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Monday 1 November 1999

Lundi 1^{er} novembre 1999

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 1 November 1999

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 1^{er} novembre 1999

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): I rise today to speak to the throne speech. I would ask for unanimous consent to split my time with the member for Sudbury.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Is it agreed? It is agreed.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I have lived in Tweed, Ontario, which is in the heart of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, for my entire life. I am a farmer's daughter, raised in the French settlement north of Tweed. My parents worked hard for all they have, and they raised their daughters to care about people and respect others, to work hard, to get a good education and to always be honest. It is within this hard-working rural family that I learned about the importance of democracy, the value of having a voice and the moral responsibility to stand up for those things that you believe to be true.

Anyone who has been a member of this House knows the significant impact that the role of MPP has on our families. I am fortunate to enter this role with the love and support of the my husband, Helmut, and our four wonderful children. The sacrifices they have made already, and will continue to make in the future, to allow me to effectively represent the people of my riding, for that I am truly thankful.

I would also like to thank the many individuals from across my riding who worked so hard to help me be their voice. It was truly a team effort that brought me to Queen's Park to represent the people of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. I am humbled by their confidence, and I take very seriously my responsibility to be their voice. The residents of my riding want and deserve to be heard at Queen's Park.

Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington is a realigned riding that was previously served by three fine

representatives, Mr Harry Danford, Mr Bill Vankoughnet and Mr Gary Fox.

As I have travelled throughout my riding, many people have remarked that it is a very large one. Not only does Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington have one of the longest names, but it also covers an area of 12,330 square kilometres, stretching from Maynooth, the gateway to Algonquin Park in the north, to Amherst Island in the south. The riding is made up of rugged Canadian Shield, rich rolling farmland, pristine lakes and quaint towns and villages. We have over 90,000 residents, 26 municipalities and 5,000 kilometres of road.

Many travellers come to Ontario seeking experiences they cannot find at home. Areas like the Land O'Lakes tourist region in my riding are working hard to ensure that visitors to the area return home with memories that will last a lifetime: boating, camping, wilderness retreats, skiing or snowmobiling. If one is looking for a unique vacation, Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington is filled with wonderful opportunities, some of Ontario's finest provincial parks, the Rideau Canal, the Trans-Canada Trail and numerous community fairs and festivals awaiting travellers who venture east of Toronto.

The riding is also rich in heritage, as the home of the United Empire Loyalists, and many significant historical sites. Napanee, Bath and the Loyalist Parkway offer a veritable treasure trove of historic experiences. Throughout the riding there are numerous historical and heritage centres that actively record and promote the courage and work ethic that have formed the strong foundations of the rural communities in Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. Their origins are from throughout Europe and the United States, and together they underpin the rich fabric of society in rural Ontario.

1850

Yet as wonderful as Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington is, over the past several months I've had the opportunity to hear from many real people across my riding. Groups and individuals have told me that this unique part of Ontario faces many significant challenges in the coming months.

The throne speech talked about real people and real families. However, I was most disappointed that the throne speech did not address the real issues of rural Ontario. The throne speech, as long as it was, was silent in addressing the myriad of issues that have come to me in recent weeks and months. Regularly, I have heard from parents of students with special needs who have experienced reductions in support services for their children. Local boards are bound to a funding formula that is

inflexible and inadequate in providing for the range of needs within the board. The funding formula, nobly intended to provide resources equitably for students, falls far short of that goal when providing for special-needs students.

The trauma of municipal amalgamation, with little if any support or direction from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, has placed significant burdens on many of the municipalities in my riding. Essential services such as police and ambulance have been forced upon these rural municipalities without regard for their ability to pay or to manage such important services in sparsely populated rural communities.

One municipality in my riding, Addington Highlands, is 71% crown land, and it has had Highway 41, a major eastern Ontario artery, downloaded. The municipality would indicate that it would be able to maintain the highway; however, the municipality does not have the resources to upgrade the highway.

The municipality of Central Frontenac is in a similar situation, as Highway 509 and Highway 38 have been downloaded. These roads are in pitiable condition and require major repair and construction. The throne speech said nothing about government plans to assist and support municipalities that do not have sufficient local resources to address the burdens that have been downloaded to them.

Another transportation issue in my riding is the lack of adequate service for the ferry users of Amherst Island. Ferry users are forced to use an older ferry that is not large enough to meet the local need, and many users question its safety. The throne speech was silent in addressing the transportation needs on Ontario's aqueous routes.

Health issues throughout Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington are numerous. However, the issue of greatest concern relates to letters that local hospitals have received. They have been instructed that they must end their fiscal year in a balanced position in spite of situations that may have been inherited from predecessor governing bodies. This expectation will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the operations and service delivery in these hospitals.

My office is repeatedly made aware of the desperate need for increased support in the area of home care. When people are being discharged from hospital sicker and quicker, there is even greater need for home care services to assist people in their recuperation. Many people, usually seniors, who would like to be able to stay in their own homes, and who would be able to do so with only a little help, are being forced to consider placement in already overtaxed long-term-care facilities because they are being denied a few hours a week of home care for personal care and/or homemaking. However, the throne speech was silent on these issues that are very important to the real people in my riding.

I promise the people of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington that I will be their voice at Queen's Park. I know for whom I work, and I am both humbled and inspired by their confidence. My work will bring me to

Toronto. However, my heart is and always will be firmly rooted in my riding.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I'd like to thank my colleague for splitting her time with me.

As this is my first speech in the House, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the people of the expanded Sudbury riding for re-electing me and sending me back to the Ontario Legislature to fight for what they feel to be very important and to fight for the directions they feel are necessary not only for the people of Sudbury but for the people of Ontario.

I'd like to congratulate as well all members on both sides of the House who have either been re-elected or elected for the first time. It is a wonderful experience. It's an honour to be a member of this particular House, and I look forward to the interchange which will take place among the members of all three parties over the course of the next several years.

I look forward as well to working with the government in establishing meaningful legislation that wasn't addressed in the speech from the throne.

Just a few of the topics that I believe to be very important include meaningful legislation with regard to the protection of children who are sexually abused or exploited through prostitution. I know the Solicitor General will ensure that this type of legislation is at least talked about over on the government side, because that problem is real. It's not only real in my city or in our area of Ontario; it's real all across Ontario and in fact across Canada. It has to be dealt with not only municipally, not only provincially, not only federally, but internationally as well.

I also look forward to working with the Solicitor General to ensure that meaningful legislation is passed with regard to those people who decide they are going to outrun the police. I look forward to quick passage of that type of legislation which will ensure that the memory of Sergeant Rick McDonald from Sudbury, who was killed by a van fleeing the police, will be a lasting memory for those of us who believe it is important to pass meaningful provincial legislation which will discourage that. I believe his wife, Sergeant Corinne Fewester McDonald, has placed a trust in our Solicitor General. She has also placed a trust in me as her representative to ensure that this legislation reaches fruition quickly. I wish it had been in the speech from the throne, but I know that the Solicitor General, who has given his word to our police force and to Sergeant Corinne Fewester McDonald, will ensure that the legislation comes to the House quickly and that we will debate it in a very honest, open and frank way, and hopefully pass the legislation that is necessary.

We have immediate problems, as you know, in northern Ontario and in my riding of Sudbury that I want to deal with for the next few moments. Certainly one that is of major concern to me is the doctor shortage that is happening in the region of Sudbury at this point in time. We know it's not a problem unique to Sudbury or to northern Ontario but is a problem across Ontario. In Sudbury, though, the problem is critical. We are now

short 35 specialists. They cover all the fields of specialty, and people are dying because they aren't able to be seen by the specialists who can treat them and maybe save their lives.

We have a solution in Sudbury and we have presented it to the government. The government has acted only in part on it. I suggest to the government that I am willing to work with this government and with this health minister to ensure that the program in the north, by the north and for the north is implemented fully. But in order to do that, the government is going to have to make a substantial commitment of dollars to the program.

Everyone on both sides of the House realizes and understands that there is a solution to the shortage of doctors in northern Ontario. This document was put together by the health care professionals in northern Ontario. We are willing to implement it in northern Ontario. They are willing to work to ensure that there is a continuum of services provided by specialists and by family doctors, but the reality is that the program will only be successful if it is funded, and it has to be funded by the province because it is a provincial initiative.

1900

The people at the Northern Academic Health Sciences Network are very willing to work with this government. They have shown in the past that they are open to the government's suggestions for altering the program, but the reality is, in all fairness to the program and with all due respect to the government, that their suggestions aren't nearly as good as what's there at this point in time. That has been proven time and time again. The health minister has stood in the last Parliament and committed some monies to it, saying that it was an excellent program. The reality is it cannot be implemented unless you fund the program completely. I look forward to that announcement being made by this government at some point in time, and I hope that is immediate, because we need those doctors in Sudbury and in northern Ontario now.

Second, I'm very concerned about the northern health travel grant. I've stood in this House on numerous occasions in the 36th Parliament and argued for more money. The reality is that it is necessary for this government to ensure that northerners are treated fairly. All that northerners want is a level playing field, a playing field that is equal to the playing field provided for patients in southern Ontario. I will be continuing to go back to the northern health travel grant until, in the wisdom of this government, they see fit to fund it accordingly.

I am very concerned about hospital restructuring in the regional municipality of Sudbury and in northeastern Ontario. It is virtually impossible for the people of the Sudbury region to come up with \$20 million-plus in order to build the new facility that your restructuring exercise said was necessary in Sudbury. It is impossible for us to cut our services any more. When you see that we're running deficits of \$7.2 million one year, \$8 million this year, the reason that's happening is you have underfunded the system in years past. You have withdrawn too much money from the system, and it is now

crucial that you understand, that you pause, look and fund.

I welcome, and I'm sure the hospital administration in Sudbury would welcome, the Provincial Auditor's going in and studying the books in the Sudbury Regional Hospital. You will find that it isn't the fault of the people who are running the hospital; it isn't the fault of the people who are providing the services. It is the lack of understanding that this government has with regard to the extra burden and extra costs attached to the delivery of health services in northern Ontario.

I look forward to working with the government and I look forward to the government committing early, hopefully next week. When your health minister meets next week with all those hospitals that are running deficits, I hope that she will understand, she will come to her senses, and she will realize that delivering services in northern Ontario is very unique and very costly.

I look forward to working with the Minister of Health and with the Minister of Labour with regard to the workplace carcinoma committee. It is unacceptable that 9% of the workforce goes to work and contracts a deadly form of cancer that will, either in the short term or long term, kill them. It is more inexcusable when we have the means to ensure that the number is reduced substantially.

The workplace carcinoma committee is not a partisan matter. The workplace carcinoma committee should be a committee established with all-party consent to ensure that working men and women in this province can go to work and feel confident enough in knowing that their workplace will not kill them.

In conclusion, I would like to thank those people who worked on my campaign. We had 1,340 volunteers. I don't have the time in 41 seconds to mention all of them, but I do want them to know that they are equally important in my estimation, and over the course of the next four years I will hopefully meet the goals and certainly the agenda that they have asked me to implement at Queen's Park on their behalf.

Finally, one should understand that in democracy there is debate, and that debate must not only include the government members but must be respected by the opposition members and the government members for each other.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments and questions?

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): It's a pleasure to rise tonight to join in the debate. I'd like to congratulate the member for Hastings-Frontenac on her maiden speech, and the member for Sudbury.

We are continuing to discuss the throne speech and the amendments that have been introduced. Our government made it very clear that there are still a lot of changes that need to be done and that we were elected to continue to fix government. That's what we intend to do, follow up on our Blueprint and the platform that was presented during the election.

The job of building a stronger and more prosperous province continues. The spirit of the Common Sense Revolution continues to guide us, and our agenda is a

very busy agenda. We need to continue the job-creating tax cuts and we have indicated that we'll be continuing to do that, and introduce a further 20% reduction in personal income taxes and a 20% reduction in the provincial portion of residential property taxes. We have introduced the taxpayer protection and balanced budget legislation, and that was long overdue. The people of Ontario have said very clearly during the election that they wanted us to do that, and that is the first piece of legislation we want to introduce. I am pleased to report to the House that it has been done.

We also indicated that we want to proceed with the declaration of taxpayers' rights and we'll be doing that.

Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): I think it's very important that everyone in this House put their earphones on at the present time. I was just watching the television at 7 o'clock, and there's a major announcement that would break up the Collège d'Alfred in my riding. This government has been saying that they will cut personal taxes, but they never say what is going to follow.

J'aimerais apporter à votre attention la nouvelle qu'on vient de nous présenter à la télévision de TFO. On vient de nous annoncer des coupures d'au-delà de 1,5 \$ million au Collège d'Alfred. Cela est la subvention que nous recevions au Collège d'Alfred. Cela veut dire que c'est une recommandation qui vient du comité ministériel qui va être discutée à la prochaine réunion du cabinet.

1910

Je crois que c'est une tape en plein visage pour les francophones de l'est ontarien et de toute la province. Je dis bien une tape en plein visage parce que ce gouvernement-là ne comprend pas l'importance de la langue française et des services en français ici même en Ontario. Nous avons au-delà de 52 pays sur ce globe qui parlent français où le français est leur première langue officielle. Aujourd'hui, avec ces coupures gouvernementales de 1,5 \$ million, nous allons être obligés de fermer le Collège d'Alfred. Est-ce que c'est un autre Montfort ? Je crois que c'est la suite avec le gouvernement Harris qui ne croit simplement pas aux services aux francophones, qui sont au-delà de 500 000 dans cette province.

Je crois que c'est une honte pour ce gouvernement d'agir de cette façon et j'espère que le conseil du cabinet va regarder la recommandation et s'assurer que le Collège d'Alfred demeure ouvert pour donner les services à tous ces étudiants qui étudient en agro-alimentaire dans notre comté.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments or questions?

M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-Baie James) : Encore une fois on voit dans la communauté francophone un gouvernement qui ose attaquer la communauté d'une manière qui touche à la souche de ce que c'est que d'être francophone. On a vu dernièrement dans le premier parlement du gouvernement conservateur attaque après attaque quand ça vient aux services à la communauté francophone. On a vu ce qui est arrivé à l'hôpital Montfort, on l'a vécu. On a vu ce qui est arrivé avec la réduction des services du gouvernement provincial

envers la clientèle francophone. On l'a vu, on l'a vécu. On voit aujourd'hui le gouvernement qui veut attaquer encore une autre institution provinciale, une autre institution francophone, le Collège d'Alfred.

À quel point est-ce que ça va s'arrêter ? À quel point est-ce que le gouvernement va finalement comprendre que la communauté francophone a besoin d'avoir ces services pour être capable d'épanouir sa volonté comme communauté francophone envers sa propre communauté ? On ne peut pas toujours envoyer nos enfants, jour après jour, aux institutions anglaises. On a été à travers de ces situations-là dans le passé. C'est pour ces raisons que les gouvernements d'avant ont mis en place ces institutions pour s'assurer que nous, les francophones, avons à nos institutions qui sont là pour desservir la communauté francophone. On apprend encore que le gouvernement va traiter la question quelque temps cette semaine ou la semaine prochaine faisant faire avec le Collège d'Alfred. Le ministère d'Agriculture veut retirer 1,5 \$ million de cette institution. Si l'approbation est donnée par le ministre, M. Hodgson, et par le premier ministre, M. Harris, ça veut dire la fin de cette institution.

Monsieur le Président et les députés de l'assemblée, et spécialement sur le bord conservateur, allez-vous comprendre une fois pour toutes que c'est assez ? On vous dit d'arrêter pour une fois et réfléchir à ce que vous êtes en train de faire à la communauté francophone et à la communauté agricole du nord-est et de l'est en Ontario. Ça a besoin d'arrêter.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I was interested in listening to the presentation made by the newly elected member from Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, my regional home area, and also the member from Sudbury.

I'd like to bring to the attention of the first member who spoke who was rather critical of some of the CCAC activities and getting some of the dollars out there. I think she should recall some of the things that have happened in previous years. When the Liberals were in government back in the late 1980s, they were the ones who started to close hospital beds. I'm not saying that was necessarily wrong at the time, because there was a change in medicine. But they did nothing about those closed rooms other than just let them sit there. Then the NDP, who screamed about the closing of beds and rooms, came along and continued to close just as many beds as the Liberals did and did nothing about the expensive hospitals sitting there.

This government finally did something. We took the bull by the horns and we looked at all these beds that were closed, equal to about 30 medium-sized hospitals. The HSRC came in, a very painful activity. In my area the Port Hope hospital was closed and that was not an easy thing to handle. But something had to be done about the number of beds, and what I'm coming around to, the member from Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, is the fact that we've reinvested those dollars back into the system and now the system has some money for things like CCACs and to look after people at home.

We've also come out with longer hospital stays for new moms. It's now up to at least 60 hours that they're able to stay in hospital. As a matter of fact, we're committed to getting more physicians into our underserved areas by paying their tuition, provided that they will go and serve for some five years in the underserved areas.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington has two minutes to respond.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I'm very happy to respond to some of the statements made by the member for Northumberland with regard to having me go back in history and think about what happened in the former Liberal government. I reflect with great pride on the record of that government.

More to the point about what this government has done: The issues that I raised in my comments on the throne speech in the area of health care specifically related to the fact that hospitals in my riding have been given letters that direct them to end the year in a balanced position in spite of the fact that they have inherited some significant deficits over which they've had no control. What it will require is a very serious consideration of the needed services that are provided now, with a view to reducing or modifying those services. So I find it hard to understand that the member opposite would suggest this is a better way of providing health care within the community.

Also, with regard to the role of CCACs, I certainly in no way commented negatively on the role. I believe they're doing their very best with the limited resources they have. I have had the opportunity to meet with both members of the board of directors of the CCAC and members of the administration, who very clearly indicate they are not provided with adequate resources to meet the caseloads they have. There are people in my riding who are not getting the home care services they need and deserve. They are going home from hospital sicker, they are not getting the hours of home care they should have, and in some cases they're even returning to the hospital. So if you want to talk about CCACs and the role they have, I'm very happy to do it. I'm very happy to point out to you that they need more financial assistance in order to do their job.

The Deputy Speaker: I want to bring to the attention of the House a former member from Kitchener-Wilmot, Gary Leadston, in the members' gallery.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Further debate?

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): Mr Speaker, I would like to request unanimous consent to share the time I have remaining after my speech with my friend the member for Northumberland.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed? It is agreed.

Mr Arnott: I am honoured and privileged to join in this response to the speech from the throne, speaking on behalf of the people of my new constituency of Waterloo-Wellington.

In Ontario's restructured Legislature, which now has 103 seats and 27 fewer MPPs, in some ways I consider this to be my maiden speech for the new riding of Waterloo-Wellington. While I continue to serve a large portion of Wellington county, I now have the added privilege of serving constituents in Waterloo region, including a part of the city of Kitchener. I am very pleased and delighted that my former colleague Gary Leadston is here in the gallery today, because Gary represented Kitchener-Wilmot, as you indicated, Mr Speaker, very ably over the four-year term he spent here, and of course my new riding includes much of Gary's old riding.

In the 20 months preceding the election, and since June 3, I have met many people from Waterloo region, from Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich townships and those from the southwestern part of the city of Kitchener whom I now represent. I think it's important to say to my constituents, both new and those I have represented since 1990, that I believe it is my first job to represent their needs and concerns to their provincial government.

I think it was Winston Churchill who said that he who represents his constituents first represents his government best. I agree with that statement. The themes of Ontario's throne speech closely mirror that sentiment: "Government exists to serve people—not the other way around."

The people of Ontario, and my constituents, want to enter a new millennium that provides every single Ontarian with boundless opportunities in a province that is destined to have a better future. The throne speech is Ontario's commitment to how we will serve those aspirations. More jobs that are more secure and better paying, better access to health care, higher quality education and the greatest possible access to healthy beginnings for children is where we see Ontario in the future. Our continued commitment to strong leadership and a strong economy is how we will get there.

1920

Our steadfast commitment to greater opportunities for all Ontarians is perhaps most poignantly represented in the throne speech by its reference to Jerry Weber, a young man from Kitchener. You'll recall that in dealing with the combined pressures of a struggling new business and an illness in his family, Jerry had no option but to seek social assistance.

Under our new system of work for welfare, where welfare has been transformed from mere cheque distribution into a system that helps people find work, Jerry is now back on his feet. He now runs a successful small business called Northern Barn Custom Furniture in Baden in my riding of Waterloo-Wellington.

I want to thank the Premier for hosting the Webers recently by personally providing Jerry and his wife with seats for the throne speech—they were sitting right down here. That was a wonderful gesture, and a fair one in terms of a seat-for-seat swap, considering that the Premier himself recently received a chair that was hand-crafted by Jerry to indicate his personal appreciation for Ontario's new welfare system.

I was glad that Waterloo-Wellington had two references in the recent throne speech. The beautiful Grand River watershed is part of our heritage in Waterloo-Wellington, the attraction that drew waves of immigrants to settle in our area in the 19th century. The Grand River Conservation Authority was mentioned in the throne speech for its plan to make Ontario better in the new millennium.

As part of the government's Ontario 2000 program, the Conservation Authority will distribute 50,000 white pine seedlings so that school children will have an opportunity to plant Ontario's official tree. I can't think of a better way for our kids in the watershed school boards to learn about protecting our environment and our future than by doing something about it. It's a lesson we can all fully appreciate through generations to come.

By the time they see those trees reaching maturity, they will know an Ontario that is more prosperous and healthy in every way because its leaders had a vision for its betterment.

We have made the structural changes that have laid the foundation upon which we are building a better future. And much remains to be done. Ninety-nine tax cuts, less red tape for small business, a balanced budget plan and a commitment to start paying down the debt are among the measures we are enacting to create the economic climate that will in turn create another 825,000 new jobs.

As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, it is my role to work with my friend the minister, and David Lindsay, president and CEO of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board, towards our government's goal of making Ontario the best place to invest and create new jobs.

Most recently, we did this in our salute to small business, and I was pleased to join the minister for a day in the Guelph and Waterloo area. We held an Ontario Trade Days forum in Guelph, and I was pleased to be at that, and launched the 1999 Ontario Global Traders Awards for outstanding achievement in exporting.

Along with the member for Guelph-Wellington, we visited ABS Friction in Guelph, and later joined the Health Minister and MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo at Northern Digital in Waterloo. Both companies are top-performing, small- to medium-sized exporters, and both are 1998 Global Traders Award winners.

Small business accounts for 80% of over half a million net new jobs that have been created in Ontario since 1995, since we first took government. We salute the men and women who take great risks following their dreams, and who work their hearts out to create or run small businesses. They are the number one job creators and the innovators whose new ideas and business practices lead the way to our future and prosperity.

That is why this government helps small business to grow. Along with tax cuts and reduced red tape, the ministry has programs that work in partnership to develop business in Ontario. We have business self-help offices and enterprise centres that form partnerships with

the business community and municipalities to foster small business beginnings, expansion and ultimately job creation.

Recently I had the pleasure of joining the member for Oakville, the newly elected Speaker of this Legislature, and local partners to launch the enterprise centre for Halton region. In Halton, and in every business community I have visited or met as we've expanded this program, I have found strong support for this concept. So I welcome all members of this Legislature to review the material recently sent to them by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade requesting their input on obtaining wider support to extend this service to more regions, including the north of the province.

Our programs help create jobs in growth areas, or what we might call the jobs of the future. Sometimes, future job creation depends entirely on the skills and training we provide today. Through our strategic skills initiative, we have formed funding partnerships at Conestoga College in Kitchener and Confederation College in Thunder Bay to provide training for tomorrow's jobs. I've heard time and time again from business people in recent months that they would expand and create the new jobs we continue to need if only they had the skilled people available to fill these jobs. Our multi-year, \$100-million commitment through the strategic skills initiative is providing workers and employers with the skills they need to prosper.

The Ontario government realizes that strong training and motivated people are keys to future prosperity. Last month I had an opportunity to find out how much future entrepreneurs have to offer when I attended the Royal Bank Shad entrepreneurship cup on behalf of the Premier at the Ontario Science Centre.

As you may be aware, Mr Speaker, Shad Valley is an organization based in Waterloo whose core mission is to develop the scientific and technological capabilities of senior high school students and integrate these abilities with an advanced entrepreneurial spirit. The young people I met were the highest of high achievers. In fact, Shad Valley has had 11 Rhodes scholars among their alumni so far—quite an achievement.

As I told them, they embody the principles of A Road map to Prosperity, which is the province's vision for economic growth and a higher quality of life. Specifically, this program is in step with fostering entrepreneurship and innovation for our youth and throughout the training system. Every young person we train and every business we help to grow creates a stronger economy that supports a higher quality of life. That stronger economy has enabled us to increase the health care budget to a record high of over \$18.9 billion this year and commit to a further increase in health spending of 20% over the next five years.

The quality of life improvements of health care expansion are well on their way in hospitals that serve Waterloo-Wellington. Recently, I joined the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to launch a new childbirth and children's centre at the Grand River Hospital in Kitchener.

As part of our plan to improve access to health care for children and mothers, the province is investing over \$7 million to build the new centre, which will go a long way towards reaching our goal of providing better beginnings for mothers, children and families. It carries through on our 60-hour guaranteed stay for new moms, and our Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, which supports parents' efforts to nurture healthy emotional and physical child development right from the start.

I'm pleased to report that since the Legislature passed my resolution highlighting the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, the province is increasing the program's funding nearly sevenfold, from its original annual budget of \$10 million to \$67 million by the year 2000-01.

Waterloo-Wellington will also have access to some of the world's best cancer treatment when the new cancer centre opens at the Grand River Hospital. Waterloo-Wellington heart patients will soon receive more of the treatments they need closer to home at St Mary's hospital in Kitchener, which will soon house two cardiac laboratories. The first lab is expected to be up and running by next summer, and I understand they will perform important, if not crucial, procedures such as angioplasty, the treatment where small, inflatable balloons are used to enlarge a narrowed blood vessel, improving the circulation of blood through a person's heart.

These and many other accomplishments demonstrate that this government represents the views of the people who put us here and that we are working to ensure a better quality of life for all Ontarians.

In Waterloo-Wellington we expect government to be frugal and to live within its means. We want government to adequately fund important services like health care, education and protection for our environment and our communities. We insist, rightly, that government manage its affairs honestly and competently. And that is what we will endeavour to do in this 37th Parliament of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member for Northumberland.

Mr Galt: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and also thanks to the member for Waterloo-Wellington for sharing his time. This, of course, is my first opportunity to speak in the House in the 37th Parliament, and I certainly welcome back all the incumbents and also welcome the newcomers, and of course condolences to those who were not successful.

Indeed, what a privilege it is to be able to serve your constituents—in most of our cases, some hundred thousand people whom we're able to represent. There was a slight modification in my riding this time around. I did not lose any of the county of Northumberland but picked up the Trenton ward in Quinte west. I'm certainly very grateful to be able to serve and have this opportunity and also to thank the volunteers who worked so hard to ensure success in our riding. They certainly believed in what our party was doing. I was once asked how many were involved and I quickly estimated, "Oh, at least 200

or so." But thinking afterwards, hundreds and hundreds of people were involved in some way, answering phones or putting up signs, and that's true of all parties. I have the greatest respect for those who work for a party, preferably ours, but at least if they're working for a party they have some belief in the democratic process.

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Even after some four years of serving here, it's still a thrill to come in here and take part in the debate. We live in an era when it seems so important to put politicians down, whether it's in the press or whatever, but I personally think there is absolutely no higher calling than to have your fellow people—fellow men, fellow women—elect you and to have a majority ask you to come and serve here at Queen's Park.

The songwriter Bob Dylan once wrote, "Those who are not busy being born are busy dying." I think every day that I spend here in the Legislature is just a little like being born. There are always new ideas and new activities. There are always new discoveries, new challenges and new twists. I certainly look forward to this term and debating here in the House.

The press referred to the federal throne speech as the drone speech. In that speech, as the press reported, they said nothing, and it was filled with empty promises. But not so the speech that we had from the throne here in Ontario. That speech had meat. It had all kinds of details. It reaffirmed the platform that we campaigned on back in May 1999. It was about full steam ahead in Ontario, about building a stronger and a more prosperous province. That's what's been going on for the last four years, and it's going to continue for the next four years.

Some of the highlights that I particularly liked to see in the throne speech related to job-creating tax cuts, which will include another 20% cut in the income tax, just what it did in the first term. Here we are at 571,000 net new jobs, right on track to the five-year point of having 725,000 net new jobs as we promised back in May 1995.

We'll be bringing in the taxpayers' bill of rights and balanced budget legislation. There's going to be a businesslike approach to running government, one like we never saw in that lost decade from 1985 to 1995. Even the opposition parties are agreeing with our ideas on a sex offender registry that is needed.

We'll also be cracking down with zero tolerance on welfare fraud and aggressive panhandling. It's certainly time that we took welfare fraud very seriously.

As we look at agricultural issues, it was highlighted in the throne speech that agriculture in Ontario contributes some \$25 billion to the economy of this province. It also employs some 640,000 people. In Northumberland, it's the second-largest industry. It's good to see that we're going to follow through and update the food safety standards and increase inspection programs. We will also be working with farmers to improve rural water quality.

But I think what's really important in that throne speech is that we're going to do our very best, at least, to ensure that there is a fair share coming from the federal

government to assist with the safety nets in this province. Last year, the province of Ontario produced 23% of the agricultural production across Canada, but how much did they assist us with the safety net programs when farmers were in trouble? A measly 16%, when we produced 23%. I think it's time that the federal Minister of Agriculture paid attention to what's happening in his province and looked after his farmers in Ontario.

Health care has been mentioned several times in this House. We are quite concerned in Northumberland, with an aging and growing population, increasing pressures on health care. I'm thrilled that two of the five new hospitals to be built in Ontario in this term will be in my riding, one in Quinte West, in the Trenton ward, the Trenton Memorial Hospital. The steel is in the air and the roof is going over it as I speak this evening. In the west part of Northumberland there is also a commitment for a hospital with 70-30 funding, which certainly was never heard of when the opposition was in government.

We're also addressing the MD shortage, something that is very crucial in the Campbellford-Seymour area. One of the ways of addressing that, of course, is paying for their tuition, provided they go to underserved areas once they graduate.

We're also building on the hiring of some 12,000 nurses, which we were committed to earlier, by increasing the funding for nurse practitioners, and also for the creation of a chief nursing officer in all Ontario hospitals. These are indeed very wise moves in giving real importance to the nursing profession here in the province.

It was also good to see in the throne speech the thrust towards tourism and promoting tourism. Certainly it's a \$60-million business in Northumberland. There's absolutely nothing more picturesque than the rolling hills of Northumberland, with Rice Lake in the north, Lake Ontario in the south, the Trent River system on the east and the Ganaraska on the west.

If there was anything in the throne speech that was the overall message, it had to do with economic stimulation, the cutting of taxes, the cutting of red tape and job creation. The job that we started out with four years ago has been tremendously successful. We're going to stay on track with that success and ensure that there are 725,000 net new jobs here by June 2000, and we'll keep right on creating those jobs.

We've reaffirmed our commitment as a government. We've reaffirmed that we will be attracting investment, that we'll be cutting taxes and we'll be making Ontario competitive. That's why some businesses are leaving this country. It's because we're just not competitive enough. There isn't a balanced playing field between labour and management. That playing field must be levelled. We must be competitive or we're going to see more industry leave. With this government, I can assure you that Ontario will be competitive well into the next millennium.

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): To the honourable members from Northumberland and Waterloo-Wellington: When we talk about economic stimulation, I wonder if they understand that for the first

time—it's unprecedented—we have a booming economy that isn't translating down to needs for people, isn't translating into work for people.

We have in our own community a booming economy, supposedly, yet we have an ophthalmologist who is shutting his doors because this government is changing the rules, and as it changes the rules, it doesn't consider how it affects people.

The economy is stimulated, yes. We have an economic boom, but it isn't translating into the health care system. Hospitals are being told we've got an economic boom, but we still have to continue cutting beds because the deficits have to be cut. I have to say that hospitals are not in the business of making money. They're not in the business of being able to provide monies to pay off their debts that they've incurred over the last number of years.

Again, government has a role, and that role is not just to look at the bottom line; it's to meet the needs of people. The balance that is needed is that you have to have fiscal responsibility—we know that—but you can't do it at the high price that it's costing this province when it comes to meeting the needs of people. You can't ignore the elderly, you can't ignore the disabled. You can't ignore the realities of the consequences all of these restraints are causing people. The struggles and the pain cannot be ignored. Government is there to give an even playing field.

Mr Bisson: I have a couple of comments on the comments made by the member for Northumberland. He talks about the economy doing really well and takes great pleasure in trying to take credit on the part of his government for what's happening in the economy. All of us understand, all of us know, that the reality is that the Ontario economy is doing well, by and large, because of what is happening in the US. For this government to take the position that the whole of the economic boom that supposedly we're seeing in southern Ontario is as a result of the Harris government is really a stretch. It would be akin to saying a tax cut in Ontario stimulates the US economy. Give your head a shake. You know that ain't the case.

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Then, to top it all off, the Premier has the nerve to go to Sudbury on Friday and say: "The economy is doing well. Since I have come to power, the economy in northern Ontario has done better than it ever has before." How do you explain the fact that unemployment has gone up since 1995 in northern Ontario, since the time that Mike Harris has taken power? Why? Because this government has turned its back on its responsibility to northern economic development, something that every government in the past—yes, including the Bill Davis government of the previous Tories—had done before. This government doesn't believe in intervention on the part of the province in assisting and being a partner at the table. Rather, it's a laissez-faire attitude. Let the big corporate elite decide what's going to happen. There are some positive sides to the southern Ontario economy, but none for us.

The other thing I really take exception to is he goes on at great lengths to talk about how: "Second term around, we're going after them welfare cheats. Boy, we've gotta kick 'em again." You know, everybody wants to make sure that somebody who's getting welfare is justly deserving. I wouldn't argue for a second that we shouldn't try to make sure it's accountable, but I think it's somewhat taking—I can't say the unparliamentary word—

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: It's a double standard, I guess I can say. The same caucus condones a tax evader who has been convicted in its caucus, and then they go after welfare cheats. I think it's hypocritical.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments and questions?

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's my pleasure to respond to the comments made by the member for Waterloo-Wellington and the member for Northumberland. Both of them tried to summarize the platform which the people of Ontario voted for on June 3. Clearly, as we formed the government, the people have spoken.

To summarize a couple of points, even during the May-June activities that we were all involved in, getting elected, we had to clearly demonstrate to the people of Ontario that we were committed to doing what we promised. It does take focused and very strong leadership to do what you say. Clearly, the opposition just is not up to the job. It's that simple. I've heard it said by some that it has weak and vacillating leadership. I'm proud that we've recognized the NDP with third party status. It shows our inclusiveness and respect. They really did offer a clear alternative. The clear alternative was that they weren't going to try to balance the budget or cut spending. We know what they are about.

If I look in some detail at the Liberal platform, it gives you a good insight into what they wouldn't have done. In fact, it was called the 20/20 Plan. The old saying is that 20/20 is hindsight. True, that's exactly what it was. They looked at what we did, and then with respect to health care—in the few minutes remaining—they were implementing a health audit. The reason for the health audit was to suggest perhaps that there were some inappropriate spending areas in the Ministry of Health, which is an appropriate approach. This government is allocating resources, putting patients first.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): I want to compliment the members for Waterloo-Wellington and Northumberland for speaking on behalf of their government. I only wish that when we allow you to brag about what you feel you've done well, you would also give credit where credit is due. There was a lot of boo-hooing when it was said, "What about credit to the federal government and the fact that it has balanced its books?"

Interjections.

Mr Crozier: And there's more boo-hooing. I'll tell you what. I'll give you folks over there all the credit.

Interjection.

Mr Crozier: The member from Durham harps away and says, "The voters spoke." You know, the voters only gave you 40%; 60% didn't like what you had to offer.

We've got an electoral system in this province that's first past the post. That's what we have to deal with. You won the highest number of seats in first past the post. But don't ever say that the voters of Ontario gave you all this mandate, when 60% of them didn't.

Let's give you credit for everything good that has happened. Tell me why, last Thursday night, I listened to parents with tears in their eyes because there isn't enough special education funding for their kids. If you have taken credit for the good things, will you take responsibility for that? No. Do I hear anybody over there—put up your hand if you'll take responsibility for cheating special education kids' needs in Ontario.

Interjections.

All I hear is a bit of nattering. You're quite willing to take all the credit, but you won't will stand up and take the blame for some of the things that aren't being done right in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Northumberland has two minutes to respond.

Mr Galt: Brilliant comments from the member for Durham, absolutely excellent observation on his part. It's unfortunate the members for Sarnia-Lambton and Timmins-James Bay didn't see it quite the same way.

I'd like to zero in on some of the comments by the member for Essex and give credit where credit is due, and I think maybe I can in the next few minutes. Here is a party that won't go and lobby with their first cousins or brothers and sisters and do anything about the over \$3 billion in cuts to health care. They started with 50% of funding for health care; they have cut it to 7.6%. I would think, when they're dancing cheek to cheek, that the provincial Liberals might lobby a little with the federal Liberals and get a little assistance for Ontario.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Essex, come to order.

Mr Galt: Maybe they could do something about employment insurance premiums. They're ridiculously high, cutting jobs in this province, with \$21 billion in the bank. Will they do anything? No, they won't do anything.

Then they talk about our lacking a majority in this House. What about their cousins in Ottawa, who got 38% of the vote? This is the first government in history that, with two majorities in a row, actually increased their percentage. That's what happened in Ontario. If we could just get the provincial Liberals to work with their federal cousins, I think Ontario would be a lot better.

It's interesting to note that 100 of the 103 federal members from Ontario are Liberal. But are they doing anything for the province? No, and I think that's pretty unfortunate, but what else would you expect from a Liberal?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I hope you have that out of your system. It may have been something you ate. I'd like to see you in here for the rest of the evening, and you won't be if you keep on.

I'd like now to recognize the member for Ottawa-Vanier.

Mrs Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier): I ask for unanimous consent to split time with the member for Hamilton East.

The Deputy Speaker: Agreed? It is agreed.

Mrs Boyer: It is with pride that I rise in this Legislative Assembly to address you and my fellow members as the elected representative for Ottawa-Vanier.

Mon élection à Queen's Park est pour moi un sommet, et j'accepte ce défi avec confiance et détermination.

My first words here as a representative of the people of Ottawa-Vanier are to pay tribute to the former outstanding member, whom I have the honour to succeed. Bernard Grandmaître was a dedicated and public spirited legislator from my area for many years. He arrived at Queen's Park with a solid record of municipal service. When he came here, he championed the cause of French-language services in Ontario.

Comme ministre responsable des Affaires francophones, il a su répondre aux besoins de la communauté pour une institution post-secondaire en appuyant activement l'établissement du premier collège francophone, la Cité collégiale à Ottawa, avec la participation des députés de Thunder Bay, Atikokan et Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. Bernard Grandmaître est peut-être plus connu comme le père de la Loi 8. Par son leadership, il a contribué au sens de sécurité culturelle et constitutionnelle de la francophonie ontarienne.

We will remember Ben Grandmaître with immense respect, profound gratitude and enduring affection.

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Je tiens à remercier les électeurs d'Ottawa-Vanier pour l'appui qu'ils m'ont accordé le 3 juin dernier. J'aimerais aussi saluer et remercier les nombreux bénévoles qui, par leur travail acharné et leurs efforts, ont permis que je sois ici aujourd'hui.

To the people of Ottawa-Vanier, I thank you for the opportunity to serve you at Queen's Park and for placing your confidence in me. I pledge to do my utmost to bring your concerns to this assembly. I am delighted to be a member of our Liberal caucus and I am very proud to be the successor of Horace Racine, Albert Roy and Bernard Grandmaître in Ottawa-Vanier, under the dynamic leadership of the member from Ottawa-South.

My constituency of Ottawa-Vanier is as diverse as any in Ontario and probably more diverse than most ridings. It is with humility that I come here to represent my neighbours, my former colleagues, hundreds of people with whom I went to school many years ago and who still live in the riding, and everyone else who has moved to the area in the last half-century.

Je représente des gens très riches et des gens très pauvres. Je représente des personnes handicapées ayant des besoins spéciaux.

I represent young people looking for meaningful employment and adequate, affordable housing. I represent the homeless. In my riding there are several overburdened daytime and nighttime facilities struggling with the challenge of providing the most basic assistance for those devastated by poverty, loneliness and misery, by the loss

of family, the loss of friends, the loss of dignity and the loss of hope.

I represent squeegee kids, tomorrow's voters, and those squeegee kids who are already voters.

Je représente un comté avec une grande proportion d'aînés, des aînés impliqués dans la communauté, des bénévoles oeuvrant pour et avec leur communauté. Ils jouent un rôle de premier plan afin de garder l'unité de notre communauté.

I represent as well those seniors who are living on the edge of poverty or already in poverty, a sad legacy of our shortcomings in the distribution of wealth, an indictment of woefully inadequate public policy in this regard.

I also represent hundreds of homosexuals, perhaps a few thousand, who are no doubt rejoicing at the change to provincial status that gave them their fundamental rights only last week.

I also represent people of all ethnocultural backgrounds.

Je représente une importante et active population d'expression française. Aucune de leurs inquiétudes n'a été adressée dans le discours du trône. Leur futur statut dans un environnement municipal restructuré dans la région d'Ottawa-Carleton a passé sous silence.

D'ailleurs, il est de mon devoir de tout faire, en ce 10^e anniversaire de la mise en oeuvre de la Loi 8, pour non seulement la défendre mais pour faire face à ce qui menace son efficacité et son plein respect.

Le transfert des responsabilités des services provinciaux aux municipalités m'inquiète et j'y verrai. L'annonce tantôt de voir l'abolition des subventions au Collège d'Alfred qui pourrait entraîner sa fermeture est un autre exemple du fait que la Loi 8 pour ce gouvernement n'a aucune importance.

I represent thousands of persons whose livelihood is small business as sole owners, partners, or valued employees. Small business is the engine of our economy, the great provider of employment.

I also represent teachers. Teachers are professionals. They have the training and the certification to practise the profession of helping to form tomorrow's adults with today's children. It is time this government began showing teachers the respect this essential profession deserves and to work with them, not against them, to support them in their vocation.

This government has announced province-wide testing for teachers. Don't you know that these teachers are already subjected to a comprehensive evaluation process? The Ontario College of Teachers has developed standards of practice and a code of ethics for the teaching profession.

This government has repeatedly said that the education money must be placed in the classroom. Don't you think this is a costly endeavour with doubtful results?

What about the school closings in Ottawa-Carleton? When will we look over the funding formula?

Je représente des étudiants et des étudiantes qui se préparent à poursuivre leur éducation post-secondaire en Ontario. Notre province a le plus bas niveau d'allocations

de subventions « per capita » de toutes les provinces au Canada. Je m'inquiète du futur de mon petit-fils, Jean-Sébastien, qui est ma joie et mon inspiration et qui un jour héritera d'un système d'éducation mal subventionné. Je veux pour lui une éducation de qualité.

I have been involved in community activities all my life. In particular, I have spent a great deal of my free time being involved in politics, usually for the Liberal Party. Let me be very frank when I say that I wear my political activities as a badge of honour. May no one suggest that there is anything unseemly about partisan political activity. I certainly do not believe so. On this question I do not take a back seat to anyone.

My philosophy is to work with those who want to be part of the solution to our problem, and in that spirit I will always welcome advice from my constituents regardless of their political background. When that advice comes from those who respect what we do, we know that such respect is ultimately respect for democracy, for our traditions and for a responsible government. I have gained a reputation for being a fighter for francophone affairs and intend to live up to that reputation.

J'aimerais encore une fois rappeler au gouvernement qu'il est essentiel que les francophones de cette province aient accès à des services complets de santé en français et à une formation également en français pour les médecins et les professionnels de la santé que seul l'hôpital Montfort, une institution unique en Ontario, peut offrir.

I am also an ardent believer in the collective and collaborative strength of women and the amazing solutions to problems that result from that strength. Thank goodness for such resilience, because we face problems that are often unique to our gender. Statistically, we are far more likely to be victims of domestic violence, of sexual harassment and of poverty. Women need a voice, a political voice. We need greater political representation. The question is no longer when, but how. We need more women in politics now. Women are needed in politics to ensure that governments don't neglect the issues that are perceived to be women's issues but affect society as a whole, issues such as affordable daycare, access to quality medical care and adequate funding for women's shelters and for the children who flee with their mothers.

I may represent the second-largest francophone constituency in Ontario, but I can assure all the members of this House that I have no axe to grind and that I do not have a francophone chip on my shoulder.

Je veux l'égalité pour tous. C'est avec enthousiasme que je représenterai mes commettants et mes commettantes. Je crois fermement que l'Ontario est une province pleine de potentiel et d'enthousiasme et d'opportunités. C'est en mettant de côté nos idéaux partisans et en servant bien la population de l'Ontario indépendamment des différences de croyance, de couleur, de religion ou de langue que nous réussirons. Je représente le comté d'Ottawa-Vanier et j'en suis fière.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): I'm certainly pleased to rise and join the debate and follow my colleague from Ottawa-Vanier.

First of all, I certainly want to thank the people of Hamilton East for giving me the opportunity to come back to Queen's Park to represent them. It's a riding that I'm proud to represent. I've represented it since 1995. It's a riding that I'm proud to share at the federal level with the Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage.

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It's a riding made up of hard-working individuals, hard-nosed individuals, who work very hard to take care of their homes, take care of their kids, try to meet their monthly commitments and do their best to raise a family. It's a riding that I am proud to represent. It's also a riding that I'm proud to say voted 80% against the Mike Harris agenda. It's a riding that rejected the Mike Harris agenda outright.

I want to also, as I stand here, pay tribute to my opponents in the campaign, particularly the NDP candidate, Bob Sutton, who suffered a personal loss with the loss of his father during the campaign, but who carried on in a very classy manner with a lot of dignity and a lot of fight. Certainly the riding is better for Mr Sutton having been a candidate, and I certainly have gained a great deal of respect for Mr Sutton and the work he did and the adversity that he fought to overcome during the campaign. He should be congratulated.

As we go through the throne speech, what is interesting is this continuous Tory-American hot-button politics that we see time after time. They're great at borrowing American ideas. They talk about squeegee kids; borrowed the idea out of the page of Mayor Giuliani, the Republican mayor of New York City, who felt that the way you get rid of squeegee kids is you put them in jail and just hide them somewhere and that takes care of the problem; you no longer have squeegee kids in New York City.

Mike Harris believes in the same approach. Instead of dealing with the root cause, instead of dealing with why those individuals are on the street, somehow, Mike Harris and the Tories believe that these individuals enjoy being out on a street corner in the middle of winter making 50 cents cleaning a car window. They think that somehow it's a great enterprising business; it's Tory work creation. The reality is there are some deep-rooted problems with many of those kids, causes that have to be dealt with. Sources of funding have to be given to agencies to support those kids. Instead, what does Mike Harris do? We'll just lock them up, we'll make it illegal for kids to be squeegee kids, and that takes care of the problem. It doesn't take care of the issue, but we just put it away somewhere.

Then we borrow a page from Governor John Engler of Michigan. Great idea. Three years ago, John Engler came up with this brainwave—drug testing for welfare recipients. Another Republican governor came up with this idea of drug testing for welfare. So what do the Mike Murphys and the rest of the American consultants that you hire to run your campaigns do? They say, "Let's bring in drug testing for welfare recipients of Ontario."

It's great hot-button politics. It's the best way of trying to score cheap, sleazy political points at the expense of the most vulnerable people in this province.

You've made a career out of it as a government. You've made a history of it. Whether it's cutting benefits for welfare recipients, whether it's drug testing or whether it's cutting welfare recipients off, your government has made a career out of beating up on the most vulnerable in our society, and you continue to do that to score cheap political points because your American, paid consultants have told you that that will get you votes. But it's not right.

You go after welfare fraud. My colleagues have mentioned about your double standards already. Somehow you think that double jeopardy is OK in welfare fraud but not in anywhere else. So someone gets convicted of fraud. Yes, welfare fraud is wrong and government has a responsibility to root it out. You believe it's OK for someone to be convicted, to pay the price, to serve whatever time, to pay whatever fine, but that's not good enough for you. You can't get enough out of that person. You can't punish that welfare mom enough, can you? You can't punish that person enough. You then have to go that next step and do what's unprecedented in Canadian history, and let me tell you, probably will not hold up a court challenge, and you're going to ban that person from receiving welfare for life.

To those kids who may be dependent on our welfare system at that point, those kids whose mom may have been convicted of defrauding the system, your approach is simple: "You know what? To hell with you. Starve. Go out on the street. Go to a food bank. Be homeless." Because we're going to punish that individual not only once, not twice, but three times. Why? Because your pollsters and your consultants tell you that that works. That works from a public opinion point of view. Is it right? Is it moral? No, but, of course, it's cheap, hot-button American politics.

You talk about your tax cuts, another great page out of Christine Todd Whitman, the governor of New Jersey, the inventor of the tax cut, and you followed it. I'm not sure what it is with Tory provincial governments in this province, with your consultants, with your political advisers who have this obsession with American Republican-style politics, but every single one of your major hot-button issues has been borrowed from your friends in the States.

When you look at the rest of the throne speech, when we talk about health care—I'm not sure if that throne speech addressed the concerns of my constituents who need cancer treatment and who have been sent to Buffalo and who have been sent to Thunder Bay. I didn't notice anything in the throne speech that's going to help my constituent who now has to go to Thunder Bay to get cancer radiation treatment. Because there's no space in Hamilton and there's no space in Buffalo, we have to go to Thunder Bay. You were silent on that, weren't you? That's amazing.

You talk about the environment. You talk about environmental protection, which affects my riding. I have

a riding that is heavily industrialized, and many of my residents are affected by pollution, by emissions, by air quality. The auditors told you four years ago that there were over 200 air quality standards that are badly out of date and you, until today, have still not moved to upgrade one of those air quality standards. I do not see one commitment in the throne speech that's going to deal with that.

You talk about tougher laws for hazardous waste, but you don't talk about the staff to enforce those laws. As you do in every area of environmental protection, you talk the talk but you fail to walk the walk.

You talk about education. My colleague from Essex mentioned earlier about special needs kids. We had over 34 kids in the city of Hamilton who were out of school for almost two months—34 disabled kids who were forced out of school by this government for almost two months—

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): No, by the local board.

Mr Agostino: —not being able to provide funding. Because of the stupid, ridiculous funding formula that this government has brought in, 34 kids were out of school for two months.

The member from Scarborough has the gall to defend that stupid policy that is hurting kids in my riding, and it is a disgrace. It is a disgrace, what you have done to disabled kids in this province. Over 500 kids have to attend part-time because this government decided that giving a tax cut to the wealthy was more important than looking after disabled kids in this province. That is your legacy, disabled kids not being able to go to school because you don't give enough money. That is an absolute disgrace you should be ashamed of. This is the government funding formula that has caused this.

The reality is that this throne speech contained more of the same rhetoric, more of the same Tory bravado when it comes to beating up the most vulnerable, but it contains very little to help average Ontarians. They call them real Ontarians. I don't distinguish between real Ontarians and unreal Ontarians. All Ontarians are equal; all Ontarians should be treated properly. This government seems to discourage that.

Then they talk about the economy. It's funny, you took credit and you went to great lengths to talk about job creation, all the wonderful work you've done. Somehow, when Procter and Gamble closed in my riding, there was silence from the Tory side of the House. I didn't hear the Premier get up in the House and announce that Procter and Gamble had closed, with the hundreds of jobs that went with it. When Case closed in my riding last summer, again, I didn't hear the Premier stand up in the House, or any member of the Tory government in the Hamilton area come to the rallies in front of the plant and stand on a flatbed truck with myself, the mayor of the city, union leaders and talk to the hundreds of workers who were going to be out of work and who didn't have a decent severance package. Where were the Tory members, where was the Premier talking to the Case

workers and to the Procter and Gamble workers in my riding who lost their jobs? I never saw any. You only have selective credit in this province. You only take responsibility for things you want to and you wash your hands of things you don't want to. You can't have it both ways. If you want to take responsibility for job creation, then you take responsibility for job loss and stand up and admit that your policies have screwed up and have hurt Ontarians.

I can tell you, as my leader, Dalton McGuinty, did on election night, this fight is not over. They have won one round. This fight is going to continue. We're going to continue to fight on behalf of those 55% of Ontarians who rejected your agenda. I can tell you that we're going to hold you accountable in the next four years in this Legislature, because we owe it to the people of Ontario who have said no to Mike Harris, no to this brutal agenda, no to this dictatorship style of politics, and we're going to be here every single day going after you and making sure you're held accountable for all your actions.

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M. Bisson : Premièrement, au membre d'Ottawa-Vanier, un très bon discours la première fois à l'assemblée. On connaît bien la madame puis on sait bien qu'elle va être un autre allié ici à l'Assemblée législative quand ça vient au dossier francophone, quelque chose pour lequel on a toujours besoin de lutter. Je trouve ça très ironique qu'à la veille de l'anniversaire de la Loi 8, le gouvernement provincial de M. Mike Harris propose qu'ils vont couper la subvention au Collège d'Alfred de la part du ministère de l'Agriculture de 1,5 \$ million. Je trouve ça ironique qu'un gouvernement conservateur, la veille de l'anniversaire de la Loi 8, se trouve encore dans la situation d'attaquer l'hôpital Montfort, tel qu'on a vu ces dernières années. Je trouve ça très ironique, la veille de l'anniversaire de la Loi 8, que le gouvernement de M. Mike Harris a affaibli la Loi 8 en allouant le transfert de beaucoup de services provinciaux aux municipalités, sans protection de la Loi 8 elle-même.

Je trouve ça non seulement ironique, mais je trouve que c'est un acheminement, je dirais même un patron pour ce gouvernement conservateur envers les services en français pour la communauté.

To the member from Hamilton East, I also would like to comment on one of the parts of your speeches where you talked about taking issue with the government's mantra when it comes to attacking people on welfare. I wonder if you can comment on the following: It's interesting that the government takes the position that they will ban for life someone who is convicted of defrauding people from collecting welfare but, at the same time, after this general election of 1995, they appointed somebody to their cabinet who was convicted not for defrauding welfare but defrauding income tax. I wonder if there's a double standard, when you see a provincial government on the one hand who says it's OK for the corporate elite to go out and defraud your income tax, but somehow we're going to hit hard people who are on welfare. Does that mean there's a double standard?

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): It certainly is a pleasure to have a couple of minutes to reply to some of the comments that were made here tonight.

In my first comment I would ask a question of the member from Hamilton East: Where were you when people were dumping hazardous waste into your constituency? Where did you run? To the States? I didn't see anything mentioned about the States in the throne speech.

Pour ma collègue d'Ottawa-Vanier, je voudrais prendre une référence aux comptes publics de l'Ontario 1998-1999. Si on regarde la place des dépenses par catégories principales : on dépense 34 % de chaque dollar qui est collecté en Ontario pour la santé ; sur l'éducation et la formation, on dépense 20 % de chaque dollar dans la province ; pour l'intérêt sur la dette publique, 16 %, puis qui est responsable pour l'intérêt sur la dette publique ? Les libéraux, les néo-démocrates, parce qu'ils ont rendu la province dans les dernières 10 années, dans la dette. Alors on prend 16 % de chaque dollar qu'on dépense pour servir la dette publique maintenant, madame. Si on regarde la sévérité de cette dette-là, vraiment ça affecte tous les services qu'on peut essayer de faire parvenir aux résidents de la province. C'est vraiment une situation très sérieuse.

Pour mon confrère de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, je suis d'accord avec vous que vous avez des grands « concerns » avec ce qui se passe dans votre région. Mais vraiment, ce n'est pas la première fois. On regarde qu'est-ce qui s'est passé à Ridgeway, qu'est-ce qui s'est passé avec les néo-démocrates avec le collège d'agriculture dans ma région avant. Ils l'ont fermé eux autres. Ils l'ont fermé complètement. Ils n'ont pas juste réduit le montant de subventions qu'on faisait parvenir au collège, mais ils l'ont fermé complètement.

Applause.

M. Lalonde: Je suis fier de voir que d'autres personnes membres du Parti conservateur reconnaissent mes inquiétudes. Mais tout d'abord, je tiens à féliciter la députée d'Ottawa-Vanier. Elle a démontré qu'elle était prête à défendre les droits des Ontariens, les droits des francophones. Elle saura aussi défendre adéquatement les droits de la femme. Elle a une compétence dans le domaine de l'éducation. Elle est peut-être une nouvelle députée ici à l'Assemblée législative, mais laissez-moi vous dire qu'elle a définitivement beaucoup d'expérience dans le domaine de la politique.

Elle a démontré auparavant qu'elle connaissait bien la loi ontarienne. Elle est aussi la personne qui a oeuvré au sein du comité de notre père de la Loi 8, son prédécesseur, Bernard Grandmaître. Elle a été sa gérante de campagne pendant plusieurs années, tout ça pour vous dire qu'elle rentre ici et qu'elle connaît définitivement les lois à suivre.

En page 13 du discours du trône, j'ai la copie anglaise ici, c'est clair : « Your government believes that students deserve to graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to get jobs. It will expand the number of community college and university courses with direct job link. » L'annonce que nous venons d'avoir ce soir à TFO, à 7 h

ce soir même, n'indique pas vraiment ce que le gouvernement a mentionné dans son discours du trône. Je pourrais dire que c'est du pareil au pire que nous entendons à tous les jours dans cette Chambre. Le Collège d'Alfred a un budget d'au-delà du 4 \$ millions. Le gouvernement provincial donnait des subventions de 2,2 \$ millions. La balance, nous recouvrons ces coûts à travers des cours faits sur mesure. J'aurais la chance d'en discuter davantage.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): The member for Broadview-Greenwood.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Thank you, Speaker. You must have taken all those photographs home and been practising all our ridings, because you're doing a very good job of remembering, much faster than I did. I congratulate you on your post.

I also would like to take this opportunity, as did the other members who spoke for the first time in this new Parliament, to congratulate all those who were re-elected and elected for the first time, and to say that I very much look forward to working with you in a positive vein. We'll see, won't we?

I also want to thank the voters of Broadview-Greenwood very much for their confidence in me at a time when—there is no doubt about it, the NDP were affected quite negatively in this election. We have nine members sitting here, and that's the reality. I am very humbled by the confidence that the voters of Broadview-Greenwood had in me, not only in electing me again for the third time but electing me by a very wide margin. I certainly want to pledge once again that I will continue—

Interjection.

Ms Churley: I thought this was my speech. It's a two-minute response, isn't it?

I want to congratulate the members who just gave absolutely wonderful speeches about the awful things this government is doing. Now that I've done all of that, when I get up in about 20 seconds from now, I won't have to do that all over again. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Response?

Mr Agostino: I certainly want to thank my colleague the member for Ottawa-Vanier, who spoke very well to the concerns of her riding and the way she's going to deal with representing all Ontarians across this province, which is clearly the Liberal way; and the members for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Timmins-James Bay, Gengarry-Prescott-Russell and Broadview-Greenwood for your comments in regard to the debate.

I very much appreciate the member for Broadview-Greenwood thanking her constituents in her two-minute response. It is somewhat unique.

Ms Churley: Saving time for my 20 minutes.

Mr Agostino: Exactly. You can use it later.

I want to briefly respond to the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, who talked about hazardous waste. I had a little chat with the member for Stoney Creek, but didn't quite get the whole story in that 10-second conversation. You failed to mention that it was your government that approved the landfill site. You failed to mention that it was your government that was responsible

for monitoring what went into the landfill site. You failed to mention that it was your government that failed to bring in legislation. Of course the Liberal-turned-Tory member for Stoney Creek would now like to take the credit for being the great saviour, but the silence has been deafening since the election campaign, as it was when the report was hidden and not released, covered up till after the election. It was when this government failed to act the way you wanted it to.

I hope the members will encourage this government now, when it comes to hazardous waste, to hire inspectors to enforce those laws you've brought in. The reality is that this government likes to talk the talk. They talk tough all the time. They are the big, tough guys, pounding their chests, beating up on everybody who gets in their way, and then when they bring in legislation, they don't bring in the staff to enforce that legislation. It's totally another useless effort by this government.

I just want to remind this government that you were elected to govern for all Ontarians. Although not all Ontarians voted for you, once you hold the power of office, you take on that responsibility. You are elected to represent folks who voted for you and those who didn't. You are elected to govern for all. I remind you to do that and for a change try to do it with sympathy and understanding for all Ontarians.

The Acting Speaker: And now the member for Broadview-Greenwood.

Ms Churley: Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Hamilton East on a fine speech indeed.

Picking up where I left off, I want to pledge again to the constituents in Broadview-Greenwood, and in particular to my new constituents in the part of East York which is now part of the riding of Broadview-Greenwood, and a little part of the old Beaches-Woodbine, that I enjoyed working with them before the election and certainly look forward to continuing that work.

I also want to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about some of the people and organizations in both the old riding of Riverdale and the larger Broadview-Greenwood riding who worked so hard in the last regime under the Tory government in fighting, successfully in some cases. I want to remind those out there who didn't vote for the Tories, who don't like the Tory policies and in fact are being hurt by the Tory policies, that there were times, believe it or not, under this government in the last four years where constituents, organizations and individuals, working together with their member, were able to make some changes and force the government to back down.

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I am proud to say that people in my old riding of Riverdale, and people from East York, did have successful fights against the government. Let me mention Jason Wong and Andonis Artemakis, who are part of the small business community. There are others too, but I single those two out for putting up and being the first ones on the street, especially Jason Wong and the Chinese

chamber of commerce, with banners fighting the Harris government's huge tax increases for small business.

If you'll recall, there were about seven botched bills on that, and it was the small business community that this government touts as being one of the sectors they care most about that was badly hurt by that. Let us bear in mind that all they got was a three-year reprieve. They don't know what's going to happen after that. There are also enough loopholes in it that there are some small businesses who are still faced with 100% increases and more.

There were the parents groups and the teachers groups that fought ferociously to keep the 11 schools throughout the new riding configuration of Broadview-Greenwood—11 in one riding—which were going to close because of the Harris government's funding formula. They fought successfully and managed to keep those schools open. Those are two of the groups of people who came together and fought hard and actually, although not completely, had some success fighting this government.

I want to applaud the people who fought to keep Riverdale Hospital open. That hospital was one of the ones slated to be closed, and the community and workers at the hospital, the president of the hospital, many people working alongside me and my office, fought hard and managed to keep that hospital open, albeit it's going to be a long-term-care facility, and we still have real concerns about what is going to happen to those very sick people who live there now, who need more extended care. Nonetheless, that was a big win for our community.

I want to thank all those people who put in countless volunteer hours to fight successfully to keep important community assets open in our community of Riverdale and Broadview-Greenwood.

I want to refer to something that happened earlier today. I want to go on the record and I want to make it clear how offended I was this afternoon when the environment minister was being asked a question by the member for St Catharines on an environmental matter connected with the whole Steve Gilchrist affair and all of that. I'm sure that the Minister of the Environment was trying to be funny—I would have been outraged by it anyway—but on the day that we have announced that this is Wife Assault Prevention-

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): On a point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Point of order. Stop the clock, please.

Hon Mr Klees: Mr Speaker, this may well be a point of privilege. I'll let you make the decision. To the point that the member is referring, I really feel that-

The Acting Speaker: Under which standing order are you speaking?

Hon Mr Klees: Which standing order is a point of privilege?

The Acting Speaker: If it's a point of privilege, you would have to file it.

Hon Mr Klees: Then I'll do a point of order, because I really believe that the point the honourable member is

about to make is grossly unfair to the Minister of the Environment.

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order. It's a little hard and difficult for me to be clairvoyant. Member for Broadview-Greenwood.

Ms Churley: Let me continue making my point. It's clear that the member is a little nervous about what I'm going to say, because hopefully he agrees with me that when the Minister of the Environment responded, trying to be funny, on the day when Wife Assault Prevention Month was announced, and made a joke about, "I don't beat my wife either," there was such a reaction from myself and Shelley Martel and Frances Lankin and others that the minister immediately said, "I know it's serious and I retract it."

Interjections.

Ms Churley: The Liberals want me to acknowledge that they were outraged by it. But seriously, I remember a couple of years ago—I don't know what it is about the members from Brampton—the member for Brampton North, if you'll recall, was sitting here at the time. He yelled at me, when I was up speaking to the Premier about breakfast programs, that I should go home and make breakfast for my kids, and ended up having to retract that statement. It was quite offensive today when the Minister of the Environment came out with a remark like that again.

I don't know if he and the members who were screaming at me a moment ago about my raising this understand the significance of making a joke about that. Hopefully, they do. But I want to go on the record that it was absolutely astounding that a minister of the crown would say that, especially on a day like today. This is the attitude right now from the guys sitting across from me there in the Tory rump down here, still laughing and joking about it. You'd think that they would have the dignity to understand that the comment made today by their environment minister was totally inappropriate. I rest my case by the reaction that I'm getting right now.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Stop the clock. The member for London-Fanshawe.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): The member referred to me as the guy across the way. My riding is London-Fanshawe, just so she can be corrected.

Ms Churley: I want to talk a little bit about what was missing from the throne speech. The government members in particular get up and brag about all the great things they've done, and will continue to do, for Ontario. What they don't talk about at all, what we don't hear anything about, is this growing gap that's very real between the rich and the poor.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Once again, they're demonstrating that they'd rather not hear about that.

Let me tell you a fact about the tax cut that they like to brag about. It will add over \$30 billion to Ontario's public debt. We get a tax cut that helps the rich but adds to our deficit. Over half of the tax cut went to the richest 20% of Ontario families. If you're in the top half of the

richest 1% of families, you get \$15,586. If you're among the poorest 10% of Ontario families, you get \$150.

These Tories like to talk about the fact that they've made tax cuts and they're paying down the deficit and everybody is benefiting. What they don't look at is that those who only get about \$150 back are paying higher tuition fees, are paying more user fees. We've all seen that, but no, they don't talk about the user fees that are being put on the poorest in our society. That is the reality.

I also want to talk about child care. The government is trying to make sure, they say, that all welfare recipients go back to work. They come up with these programs—they've come up with yet another one for teen mothers—but they're not creating the child care spaces for hundreds, in fact thousands, of women out there who not only want to work but in many cases have to work, without even making value judgments about whether or not the kids are better off at home or in daycare, although there are all kinds of studies to show that children fare very well when they get early intervention and education.

Two thirds of moms with children under three have paid work now and most of these women are working because they need it for their families to survive. It puts food on the table and a roof over her family's head. It is incumbent upon the government to make sure that there is licensed, regulated daycare so that when these women go to work they know their children are in a safe place. What we don't want to see, which is beginning to happen, is some women displacing others. There is a tremendously long waiting list for women who absolutely need child care to get out there and work.

There was a report issued—I doubt if any of the Tory members read it, but I suggest they might like to do that and see the other side. The Centre for Social Justice put out a report in October 1998.

Ms Mushinski: That's condescending.

2030

Ms Churley: They're worried that I'm being condescending, when they stand up all night and talk about how wonderful they are and that the opposition has nothing to offer. They talk about me being condescending. Give me a break. Get real.

I suggest the members opposite read this report. It shows that any benefits from our economy are going almost entirely to those with the highest incomes while the poor and the middle class are getting squeezed. That is a fact; that is the reality. Perhaps the members find it condescending, but I suggest that this government take a look at those facts and start trying to figure out what they're going to do about it.

The report shows that the richest 10% of Canadians made 314 times more than the poorest. From 1995 to 1996, the poorest 10% of Canadian families with children under 18 saw their average after-tax income drop from \$15,208 to \$13,453. That is the reality, my friends. In a radio interview, the author of the report took dead aim at the Harris government's income tax scheme. She said that in Ontario the richest group of taxpayers got the most back.

The report demonstrates that the fastest rate of job growth is in the lowest-paid jobs.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: It's boring to you, isn't it, member for Scarborough? I'm sorry.

The Acting Speaker: Speak to the Chair, please.

Ms Churley: But for the people who are in those low-paid, ghetto jobs it is not boring, believe me.

It also examines the growing phenomenon of self-employment and finds evidence that this is part of the growing gap. Listen to this: "Of the roughly 400,000 jobs created since Harris was elected, more than half of those are in the so-called self-employed category." That does not necessarily sound like a problem until you realize that in 1995 more than 16% of the self-employed in Canada had incomes less than \$5,000 a year while only 3% of paid employees are in that category.

What this makes clear is that many of the self-employed are really self-unemployed. Many of the people we count as real jobs have been downsized out of their jobs and can't find decent-paying jobs. So they're looking for contract work and making the best of a bad situation. The study shows that self-employed women, in particular, make about half of what self-employed men do. That's a much bigger gap than in the regular workforce.

I want to give you a few more facts from this report to think about. On average, the top 100 CEOs in Canada saw a 56% increase in compensation in 1997. For ordinary families, the families we're trying to represent here, wages are not even keeping up with inflation. In 1973, 60% of families with children under 18 earned between \$24,500 and \$65,000, and that's in 1996 dollars. By 1996 that middle class had shrunk. Only 44% of families with dependent children made between \$24,500 and \$65,000.

The good news is the report offers some suggestions and recommendations. They lay out a very serious problem in our society, where this gap between the rich and the poor continues to get wider and wider. That is not just a problem for those who are at the very bottom of our income bracket, but it's a problem for all of us as a society. There are some very good recommendations in this report, and I suggest that the government take a look at it and start thinking about ways to implement some of those recommendations. Unfortunately, the recommendations are counter to many of the measures the government has taken already, which have even made the situation worse. I have copies of this report, which I'll be happy to give to anybody who is interested.

I want to briefly talk about some of my critic areas; as you know, I have several of them. I want to talk about the disabled portfolio. The government promised in 1995—in fact, before the election—that they would bring in a new Ontario disabilities act. Our government brought in employment equity. That's where we put our emphasis at that time, and disabled people were a large part of that. This government then threw out employment equity completely, so all the benefits that would have gone to disabled people, among others, within that bill were thrown out. At the same time, they did not bring in an act that

they promised. So they not only didn't do what they said they'd do, but they made the situation worse. We have offered to work in co-operation with both the Liberals and the Tories and not make this a partisan issue, and I pledge that again tonight. If we can work together to make sure that this act is put in place very quickly, I really want the opportunity to make that happen.

Let me also add—and I wish the minister could hear me talk about this; I know he's around tonight. We know there's a real problem with the Ontario disabilities support plan. My party has been raising it regularly and we will continue to do so. We talked last week about the mix-up with the cheques because of the old computer system. Fortunately, as I understand, those cheques got out, but there are going to be more problems. There's already an adjudication problem, where people are having to wait months. It's a nightmare. It's a disaster. It is underresourced and it's a botched implementation which is hurting disabled people. There are disabled children who can't be in school because the supports aren't there. The government is letting disabled people in this province down once again, and I very much hope we can reverse this trend.

The other area I'm responsible for, as always, is the environment. I'm disappointed to see that the government has cut even more from the Ministry of the Environment. We already know that there are hardly any front-line workers left in either the Ministry of the Environment or Ministry of Natural Resources. I'm very concerned about that. We have a terrible air-quality problem. We have more and more hazardous waste coming into the province from the States. We need to see more resources go back into that ministry, not more taken out.

Finally, for only a moment I want to talk about another area where I'm the critic, and that is children and youth. I mentioned child care briefly, but I want to come back to squeegee kids. Some of you were here this afternoon and some weren't. I know the government gets really upset when we talk about it, and we get accusations that there's chaos on the streets and that the whole world is going to come to an end if the government doesn't act on this. I want to say very clearly to the government that I am offended—and I said this earlier this afternoon—that somehow, let's pin it on the women. Women are scared of these people.

I am not scared of squeegee kids when I'm sitting behind a big hunk of metal. I'm more scared when I'm walking home late at night. I'm more scared about the reality of gang violence and home invasion. Those are the kinds of things that women and people in general are scared about.

The reality is that young people in this province do not have the same opportunities that many from our generation had. Jobs are hard to come by. The minimum wage hasn't been raised since the government came to power in 1995. The supports aren't there for these kids. Housing is now a disaster. Rent control is gone. We have shelters full to the brim right now, with nowhere for people to go. We have a lot of problems out there which this throne

speech didn't even talk about at all, and that's the tragedy of the situation we're talking about tonight.

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Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): I'd like to make some observations about the member for Broadview-Greenwood, particularly with respect to her remarks on the throne speech. She says that this government's priorities are turned upside down—that was the essence of her remarks, from what I could hear—that it's a tragedy that we haven't looked after children. In point of fact, this government, in the last session, took very effective action in bringing changes to the Child and Family Services Act, particularly in getting resources to children at risk.

Interjection.

Mr Hastings: I know that this is going off the throne speech. The member from Hamilton says this government is obsessed with American standards, American themes. Yet the member for Windsor West, the member for the riding next door to Windsor West, and the member for—it used to be Oakwood—guess where these three were in April 1998. Talk about obsessiveness with American campaigns and elections. These three members were in Washington, DC. How they paid for their trips, I'll leave it for them to talk about.

Interjection.

Mr Hastings: How do I know that? I was there myself to look at what was going on, but at least I paid for it.

Getting back to the member for Broadview-Greenwood, the environment is one of the key priorities of this government, and we have acted in that area, in particular with the vehicle emissions program.

Interjections.

Mr Hastings: You can laugh all you want—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Questions and comments? The member for Timiskaming-Cochrane.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and congratulations on your position as an officer of the House.

Timiskaming-Cochrane, I know, is new for you to say and it's new for me too with our new, reduced House. It's a very interesting riding.

I observed today when the minister for technology boasted about this government's accomplishments in helping rural Ontario with high-speed data transmission that I'm going to have to get up and ask him a question someday, and tell him that of the 7,700 party-line households in this country, 4,850 are in my riding. We're so far behind the times.

While some of rural Ontario is sending data at Concorde jet speed, a lot of my constituents are still stuck with a Model-T Ford telephone system. They're way back in the pioneer days. As far as I'm concerned, that's just not acceptable. I'm going to be calling upon this government in a very formal way in the next few months as we work out some proposals with our local phone company, to make a contribution, as well as the federal government should be making a contribution, to make sure that every Canadian and every Ontarian has access to at least one private line. I think that's very important.

The CRTC, up until now, did not allow any other outside contribution. Therefore, it could not have been done in the past without putting up phone rates \$100 to \$200 a month, which would be prohibitive.

When I hear a question such as that and an answer such as that, the minister needs to know that not all of Ontario is doing as swimmingly as you might see in southern Ontario. I wish we had little bit more of it.

We're not doing as well, but we'll be calling.

Mr Bisson: I'll just pick up on the comments from the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane. There are some communities within your riding that have one telephone for the entire community; for example, the community of Wahgoshig, as you well know. That is directly a problem that we're having all across northeastern Ontario when it comes to phone service, not only in Timiskaming-Cochrane, but also in Timmins-James Bay and a number of other areas.

To the member from Broadview-Greenwood, I think she's right when she talks about what's happening in the economy of today. The Tories get up and have a great time trying to talk about how good the economy is doing. They're just out there with their little speeches, saying: "Oh, Mike, we're doing such a good job. Look what we're doing in the economy." The reality is, this economy that they talk about, by and large, is not benefiting most of the people in this province who really need it.

We're finding that the majority of jobs that are being created, if you go back and look at the stats, are at or close to minimum wage. The reality is that what we're seeing with jobs that are being created within the stats they give, supposedly all good news, is that we're losing good-paying jobs in the industrial sector to what we now call McJobs, basically minimum-wage jobs.

Interjections.

Mr Bisson: That's the reality. How would you like to raise your family on minimum wage? Yes, it is disgusting that you guys stand there trying to support minimum-wage jobs. There was even an attempt at one point in this government's life to reduce the minimum wage. If they could have got away with it, they would have.

The point is simply this: The government in its policies is basically adding to what we call the growing gap. We find that in this economy the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Why? Because this government snuggles up behind the corporate elite of Canada and of the United States and the multinationals and says, "Yes, siree, we'll do whatever the big multinationals have to say because we know that's where our bread is buttered, but not that of the working class."

Mr Agostino: I want to thank my colleague from Broadview-Greenwood for her comments. As usual, the member speaks with a great deal of compassion and care and understanding of the plight of many of the less fortunate in our society and in our province.

While I'm up I also want to welcome to the opposition benches the Minister of Community and Social Services, who has graced us with his presence. We certainly have promised that we would give him a seat up here a little bit closer if he decides to come over and see the light.

I'm glad the Minister of Community and Social Services was here to hear some of the comments made by the member for Broadview-Greenwood, because I think we've got to understand that when we make policy decisions, particularly as they impact social policy as it impacts people in this province, we've got to go beyond simply the number-crunching and what feels good and sounds good.

We've got to understand that every single decision we make involving a welfare recipient involves kids. There are almost 500,000 kids in this province dependent on welfare assistance, so when you cut benefits by 22%, you also cut the ability for those kids to be fed, to be clothed, to have a roof over their head by 22%. When you talk about the family support plan and the impact it has and the changes you've made there, that impacts kids.

Every single decision you make when it comes to the disability plans in this province, when it comes to rules that you change where you all of a sudden make people ineligible—and you take pride in saying they're off the welfare system—yes, they're off the welfare system, but when you simply change the rules and make them ineligible, they end up on the streets, they end up at the food banks, they end up in shelters across this province.

I think the member for Broadview-Greenwood is trying to get a simple message out to you, that you've got to take some time and some care when you're making decisions as they affect the most vulnerable in our province. It's got to be more than public opinion polls. It impacts real people and you should think about that when you make those decisions.

The Acting Speaker: Response?

Ms Churley: I can comment on my own speech, I guess. I don't think I'm going to respond to the comments on the telephone situation up north, although I have the greatest sympathy with that problem, particularly after the questions from a government backbencher to a minister today about some technology. I don't think I know a whole lot about that.

I do want to say that I find it frustrating—and I'm sure the new members over time are going to find that too—with the response, and it's from all sides of the House. I know people call me a Pollyanna and say I give Sally Field speeches and all of that. I recognize that about myself.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I have never called you a Pollyanna.

Ms Churley: No. You've seen the worst side of me too. I can be as partisan as the rest of them, and more so than most.

But there are times when I find the attitude from government members very frustrating when an opposition member stands up, when that opposition member opens his or her mouth to point out some realities that we're seeing out there in communities and we're reading in studies. We are not making it up. You have your job to do as government members. I've been in government; I've been a cabinet member. I know how it works. I understand the constraints you're under and that you

have to toe the government line. We hear it daily. But the reality is that we've got some real problems in our community. We face them every day as MPPs. We all have a responsibility in the House to try to address it. You don't know it all. You don't have all the answers. Sometimes we can help. I hope very much that on some of those issues that we discuss tonight, we can work together and try to make Ontario a better place for all of us.

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The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Tina Molinari (Thornhill): It's an honour to rise today to make my first speech on the debate of the throne speech. I want to welcome Rabbi Domb and other members of Thornhill who are here today.

C'est un honneur et un privilège d'avoir l'occasion de vous adresser la parole aujourd'hui afin d'exprimer ma gratitude aux électeurs et électrices de la nouvelle circonscription de Thornhill qui ont fait le 3 juin confiance en moi, de même pour les accomplissements exceptionnels du gouvernement de Mike Harris.

I'm proud to be here today with all my colleagues, as a new representative of the Mike Harris team, a team that has spent the past four years restoring great hope in this province. It is that same hope for opportunity and prosperity that led my parents from Italy to this great province in 1956. They came to Canada at a time when people had hope and faith in their government, that their work would be accomplished and that it would all be rewarded. The good news is that I can tell my children today that we have returned to a time in our province when we may again have that hope in government that our hard work and our efforts as law-abiding, taxpaying Ontarians will be rewarded.

It is my commitment to my parents and my family that led me into local politics in 1988.

Remarks in Italian.

My riding is a diverse mix of individuals that reflects a great mosaic of this province and our great country of Canada. I want to recognize and thank the Honourable Al Palladini, Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and the Honourable Dave Tsubouchi, Solicitor General for Ontario, for their exceptional work on behalf of the constituents of the new riding of Thornhill. My constituents are also fortunate to have two of the most outstanding mayors in our province: Her Worship Mayor Lorna Jackson of Vaughan; and a former Ontario legislator, His Worship Mayor Don Cousens of Markham. It is exceptional individuals in my riding who make Thornhill one of the best communities in Ontario to live and raise a family.

This province has many heroes, both well-known and unsung, and while we consistently hear about the well-known heroes in the media, it is the efforts of many unsung heroes that we never hear about who shape our lives daily and quietly without recognition.

My riding has many heroes and I would like to recognize some of them here today. It is individuals such as 12-year-old Sarah Rose Black, a student at Bishop

Scalabrini, and 12-year-old Stephanie Winston, a student at Rosedale Heights public school, who dedicate numerous hours volunteering for the Canadian Cancer Society at their schools with teachers and students.

Also very active in our community is long-time Markham Councillor Randy Barber, a participant in the Canadian Diabetes Association in York region and the Arthritis Foundation.

Most recently, I had the opportunity to attend a fund-raising dinner for the Yee Hong Centre for Markham. Yee Hong centres provide a high level of care for seniors. Dr Joseph Wong and Mr Stanley Kwan have been volunteering numerous hours to raise funds to build a new centre in Markham. Their campaign has already raised \$5 million.

I know that the Premier is very proud of Ontarians who dedicate their precious time to volunteer causes across this province, and I am equally proud that there are so many of these individuals hard at work in my riding of Thornhill. Each and every one of them deserves our congratulations.

The voters of Thornhill spoke loudly and clearly for a government whose promises made are promises kept. We are working hard to see that government works for hard-working Ontarians and delivers on new promises endorsed on June 3, 1999.

For a long time now, Thornhill residents have been telling me that they were tired of their federal government not taking the courageous steps that this provincial government did in seeing that the tax burden for hard-working Ontarians was alleviated. Hard-working Ontarians understand that the more they save and invest their hard-earned money and do not overspend, the more they will have at the end of the day and the brighter their future will be.

Our government understands this as well. We have promised and delivered the lowest personal income tax rate in the country. We are constantly urging our federal counterparts to join in tax relief at the federal government level.

We celebrate every small business person's achievement of job creation in our province—not only new jobs but secure, well-paying jobs in many sectors of the economy.

Our government is responding and we will carry on doing all we can to make sure that the Ontario economy remains strong and vibrant. It has been demonstrated many times that tax cuts create jobs. Our government will continue to reduce the burden of overtaxation of hard-working Ontarians.

In the throne speech our government has committed to cutting the provincial portion of the residential property taxes by 20%, decreasing small business corporate taxes to 4.75%, and an additional 20% income tax reduction. This will allow hard-working Ontarians to have more money at their disposal to spend, save and invest. The taxpayer protection act will ensure that all Ontarians will not be subject to tax increases without voter approval.

We must always work towards ensuring that government watches its spending, and to that end, we have

introduced a balanced budget act that will see penalties for politicians who overspend and a declaration of taxpayer rights that will ensure that people get the most from their government.

Four years ago this province's finances were out of control. The deficit approached \$11.3 billion. I faced a similar challenge as chair of the York Catholic District School Board. The reality is that deficit and debt only hurt our future and our children's future.

Fiscal responsibility, taxpayer protection and demanding and accessible education are key building blocks to the prosperity that the people of Thornhill and all of Ontario want. This government has an outstanding record on attracting investment to Ontario, promoting consumer confidence, cutting taxes and fostering an environment where business creates jobs for Ontarians.

There is proof that our plan is working. Courageous entrepreneurs all across this province are taking on the crucial challenge of creating jobs and prosperity for the people of this province and showing Ontario's competitiveness on the world scene.

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Two of these individuals, Stephanie Buccarelli and Daniela Durante, have been hard at work creating jobs and prosperity for the people of my riding. Starting with Daniela's sole proprietorship and two employees in 1994, Stephanie and Daniela joined forces in 1998 and have seen their business grow to its current 1,400-square-foot complex, providing seven jobs to people in our community. I applaud their courage as entrepreneurs and thank them for contributing to the small business effort that truly fuels this province's economy.

The Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and the Markham Board of Trade are two exceptional institutions in my riding that work hard to promote business, commerce and job creation.

The throne speech reaffirmed this government's strong commitment to education. In November 1988, I ran for trustee for the York Catholic District School Board. I was not satisfied with the curriculum and thought that I could have an impact in improving the education system. My goal was to ensure that not only my children but all the students in the York Catholic District School Board got the education they required to compete in the global market.

I quickly discovered that school boards were bound by an inadequate curriculum mandated by the province. Parents are telling me that they like the increased accountability provided through the new province-wide curriculum that clearly lays out goals and timelines for teachers, students and parents. Standard tests that measure progress and understandable report cards, which are being extended to secondary schools starting this year with grade 9, are key components.

Marshall Jarvis, past president of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, has said: "I think this is a good curriculum developed by teachers. I think that the government has moved in the right direction on this one. I hope they continue in other areas."

Thornhill parent Patrick Black, trustee for the York Catholic District School Board, echoed to me parents' enthusiastic support of the educational reforms that our government has brought forth.

Another exceptional inclusion in the new high school curriculum is mandatory community service—good news for every community across this province.

Exhaustive studies confirm the need for change in the education system in Ontario. Where past provincial governments long recognized the need, they were unable or unwilling to act. This government clearly demonstrated the will to move ahead and has kept its commitment to a fair and non-discriminatory funding model. The removal of education funding from local taxation was the only way to ensure equal resources per pupil throughout the publicly funded education system in Ontario. The Mike Harris Progressive Conservative government was able to achieve this.

I was also pleased to have been a trustee with the York Catholic District School Board when the two York boards undertook a variety of co-operative ventures. The joint board consortium, which is responsible for school bus transportation, planning services and purchasing services has achieved major accomplishments. The success of these two boards led to the winning of the 1997 Ontario Local Government Innovative Public Service Delivery Award.

The York Region District School Board has also been given praise for these programs from the Education Improvement Commission as being a "well run, sophisticated organization with strong leadership. The board has a clear understanding of the challenges it faces, such as rapid growth and social and economic diversity."

Thornhill has a wise range of educational opportunities. During the election, I visited with educators, parents and teachers at Netivot, Eitz Chaim, Zareinu, Leo Beack and Associated Hebrew Schools. I was very impressed with the quality of education being provided in these schools. The Jewish day schools provide the children with the education they require to learn and live within the values and beliefs of their heritage. As Jewish schools receive no funding from the province, servicing their special needs students is an even greater challenge. They have all said to me that they want our commitment to provide health support services for these very special students. I have already made the pledge to these parents that I will ensure that their concerns are heard and that their issues are addressed for the future of their children.

Eventually children move from elementary and secondary schools to post-secondary education. I am honoured to have the opportunity to work with the Honourable Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, as a parliamentary assistant. The exciting initiatives that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will be implementing will ensure that every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend post-secondary institutions.

Our programs and policies increased student aid to the highest level in Ontario history. The Aiming for the Top

scholarships to the top 10,000 students in Ontario who need financial assistance will support our hard-working students. The private sector will be challenged to match the government's \$35-million annual commitment.

The SuperBuild Growth Fund will provide new and improved infrastructure to meet the needs of students as the demands on our education system continue to grow. This is good news for Thornhill parents and students and good news for post-secondary education in this province. This government will be passionately dedicated to assisting these institutions to truly see that their graduates find rewarding careers and job opportunities upon graduation. Students deserve this, and a growing Ontario economy requires this.

I want to reflect briefly on the way three other throne speech commitments—health care, conservation and community safety—will benefit my constituents in Thornhill.

One of the messages I have been most proud to take to the constituents of my riding of Thornhill since being elected has been this government's outstanding record on health care funding. The riding of Thornhill has benefited directly from this government's focus on priority health care spending with funding announcements being made for many health care facilities across my riding. Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care received a contract to build and operate a new 120-bed nursing home in 1998 from the then Minister of Long-Term Care, my colleague the honourable Cam Jackson. The York Central Hospital received almost \$32 million in funding this year, and York region as a whole received \$192 million in increased health care spending since 1995.

Mr Frank Diamant, executive vice-president of B'nai Brith and a member of our community, told me of the funding announcement to Baycrest Hospital: "We have long needed these resources for seniors in our community and the announcement for Baycrest was good news for all. It is encouraging to see a government that listens to the needs of the people in their communities."

Health care funding has been increased under this government over the past four years to an all-time provincial high of \$18.9 billion. My community of Thornhill applauds this and encourages government to carry on with plans to introduce the Patients' Bill of Rights.

This government is also busy demonstrating its commitment to conservation projects all across this province. I recently had the pleasure of attending a ceremony in my riding that saw the historic Baker sugar bush preserved. This was made possible with the provincial government commitment of just over \$1 million, thanks in part to the hard work of former local MPP and Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Al Palladini, towards this important conservation effort.

Community safety is also of paramount importance to my constituents. York region police provide our community with programs such as Neighbourhood Watch; Block Parents; the victims' assistance program; the values, influence and peers program; the citizens awareness program; Road Watch; Risk Watch; and crime prevention through environmental design.

As the government continues to focus on priority spending in the areas of health care, education and community safety, constituents like mine in Thornhill benefit from programs like the 1,000 new police officers across Ontario, in which York region was a major benefactor. I share in my constituents' endorsement of this government's strong strides in the commitment to a safer Ontario.

We as legislators much ensure that our government truly works for Ontarians who put their trust, hope and aspirations in us so that we can continue to make this province the best place to live, work and raise a family. I am proud and honoured to make this commitment to the constituents of my riding of Thornhill.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

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Ms Di Cocco: I have to congratulate my colleague from Thornhill on her election. The member and I have a great deal in common as well as our background. I think the immigration time frame is about exactly the same time. There's a great deal of commonality in our backgrounds, and again I do want to congratulate my colleague.

I do have to say that as much as we have a lot in common. Of course, there are going to be a few things I don't necessarily agree with when it comes to the direction in which I see the province and how I see our role as members of the Legislature. I don't really agree with the fact that—education is not just about dollars and cents. It's also about morale, and of course morale is the people who are in the front lines, just like health is not just about profit, the bottom line. I also understand, as we have been in business for 25 years, what it means to have a business and try to make ends meet and work very, very hard. On the other hand, government has the role to be compassionate, and that's something that seems to be lacking in our philosophies.

I also applaud my colleague's knowledge of Italian. It's excellent. I did understand some of what she said.

The issues of deficit and debts I agree are a liability, but you have to remember that it was your government that added \$10 billion to the debt.

Interjection: No.

Ms Di Cocco: They did. That's a fact.

Mr Bisson: My congratulations to the member for Thornhill on her first speech in this Legislature, something that I'm sure she's going to remember for some time. I hope she has the opportunity to speak again soon.

It was interesting listening to her comments, especially in light of the comments on education. I listened intently to the comments made in regard to how she feels education has somehow been strengthened over the last five years, and tried to relate that back to her riding of Thornhill. I can't speak for the people of Thornhill; I'm sure that she can. But I can speak for the people of Timmins-James Bay. I was up in Moosonee on Friday and Saturday meeting with various education officials and teachers and others, in order to get a bit of a sense of

what's happening with education in that special place of the province.

I can report to the member for Thornhill, as I will report to the rest of the members of the House a little bit later, the state of education for native children up on the James Bay coast. I invite you, member for Thornhill, to come up and visit and to sit down with these children and sit down with the teachers and parents and administrators, and then come back to this assembly and tell me if you can have the same kind of speech that you gave here. Clearly, the funding model is not working for those particular communities, as I know it is not working in a number of other places. We have one third of children in those classes, both in Moose Factory and Moosonee, who are without the ability to get services in regard with special needs.

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: The member for Etobicoke-Rexdale always laments that somehow or other we're making these numbers up, but the reality is those children are not meeting it the educational norms across the province of Ontario, and by and large because of your funding formula. There are very special circumstances that affect these children when it comes to education up on the James Bay coast. I will get to that in some detail later. But I want to tell you, all is not well in the world of education when it comes to these kids, and I'd like her to repeat to them what she's just told me today.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Scarborough Centre.

Ms Mushinski: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I too would like to start off by congratulating you on your appointment to the auspicious chair in which you sit.

I also wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to the member for Thornhill, not only for her great election victory but for the wonderful speech that she made this evening. In fact, it was very refreshing that she made a speech that spoke to the throne speech.

It was interesting because I was really trying to glean from the Liberal members and the NDP members exactly what it was they were addressing in terms of the throne speech. So it was very refreshing for the member for Thornhill to come back to the meat and the substance of the debate that we're discussing this evening, that debate being on what the Honourable Hilary M. Weston, the Lieutenant Governor, said in her speech.

The honourable member for Thornhill spoke about the balanced budget. She spoke about tax cuts. Clearly, tax cuts create jobs. Had she had more time, she perhaps would have been able to elicit why we believe in our agenda so much, given the dismal track record of the previous 10 years of Liberal and NDP mismanagement when we saw 65 tax increases and lost 10,000 net jobs and saw deficits rising to the point of \$11 billion. At the same time, we were being robbed by the federal government, which was cutting grants to us for health care and robbed us of \$21 billion.

Mr Crozier: I too want to congratulate the member for Thornhill on her address regarding the throne speech

this evening. She spoke eloquently and with some passion and understanding for what it is that her government is trying to do. She also mentioned the mosaic of her riding, and I too appreciate that, because in my riding of Essex we have a significant German population, Italian and Arabic. So that I should not leave anyone out, we have some 60 nationalities in our riding. That's part of what makes Ontario as great as it is and our country as great as it is.

I do though, since the member from Thornhill spoke about education, want to mention again that there's still so much that we have to do. You may talk about what you think you've done in education. We may not share that same view. But as I pointed out earlier, I attended a meeting at the LaSalle high school for the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board. It was a forum on special education; particularly, it was in that area of the intensive support amount grants. Quite frankly, they weren't words of mine, they weren't prompted by anyone, but there were parents there who literally begged for help, whose children had been assessed to have a certain need in special education, but that the support just isn't there. I beg the minister—she's here this evening—to take those parents' words into consideration.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Thornhill in response.

Mrs Molinari: I'd like to thank the member from Sarnia, the member from Timmins-James Bay and the member from Scarborough Centre and the member from Essex for their comments.

Basically relating to the funding for education, prior to the new model it was based on assessment within the riding or within the electoral area where you live. That's an unfair way of funding education. Those who were rich in assessment had more than those who were poor in assessment. The funding model now provides a per pupil allocation and it's funded per pupil rather than on the assessment base. There were many boards across the province that were poor because of their assessment. Toronto was one of the richer boards because of the assessment base with the commercial and industrial that is in downtown Toronto.

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I also want to point out the capital allocation. Prior to this new funding model, capital was allocated to boards by the province, not taking into account the local needs of the community. The way the capital funding model is now, boards are given an allocation on the excess they have in student places, so they have the local autonomy to decide where the schools are built. If schools are closing down in areas, it might be because previous governments gave allocations to areas where they shouldn't have been given. Now the funding model is fair and school boards have the local autonomy to allocate schools in the areas where they see fit, not a government that is distant from the school boards.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

On Monday, October 25, 1999, Ms Mushinski moved, seconded by Mr Tilson, that an humble address be

presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

“To the Honourable Hilary M. Weston, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

“We, Her Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.”

On Tuesday, October 26, 1999, Mr McGuinty moved that the motion for an address in reply to the speech from the throne be amended by adding the following thereto:

“Whereas the throne speech was an empty speech from an arrogant government; and

“Whereas the Harris government clearly wished to avoid taking responsibility for its decisions to double the size of the Premier’s office, give 30% raises to its top political staff and shower patronage on the likes of Al McLean by allowing the Legislature to sit only seven days in the first 10 months of this year; and

“Whereas the Harris government failed to signal a new approach, failed to outline a vision for taking Ontario boldly into the new millennium and failed to address the real concerns of Ontario residents; and

“Whereas the throne speech was silent on such important issues as hospital deficits, sky-high tuition, carnage on our highways, gridlock on our streets and homelessness in our communities; and

“Whereas the Harris government is clearly out of touch and its throne speech proved it has the wrong priorities;

“This House profoundly regrets that the Harris government continues to act in such an arrogant manner on an agenda which will continue to cause significant hardship for our youngest, our oldest, our sickest and our least fortunate in society.”

On Wednesday, October 27, 1999, Mr Hampton moved that the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session be amended by striking out all of the words after “Whereas the throne speech’ and substituting the following:

“lays out a government agenda that will increase the growing gap between the rich and poor in Ontario, while tightening the squeeze on the middle class; and

“Whereas much of that agenda is supported by an official opposition that is complaining about the tone, rather than the substance, of the government’s direction; and

“Whereas the government’s policies will continue to enrich the wealthiest in the province while damaging environmental protection, child care, home care, affordable housing, community safety and other areas of primary importance to the people of Ontario; and

“Whereas the protection of the rights of workers and the health and safety of Ontarians on the job will continue to be eroded by the government actions; and

“Whereas the government has repeatedly broken promises to people with disabilities, both to pass an Ontarians with Disabilities Act and to put in place an effective disabilities support program; and

“Whereas working families who are falling farther behind need a government that will address their growing economic insecurity, not funnel more money into the pockets of those who are already well off;

“Therefore, this House regrets that the government has failed to put forward a legislative agenda which deals with the issues of concern to a majority of Ontarians.”

The first question to be decided is Mr Hampton’s amendment to the amendment to the motion.

All those in favour of Mr Hampton’s amendment to the amendment to the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it. Call in the members.

I have a deferral motion:

“Dear Mr Speaker:

“Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I would like to request that the vote on the amendment to the amendment to the address and reply to the speech from the throne be deferred until November 2, 1999. Thank you for the assistance in this matter.

“Sincerely,

“Honourable Frank Klees

“Chief Government Whip”

The vote is accordingly deferred.

It being 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

The house adjourned at 2127.

ERRATUM

| No. | Page | Column | Line(s) | Should read: |
|-----|------|--------|---------|---|
| 7A | 220 | 1 | 17 | Toby Barrett, Marie Bountrogianni, Ted Chudleigh, |

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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| Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford | Tascona, Joseph N. (PC) | Halton | Chudleigh, Ted (PC) |
| Beaches-East York | Lankin, Frances (ND) | Hamilton East / -Est | Agostino, Dominic (L) |
| Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale | Gill, Raminder (PC) | Hamilton Mountain | Bountrogianni, Marie (L) |
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| Brant | Levac, Dave (L) | Huron-Bruce | Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women / ministre des Affaires civiques, de la Culture et des Loisirs, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine |
| Broadview-Greenwood | Churley, Marilyn (ND) | Kenora-Rainy River | Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique |
| Bruce-Grey | Murdoch, Bill (PC) | Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles | Gerretsen, John (L) |
| Burlington | Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme | Kitchener Centre / -Centre | Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC) |
| Cambridge | Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) | Kitchener-Waterloo | Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée |
| Carleton-Gloucester | Coburn, Brian (PC) | Lambton-Kent-Middlesex | Beaubien, Marcel (PC) |
| Chatham-Kent Essex | Hoy, Pat (L) | Lanark-Carleton | Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement |
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| Elgin-Middlesex-London | Peters, Steve (L) | Mississauga East / -Est | DeFaria, Carl (PC) |
| Erie-Lincoln | Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines | | |
| Essex | Crozier, Bruce (L) | | |
| Etobicoke Centre / -Centre | Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail | | |
| Etobicoke North / -Nord | Hastings, John (PC) | | |
| Etobicoke-Lakeshore | Kells, Morley (PC) | | |
| Glengarry-Prescott-Russell | Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L) | | |
| Guelph-Wellington | Elliott, Brenda (PC) | | |
| Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant | Barrett, Toby (PC) | | |

| Constituency Circonscription | Member/Party Député(e) / Parti | Constituency Circonscription | Member/Party Député(e) / Parti |
|---|--|--|--|
| Mississauga South / -Sud | Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance) | Sault Ste Marie | Martin, Tony (ND) |
| Mississauga West / -Ouest | Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles | Scarborough Centre / -Centre | Mushinski, Marilyn (PC) |
| Nepean-Carleton | Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones | Scarborough East / -Est | Gilchrist, Steve (PC) |
| Niagara Centre / -Centre | Kormos, Peter (ND) | Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest | Newman, Dan (PC) |
| Niagara Falls | Maves, Bart (PC) | Scarborough-Agincourt | Phillips, Gerry (L) |
| Nickel Belt | Martel, Shelley (ND) | Scarborough-Rouge River | Curling, Alvin (L) |
| Nipissing | Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif | Simcoe North / -Nord | Dunlop, Garfield (PC) |
| Northumberland | Galt, Doug (PC) | Simcoe-Grey | Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie |
| Oak Ridges | Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille | St Catharines | Bradley, James J. (L) |
| Oakville | Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président | St Paul's | Bryant, Michael (L) |
| Oshawa | Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC) | Stoney Creek | Clark, Brad (PC) |
| Ottawa Centre / -Centre | Patten, Richard (L) | Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh | Cleary, John C. (L) |
| Ottawa South / -Sud | McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition | Sudbury | Bartolucci, Rick (L) |
| Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean | Guzzo, Garry J. (PC) | Thornhill | Molinari, Tina R. (PC) |
| Ottawa-Vanier | Boyer, Claudette (L) | Thunder Bay-Atikokan | McLeod, Lyn (L) |
| Oxford | Hardeman, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales | Thunder Bay- Superior North / -Nord | Gravelle, Michael (L) |
| Parkdale-High Park | Kennedy, Gerard (L) | Timiskaming-Cochrane | Ramsay, David (L) |
| Parry Sound-Muskoka | Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie L. (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances | Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James | Bisson, Gilles (ND) |
| Perth-Middlesex | Johnson, Bert (PC) | Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale | Smitherman, George (L) |
| Peterborough | Stewart, R. Gary (PC) | Trinity-Spadina | Marchese, Rosario (ND) |
| Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge | Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation | Vaughan-King-Aurora | Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce |
| Prince Edward-Hastings | Parsons, Ernie (L) | Waterloo-Wellington | Arnott, Ted (PC) |
| Renfrew-Nipissing- Pembroke | Conway, Sean G. (L) | Wentworth-Burlington | Skarica, Toni (PC) |
| Sarnia-Lambton | Di Cocco, Caroline (L) | Whitby-Ajax | Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones |
| | | Willowdale | Young, David (PC) |
| | | Windsor West / -Ouest | Pupatello, Sandra (L) |
| | | Windsor-St Clair | Duncan, Dwight (L) |
| | | York Centre / -Centre | Kwinter, Monte (L) |
| | | York North / -Nord | Munro, Julia (PC) |
| | | York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston | Cordiano, Joseph (L) |
| | | York West / -Ouest | Sergio, Mario (L) |

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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