principle, debate the bill in principle. It's very hard to do that without just waving your hands and not really getting anywhere. We really have to try to debate the different schedules of the bill, and I hope that that happens. I hope that the government House leader does not impose time allocation on this bill until we have done that.

Just to give an example—this is an example for my constituents in Kingston and the Islands, but it's also an example that I want to give the government for something that they had better watch out for as we proceed with consideration of the bill. I have not had time in the 24 hours since this bill was tabled to consult my local distribution company, and one of the schedules on this bill concerns local distribution companies. I don't know what they've been doing over five months of being away from this Legislature. I will give the government some credit that they put the schedules in alphabetical order, so bravo for doing that during the five months.

The reason why it's important for me to consult my local distribution company—Utilities Kingston, Kingston Hydro—is because this bill addresses governance and the governance structure of local distribution companies. In Kingston, we have a unique structure for our utilities. No other place in Ontario has this. The reason we have that is because of the Energy Competition Act of 1998, passed under the former PC government of Premier Mike Harris.

So we've got Utilities Kingston. What they do is they manage and operate and they maintain the assets of water, waste water, natural gas and electricity, as well as a broadband networking business. They do that job. The actual corporation that owns the electricity assets is Kingston Hydro corporation, and that is the local distribution company regulated and licensed by the Ontario Energy Board. All of this is ultimately owned by the city of Kingston.

So to be able to do my job, I need to go and consult with my local distribution company and have a phone call, an email to the CEO of Utilities Kingston. Because I can't do that consultation and come back and at least talk a little bit in depth about that particular schedule of the bill and how it affects my riding, that's an example of how debate on this bill at second reading is going to be very, very shallow.

I would say that I think that the reason the government is dumping this bill and calling it for debate 18 hours later is that this government, the PC government, does not want to give the elected representatives of the people of Ontario time to really dig into what this government would rather do in the dark. This is a trend of this government wanting to make the Legislature less relevant.

Here is an example of the government trying to make this Legislature less relevant, and we've heard this during question period. When the Legislature is here, what do we get to do? We get to look the Premier and the minister in the eyes. We have been talking about the story of students at private colleges who are on OSAP. We were able to tell stories, like the story about the student in health care who was on OSAP. They were able to train to work as a dental assistant because they were on OSAP at Trillium College in Kingston, but now this college has had to close down—temporarily, hopefully—because the government, this government has decided to suspend OSAP for all students at private career colleges, even though this particular college, Trillium College, was inspected by the government and passed inspection in August. This own government's inspection was done in August. They passed, and yet this government says, "Oh, no. We've got to shut down OSAP for all students at private career colleges." It doesn't matter that the student was only one class away from finishing their classroom studies and then going on to a placement. You know, a large majority of students who get placements then get hired by the employer who creates the placement.

1640

So this is why Parliament is relevant, because we can bring this to the government. The schedule for this bill, I would say, has the same disrespect for Parliament—calling this large omnibus bill for debate 18 hours after it was tabled. On the opposition side, we're going to keep fighting to keep the people's House. When somebody cries out, we're going to try our best on this side of the House to give them a voice. That's why Parliament is relevant.

The schedule offered by this government is a travesty. Eighteen hours from dump to debate—it's shameful. It's cowardly.

Now, on to the bill. What's at stake in this bill? Well, in communities across Ontario, people want efficiency. Small business owners do not want red tape. We don't want to stifle innovation. Forestry and mining operators in northern Ontario do not want endless administrative delays. We want to get projects moving. Farmers do not want to spend precious hours doing paperwork they don't have to. Municipalities do not want long delays in getting critical infrastructure and housing built. On these core goals, there's no disagreement.

But our duty as legislators is not to simply applaud a bill's title, applaud the platitudes of the ministers' speeches that we heard this morning. Our responsibility is to look below the surface and scrutinize all the schedules in this omnibus bill and ask this fundamental question: Does this bill actually build Ontario faster where it matters most—in energy reliability, natural resource expansion and agricultural resilience—or does it simply dismantle local consent, reduce environmental transparency and shuffle administrative paperwork while ignoring our core economic bottlenecks?

Let's go to a couple of examples. One of my concerns is we're throwing away accountability. You know, it may feel good when you get rid of accountability, but somebody is going to come along and try to take advantage of the lack of guardrails, and we're going to be in trouble again.

Schedule 8, sections 3 and 4—schedule 8 concerns the Environmental Bill of Rights. With this change, most bills

under consideration in this House will no longer be required to go to the Environmental Registry of Ontario and list how the environment will be affected and solicit public comments. That's one way that accountability will be compromised. I know that my colleague from Beaches–East York is going to discuss this in more detail, but we have to ask the question: Will this government keep us safe? And this question is raised by what the government is trying to do.

This bill removes the need for municipal councils to give their support to new landfills. That's in schedule 7 of the bill, which repeals section 17.5 of Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act.

The point here is that consultation, which this government sometimes just ignores anyways, is not the same as winning the support of a municipal council. And what's the proof of that? What's the proof that that's different? Well, it's the battle over the landfill in Dresden. The proponent for that landfill argued, "Well, it was a landfill 30 years ago, so it's not a new landfill." The opponent said that it hasn't been a landfill for a long time, so it should be considered as a new landfill, and so the municipality's support is required. If consultations were the same as municipal support, there wouldn't have been such a battle over this, for the Dresden landfill.

Now, in 18 hours, I didn't have a long time to examine this bill logically, like how I would like all Liberals to study legislation: Read it, analyze it and ask people about things that you don't understand or you don't know about. There hasn't been enough time to do this, and I hope that there won't be time allocation on this debate until enough people have spoken about enough parts of the bill.

I thought, "What do I do? Because I've got to stand up and speak." So, I thought, well, why don't I think about it like the PC government? So I should think: Who benefits, and is there any connection between who benefits with the government and the Progressive Conservative Party? I think this is a reasonable way for the opposition to think about this bill, because we're still waiting for the RCMP's criminal investigation about the $8-billion greenbelt land giveaway. We're still waiting for all the secrets to come out about the Ontario Place deal and the Metrolinx air rights scandal that you might remember from our last session. We're still waiting for the Integrity Commissioner and the OPP to shed light on the Skills Development Fund scandal. We're waiting for the OPP to possibly place criminal charges in the OSAP debacle. When it comes to landfills, which is what one of the schedules in this bill is about, those who stood to gain from approving a landfill in Dresden, there seemed to be plenty of connections between the PC Party and the PC government and the proponents of that landfill. So we're going to need some time to do some digging, and there's much to check.

In the meantime, we can ask the government: Why is it okay to get rid of some rule? Why did a past government make that rule, and why is it safe now? I think that's an important thing to think about: Why is it safe now? And that's why in my question to the member from Oshawa and just now, I said, "Will this government keep us safe?" This is the question. We can't just think about, "We've got to fight Trump. We've got to grow the economy. Let's build, build, build. Let's push aside all the rules that kept us safe in the past." There may be rules that we don't need anymore today, but stand up and tell us why it's okay now to remove that rule or to change that rule. I did not hear that this morning, Speaker. I listened to the speeches from the ministers and the parliamentary assistants. I know that the presenting minister, the Minister of Red Tape Reduction, gave a very general speech and did not address for any of the schedules of the bill the question of, why is it okay now to get rid of a rule that we needed to put in place in the past?

Just on that matter, the speeches from the government side this morning: I think we can get a sense of how many different schedules there are in the bill. The government side only talked about two schedules in the speeches this morning. That is how vast and wide this omnibus bill is, and again, why I would call on the government House leader, who—I believe he's a good guy, and I believe that he respects this institution of the Parliament of Ontario. That's why I call on him to not follow the patterns of the past and to not time-allocate second reading debate on this omnibus bill until all of the very diverse schedules have been addressed in a substantive way by the government side and the opposition side.

One thing that I heard this morning, one of the speakers on the government side said, "Well, a lot of time has passed. These rules were written a long time ago." And I don't think that's a good enough argument, because, looking across the way, a lot of time has passed on this government, and we're not using that as an argument to tell them to resign.

So, important issues were not addressed in the government speeches this morning, and I want to give you some examples. I want to explain what I think the government should address. Maybe the minister's job was to give a very general speech with platitudes and lay out the overall philosophy. That's okay, but in the rest of the second reading debate to come, I hope that there is some substantive discussion of each of the schedules by the government.

1650

I'm just going to talk about the first three schedules. Schedule 1 of the bill is about getting rid of licences for machines used in installing drainage work on farms. So my question is, why is it safe? Why is it safe to get rid of licences for machines used in installing drainage work?

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has said something about this schedule of the bill. What they said was, "We have no comment." Because the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has said "no comment," I think that just begs the question of the government: Why is it safe to get rid of licences for machines in installing drainage work? The OFA has offered a number of comments in favour of some of the things in this bill, with some provisos, but the OFA had no comment about what's in schedule 1. It really is up to the government to explain why it is okay, when in the past we decided we needed to license these machines.

Why is it okay now to not license these machines? Maybe there's a valid reason, but the debate in this Legislature, if it were to remain relevant, has to address this question. It has to say why it is okay, why it is safe, to get rid of licences for machines used in installing drainage work. Just tell us the answer.

Schedule 2 of the bill gets rid of licences for selling medicines for livestock. Again, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has commented. They support this change, but there are some provisos. I'll just read a submission from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture:

"OFA supports the proposed transition to a registration-based framework for businesses selling designated over-the-counter livestock medicines, provided it maintains existing access to livestock medicines, reduces administrative burden, and preserves safeguards for animal health, product integrity, traceability, inspection, and enforcement." This came from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, which has a substantial policy group.

My question to the government would be: Will the government address the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's provisos? They support this change, but they've got a bunch of provisos: "Make sure this, this, this and this are taken care of." All the government needs to do is say, "Yes, we will. We will cover each one of these provisos: 'safeguards for animal health, product integrity, traceability, inspection and enforcement.'" But the government, in its speeches this morning, just talked in general platitudes most of the time. They didn't answer the question, "Will this government keep us safe?" All they needed to do was say, "Yes, we are going to take care of the provisos. We can talk about it at the public hearings for this bill when it goes to committee."

That raises another point, because so many bills recently, with these shortened sessions—the government wants to try to avoid scrutiny from elected representatives of the people of Ontario. Because of these shortened sessions, a lot of bills have skipped the committee stage. It's not a trivial thing. In fact, the budget bill, last time, skipped the committee stage. I challenge the government House leader, who I know is a decent guy and respects this institution, to allow this bill to go to committee and have public hearings so that we can hear about all the details that we need to hear about for this very, very diverse bill.

Schedule 3 of the bill, Speaker: Again, they've had five months and they could have, in their speeches—actually, there are more speeches to come, so I hope that they take that opportunity to give some details.

But why is it safe to get rid of permits to move bees to or from a quarantine area or transporting beeswax refuse or used honeycombs? Bee health—these are domesticated pollinators—is really important to agriculture. And because it's very important to agriculture, it's important to our whole economy. Bee health is not something that's trivial or just a little thing you can not be careful about. So why is it okay to get rid of these permits to move bees around or to move beeswax refuse or used honeycombs around? Maybe it's okay. Maybe it's okay, but again, the government's speeches so far have been platitudes. They haven't addressed why it's safe to do that. How will this government keep us safe?

Biosecurity is just so important. You go to a farm; farmers are very conscious of biosecurity, and these biosecurity controls are the primary barrier when it comes to bees, protecting healthy hives from devastating diseases like American foulbrood. I guess this is another thing that annoys me a little bit: Suggesting that biosecurity is just red tape demonstrates a dangerous misunderstanding of biological risk in agriculture. You know, a little thing goes wrong—and these things are living, so they reproduce. That's the danger. The government just needs to stand up and explain. Give the rationale. Say why it's safe to get rid of these permits to move bees around.

Now, finally, I want to talk about how the government handles the big issues like productivity growth, becoming more competitive and seizing value in global supply chains. The problem is that red tape reduction is not a substitute for a plan. One example of why leading with red tape reduction is not a substitute for an economic plan is the following. And I don't think that the government has a plan; it doesn't seem like it's acting with a big plan in mind. It likes to make stakeholders happy is what it seems to me it likes to do, especially likes to make its own friends and donors happy.

Here's the thing: If you talk to mining executives in the north or you talk to greenhouse operators in the southwest or heavy manufacturing plants across Ontario, the number one bottleneck to expanding their operations is not defining a fuel tax or whatever; it's power grid capacity. We've got transmission bottlenecks, so mining projects in northern Ontario are waiting on high-voltage transmission line hookups to electrify operations and reduce reliance on diesel. The agricultural sector has grid limitations. Greenhouses and food processors are being told by local distribution companies that there isn't enough transformer capacity to connect new facilities to three-phase power. We have a big constraint in the Peterborough-to-Kingston region that the IESO is looking at right now. And then a lot of industrial producers need energy rate predictability, the price they pay for energy, because they're phasing rising energy overhead that limits their capacity to compete globally.

So this is the big question, and yet Bill 140 doesn't offer a strategy in that area—no energy grid strategy, no clean energy expansion framework and no relief for industrial energy consumers. I'm not saying that that had to be in Bill 140. But I just want to make the point that leading with a red tape reduction bill is not a substitute for a strategy, and shuffling definitions of fuel taxes, for example, while ignoring grid capacity is like fixing the horn on a car that has no engine.

There's much more to say, but I know that my colleague from Beaches–East York, the critic for the environment, is very eager to talk to this legislation and explain what's wrong with this bill.

But one last challenge to the government House leader is: Don't time-allocate on this bill until every schedule of the many, many diverse schedules in this omnibus bill is

debated in a substantive way by the government and the opposition.

1700

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's always a pleasure to stand up in this gorgeous chamber and represent the really good people of beautiful Beaches–East York.

It's a pleasure to stand up; it's not a pleasure to talk about this egregious, horrendous, large omnibus bill, which did not have to be an omnibus bill had we been sitting regularly like other governments all over the world. We know this government has shown a particular affinity to extended time away from legislative sessions, so I'm first going to speak on why we don't need an omnibus bill.

We have these drawn-out hiatuses which pause our legislative process. For five months, this government hindered our ability as lawmakers to propose legislation, debate formally and collaborate with stakeholders on bills to ensure that they are thoughtful and comprehensive before we enact them. I'm hesitant to call this time away a "break," because during this time my colleagues and I, of course, have been very busy in our ridings. But our job is to do both: to be in our riding and to be here. To put how long we've been away from this Legislature into perspective, I'd like to highlight all that has happened and changed in five months.

I've had hundreds of meetings and events all over the city and in my community. There have been umpteen by-elections and one municipal election where we welcomed hundreds of new representatives and returning representatives in Ontario. We cheered for our World Cup, several marathons, triathlons, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving. We've seen the summer come and go and ushered in the fall. We're ushering in the fall when we're just coming back from summer break. How ludicrous is that?

And now, finally, we are back at Queen's Park. But it seems like this government has learned nothing, because while the rest of us were meeting with and calling and emailing our constituents, joining rallies, walking in protests and supporting parades, the government had its head down, working on this.

They let students move away from their homes and sign leases on apartments, then revoked their OSAP, leaving them stranded in unfamiliar places with no way to pay for their schooling and living expenses, having stolen their plans for the future.

They stood by as OPSEU social service workers were striking for weeks. OPSEU social service workers provide help that our society simply could not live without. People experiencing life-altering challenges, survivors of violence, veterans with PTSD, adults with developmental disabilities, children with depression and anxiety all rely on OPSEU workers, with their highly skilled physical and mental care, compassion, comfort and healing. But this government refused to bargain, resulting in weeks of lost services for their clients.

School started just a month ago, and there's already high drama with our education because of this government's lack of focus and funding. Teachers prepared for their classrooms, parents bought binders and pens and prepped lunches, and students bid another adieu. They're ready to engage, and this government is refusing to engage with education workers. This could mean a prolonged period without consistent educational instruction with the education workers that students have built their comfort and understanding with. And the government knew this was a risk. These are things the government should be dealing with and they are not dealing with. Instead, they're creating these horrendous omnibus bills.

Also with education, slashing the outdoor education programs, which we know is seriously detrimental to our young Ontarians' physical, mental and spiritual well-being. And also, reducing funding to model schools similarly robs schools of equitable offerings, including, but not limited to, nutrition programs, innovative learning initiatives suited to the needs of students and various health services etc.

And yet this Bill 140 does not reverse the cuts to OSAP, which it could. It does not provide adequate school funding, which it should, nor does it reduce class sizes. It does not make the autism services wait-list manageable, and it does not end hallway health care medicine or reduce nurses' burdens. It does not return the city of Toronto's waterfront to the city of Toronto and the people of Toronto, and it does not address this province's completely abysmal emergency response and preparedness plan.

You want to do an omnibus bill? I would wholeheartedly support an omnibus bill that addressed the things that Ontarians need and rely on.

So now let's start. We'll start with schedule 8, the Environmental Bill of Rights. This bill weakens the ability of the public to appeal environmental policy decisions for people who have a reasonable belief that will cause significant harm to the environment.

We already knew this government had a vendetta against the courts because the Premier himself suggested we should abandon our current system of independent judges appointed based on merit, expertise and experience and, instead, be more like the United States of America. Now, the Premier wants to be like them with our judges and elect our judges because he did not like it when a group of judges ruled his move to destroy the bike lanes was unconstitutional back in 2025. Now, a year later, the Premier is following up on his distaste for courts, specifically when the courts work in ways he does not agree with, and he is stripping the public of the ability to prevent actions that endanger the environment.

This begs the question: What does this government have planned that they do not want to be held accountable for? Stay tuned. This government is actively working to create a less informed and less engaged Ontario. But guess what? It won't work. I know Ontarians, and I know that threats to the environment that wildlife and humans depend on will not go unnoticed.

This government doesn't stop there. Schedule 8 also rids the province of the responsibility to set out environmental values that guide policy decisions not only in the

Ministry of the Environment but across ministries in any decision that would impact the environment. In case this government was unaware, that's almost every single decision. I'm so worried for the environment, so I'm glad I'm here.

We have a Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response that does not apparently deal with climate change—according to the member from the Bay of Quinte and the member from Whitby. Yes, that is true. In committee, those two members said that the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response does not deal with climate change. Think about that for a moment. We have Ministries of Red Tape Reduction, Infrastructure and Housing that view environmental protection as unnecessary delays, a budget that only uses environment in reference to the economy and a Premier who cannot even say the words "climate emergency." What a sad state of affairs.

What this government does not seem to get is that you cannot build communities in a world that is on fire, and you cannot construct homes when big companies with unfettered access to water are permitted to take and take until levels are dangerously low and groundwater is unsafe. You cannot protect educated children when they cannot get to school safely because bike lanes are ripped out and cars are speeding in school zones without speed cameras. You cannot feed a province when pests flourish due to lack of biodiversity and extreme heat puts insurmountable stress on crops, and you cannot shop in small businesses and buy local when streets are flooded.

So, yoo-hoo, news flash: This mandate of protecting Ontario demands that you need to protect the environment that we all live, work and play in.

1710

Schedule 8 is quite troubling as it removes opportunities for the public to comment if the minister has conducted a regulatory analysis under the Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act.

What does this regulatory analysis entail? Not much. The act says:

"Where an instrument governed by this act that would affect a regulated entity is proposed and where the additional prescribed criteria, if any, apply, the minister responsible for the administration of the instrument shall ensure that,

"(a) an analysis of the potential regulatory impact is conducted, including the prescribed direct compliance costs; and

"(b) the analysis is published in the prescribed manner."

Okay, let's check out the regulations. Maybe there's more in there.

All that is set out here is an analysis of direct compliance costs, which is "a direct cost of complying with a draft bill, regulation, policy or form, and includes administrative costs, fees, upfront capital costs, upfront operating costs and ongoing operating costs."

We do not see any provisions for evaluations of impacts on water, air, land, animals or Ontarians. What we are seeing here is the government consolidating power within itself to decide when a project is environmentally impactful and to decide whether they want to address these impacts and to decide how much they feel the public should know. There is a lot of responsibility that the government bestows upon itself. And last time I checked, we're a democracy.

What has this government done to earn Ontarians' trust—trust that they will look out for the water we drink, the land infrastructure rests on, the trees that prevent erosion and flooding, the animals and plants that keep our environment functioning properly? This government has made it their mission to crush public oversight and transparency.

In the 2025 report, the Auditor General warned this government that they were in regular violation of the Environmental Bill of Rights, notably exempting projects with environmentally significant components from adhering to the legislative processes. The report highlighted how this government failed to consult the public, and when it did, inadequate information was provided, meaning that important context and details were hidden from the public.

When feedback was received, it was not considered when passing bills, with 22% of proposal notices failing to explain the potential environmental impacts, while 18% of the instrument decision notices were absent of links to the relevant permits and approvals for reference. And there was an 88% increase in outdated proposal notices in the registry. That's pretty competent.

Additionally, the report notes that the government continued in its failure to meet their legislative duty to educate the public on the Environmental Bill of Rights, departing from the standard of other provincial agencies who do take this education responsibility seriously. The Auditor General recorded an 80% decrease in the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' social media posts related to the Environmental Bill of Rights. Think about that.

It was not that long ago that an Ontario court found this government in breach of the Environmental Bill of Rights, or when the government dismantled our carbon emission reduction plans and goals.

The Premier tried to grab protected greenbelt land, stripped mandates for EV charges, gutted conservation authorities, failed to swiftly and adequately respond to natural disasters as recently as this summer's wildfires and flooding, weakened waste diversion goals and made it easier for companies to take water from Ontario. And these are just a few offences. This is like a horror movie, actually.

Despite all of this, the Auditor General still concluded the Environmental Bill of Rights enabled the public to participate in environmental decision-making in our province, and moreover, Ontarians exercised their rights again and again and again. Thank goodness.

When the public prevails, regardless of this government's efforts in squashing their voices, our province is better and safer.

The Auditor General provided several examples to illustrate this outcome—which I will skip over, because

I'm just noticing my time. But one is the Auditor General recommendation that the Ministries of Infrastructure and Transportation consistently consult with the public about environmentally significant proposals and refrain from exempting projects from the Environmental Bill of Rights. The ministries responded that they do not agree with the recommendations of the Auditor General—because they know better, I guess—and that they will strive "to provide opportunity for public consultation."

"Strive" versus "do"—there's a lot of room in between those two.

The Auditor General also recommended that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks bolster their public education on the Environmental Bill of Rights, notably through finalizing and implementing a plan for new and ongoing education programs by 2026. The ministry responded that they agree with this recommendation, actually, but in this bill, we see an abandonment of environmental value requirements and a diminishing of Ontarians' rights to appeal under the Environmental Bill of Rights and no new plan for education.

These are just a few examples of the government's pattern of blocking public knowledge and consultation and reneging on its word. There are countless more examples, and what they all illustrate is that this government cannot be trusted to decide what is environmentally significant, nor can they be trusted to listen to the communities who these laws affect and the experts who know more than them.

Schedule 22, the blue box: I find this beyond troubling, that this government claims that they will be "consulting with recycling sector stakeholders, including producers and PROs, and the public." In schedule 22 of this bill, it is hard to believe that this government thinks they are in the best position to implement stronger transparency and accountability to Ontarians' recycling system.

How can the government foster clarity and responsibility when they have made it abundantly clear that Ontarians cannot expect these traits from them? After this government passed Bill 97, they blocked Ontarians from access to government documents. The government has ensured that they cannot be held accountable to the people who elected them. So how are we to trust, if the government encounters information that they do not want exposed, information that would make them look bad, that they will follow through with the request for transparency? How are we even to track if this government is following through on their promises when they are no longer subject to FOI laws and they do not need to listen to the people with experience and expertise on the subject matter through the committee process?

Schedule 22 continues on with provisions beyond what is stated in Bill 140. Notably, the government endeavours to cancel curbside collection of flexible plastics, overflow recycling in bales and bags and delivery of additional recycling bins to residents unless there are accessibility concerns. Think about that for a minute. Our landfills are filling up. We know—you've been told, we've been told, I've been telling you—there's a 10-year shelf life, basically, unless we expand them somehow—and yet. So recycling is a waste diversion measure, and now you're squashing recycling materials.

Perhaps this is the government's backwards way of justifying delaying recycling targets: If you collect less, it appears that recycling is less needed, then the government does not need to push for greater targets, because the current ones seem adequate. This is a completely false equivalent.

But there's much more to recycling and waste diversion that this government chooses to not understand. A lot of recycled materials do not yet have a market and are shipped overseas, exacerbating water, air and land pollution in other countries, while other waste ends up in landfills even though it should not. And we need to be mindful: There is no such place as "away," so you can't "throw something away."

1720

In 2024, Ontario produced 16.88 million tonnes of waste with 12.75 million tonnes disposed in landfills; 73% of that waste was managed within Ontario, while 27%—3.44 million tonnes—was exported to the United States. We have known about this problem for years, and, as I repeat over and over again to this government, there is a high, high cost of inaction.

A mere seven of Ontario's 54 landfills account for 57% of Ontario's available capacity. I would ask all of you if you've ever visited a landfill site, and if you have not—

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I knew my favourite across the way would have visited a landfill site. But I would urge you—there's your homework assignment: field trips. Go out: tour Disco Road, the anaerobic digester; go to Green Lane Landfill; go to a landfill in your area. Hang out there for a while. Learn what's there and what could be diverted. I visited many waste transfer stations: Disco Road—fantastic facility, with their anaerobic digesters—and, of course, Green Lane Landfill, city of Toronto's landfill, down near St. Thomas, which we know will be at capacity in 10 years.

Countless organizations have warned this government about waning landfill capacity since they came into power, and they have continued to warn this government year after year after year. Just last year, the government was warned that we only had 10 years, as you know, of landfill capacity, and that's a generous estimate, considering it is dependent on current waste exports to the United States, where we know there's someone down there who's very volatile and is changing rules all the time.

Last year, this government was also warned against relying on waste exports, and that if we failed to measure our waste, we cannot expect to manage it—basic business sense. Right here in the chamber, you know, you've heard me repeatedly warning you, screaming from the rooftops umpteen times that we are nearing our landfill capacity. So let's think outside of the box; let's think about other waste diversion tactics and that decisive, strong action is needed to divert waste.

You all know I'm a champion of recycling, but recycling actually is just one step ahead of trash. There are so many other Rs that you should be focusing on, but you're not. And it's not a solution to the bigger issue of overconsumption and waste.

We need to champion reuse and reduce, but beyond that, invest in education campaigns that help us understand how to buy and buy better and how to repurpose items that have a lifetime of more utility. With affordability top of mind for Ontarians, all of this practice is even more prudent: to refuse to buy fast fashion, to rethink, to repair, to repurpose. I would encourage all of you to visit a repair café or host one in your riding, back like your grandparents used to do, to repair things instead of throwing them out, because we know where they're going.

I feel like you could really champion this issue—this government could, if they wanted to, if they actually passed my private member's bills. I've done the work for you, and I proposed several private member's bills specifically related to trash: Bill 87—deconstruction versus demolition.

Ontario generates nearly 7.5 million tonnes of materials from the industrial, commercial and institutional sector, of which 6.6 million tonnes end up in landfill or exported. That does not have to be the case. It is 2026. Let's get creative. Let's get innovative. Let's think outside the box.

In landfills, there are materials. These materials and other materials take up considerably more space which we do not have. I have people asking me what to do with a mattress. Why don't we work with start-ups or other companies that have ideas for that? Moreover, many of these materials can be reused.

There are already organizations—from my deconstruction bill. I'm sure you listened intently when I spoke to you about that. I spoke to you about a company called Ouroboros Salvage. They're equipped to repair, repurpose and resell materials. So, they deconstruct some building at the U of T and they take the mantel, they take the bricks, they take parts of the furniture, and then they can repurpose them for another development.

It's a no-brainer. Investing in increased waste diversion from the IC&I sector not only frees up space in our landfills, but it creates a new market of Ontario and Canadian goods, one that is more affordable. It's a win-win. I'm just giving you that gift of waste diversion right there with Bill 87, okay? You can have it. I'll give it to you free of charge.

Another bill is Bill 134, organics. This government talks a lot about making homes more affordable and buying local. I hope they are paying attention to the Ouroboros. But with the organics, AMO reports an estimated two million tonnes of organic waste is sent to Ontario landfills every year. Two million tonnes of organics—that's ridiculous. Organics in landfills are a significant contributor to greenhouse gases, specifically methane generation, a uniquely potent greenhouse gas—over 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

These numbers represent unsustainable food waste at a time when grocery prices are sky-high, dangerously growing greenhouse gas emissions in an already dire climate emergency, unnecessary space taken up when our landfills have no space left to give, and revenue and jobs missed out on in an unemployment crisis. Now, with the United States announcing 50% tariffs on municipal waste, this government is scrambling to find options that meet the moment. I'm just going to give you that gift of my private member's bills.

The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks mentioned this morning that they will do everything they can to work to get rid of organics in landfill sites. Let's also roll out organic collection—green bin in Toronto—in multi-residential buildings. People living in those buildings want to do the right thing. They want to help recycle, repurpose, reuse and divert the waste as well. Here at Queen's Park, I know they do composting in the kitchen, in the dining room. We could expand that to all of our offices and the receptions—easy win right there.

We know that the waste ends up in your and my backyard, or maybe in an ocean hundreds of kilometres away. These microplastics also make their way downstream. We cannot accept polluting land and water for the sake of our convenience. It's unconscionable. So, be a leader. I'm asking this government to be a leader in waste diversion.

I also had a few other bills that I know you were really paying attention to: Bill 90, textile waste; and Bill 32, the bottle-deposit return system, which actually I've introduced twice in this Legislature. Ontario and Manitoba are the only provinces in Canada that do not have a bottle-deposit return system. If you're my age, my vintage, you would have grown up with one. It was fun. There was less litter on the streets. I know you care about litter because I think that's probably your only climate action initiative that this government does, so I know you care deeply about it. Then you're also diverting waste from a landfill. You're also creating jobs. It's the right thing to do. The Canadian Beverage Association of Ontario wants you to do it. I am sure this government has received hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands, of emails to support a bottle deposit return system, because I have.

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Most of my private member's bills are on waste diversion, and I am just going to package them up and give them to this government, free of charge, unless you want to put me on payroll—which I feel like I'm working for you, although you're not taking the smart decisions.

I'll take my last—what do I have—two minutes left to talk about—what can I talk about? How this government takes all the time off. It's ridiculous. We're only going to be here for, what—

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Twenty-three days.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Twenty-three days, and then we're on winter break. What do Ontarians think of that? I can't even imagine.

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: A day for every schedule, I was told. That's perfect.

So we have one omnibus bill that could have been a bunch of little bills, done properly, gone through committee. Also, it might be nice for the opposition members to

get a briefing on this bill, Bill 140, before we're speaking in the House. I don't know why we're doing things backwards. But it's a ridiculous bill, jam full of things that don't even belong together: highways and bees and trash and the Environmental Bill of Rights. It's just a cornucopia of destruction, I guess I would call it.

If this government is truly serious about the landfill sites—which is a serious issue. We know that, with what's going on with the tariffs now, but we've known about it for years. We should actually work together, collaboratively. Ontarians want to see us work together and address the waste issue and start diverting it first.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to say thank you to the member opposite for her remarks. Certainly, a lot of the stats that were shared are absolutely driving the government's policies.

I'll go back to 2017, where Ontario's exports and garbage peaked at 3.6 million tonnes sent to Michigan, New York and Ohio. It's just abysmal that our waste management policy of the day back in 2017 was to send our garbage abroad. That's dropped down to 3.14 million from 2024—that's tonnes, Speaker. So all the reasons for managing our waste better that were expressed are valid, and drive, certainly, what's in this bill.

I guess my question for the member opposite is really related to the energy from waste components that are in the bill. It's a way to make use of that waste that cannot be diverted and allows for us to use our resources better. I'm hoping the member can elaborate on her thoughts.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for that good question.

I know this government has a habit of always going back in the past, in the history of previous governments, and the shame-and-blame game. But we're here and now, October 28, 2026. Let's move forward. Because, first of all, I wasn't here, but I have given this government a bunch of private member's bills on waste diversion.

I would argue that we need to exhaust every single possible waste diversion idea. We have smart people in Ontario, experts in the field of waste diversion—as I mentioned, Ouroboros Salvage etc.—for deconstruction, for repair, repurpose, rethink; phasing organics out of landfills, before anything like that is considered. We have not done that yet.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My question is for the member from Beaches–East York. Members from Nickel Belt and Sudbury have been advocating for many, many years to have the remaining 68 kilometres of Highway 69 four-laned as it is extremely dangerous and people are dying on that highway. The Conservative government promised in 2018, 2022, 2025 to widen Highway 69, yet they voted down NDP amendments to a previous bill that would have fast-tracked work on Highway 69.

Now, in this dumpster fire of a bill there are 23 schedules that include removing municipal rights to make decisions about locating landfill sites and allowing garbage incinerators, and it guts the Environmental Bill of Rights. These are changes that we cannot possibly support, so it strikes me as a political game, contemptuous of the work of this House, to have inserted this fast-tracking of Highway 69 in an otherwise largely unsupportable bill.

So my question is, do you see any reason why—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Response?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Thank you to the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North for that great question. It baffles my mind why the highways are in this bill, other than it's a poison pill of sorts—to have something fantastic in this bill. I truly feel the north has been neglected. We've seen that with the airports, with all the focus on Billy Bishop unnecessarily, instead of all the airports in the north that need funding and financing. If this government were serious about protecting the north, keeping them safe, they would put the highways, which is desperately needed—the improvements—in a stand-alone bill for the north.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question? I recognize the member for Markham–Thornhill.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to my colleague from—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I skipped the member for Don Valley East.

Mr. Adil Shamji: You're most kind, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much for acknowledging me.

It is wonderful to see everybody in the House. It's been a long, long, long 147-day extended Thanksgiving long weekend. I am relieved to be back in the House to discuss the issues that matter most to Ontarians. Of course, the environment is certainly one of those things—accountability is another one of them—and interesting that we're talking about highways.

I would love to invite the outstanding members from Beaches–East York or Kingston and the Islands to reflect a little bit on why, after 147 days of an extended long Thanksgiving weekend, we received only 18 hours to review this legislation on a matter that should be so important to all members in this House and all members of Ontario.

Mr. Ted Hsu: You know, to give the government some credit, after five months, they did put the many schedules in this bill in alphabetical order.

I think what this government wants to do is make it hard for the opposition MPPs to do our job of holding this government to account. So they don't give us enough time to read the bill. Not only do we have to read this omnibus bill of over a hundred pages, but we've got to read the submissions to the regulatory registry of Ontario, we've got to read the submissions to the Environmental Registry of Ontario. So there's a lot to digest, and by giving us only 18 hours between the tabling of this bill and the beginning of debate on this bill, they just make it hard for the opposition to really debate substantively and hold this government to account.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Question?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the members opposite for your presentation. We have a lot of respect for those members. Thank you for your passion.

Madam Speaker, business is not as usual. The world has taken a U-turn. Our government has completed its review of 192 permits and counting. That is 51% of all 375 business-facing permits.

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We are ahead of schedule, and the transformation to date will save almost 220,000 processing days, Madam Speaker. This is not numbers; this is really more than a number. It's a competitive advantage.

Can the member explain why they seem determined to defend the permit system that forces workers, municipalities and businesses to wait months or even years for approval that can be completed much faster?

Mr. Ted Hsu: I'm going to go back to my speech—and I apologize. I've been away for so long from this House that, during my speech, I drifted forward. I forgot that the microphone is right here, and I have to stand at this corner so I don't start walking towards you as I get animated.

But one of the things that I said in my speech, and I'll take advantage of this answer to say this, is, we're not opposed to getting rid of regulations that maybe don't need to be in place anymore, but what we want is, we want the government to provide an explanation, to give a rationale for why a regulation was needed in the past but now it's not needed in the present. We just want an assurance from the government that they will protect us as we dismantle regulations, get rid of regulations in the name of fighting Donald Trump.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: I'll ask my question of the member from Kingston and the Islands.

We're of a similar vintage. You were talking about the time before the Environmental Protection Act and the Environmental Bill of Rights, and I remember that time because, in the 1970s, I remember the detergent companies suddenly discovered that if you put phosphates in detergents, your white clothes are whiter and your coloured clothes are brighter. And the next year, after they put this phosphate in the detergent, half the fish in Lake Ontario washed up dead on the shore. They put DDT as a pesticide on crops, and it ended up killing all kinds of birds. They put lead in gasoline, and now, in retrospect, it turns out that lead in gasoline was causing lead poisoning in human beings and led to an increase in violent crime.

So, the Environmental Protection Act and the Environmental Bill of Rights that this government is gutting, is that red tape or does it actually protect us from those kinds of—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Response?

I recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ted Hsu: My goodness, I guess we are of the same vintage.

I actually have a lot of lead in my blood, because I did this test once where StatsCan came and tested my blood. They did all sorts of tests, and there's a lot of lead and mercury in my blood, it turns out—a lot more than younger people—and it's because I grew up in that era where the best thing we could say, "Well, at least we don't live on Lake Erie."

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Well, it's a pleasure to rise today, Madam Speaker, to speak to this piece of legislation.

Before I begin, I do want to take an opportunity to thank the Minister of Red Tape Reduction for all of her work on this piece of legislation. I can't understate how important it is, especially in the current economic environment, for us to be more productive, to ensure that we have less regulation and for us to be able to attract more businesses and reduce the cost of doing business. This piece of legislation that you have before you is a culmination of hard work by that minister over the past couple of months to truly bring a transformative piece of legislation to this Legislature that is meaningful, will make a difference and ensure that our province can succeed in the future.

Now, this piece of legislation is also really important because it represents a wide variety of measures that can help not only with safety, but it can help with ensuring much-needed areas of this province are serviced.

One of the most important parts of that—and I will get into a lot of this in a lot of detail—is Highway 69. How do we get that built faster? How do we get it built quicker? But I think the true test of this piece of legislation will be making sure that the members opposite support the fast-tracking of that highway.

Highway 69, we know, is one of the most important and most critical arteries connecting the north to the rest of the province, so what you have before you here is an opportunity, for those members that represent the communities in Sudbury, to fast-track that project by over five years. We will speak to that—

MPP Jamie West: Let's pass it tomorrow.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: —and I hope that that member, who has spoken about Highway 69 in the past, can rise above partisanship and support a piece of legislation that will be meaningful for his community, for the people that live in Sudbury, that commute to Sudbury, but also to the thousands of people that drive on those roads, the businesses that depend upon it and the future opportunities that will persist.

Madam Speaker, we know that Ontario is the best place to live in Canada, work and raise a family, but we know that there's always more that we can do to reduce that red tape, streamline regulatory requirements and give businesses the tools they need to succeed. While our economy is under attack, this work has never been more important.

Our government was elected with a clear mandate to protect Ontario, to build a stronger, more resilient and self-reliant economy in the face of trade turmoil and ongoing uncertainty. There's no time to waste. Now more than

ever, we must take swift, decisive action to create a more competitive environment that welcomes businesses from around the world.

When the trade war began last year, our government moved quickly to tear down interprovincial trade barriers that cost Canada's economy close to $220 billion a year. Those barriers had existed for over 100 years, but we didn't hesitate to embrace a bold new vision for our province and for the country. We showed people across Ontario that we are serious about protecting their future.

One year later, we're just as determined to tackle any obstacle that stands in the way of Ontario's economic success, because protecting Ontario means standing up for our workers, backing our businesses and building the foundation for long-term growth. That's exactly what our government is doing by tabling the Building Ontario Faster Act. I am proud to be a part of a government willing to do whatever it takes to protect Ontario.

As I mentioned in my introduction, Highway 69 is a critical corridor for northern families, businesses and Ontario's mining sector. It connects northern communities with the rest of the province, keeping people and goods moving safely, reducing travel times and supporting economic growth. That's why our government is widening Highway 69 from Parry Sound to Sudbury, a corridor of more than 150 kilometres. With this project, we're improving road safety, strengthening northern communities, driving economic growth and keeping people and goods moving safely across the region for generations to come.

Completing Highway 69 is a priority for our government, Madam Speaker. To date, we have widened more than 84 kilometres of that stretch, expanding that corridor to four lanes. That leaves approximately 68 more kilometres to complete, and we want to finish that work as quickly as possible.

The Building Ontario Faster Act, if passed, would allow us to accelerate the construction on Highway 69 by over five years. What will we do? We'll establish a streamlined, project-specific environmental framework so work can begin sooner and northern families and businesses can see the benefits faster. The legislation would create a project-specific environmental framework that maintains oversight, allowing early works on the remaining sections of the highway to begin earlier than anticipated. If this legislation passes, the environmental work already completed would continue to inform oversight as the project advances.

I want to be clear: The legislation would not affect the crown's ongoing duty to consult. We will continue working with the Indigenous communities and fulfilling the crown's duty to consult. In fact, just two weeks ago, I was proud to stand alongside Chief Adam Pawis of Shawanaga First Nation and Chief Lloyd Noganosh of Magnetawan First Nation as we announced our plan to accelerate the expansion of Highway 69. Their presence was an important reminder of the relationship we have built and the importance of continuing to work together as this progress moves forward.

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We are committed to building this critical highway faster, while maintaining environmental oversight and respecting the right of Indigenous communities. This is about building smarter. It's about cutting red tape. It's about supporting the families and businesses that depend on Highway 69 each day, creating good-paying jobs for construction workers and Indigenous businesses, and working more efficiently to build the projects that matter most to the people of Ontario. We're using every tool available to get this project across the finish line faster. Widening Highway 69 will enhance road safety along a vital route that supports economic development in northern Ontario and our province's world-class mining sector.

And Highway 69 is just one part of our plan to strengthen transportation infrastructure across northern Ontario. In 2026 alone, we invested over $600 million in northern highway projects. We're accelerating the construction of more than 500 kilometres of all-season roads leading to the Ring of Fire by up to five years, supporting the potential for 70,000 jobs and $22 billion in economic activity as Ontario develops its critical minerals sector. We're twinning the Trans-Canada Highway from Thunder Bay to Nipigon, Kenora to the Manitoba border, keeping traffic flowing along a critical cross-country corridor that supports the movement of billions of dollars worth of goods each year.

This year, we have started work to rehabilitate nearly 17 kilometres of Highway 17 from south of Echo Bay to Highway 548; advanced work on the replacement of the Little Current Swing Bridge; and made significant progress in our plan to expand Ontario's rest area and truck inspection station network, keeping all road users safe. And we're not stopping there. We're moving to 24/7 enforcement operations at our $30-million truck inspection station in Shuniah. We have heard northern families and businesses loud and clear: Road safety will continue to be a priority. During our northern enforcement initiative, officers conducted more than 10,000 vehicle inspections and laid charges for regulatory and safety violations. We're developing a province-wide curriculum for truck drivers in training schools to strengthen training and reinforce the rules of the road.

We are restoring passenger service in northeastern Ontario by bringing back the Northlander, which will connect downtown Toronto to Cochrane, and our provincial ride-share framework is improving transportation options for people in northern communities. People in every corner of Ontario deserve reliable connections to jobs, services and communities. And for Ontario to succeed, we need northern Ontario to succeed. Highway 69 is vital to the northern economy, and we are determined to finish its expansion. This legislation is another concrete step forward toward a safer, stronger and more prosperous northern Ontario. If passed, the Building Ontario Faster Act will help us deliver that progress sooner.

In addition to our multi-billion-dollar investments in the north, our government is making historic investments in public transit. We are investing close to $70 billion in

public transit, the largest subway expansion in Canadian history and one of North America's most ambitious transit expansion plans and programs. We're making these historic investments in transit to connect to communities, reduce congestion and make it easier for people to get where they need to go.

Through major subway and rapid transit expansions, we're transforming how people travel across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. The Ontario Line subway will give the city of Toronto 15 new subway stations, while the Yonge North subway extension will extend the TTC's Line 1 subway into Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill. I want to thank my good friend and colleague from Markham for all of his support in advocating for this Line 1 extension—it wouldn't have happened. Mr. Kanapathi, when he was a councillor, he was advocating for a Line 1 expansion, and when he became an MPP, he made sure it happened, so thank you for your advocacy. That's how we get stuff done in this province.

The Scarborough subway extension will add nearly eight kilometres to the TTC's Line 2 subway, while the Eglinton Crosstown West extension will create a continuous rapid transit line from Scarborough to Mississauga. We're building the Hamilton LRT and the Hazel McCallion Line to bring fast, reliable transit to commuters in Hamilton, Brampton and Mississauga.

We're making major investments in the GO network. To date, we have invested more than $15 billion in GO expansion, which will deliver two-way, all-day service on GO Transit's busiest routes. Our GO extensions will bring enhanced, state-of-the-art service to communities in Kitchener-Waterloo, Durham region, Hamilton and Niagara. These investments are about real results that families and commuters can count on.

Last year, we launched the first-ever weekend GO train trip between Toronto and Kitchener, and earlier this year, the Eglinton Crosstown LRT opened to the public, offering faster and more reliable journeys across Toronto, so people can spend less time travelling and more time with their families. We introduced daily round trips between Toronto and Stratford, improving access to the world-renowned Stratford Festival and supporting local tourism.

Madam Speaker, we are building transit that supports workers, students, families and visitors alike. We started major construction at the Grimsby GO station, which will reduce travel times to the nearest GO station by up to 30 minutes. We completed major upgrades to Bloor GO/UP station to support future service increases on the Kitchener line.

We continue to make these historic investments. We've started work to expand Durham College Oshawa GO station, as we advance the Bowmanville expansion, which will extend nearly 19 kilometres to the Lakeshore East line. Students need reliable ways to get to class. These investments will give them more convenient connections to their communities.

We're also making transit more affordable. Families should be able to keep more of their hard-earned money. We extended the One Fare program, saving riders up to $1,600 a year through free transfers between GO Transit, the TTC and participating local transit agencies. Since One Fare launched in 2024, it has saved commuters more than $300 million and enabled over 100 million free transfers.

Madam Speaker, our vision for public transit is clear. The people of Ontario gave our government a clear mandate: They want us to build quickly. We share that sense of urgency. That is why we are proposing this piece of legislation to accelerate major projects like Highway 69. We're equally determined to support the businesses that create the jobs and drive our economy. That means working closely with the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction to simplify corridor management permits, including building and land use, signs, encroachments and entrances along provincial highway corridors.

The Building Ontario Faster Act, if passed, would also make it easier for garage owners to set up shops by eliminating licensing requirements while retaining oversight of—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Thank you. We'll now move on to orders of the day.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

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Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)	Milton	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Lahey, Susan (PC)	York—Simcoe	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
McKenney, Catherine (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
Racinsky, Joseph (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	
Rae, Hon. / L'hon. Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Hon. / L'hon. Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (IND)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaban, Fatima (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Artificial Intelligence Adoption / Ministre associé de l'Adoption de l'intelligence artificielle
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	