



**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 37th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 3 April 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 3 avril 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 3 April 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 3 avril 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES
LEGISLATION

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Welcome back, everyone. Members' statements.

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): This government has failed 1.5 million persons with disabilities in this province. Loud and clear, over and over, that's the message I heard as I travelled the province during the month of March and met with over 1,500 groups and individuals.

Disabled persons face access barriers, barriers to education, transportation, the health care system. Even the government's very own ODSP program prevents these individuals from reaching their full potential. They are not looking for handouts; they are demanding a level playing field.

There is still no Ontarians with Disabilities Act despite repeated promises, three ministers and one pathetic attempt at legislation. There is, however, a string of broken promises by this government, not the least of which is the promise of open consultations. The former minister held closed-door, invitation-only consultations, as is the current minister, who even refuses to define her ever-illusory action plan.

I believe it is my responsibility to meet in person, in the open, with those who would be most affected. The results will be made public and provided to the Premier and the minister responsible.

On November 23, this House unanimously supported my resolution calling for the passage of legislation within two years. As this Legislature sits for the first time in the 21st century, I urge the government to take responsibility for the promises, to truly listen and to work co-operatively to pass a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): It's a pleasure to be back.

I'm pleased to rise today in the House and talk about community safety. Last Monday night, the Newcastle

Ratepayers Association and I hosted a public forum to share information and hear from residents on how they want to make their communities safer places to live. People from across my riding of Durham spoke to the audience about how they became involved in their communities and the effective programs in their area. There were many promising stories told.

I would like to congratulate the presenters and tell you that they were Fred Ford of the Cartwright Youth Activity Centre, Dominic Vetere of Dom's Auto Parts, inspectors Ross Smith and Chuck Mercier, Scugog councillor Ken Gadsden for the Scugog Road Watch program, April Dubreuil of the Firehouse Youth Group in Bowmanville, David Rickard of the Newcastle Ratepayers Association, Ron Hooper of the Bowmanville BIA, Barry Walters of the Newcastle BIA, and Nicole Johnson and Marianne Winters from the Neighbourhood Watch groups in Newcastle and Orono. They spoke of successful programs to take back their communities.

I also want to thank Gerry Martiniuk, co-chair of the Ontario Crime Control Commission, for speaking to my constituents about the steps our government is taking to help strengthen community safety.

I applaud the initiatives being taken by the people of Newcastle and encourage all members to participate in taking back our communities and having community safety and crime prevention as a top priority.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): I wrote to the Premier last week to ask his opinion on attaching homing devices to employees, like Andersen Consulting is now doing to social service employees. We don't agree with this policy, but I want to hear what the Premier has to say, because I would like him to volunteer to be the first recipient of such a homing device. Unfortunately, I don't know that the gadget would actually register when the Premier is out of the province, which he has been most of the time, and then Andersen Consulting would have to fire him for never being here.

Then maybe we could attach the homing device to the individual who is now running for the federal party, also out of the province most of the time, and therefore the device also would not register, and Andersen Consulting would have to fire him too. We could go right through the entire cabinet and we would have virtually no one left in cabinet. The truth is, do we really want to do this to the people of Ontario who serve in the public service? It's completely inappropriate.

To date, I have not heard back from the Premier to suggest that he agrees or disagrees. This speaks to the fact that the privatization of that contract with Andersen Consulting, which we have said from the beginning is a boondoggle that takes money from the taxpayers in a very inappropriate manner, the whole notion of Andersen Consulting doing this—it's likely that the Premier didn't know about it in the first place.

Once again, I support Erik Peters in calling for a complete abolition of that contract.

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I rise in the Legislature today to recognize the contribution of agriculture in my riding of Perth-Middlesex. Two weeks ago, the Perth County Federation of Agriculture released a report that indicates that agriculture generates over \$1 billion in annual sales and employs 29%, nearly one third, of Perth county's workforce. The report also highlights the fact that the agricultural sector has links with almost every sector of the Perth county economy and touches an estimated 686 businesses.

The report also shows that Perth county is among the top five agricultural producers in Ontario. It is also significant that Perth county ranks seventh among Canadian provinces in terms of farm gate sales, ranking ahead of Nova Scotia, PEI, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

I want to commend the farmers of Perth county and the thousands of residents who are directly and indirectly involved with the agricultural industry. I also want to applaud the efforts of my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, who continues to work on behalf of the Ontario farmers.

Mr Speaker, I hope that you and other members of the Legislature will join with me today to celebrate the accomplishments of the agriculture industry in Perth county.

BREAST CANCER

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): In speaking with Lawrence and Kay Greenaway, the founders of the Breast Cancer Society of Canada, I've learned some disturbing facts regarding the screening process for breast cancer. According to recent data, 60% of the mammography machines in Ontario are not accredited by the Canadian Association of Radiologists. This means that the technicians using the machine do not require specialized training. As well, a mammography machine that is not accredited is not subject to the quality control for accurate amount of radiation and quality of film.

This is alarming because it brings into question the accuracy of the testing for early diagnosis of breast cancer. In the United States, by law, every mammography facility requires mandatory certification. Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal caucus believe that all mammography machines in Ontario must be accredited.

Prevention and early detection are the key to lower breast cancer mortality rates. It is not acceptable that 60% of mammography machines in this province are not subject to strict quality control.

Unfortunately, the Minister of Health will not even meet with the founders of the Breast Cancer Society of Canada to discuss this. I ask that the Harris government take responsibility, stop blaming others and address this matter.

1340

OPP BEAR HUG BAND

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I rise today to recognize a successful group of police officers and community policing volunteers who promote children's and seniors' safety programs by performing at community events and children's concerts throughout the province. The name: the OPP Bear Hug Band.

The OPP bear hug safety program was developed by OPP Sergeant Gord Magee in 1988. Over the years, they have been featured at benefit dances, community concerts, Canada Day festivities, rural events and many major events. This band is well received by everyone who has had an opportunity to hear them. They combine well-loved and known music—by singing, clapping and dancing—with important safety messages from a variety of services such as fire departments, ambulance services, police services and Ontario Hydro.

The popularity of the Bear Hug Band is skyrocketing. They are booked up for months in advance and are even accepting bookings from out of our province and country. I was very pleased to recently learn that the Bear Hug Band will be travelling to the Netherlands from May 1 to 9. They have been invited to attend the Remembrance Day services held in Grosbeek.

I commend the OPP Bear Hug Band for the hours of personal dedication and time they have put into every successful venture. As members of this assembly, let us join together to thank and salute the OPP Bear Hug Band for their work as they promote safety.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): It's very clear that this government is about to open its arms to private universities, both Canadian- and US-based. The government spin masters will try to convince Ontarians that this is a good thing; they're good at that. The government will say that these universities will operate at no cost to the Ontario taxpayer. The reality is that private universities cost the taxpayers millions of dollars a year in the US and they will do the same thing in Ontario. For example, 17% of Harvard's annual income comes from government grants and contracts. Private colleges in Ontario already use the OSAP system that is paid for by taxpayers' money.

The government will say that by introducing private universities, the double cohort enrolment crisis will be

solved. The reality is that the types of for-profit, private universities the government is considering offer niche programming at exorbitant prices. They will not provide spaces for the 80,000 18- to 24-year-olds who will be seeking a proper university degree, not a niche program.

The big issue is that the Harris government to date shows no real interest in planning for the tremendous challenges our universities face. For example, the Super-Build was a super bust, and I look forward to exposing the myths in the weeks to come.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I rise today to call on the Minister of Municipal Affairs to do three things with regard to the question of Flamborough being a part of the future new city of Hamilton.

One, he make an immediate decision. There is absolutely no need for the minister to delay or drag this out any further.

Secondly, I call on the minister to reject partitioning of Flamborough from the new city of Hamilton outright, given the fact that of the four conditions he set out, two have not been met. The region of Halton has rejected accepting part of Flamborough, and the minister had laid out that he wanted all of the municipalities that would receive any part of Flamborough to be on side. One of the key players is obviously not on side. Second, the minister set out that the transition board of the new city of Hamilton would have to agree to the financial assumptions that are underlying Flamborough's bid, and of course they do not. In fact, the discrepancy is huge, in terms of tens of millions of dollars.

Lastly, I call on the minister to make this decision, not only immediately in light of the decisions that have been made by the transition board and Halton, but that it be binding and final. We don't need this question of whether Flamborough is in or out of Hamilton hanging over us for months or years to come.

Minister, make the decision, make it immediately, and make it that Flamborough will be part of the great new city of Hamilton.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTER

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): The Liberal member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale and critic for science and technology says it is important for members of the Legislature to take the opportunity during question period to challenge the Premier and the government on its record.

He cares so much about question period that he had his staff—the Liberal caucus staff and the legislative research staff—conduct a study on how often the Premier attends question period so that he could raise important questions.

He cares so much that he has planned to introduce a private member's bill to dock the pay of the ministers who fail to appear in this Legislature as often as the

member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale would like them to show up.

Well, I thought I would do my own quick study using the Internet access available to us by the assembly. In my quick study I found that the Liberal member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale has only asked five questions in his time at Queen's Park—that's right, only five questions. The member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale serves as his party's science and technology critic. How many of his five questions have been directed to the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology? How often has he used the opportunity afforded to him by question period to advance the issues in his critic portfolio? The answer is, not once. Never has the Liberal critic for science and technology raised a question in this chamber pertaining to issues in his portfolio. Perhaps if he spent less time grandstanding and more time—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the member's time is up. Just so the members know, the second go-round in this session will be a little bit quicker on the time. I apologize, but we need to do that to keep things running smoothly.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I seek the unanimous consent of this House to move and immediately pass the following motion:

Be it resolved that, in the opinion of this House—

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: He can ask for unanimous consent to introduce a motion about a subject, but he cannot read the motion.

The Speaker: The government House leader is correct. He has to ask for unanimous consent first and, if he gets it, then he can proceed with the motion.

The member has asked for unanimous consent. He needs to indicate what the subject matter is, so I will let the leader of the official opposition proceed.

Mr McGuinty: The motion is, among other things, to condemn the federal government for insufficiently funding health care in Ontario.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Actually, I don't know if we're finished with this item. I have a unanimous consent request as well. May I rise now to seek unanimous consent for this House to support a motion on the PCB shipments that may be coming into Ontario? Very short.

The Speaker: The member has asked for unanimous consent? Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER FOR WENTWORTH-BURLINGTON

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that a vacancy has occurred in the membership of the House by reason of the resignation of Toni Skarica,

member for the electoral district of Wentworth-Burlington. Accordingly, my warrant has been issued to the chief election officer for the issue of a writ for a by-election.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Just on that point, if I might, I read in the press that one of our colleagues—

The Speaker: Just a second. Is it a point of order? I will say in the beginning that in the last session we were all very new, including the Speaker, and on points of order I tended to let things go a little bit because I took points of order very seriously. I must say that as a result of my indulgence, on a lot of occasions points of order were used for debate. I will tell you, in this session there are no more rookies here, including the Speaker, although some days you may think so. We are going to be a little bit tighter. If I do not see a legitimate point of order very early, I will be up. I wanted to explain that to all the members.

1350

Mr Conway: Well said, Mr Speaker.

On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm certainly no rookie, but I noticed in the papers today that one of our colleagues, and it's not an everyday event, intends apparently to seek the leadership of a national political party. My question to you is very technical. In the event that such a declaration is made, does that occasion a vacancy in a provincial seat such as the one he might hold here?

The Speaker: It's not a point of order, and the Speaker doesn't answer questions like that.

INSCRIPTIONS IN CHAMBER

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I just want to take a quick moment, before we begin, to invite all the members to look to my left. As you know, this House has a tradition of having Latin inscriptions in the chamber. We have on the other side, which is just below the press gallery, "Dare to be wise"; "By teaching we learn." "Let us be viewed by our actions" is on the right-hand side, and this is advice we all should from time to time listen to.

In 1893, when the building was opened, two of the pillars to my left, the immediate left that you see there now, did not have any inscription. As a result of the year 2000, we asked the members of the 37th Parliament to assist in choosing the appropriate models to put inscriptions to my left. The models you decided on have been carved by Siggie Buhler, who is seated in the Speaker's gallery today. Originally from Switzerland, Mr Buhler now lives in Toronto. He completed the work on March 8, 2000.

I'm sure all the members will agree that we are fortunate to have such a talented craftsman to work so closely in putting together our new inscriptions. It is with the most complimentary intent that I say these carvings look as if they have been here in the chamber from the beginning. I guess that is one of the best forms of a

compliment, to be able to say it looks like it has always been there.

The inscriptions to my left: There is immediately to the left the crown, flanked by two angels, one holding a scroll and the other a bunch of grapes, with an inscription roughly translated to mean "Good government bears fruit." The second pillar, a little farther along, is flanked by two angels, one holding an olive branch and one an hourglass. The new inscription in Latin translates into "Let there be peace in our time."

I want to take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of all the members and all the people of Ontario, Siggie Buhler for assisting, and we wish him very much success, with his excellent work in our chamber here today. Hopefully, the members will give him a sign by rising and clapping and thanking him for his efforts.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg leave to inform the House that during the recess the Clerk received the second, third and fourth reports of the standing committee on government agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 106(e)9, these reports are deemed to have been adopted by the House.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND SOCIAL POLICY

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on justice and social policy and move its adoption.

Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman): Mr Tascona from the standing committee on justice and social policy presents the committee's report and moves its adoption as follows:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 31, An Act, in memory of Christopher Stephenson, to establish and maintain a registry of sex offenders to protect children and communities / *Projet de loi 31, Loi à la mémoire de Christopher Stephenson visant à créer et à tenir un registre des délinquants sexuels en vue de protéger les enfants et les collectivités.*

The Speaker: Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed. This bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I beg leave to present a report on pre-budget consultation 2000 from the standing committee on finance and eco-

conomic affairs and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker: Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Beaubien: Thank you very much for the opportunity to thank not only the staff but the committee members. I would also like to thank the presenters who presented to the committee across the province. I would also urge all the members of the House to read the report so that we can have a friendly, balanced debate when the budget is presented. With these brief comments, Mr Speaker, I would like to adjourn the debate.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman): Mrs Mushinski from the standing committee on general government presents the committee's report and moves its adoption as follows:

Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 37, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act / Projet de loi 37, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les agences de recouvrement.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

COMMISSIONERS OF ESTATE BILLS

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that the Clerk has received a favourable report from the Commissioners of Estate Bills with respect to Pr5, An Act respecting The Ross Memorial Hospital.

Accordingly, pursuant to standing order 86(e), the bill and the report stand referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

AN ACT TO REPEAL THE SAFE STREETS ACT

UNE LOI POUR RÉVOQUER LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ DANS LES RUES

Mr Kormos moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 51, An Act to Repeal the Safe Streets Act, 1999 (Nouveaux Misérables Act), 2000 / Projet de loi 51, Une loi pour révoquer la Loi de 1999 sur la sécurité dans les rues (La Loi sur les nouveaux Misérables), 2000.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

The motion is carried.

Does the member have some comments?

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I certainly do, Speaker. This bill repeals the so-called Safe Streets Act, 1999. The Safe Streets Act was poorly conceived legislation that persecutes the poor, these nouveaux Misérables, while leaving charities incredibly vulnerable. This so-called Safe Streets Act has created danger for fire-fighters, students, any number of good-minded people who want to start raising funds on our streets. This—

The Speaker: In the introduction of bills, the statements would be short; in this session as well, we will try to remain short. Would the member please sum up quickly.

Mr Kormos: I'll be brief, Speaker. This government bill has endangered the future of charitable organizations by making it illegal to solicit money on streets, in parking lots, at transit stops or near bank machines, causing charities to lose precious fundraising opportunities and risking the safety and security of thousands of good-minded volunteers.

The Speaker: I thank the member.

1400

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS PRICE FREEZE ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LE GEL DU PRIX DE CERTAINS PRODUITS PÉTROLIERS

Mr Bartolucci moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 52, An Act to provide for an interim freeze in the price of certain petroleum products / Projet de loi 52, Loi prévoyant le gel provisoire du prix de certains produits pétroliers.

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

The member for a short statement.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This bill freezes the price of petroleum products at the price of those products on February 14, 1999. The freeze applies from the day the bill comes into force and lasts for 90 days. If the Legislative Assembly is not sitting when the freeze ends, the minister may make an order extending the freeze for another 60 days. This will allow truck drivers, independent operators, to stay in business, and the consumer to feel the Ontario government is treating them fairly.

CARE HOMES ACT, 2000
LOI DE 2000
SUR LES MAISONS DE SOINS

Mrs McLeod moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 53, An Act to provide for the accreditation of care homes, to protect the rights of tenants and to amend the Tenant Protection Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 53, Loi protégeant l'agrément de maisons de soins, protégeant les droits des locataires et modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la protection des locataires.

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

The member for a short statement.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Very briefly, the purpose of the bill is to put in place a bill of rights for tenants of care homes and to establish a care homes review board which is empowered to investigate complaints and to enforce the bill of rights. The bill also provides for the creation of an annually updated registry of care homes.

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE REGULAR
ATTENDANCE OF THE PREMIER
AND CABINET IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr Smitherman moved first reading of the following bill:

An Act to require the regular attendance of the Premier and Cabinet in question period.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This particular bill is clearly out of order and attacks the privileges of members of this House. I therefore ask you to consider not calling the first vote on this, as the title clearly indicates that this is dealing with the absence of members of this House at a particular time.

On December 21, you chastised this very member for calling attention to the absence of the Premier at that time. Your words were, "I've asked all members—"

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I do need to hear the point of order, and I would like to hear the member speaking. I would ask all the members to please be quiet during the point of order. If the member could wrap up pretty quickly on the point of order, please.

Hon Mr Sterling: Yes, I will. The member opposite has already shared this bill with the public and many members of the government House. It's clear to us that this bill is contrary to the standing orders and the practices of this House.

You said on December 21, Mr Speaker, to this very member:

"I've asked all members very clearly on occasion not to do this"—that is, comment on the absence of the Premier—"and they continue to do it. This is the last warning to everybody. I will not put up with anybody

breaking the standing orders: Last warning to everybody in this House. If they do it again, they will be named."

The Speaker: I want to thank the member on the point of order. That was during the question period, and at any other point in time—the standing orders are very clear—not on the introduction of a bill. I'm going to allow this to be introduced.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1404 to 1409.

The Speaker: Mr Smitherman has moved An Act to require the regular attendance of the Premier and the Cabinet in question period. All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Crozier, Bruce	Levac, David
Bartolucci, Rick	Curling, Alvin	Marchese, Rosario
Bountroggianni, Marie	Di Cocco, Caroline	Martel, Shelley
Boyer, Claudette	Dombrowsky, Leona	McGuinty, Dalton
Bradley, James J.	Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn
Brown, Michael A.	Gerretsen, John	Parsons, Ernie
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Patten, Richard
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Peterson, Steve
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Churley, Marilyn	Kennedy, Gerard	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Conway, Sean G.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smitherman, George
Cordiano, Joseph	Lankin, Frances	

The Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hodgson, Chris	Palladini, Al
Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Johns, Helen	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Johnson, Bert	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Kells, Morley	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Klees, Frank	Stewart, R. Gary
Cunningham, Dianne	Marland, Margaret	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tascona, Joseph N.
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Tilson, David
Elliott, Brenda	Molinari, Tina R.	Tsubouchi, David H.
Eves, Ernie L.	Munro, Julia	Turnbull, David
Flaherty, Jim	Mushinski, Marilyn	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	Newman, Dan	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John	Wood, Bob
Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Young, David
Hastings, John		

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 41; the nays are 49.

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS
AND ESTABLISHMENTS
AMENDMENT ACT
(FUNERAL SERVICES), 2000

LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LES DIRECTEURS
DE SERVICES FUNÉRAIRES
ET LES ÉTABLISSEMENTS FUNÉRAIRES
(SERVICES FUNÉRAIRES)

Mr Sergio moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 54, An Act to amend the Funeral Directors and Establishments Act with respect to funeral services /
Projet de loi 54, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les directeurs de services funéraires et les établissements funéraires à l'égard des services funéraires.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. There is a point of order. All members will remember to get to the point quickly, because I will have to cut them off if it's not a point of order.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): Speaker, it is my understanding that the rules of the standing orders to provide that no strangers are entitled to enter on to the floor of the House.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. That is not a point of order.

Mr Sergio moves that leave be given to introduce a bill entitled An Act to amend the Funeral Directors and Establishments Act with respect to funeral services.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member for a short statement.

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): I didn't know that my introduction of the bill prompted the Premier to attend today.

I'll keep it very short. I think this crystallizes the act as it is presently defined. This will allow only a licensed funeral establishment, cemetery or crematorium to indeed conduct rites for that particular use.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In light of the extraordinary hardship that escalating gasoline prices are causing Ontarians, I move that we proceed to second reading to accelerate debate on the member for Sudbury's Petroleum Products Price Freeze Act, so we can help Ontarians.

The Speaker: You first have to ask for unanimous consent. Is that what you're asking for?

Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): Mr

Speaker, I believe I have unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding the order of precedence for private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Hon Mr Sterling: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list for private members' public business: Mr Arnott, Mr Murdoch and Ms Molinari exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Arnott assumes ballot item number 16, Mr Murdoch assumes ballot item number 22 and Ms Molinari assumes ballot item number 41, and that Mr Patten and Mr Agostino exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Patten assumes ballot item number 30 and Mr Agostino assumes ballot item number 15.

The Speaker: The government House leader has moved that notwithstanding standing order 96(d)—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense. All those in favour of the motion? Agreed. The motion is carried.

Hon Mr Sterling: Mr Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Hon Mr Sterling: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 15 and 16.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND REPSONSES

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I rise in the House today to speak to the urgent need for the federal government not only to restore its cuts to health funding but also to provide predictable, stable, long-term funding so that Ontario and the other provinces can continue the work of reforming our health care system.

The status quo isn't good enough. That's why the Ontario government has already embarked on an ambitious reform agenda contained in our health action plan. The goal of our reform agenda for health care is to improve quality and expand access across the province: pharmacare, home care, community care, long-term care, primary care reform, hospital restructuring, investments in new technology. Working with nurses, hospitals, doctors and other health care providers, we continue the task of reforming Ontario's health care system. We want the federal government to join us in these reforms. We want the federal government to demonstrate its commitment to reform by providing the long-term sustainable funding needed to make reform possible. We wanted last

week's meeting of health ministers to be the start of federal co-operation. As Allan Rock himself said on March 10, "Preserving medicare is going to cost more than words, and the federal government must be there to do its share."

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Would the Premier take his seat for a moment, please. We're going to start off this session, when statements are being read by ministers and responses come, I would appreciate it if the members were quiet. What happens is that when the minister makes a statement and there is a large amount of heckling, and then when responses come, both sides are not able to hear each other.

1420

In the standing orders, there is provision for the opposition to have time to respond. Each of the critics will have time. I would appreciate it if the members would allow the minister to give the statement without the shouting that goes on.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. I say to the member, we're going to start off this session, and if it turns out that members don't do that, then they'll be watching on TV from their offices, because we are not going to proceed—

Applause.

The Speaker: Order. I know the government members wish to be of assistance, but it isn't helpful when you clap when the Speaker has a ruling. I want to make sure that members are very clear about this, because I'm going to be just as vigilant when the responses come back, when the government members yell across to that side, as well. Sorry for the interruption. Premier.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): Point of order, Mr Speaker: Could you restore a minute of time to the clock?

The Speaker: Yes, I'm sorry. I should have stopped the clock. I apologize. The clock will be restored.

Hon Mr Harris: If Allan Rock was sincere when he made that statement, he would have come to Markham and announced not only full restoration of the CHST to where it was before the federal Liberals began cutting, but also sustainable ongoing funding sufficient to meet the needs of our growing and our aging population, needs that are the focus of so many of our reforms.

But that's not what happened. Unfortunately for Canadians, the health ministers' meeting was a failure. It was a failure because the federal government didn't come prepared. The federal government clearly hadn't done its homework. It had no new suggestions. It had nothing to offer in either money or ideas.

The federal minister had been saying that he wanted to talk about ways to reform the health system, even though Ontario and the other provinces are already doing that. But he didn't even come to the meeting prepared to talk about that. Our health minister, Elizabeth Witmer, was prepared to share information on our long-term care and community care reforms, prepared to share information

about the progress we've made—a plan to create 20,000 new long-term-care beds, a 49% increase in funding for community services and a \$1.5-billion annual investment in home care and community care—and about how the expansion could in fact be accelerated with increased federal support.

But Allan Rock didn't talk about these reforms. Is he in favour of our long-term care and community care expansion? Is he opposed? Does he have any new ideas? We don't know. All we know is that he came to the meeting without any authority to commit to financial support for these reforms. Our health minister took with her information about Ontario's drug program, which is already the most generous in the country, about how much it costs, what it would take to extend it to a national pharma-care program, cost shared 50-50 between Ottawa and the provinces. We're certainly willing to participate in a national pharma-care program so that Canadians can have equal access to drugs, regardless of which province they live in. But Allan Rock wasn't ready to discuss that.

Is he in favour of Ontario's pharmacare? Is he opposed? What sort of program does he contemplate? We don't know. All we know is that he came to the meeting without the authority to agree to anything.

Our health minister was prepared to help Allan Rock understand primary care reform, because unlike the federal government, instead of talking about primary care reform, we're actually doing something: pilot projects now in seven communities, discussions with the Ontario Medical Association as to how we can work co-operatively together, government and the Ontario Medical Association, to expand patients' access. Our minister was prepared to explain to the federal government that primary care reform will not save money, and in fact will probably require significant investment, but it will provide better health care and it will help us improve physician distribution in underserved areas. So we would welcome stable federal funding to make this reform work.

But Allan Rock had nothing to contribute. Is he in favour of our approach to primary care reform? Is he opposed? Does he think we should be doing it faster? Should we be doing it slower? Should we be doing it differently? We don't know. All we know is that he came to the meeting lacking the authority to commit to any funding. In fact, he was so unprepared that all he could discuss were plans for future talks.

If there are to be future meetings, Allan Rock needs to do his homework, and he had better be prepared to come with new ideas. He should tell us what new national reform programs he is prepared to support. He should come prepared to tell us which provincial reforms he doesn't support. He should tell us what else he thinks we should be doing.

When he comes he must know how many long-term, stable, inflation-adjusted dollars will be available to the provinces to embark on new reforms. Provinces, you see, are leery of new national programs without guaranteed funding. Why? Think of medicare: 50-50. Medicare was

50% federal and 50% provincial. Today in Ontario it is 89% provincial and 11% federal.

Our population is growing and aging. The cost of new technologies and innovative medical treatments is rising. Yet the federal Liberal government inflicted the most massive cuts to health funding in Canadian history. Annual base federal funding for health care is still \$4.2 billion lower than when the Liberals starting cutting. In response to this reality, every provincial government in this country has not only made up the federal shortfall but has increased funding for health care and is working to reform and improve the system to meet the health care needs of the people of Canada today and into the future.

In Ontario we've done the same. In fact, we're investing more in health care today than any previous government at any point in our province's history. Not only did we make up the \$1.7-billion federal cut to Ontario; we've increased annual funding by \$3 billion more on top of that since we took office. That's how we have responded to the changing health care needs of the men, women and children of Ontario.

But the federal government's response has been different. So today I am asking members of the Legislature to put aside partisan differences and to unite to seek restored federal health funding.

I have drafted a resolution that I will table today. The motion reads as follows:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

(a) Condemns the government of Canada for cutting, by \$4.2 billion annually, base payments under the federal program that supports health care, the CHST, while provincial governments have increased health spending;

(b) Urges the government of Canada to repudiate the statement attributed to a spokesman for the federal finance minister, the Honourable Paul Martin, that increasing health funding would be "just shovelling money into a hole that's going to open right back up again";

(c) Urges the government of Canada immediately to restore permanently the health funding that it has cut, and to assume its fair share of increased, ongoing funding to meet the health needs of our country's aging and growing population; and

(d) Reminds the federal Minister of Health, the Honourable Allan Rock, that the sincerity of his commitment to medicare and the principles of the Canada Health Act would be best demonstrated not by idle rhetoric and vague words but by restoring the health funding that he has cut.

At this moment, I would like to credit the leadership of Ted Arnott, the member for Waterloo-Wellington, who tabled a similar resolution before the House rose last fall.

The federal government talks about reform, but provincial governments, nurses, hospitals, doctors and other health providers are already working on reforms to improve our health care system. Allan Rock talks about innovation and change, but across Canada we're already

moving forward to introduce the very changes that he just talks about.

There's only one innovation still lacking, one that certainly would be new and different, and that would be a federal commitment to provide its share of health funding for the very important reforms the provinces are already working on.

I am asking all members to consider this resolution carefully and I'm asking them to lend it their unanimous support.

1430

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I rise today to support the request for the urgent need for the federal government to restore its cuts to health funding and to also provide long-term sustainable funding in order that we can continue with the reform of our health system.

Last week in Markham, I brought information on Ontario's health action plan for reform to the meeting with the Honourable Allan Rock. As we all know, health care reform in this province is well underway, and I can assure you that it is well underway throughout Canada in each province and in each territory.

Our work has been based on our vision of health. We believe in a vision that promotes wellness and improves health outcomes for Ontarians through accessible, integrated and quality services at every stage of life and as close to home as possible.

Last week I told Minister Rock that we have a plan where we are expanding home care for Ontario citizens. We don't have the copayments that other provinces do. Our government has increased funding to support this program by 49% since 1995, which enabled 420,000 Ontario citizens access to home care services in 1999 alone. In addition, we are creating 20,000 new long-term-care beds to meet the needs of our aging population.

I told Mr Rock that Ontario's health action plan includes ensuring that we continue to have one of the strongest provincial drug plans in the country. Ontario's is among the most generous. We pay for 44 million prescriptions every year for more than two million seniors and social assistance recipients. Our drug plan also financially assists individuals who need expensive drugs to treat serious illnesses such as cancer, HIV and cystic fibrosis. In fact, we have added 1,000 new drugs to the formulary since 1995.

I also told Mr Rock about our plan to expand primary care reform and the introduction of nurse practitioners. We have been working with the Ontario Medical Association on pilot primary care sites across the province. These pilots will expand public access to family physicians and health professionals, including nurses and nurse practitioners, on a seven-day, 24-hour basis.

I can assure you, the provinces and the territories understand and are reforming their health systems in a systematic way. They are doing everything possible to improve health care by putting more money into a patient-centred system that responds to the growing and aging needs of our population.

In our province we have supported our health plan with an increase in annual health funding of \$3 billion since 1995, despite a funding cut to Ontario of \$1.7 billion by the federal government. We, in this province and across Canada, have not had the luxury of waiting for the federal government for leadership on the reform of our health systems; in fact, we have all had to embark upon this health reform during a time of drastic reductions of \$4.2 billion in CHST payments.

At the conclusion of our meeting last Friday, the provincial and territorial health ministers unanimously called upon the federal government to immediately and permanently restore the full federal cut in CHST cash payments with an appropriate escalator to ensure that funding for health through CHST keeps pace with the economic and social factors that impact on the sustainability of the system.

We also asked the federal government to reaffirm its commitment to the Canada Health Act and we indicated that we have been, and will always remain, willing to meet with the federal government to discuss ways to improve, strengthen and modernize our system for our citizens.

I would urge the House to support the motion of our Premier.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): What I intend to do at this point in time is to read the motion which I attempted to introduce just a short while ago but which was rejected by members of the government. Contrary to the motion put forward today by the Premier, this one is grounded in fairness.

Be it resolved that, in the opinion of this House, the current levels of health care funding provided by both the federal and provincial governments are insufficient to properly modernize Ontario's health care services and to provide the quality care that Ontarians need and deserve; and

Be it further resolved that this House strongly condemns both the federal and provincial governments for wasting millions of health care dollars on an advertising war when this money is needed to improve and modernize Ontario's health care services; and

Be it further resolved that this House demand that any increase in federal health funding be spent entirely on health care and be applied on top of the levels of health care funding already committed to by the province.

I too table this motion.

Unlike the Premier, I have been spending a great deal of time travelling the province during the intersession and listening to Ontarians. I can tell you that they don't want us to fight over health care; they want us to fight for their health care. Among other things, they are questioning why it is that if, according to the government—and we believe this—there is a desperate need for a new infusion of money, of dollars, into health care today, how is it that this government at the present time can spend \$3 million-plus on an ad campaign attacking the federal government?

In addition, Ontarians, quite naturally, are questioning the sincerity of the present attack being launched by the Premier against the federal government. Prior to the budget, the Tory party ran radio ads, and if we reach back and consider what the subject matter of those radio ads was, they did not ask Ontarians to apply pressure to the federal government to encourage them to give us more money for health care; those radio ads said that all Ontarians should contact the Prime Minister and urge him to cut taxes. But today apparently we're going to run TV ads, we're going to deliver brochures door to door throughout Ontario paid for by taxpayers—that's what the government is doing—attacking the federal government now for listening to them up front.

There is more than enough blame to go around when it comes to the state of health care in Ontario today. One of the things that so disappointed us most recently was this government's decision to shelve primary care reform in Ontario. I can tell you, as a result of my travels, that Ontario families lead hectic, just-in-time lives. They deserve access to 24-seven health care, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

1440

At the bargaining table, Premier, when it comes to modernizing health care in Ontario, we can't just have the doctors. This issue is far bigger than just the doctors. At that table we need our nurse practitioners, we need our nurses, we need our other health care professionals, and we need representatives of the patient groups. That's what we need there.

It's time for the government to stop engaging in this blame game, stop engaging in passing-the-buck tactics and begin to respect the need by all Ontarians to modernize and revamp our health care system. If we don't modernize our health care, we're going to lose our health care. These are the people responsible for delivering health care in Ontario. That's what Ontarians want us to do. They want us once more to stop fighting over health care and to start fighting for health care.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): We welcome the debate about health care. This is a debate that is long overdue. I want to say to the Premier and his government, look, there's no secret about what the Liberals in Ottawa have done. It's no secret that they've taken \$4.2 billion in annual funding from health care. That's known. It's also known that they took the \$4.2 billion from health care funding without any strategy for primary care reform, without any strategy for home care, without any strategy for pharmacare and, worst of all, without any strategy for something which is their constitutional responsibility, the health care of aboriginal people. All that is known. And it is known that for Liberals to engage in lecturing anyone about medicare is indeed theatre of the absurd.

Applause.

Mr Hampton: But, Premier, this is Ontario.

The Speaker: Order. Stop the clock for a moment, please. Order.

As I said earlier, and I'm addressing the government members now, in situations like this on both sides it would be more helpful if we actually listen. I know applause is seen as support, but when it's coming from the opposition benches, it makes it difficult for the member speaking. I would appreciate it if the members on the government side would listen for the remainder of the response.

Leader of the third party.

Mr Hampton: Premier, this is Ontario and it's your health care record we're here to discuss. It's your health care record where one of the first things you did as a government was you went out and you laid off 10,000 nurses and you described them as out-of-date Hula Hoop workers. Then you scramble to rehire the 10,000 nurses when you discover the health care system doesn't work without them.

It's a government where one of the first things you did was to cancel the cancer treatment centres in places like Durham region and Mississauga. You discontinued the training programs for the very health care workers who were going to work in those cancer treatment centres. What are you doing now? Sending cancer patients to Buffalo, to Detroit, because of a mistake you made in your first year of government. Not only that, but to cover up your mistake you're paying all of the costs to send cancer patients to clinics in Thunder Bay and Sudbury when cancer patients in northern Ontario are being told, "Find your own way there. Pay your own way to this cancer treatment centre"—all to cover up your mistake.

What is your vision of primary care? We saw the negotiations three years ago where you said you were going to push forward on primary care and your then Minister of Health said you were going to push forward on primary care. What did you do? No primary care. At the end of the negotiations you opened up the vault for the doctors and said: "Come on in, fellas. Take all the money you want." No primary care reform, no nurse practitioners, no needed changes to the health care system.

What do we see happening in the negotiations now? The same thing. A lot of rhetoric from you and your Minister of Health back in January and February, but now we find primary care reform isn't on the books. Nurse practitioners aren't going to move forward any faster than they have in the first five years.

What else have we seen, Premier? We see seniors who are now being limited in their hours of home care. We're seeing seniors who have to go off to a long-term-care facility because you've limited their home care.

At the end of the day, Premier, what are you doing to the health care system of Ontario? What you're doing is this: You're moving Ontario's health care system in the direction of the private, for-profit American system.

Home care: Most of the home care contracts are now going to private, for-profit corporate operators, many of them American, who have a terrible record in the United States—70% of the long-term-care beds to private, for-profit corporate operators.

Ambulances: You're shredding those and sending them down to the municipalities with no new money. They're going to privatize.

What are you doing to public health? The same thing: Handing it off to provinces.

Premier, before you go to the federal government and say to them, "Put the money back in," let's see your strategy for integrated health care in Ontario. Let's see your strategy, not three years of rhetoric about primary care. Let's see a health care strategy that does move us towards more community health centres where people get the health care they need.

We're going to support your motion, but we want to amend it. The amendments are:

That the government of Ontario adopt the following four principles: a ban on the Ralph Klein-style, for-profit hospitals and clinics; a freeze on the delisting of health services; an end to the proliferation of private, for-profit long-term care and home care; and a tougher inspection system and stiffer penalties for independent health facilities.

That will be a real step forward.

The Speaker: Just before we begin question period I would like to say this. As the members know, in the last session I was rather lenient in terms of the time, particularly with new members. Now that we're in our second session, in terms of speaking and questions, it's only fair that we all have equal time in the questions and in the responses.

You will also know that in the last session you had approximately a minute. At around 50 seconds I would advise the member to ask the question, and they had about 10 seconds to ask the question. That, I think, was rather confusing to the member when I was yelling out "Question" and so on. Sometimes they didn't know whether it was me or the opposition or the people on the other side of the House. Also, it was very difficult for me to listen to the question while trying to keep track of the time.

With your indulgence, what I would like to do is have approximately a minute for the questions, but now that we're in our second session we must stick to that fairly closely. Even if I see that you're getting to the end of the question, if it comes to about a minute and you haven't asked the question, I will have to cut you off and give it to the appropriate minister; obviously the same thing on the government side as well. In that way we will be fair to all the members involved, and all the members now have experienced a period in here, and I say that to some of the staff who may be watching who help in writing some of the questions, that we will try to keep them at around a minute.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I did say "assist with them." I know members write their own questions, but staff assist with them.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is for the Premier. We believe in open, honest and accountable government, and that's why we are so appalled by the recent cover-up of the scandal at the Ontario Realty Corp. Auditors there have been telling us that taxpayers have been ripped off, and now we learn that the police have been called in to conduct a criminal investigation.

Premier, can you explain to us why the minister responsible and the president of the ORC have not been forced to resign?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think the member knows that this government takes any allegation of wrongdoing very seriously. That is why the Chair of Management Board, the Honourable Chris Hodgson, has fully supported the recent steps taken by the ORC board and the CEO to independently audit ORC sale transactions dating back through two full real estate market cycles to 1985.

I might say that at the outset of the expanded audit process, the minister clearly stated his expectation that any indication of any wrongdoing uncovered by the audit would be forwarded to legal authorities. On Wednesday of last week, I understand that audit staff met with the Assistant Deputy Attorney General, as is the practice, and the criminal law division to review certain questionable elements related to a small, but concerning, number of past ORC transactions. So that's where the matter lies. I think the minister has taken the appropriate action.

1450

Mr McGuinty: Premier, what this really boils down to is an issue of ministerial, and indeed first ministerial, responsibility. That's what this is all about. You've brought in the police, and the auditors are in there. But what the Ontario public expects and demands is that you and your minister accept responsibility for what has gone on at the ORC.

We're talking, in one case, about a land flip. Land was originally purchased at \$1.25 million and sold a week later for just under \$4 million. Premier, that happened on your watch. It happened on your minister's watch. None of these deals can get by without the specific approval of your minister.

Premier, either your minister did not know this was happening, or he was covering up. It seems to me that the responsible thing to do on your part today, Premier, is to ask for his resignation.

Hon Mr Harris: Clearly, allegations have been made. We need to look into whether these sales were handled properly, whether they were tendered properly, whether we got the best offers and whether the procedures the minister oversees were followed. That, in fact, is what the investigation is all about. We take these matters very

seriously. Clearly, some sales occurred on our watch. I understand we have asked both the minister and the head of the ORC to take a good look at what has happened over the last 15 years. The goal: to uncover if indeed there is any wrongdoing. Now, as you know, the police are investigating as well. I think this is exactly what the public would want their minister to do.

Mr McGuinty: Five months ago, Premier, when we raised these issues in this Legislature, your minister said there wasn't anything wrong, that everything was okay. Five months ago we asked him to call in the police, and he refused. Now we discover that there have been a series of land flips which are hurting Ontario taxpayers. Now you decide you're going to bring in the police.

What we want you to do, Premier, is to accept responsibility. Responsibility has to stop inside your cabinet.

Here's a little reality check. Fact: For months, there have been questionable land deals costing taxpayers millions in lost revenue. You've now been in office for six years. Notice I said "in office," not "on the job." Fact as well: It's business as usual over at the ORC today. Another \$200 million worth of new sales are still planned at this very time, Premier. Why have you not fired your minister, and why have you not frozen all land sales until both the police and the auditor have completed their investigations?

Hon Mr Harris: I guess if every transaction, every business dealing by every bureaucrat in every agency we are associated with and fund, if they did not require ministerial responsibility, we wouldn't have ministers. We do have ministers, we do have cabinet, we do have the Premier and we are all accountable. That is why, whenever anything untoward is brought to light, the minister immediately undertakes to look into it. It's no secret that Mr Miele—the minister brought in a new Chair and a new executive director to take a good look at the practices of the ORC. That was done by the minister, and, thank goodness, he's there overseeing it.

PRIMARY CARE REFORM

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):

This is for the Premier. We believe that Ontarians are entitled to receive quality health care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To do that, we're going to need primary care reform in Ontario.

You're in the middle of negotiations with the OMA, and just recently you threw away primary care reform as though it were a worthless chip in a basement poker game. Premier, I remember when you used to argue most eloquently, in fact; you used to put a great case forward for primary care reform. Now you've decided that when it comes to negotiations with the doctors, it is simply not something you're prepared to go to bat for. I can tell you, Premier, that Ontarians want and deserve primary care reform.

Why is it that at this point in time you have abdicated your responsibility to represent the interests of Ontario patients?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): The minister may want to answer, and if she does, I'll give her an opportunity later. But I can tell you that to the best of my knowledge not one shred of difference has taken place from our negotiating position when we started these negotiations to today. I am not free to go into the details of those negotiations, as you would appreciate and understand, but you clearly are basing your question on information that is not accurate.

Mr McGuinty: Duncan Sinclair, the man who headed up your own hospital restructuring commission, tells us that your decision to back down when it comes to primary care reform in Ontario means that Ontarians are going to have to wait 10 long years before they have access 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That's what your guy is telling Ontarians. You used to say that primary care reform has to be speeded up. You used to say that it was absolutely essential because it's going to deliver better quality health care to Ontarians. I agree with that.

My question again is, Premier, why have you abdicated your responsibility to move the agenda forward when it comes to the reform and modernization of health care? Why have you forsaken primary care reform in Ontario?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the minister wishes to respond.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): We are continuing to expand primary care, as we always said we would. We said it would be voluntary for both patients and practitioners; there would be choice. We also said that appropriate evaluation would take place in order that we could continue to make appropriate changes to the system as we ensure that we have 24-hour access to medical services available to patients everywhere in this province.

We have actually expanded the number of primary care pilot sites from the original five to seven. We will continue to work collaboratively with the Ontario Medical Association in expanding these primary care sites throughout the province of Ontario, as we have always intended to. There has been no change in the plan.

Mr McGuinty: It's good to hear today from the minister representing the OMA, but it would be nice to hear from the minister representing the greater health care interests of all Ontarians. You know, Minister, that if we're going to move this agenda forward, at that table should be nurse practitioners, nurses, other health care professionals and representatives of the patient community. It is simply impossible to move primary care reform forward in that context. In order to make that happen, it's going to require leadership on your part and on the part of the Premier. Ontario families can't wait 10 years to have primary care reform up and running. Duncan Sinclair has suggested that we do it in six years—hardly lightning speed, but at least he's got something on the table.

I ask you again, Minister, why are you refusing to move forward with the primary care reform agenda, something that Ontario families need as soon as possible?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Obviously the Leader of the Opposition is confused. He obviously didn't hear the comment that we have actually gone beyond the five pilot sites that originally were intended to only be in place by today, and we actually have seven sites in the province at the present time. In fact, we have always said we would ensure that we would do the appropriate evaluation.

When you go forward with primary care reform, I think you need to make sure it's going to respond to the specific needs of all the health care professionals who will be involved in the delivery of primary care. We have always indicated that it involves more than physicians. In fact, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, we are now funding 226 nurse practitioner positions. They are available in the primary care system and the long-term-care system. We will continue to expand those primary care sites as we intended.

1500

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. The time is up. New question, the leader of the third party.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier and it is, not surprisingly, about health care. Three years ago you promised the people of Ontario primary health care reform. You said it would give us a better health care system. Then, three years ago, you entered into negotiations with the doctors. You gave them an additional \$500 million. Your fee-for-service payments to doctors have ballooned by 15%, to \$4.4 billion last year. But what did the people of Ontario get? Crowded emergency rooms, longer and longer waiting lists for cancer treatment, a shortage of family doctors. Your record in health care is one of handing over more and more money to the Ontario Medical Association. Meanwhile, the people of Ontario can't get to see a doctor, wait longer for cancer treatment, can't get the home care they need and go increasingly to more and more crowded emergency rooms.

Premier, what happened to your strategy for primary care?

Hon Mr Harris: As you've heard from my response and from the Minister of Health, absolutely nothing took place in primary care reform in the 10 years previous to our taking office. We started with virtually total inaction on the part of the government. I think the last contract the NDP government signed with the doctors was a total contract for fee for service.

Since then, as you know, we are in the middle of negotiations with the doctors. I don't think it's appropriate for me to comment on those negotiations, but it is no secret that, three years ago, we indicated a desire to move forward with primary care. It's also no secret, I might add, that one of the directors of the OMA, a doctor who happens to live in North Bay as a matter of fact, was a leading advocate for primary care. So, contrary to doctors not wishing to proceed, in fact the model of the

five original pilot projects, and now seven pilot projects—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the Premier's time is up.

Mr Hampton: You boast about five pilot projects, expanding to seven. That's all it amounts to after five years of your government. We had 55 community health centres when you took office. That was the leading edge of primary care reform. What have you done? You've frozen the community health centres. We had 57 health service organizations. What have you done there? You've frozen them. As a government, in your first month of government, you could have moved forward on nurse practitioners. When did you finally move an inch on nurse practitioners? Just this past fall. We now have 99 communities on the underserved areas list, the longest it has ever been in the history of the province.

Premier, I take you up on your word. You say you believe in primary health care reform. You say it will provide better health care for the people of Ontario. We agree with you. We're saying to you, move forward. When are you going to move—

The Speaker: Order. Premier.

Hon Mr Harris: Let me say I particularly appreciate the member's support for the direction, the initiative and the recognition that this is the way the government wishes to move. I might say his support is far more meaningful than Allan Rock's, who talks about it but won't talk about it in a health ministers' meeting, won't recognize it and will not fund it. I might add that some have talked about whether we could have primary care reform complete in six years or in 10 years. At the rate of the federal funding, we won't have it in place in 100 years. We need help from the federal government. Primary care is important but it costs money. It costs more money than the system we have in place today. We are moving as expeditiously as we can, not by decree, not by authoritarian order as the provincial Liberals want us to, but we are moving without federal money in a cooperative way with all health care professionals.

Mr Hampton: For 15 years, successive governments in this province moved ahead on primary health care reform. Larry Grossman, a former Conservative health care minister, moved ahead on it. Throughout the late 1980s and into the early 1990s, we made incremental steps: community health centres, health service organizations, nurse practitioners. Your government has stalled it.

Premier, if you can't move ahead under your own steam, let me make a suggestion to you. I've put forward a private member's bill. I'm going to call it the Tommy Douglas Act to preserve Medicare. In it, we can outline the steps and the time lines for primary care reform. Instead of going through two negotiations with the doctors and getting virtually nowhere, we can put out the timetable and move according to that timetable. If the Liberals in Ottawa don't want to move, then that is their shame, that is their problem. This can be done in the province of Ontario. Will you do it, Premier?

Hon Mr Harris: Again, I appreciate the member's support for discussion, for debate, as articulated earlier today. I appreciate that he has a bill. We'd be happy to take a look at it. It would be the only constructive thing that's come from the opposition party. I shouldn't say that, there have been others, but in a concrete way we have nothing from the provincial Liberals. We don't even have support for them to wrestle money that was slashed by their federal cousins in Ottawa. So we welcome your participation, and I think it's being brought forward in an honest attempt to assist all of us to move forward. We look forward to working with you, and we'll take a look at your bill.

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have another question for the Premier. On Friday, the police were finally called in to investigate how taxpayers are being bilked at the Ontario Realty Corp. But while the police investigate, the minister who presided over this and the Conservative Party hired hand are still in place. This is unheard of.

Premier, you must recognize that in November 1998 this minister, Mr Hodgson, received a complaint from Jeff Lyons, the prominent Conservative fundraiser. Then, although Mr Hodgson denies involvement, a whole series of deals happened. The Keg Mansion property was cancelled. Someone named Tony Miele comes on to run the ORC. Then two more deals, a flip of land in Mississauga to Frank Gabriele and the sale of a warehouse at 145 Eastern Avenue in Toronto, both deals where taxpayers were bilked, happened under Mr Miele's supervision and Mr Hodgson's supervision.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. The time is up. Premier.

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): You've mentioned some transactions that in fact were not transactions, and no sales took place, so I don't know how anybody was bilked. Let me say that the individual who is the chair now, or the chief executive of the ORC, was hired by a new board brought in by this minister, a new chairman, new board members, approved by all of you unanimously, by all the Liberals and by all the NDP members, who said, "Yes, we need a new board." Those members—who were approved unanimously by all of you—elected, among themselves, a new chairman, Mr Mavrinac, a very respected former municipal politician in the province of Ontario. They went out and hired a new chairman, and agreed unanimously that this new chief executive officer they hired was in fact who they should put in place to try and take a look at all of—

The Speaker: Order. The Premier's time is up.

Mr Hampton: Premier, if there's going to be an investigation that gets to the bottom of this, the minister who presided over it and Tony Miele who presided over it have to go. If you won't make them go here, maybe under your new bill, you can go after their parents or something.

Look, this is just a case of a number of shady deals happening under Mr Hodgson's watch and happening under Mr Miele's watch. For you to say that there is an investigation that's going to get to the bottom of it, when the two people who presided over it and who are responsible for it continue to be there—it's absurd.

Premier, do the right thing. Mr Miele and Mr Hodgson have to step aside. They were in charge when a number of these shady deals happened. It shouldn't have taken them 15 months to call in the police when it was obvious from the beginning that something was wrong. Do the responsible thing. If this is going to be a good investigation and people are going to be held responsible—

The Speaker: Order. The member's time is up. Premier.

Hon Mr Harris: You are talking about the two very people who were the whistle-blowers, the two very people who called for the audits in the first place, the two very people who, using the appropriate chief executive and ministerial oversight, are getting to the bottom of it, the two people who are bringing this and shedding some light on what was going on there. Do we like it if there's inappropriate action? Of course not. But the chief executive officer and the ministerial responsibility is to bring these issues to light and bring in the appropriate investigation, and that's what's happening.

1510

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): My question is for the Minister of Health. I believe that the people of this province want an assurance that we're not going to have more and more of our health care provided in for-profit American-style hospitals. This government has been determined from the day they took office to move more and more to for-profit American providers of health care.

One of the first pieces of legislation this government passed was the infamous bully bill, Bill 26. One of the things that Bill 26 did was to change the Independent Health Facilities Act. The act used to have a clear statement that preference had to be given to not-for-profit Canadian providers of health care. The Harris government made sure that this preference was removed from the act, deliberately opening the door to for-profit American providers.

Minister, will you tell us today, why is your government so determined to have for-profit American companies operating in Ontario?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the member well knows, there have been private companies operating in this province since the early 1970s. If you take a look at home care, in fact under your government, the Liberal government, and under the NDP government, we all had private companies operating in this province, and we have made absolutely no change at all to that process that was put in place in the 1970s.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, your government took out a clearly stated preference in law for not-for-profit Canadian companies providing health care in independent health facilities. It was there to prevent a US-style take-over of providing health care and your government took it out. And you made another change in that same act. You removed any requirement for a public tender to establish a new private facility, so you can now give a licence to anyone that your government wants to favour and it will all be done very quietly without anybody knowing what is happening.

Minister, I suggest to you that your government has already made at least one serious mistake in inviting a for-profit American company into Ontario, a company subsequently charged with fraud in the United States. I'm wondering if you've learned a lesson from this, and I'm asking if you will give the people of this province a guarantee that you will not keep granting licences to for-profit American companies to provide health care in Ontario.

Hon Mrs Witmer: Again, I would say to the member opposite, we are following the same course of action that was started in the 1970s. When you were in office there were private companies providing health services. When the NDP were in office, the same thing. We are continuing in the same way. We want to ensure that the people in this province have the best health care possible, and we'll continue to make sure that that happens.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr David Young (Willowdale): My question is for the Solicitor General, and it relates to the number of police officers on the streets of this province. Before I pose the question, I want to be clear that the people of Willowdale, the people of this province, are certainly grateful to the members of various police forces who represent us with great courage and determination on a daily basis. We also appreciate that the number of police on the street, albeit important, is only one component in community safety. While our government has taken steps forward in numerous other ways to protect the people of this province, we are looking forward to the federal government coming forth with some meaningful changes, particularly to the Young Offenders Act and its successor.

Let me ask the minister if he can tell the people of my riding and the people of this province how it is that our government is addressing the issue of community safety and putting more front-line police officers on the streets of Willowdale, the streets of Toronto and the streets of this province.

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): I thank the member from Willowdale for the question. The member has always been a very strong advocate for community policing as well. This gives me a chance to talk about the community policing partnership program which we brought in. It's a \$150-million program designed to bring 1,000 net new police officers to the streets of this province.

I was privileged to be at the recent graduation ceremony for C.O. Bick College. That's where the new recruits come from for the Toronto police. There are 69 members of this graduating class—highly skilled, highly enthusiastic, by the way. Some 51 of these people had some manner of post-secondary education, a degree or diploma, but also the ability to speak 12 different languages. Of these 69 graduates, I'm happy to say that 36 are a direct result of the community policing program.

Mr Young: I'd like to thank the minister for his response. I know that our government is doing all it can to ensure that Ontarians have the ability to live and work in a safe environment. We all know how difficult it is for people to be successful if they don't feel safe in their communities, on their streets and in their homes. Every person in this province, regardless of where they live, deserves to feel safe walking the streets of this province.

Minister, you mentioned in your answer that we are funding new police positions, positions for new officers. You talked about some of the new recruits who have joined the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. Can you explain to us how we can be sure that the money and the funds directed towards community policing partnership programs in this province will result in additional police officers?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: This \$150-million program to get 1,000 net new police officers on the street is a matching program. Over a period of five years the provincial government will match 50% for these new officers. To ensure that these are net new officers, we benchmark this to June 15, 1998. It has to be an increase in that particular police service over that number in order to qualify for the grant. This will not allow anyone to reduce their police service and then come to the government and ask them to fill it in. This has to be net new police officers.

I'm happy to say that of the 1,000 new police officers in this program, 250 will be assigned to the Toronto police service.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I'd like to know how you can justify imposing a \$925 head tax for international adoptions in Ontario. There is no such tax for adoptions in Ontario. There is no extra paperwork involved in these adoptions, and the home study that is required is the same for international as well as domestic adoptions. So I cannot understand how you can impose what amounts to an additional burden on these families wanting to adopt internationally.

How can you justify this odious head tax that you've imposed on these families?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs): Our government understands the huge challenges that families face when they seek to adopt abroad. These families are making a huge emotional and finan-

cial commitment, sometimes as much as \$20,000 to \$30,000. Last year we moved to implement the Hague convention on international adoptions to ensure that legal safeguards were in place to protect families and, most importantly, to protect vulnerable children.

It is categorically false to label this fee for service a tax. These new, extensive protections and safeguards have significant costs associated with them. Someone has to pay. Taxpayers will subsidize this process, and those using the protections pay a fee for service. No one is making any money as a result of this fee. In fact, taxpayers will subsidize these protections. This effort is about safeguarding the rights and very best interests of children and families.

Mr Cordiano: Minister, this is at a time when other jurisdictions are providing tax relief for similar kinds of adoptions. In the United States, for example, a \$5,000 tax credit is made available to families who adopt internationally.

When we passed the legislation you referred to for international adoptions in this House, we did so unanimously. There was no mention of a head tax or even a fee. I cannot understand, Minister. You can't justify this. You simply cannot begin to justify this to those families you referred to, who are having to go through the emotional burdens you have described. You know what it's like for these families. It's no secret. In addition to all the burdens they have to overcome to go through one of these international adoptions, you have imposed this huge tax. It's odious and unjustifiable, and will you today eliminate it? Stand in your place today and eliminate that odious head tax, Minister.

1520

Hon Mr Baird: Our actions and our motive in introducing and passing the Intercountry Adoption Act are all about safeguarding the huge emotional and financial commitment of families and protecting vulnerable children. We've heard far too many horror stories that families have encountered abroad, and that is why we are bringing in these new safeguards.

In a perfect world, I suppose, it would be great if the government could provide every service without any fee. But in a perfect world we wouldn't need to bring in these new measures.

This legislation, as the member opposite said, passed unanimously. The legislation we all voted for did contemplate a fee. If he read the legislation he'd see that. But the reality is that we don't want to stand in the way of any family trying to adopt. In cases of demonstrated financial hardship, the regulations under the act allow for the fee to be waived, and that is certainly the government's intention. These new measures are important and will help protect both families and vulnerable children.

ONTARIO FARMERS

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Our government has made it a priority to ensure that

Ontario farmers get their fair share of federal safety net dollars. By that I mean market revenue, crop insurance and NISA. As you know, this is an issue of great importance to the farmers in my riding of Perth-Middlesex.

Could you please update the House on how these negotiations are going?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): As the House will be aware, we have now been in negotiations with the federal minister for some eight months to make sure we can sign a new agreement which provides fair funding for the farmers in Ontario. Two weeks ago, we came to a consensus with all the provincial ministers and the federal minister that the farm safety net money that the federal government provides will be divided fairly among all provinces based on the size of the agriculture community in each province.

This, of course, is very good news for the farmers in Perth-Middlesex, in Oxford county and everywhere else in the province. It means that everyone will get a fair share of the money available. Regardless of where you farm in Canada, you will get the same benefits from the federal program. This is very good news, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the commodity groups in Ontario, who have been so active and supportive in coming to this conclusion.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Johnson: The fair share is good news for the farmers of Perth-Middlesex and indeed for all farmers. As a supplementary minister, I'd like to know how much money a fair share represents to Ontario farmers.

Hon Mr Hardeman: I think it's very important that the House recognize that in the past Ontario has produced approximately 23% of the agriculture activity in Canada and received only 16% of the farm safety net money. With this new agreement, that will go up to 23% if that is our share of agriculture commodities in Canada. If we look at those numbers—and the federal government also increased the \$600 million going towards that, which will bring it up to \$665 million. Using those numbers, this will be a benefit of \$30 million a year for Ontario farmers. So I think this is very good news. The Ontario government is also committed to putting our 40% with it, which will bring it to over \$50 million a year for our farmers in Ontario in the coming years. I think that's very good news for all farmers, including those represented by the members opposite.

HOSPITAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the Premier. On February 11, the Premier said, "We have no intention of closing Henderson hospital, absolutely." You said, "Henderson hospital is not slated for closure." But today we know that Henderson hospital is being taken apart piece by piece. Last week I was outside the hospital. Premier, you need to know that literally 200,000 people who live on

Hamilton Mountain, in Stoney Creek, Ancaster, Glanbrook and other communities are worried that they will be left without a full-service hospital.

Premier, your Minister of Health, under Bill 23, has the power to take financial control of hospitals. Will you intervene in the Henderson Hospital situation and ensure that that hospital isn't taken apart piece by piece and continues to provide the services the community needs?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I'll ask the Minister of Health to respond.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As you know, there was an operational review undertaken of the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp. The RFP went out in August of last year. It would be premature to speculate at this point in time, since we have not yet received the results of the review. But I can tell you, it is expected very shortly. At that time, I know that we will be able to make a response.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary?

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): Let me just say that what's premature is closing the Henderson emergency room and all the support services that are in place to make that room available to the people of Hamilton who use it.

Minister, none of this makes any sense. The fact of the matter is that it was your government that cut \$42 million from the operating budget of the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp, and now because there's a—here it comes—\$40-million deficit, you claim that there have to be all kinds of changes that include closures. Yet it wasn't that long ago that it was your Health Services Restructuring Commission that rolled into town, flattened Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital, downgraded St Peter's, but did say that the four acute care hospital sites in Hamilton would remain.

Now, as a result of your deficit, we're going to lose Henderson. This is unacceptable. Minister, I'm calling on you today to step in and direct that the board will not close Henderson—

The Speaker: Order. Minister of Health?

Hon Mrs Witmer: There have been no cuts. In fact, let me just share with you that the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp received over \$46 million in additional funding in 1999. They received over \$13.5 million as part of the \$196 million allocated to hospitals in December 1999. They received a base increase of over \$3 million in March 1999. They received over \$3.5 million to support their emergency rooms, \$16 million to address their working capital pressures, and nearly \$3.5 million to hire more nurses.

Let me again reiterate: There have been no results forthcoming from the operational review at this point in time. The only announcement that has been made, as you know, is from an internal working group that has spoken to the changes at Henderson Hospital. We await the outcome of the operational review. It is expected—

The Speaker: Order. The minister's time is up.

COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I have a question for the Attorney General. Your government has spoken a lot about protecting the victims of crime. I want to review a situation with you that I know you're familiar with, and that's the case of Robert Montfortin, who was a 20-year-old student at St Clair College in Windsor in 1971 when he was physically attacked during a crime. Mr Montfortin was rendered a quadriplegic, and has been receiving compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board ever since.

My constituent reached his lifetime maximum in February of this year and has appeared before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to seek an extension. Minister, could you comment on whether or not you feel that my constituent, who was rendered a quadriplegic and is still a relatively young man—could you comment on whether it's your view that his funding should be extended?

1530

Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): I appreciate the concern the member has, which I share, with respect to the serious nature of the disability suffered by the young man to whom reference has been made.

I can't comment on it. The matter is before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. I understand that a hearing did take place recently and, as far as I know, a decision has not yet been forthcoming. In those circumstances, as the member well knows, I can't comment on the workings of the tribunal, pending their decision.

Mr Duncan: In fact, Minister, I wrote to you on February 21 to ask for your personal attention on this matter, as I was informed by Bryant Greenbaum, the executive assistant to the Chair, that in fact it would require legislation to deal with this, that you are going to have to amend the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act. That is according to Bryant Greenbaum. We've also spoken with Sheri Reid of your office and have had no written response from you.

Let me ask you today: Will you bring in amendments to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act to ensure that constituents like Mr Montfortin are not left in a financial lurch as a result of the failures of this act today?

Hon Mr Flaherty: Again, I understand the member's concern with respect to the issue, which is certainly a serious one. Having said that, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the state of the law as it is today, when the appellate tribunal has heard the case and is considering this decision. I'm sure you would appreciate that it would be inappropriate for me as the Attorney General to comment on the case at this point. Let's wait and see what the decision of the administrative tribunal is at the appeal level, which is where it is, and then perhaps it will be necessary to revisit the issue. I thank the member for the question.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): My question is for the Minister of Education. I've heard many times from parents, students and teachers in my community that they are quite concerned about safety in the school system. I know that these concerns have been heard by our government. We're trying to move forward with a province-wide code of conduct. My question to you is, what exactly will this code of conduct include?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): If one issue has united teachers, parents, students and this government, it is concern for the safety of teachers and students in the classroom. We certainly heard that when the Premier and other members of caucus and cabinet met with some front-line teachers and parents on March 20, when they talked about the concern, when they talked about the fact that teachers can't teach and students can't learn if they are in fear for their safety, which is happening in too many classrooms.

We are proposing a province-wide code of conduct that will have very clear expectations for behaviour. For example, expulsion will be automatic for students who intentionally bring weapons onto school property. There will be suspensions for those who possess drugs or threaten or swear at teachers. We will also have rules of conduct for less serious offences. The goal of this is to have respect and responsibility back in our classrooms, and safety, so that both our teachers can do the job they want to do and our students can learn what they need to—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mr Spina: I'm glad we are moving forward with this. As both the spouse of a teacher and a parent, and with many relatives in the system, I appreciate this progress. I think it's important that young people today are aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights.

Minister, some school boards, such as the two in my area, currently have a kind of code of conduct policy already in place. What will these boards be expected to do, and how will they be complying with this code of conduct?

Hon Mrs Ecker: The member raises a valid point. Many boards do have particular sets of rules and codes. But we have heard very clearly is that they were not working the way they should. In some boards and some schools it certainly is very good; in others it is not. The standards are not consistent. Teachers have said that either they don't feel they're backed up when they have to make a decision to keep their classroom safe or they're not clear what authority they have. Frequently decisions have been kicked up to the board level and nothing has happened to protect the principal, the student and the front-line teacher.

We are looking at those practices that work best and we want to make sure that we are taking those best practices and expanding them across the province for a

standard code of conduct which all boards will be quite pleased to support.

I should also say that one of the things it is important to note, because some of our critics across the way keep criticizing this initiative, is that for those students who are being removed from classrooms because of behavioural things—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up.

DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. In my riding, Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, there is a severe shortage of health care professionals. In communities like Stirling, Bancroft and Marmora, to name but a few, there is a severe shortage of doctors. Not a single family physician in these communities is accepting new patients. Regularly I hear from families with children who must travel long distances to a hospital emergency ward to see a doctor. I hear from seniors who have no continuity of care as their doctors have either retired or moved away and they can find no doctor to renew their prescriptions, as this service is not provided at an emergency room by an emergency room doctor. Minister, what will you do today to address this most serious problem in my riding?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the member knows, our government has certainly recognized that it is important to have an adequate supply, mix and distribution of physicians in the province. We have taken some very unprecedented steps in order to address this issue of supply and distribution. We have taken a lead role and are developing not only short-term but also long-term solutions in order that we can identify what is going to be needed five, 10 and 15 years from now.

Fortunately, the Canadian Institute for Health Information is indicating that the total number of active physicians in Ontario has increased by over 260 since 1997. The number of specialists in the province since 1995 has also increased, by 450. Also, the rate of physicians leaving our province has decreased—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up. Supplementary.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Minister, I am aware that recently you had an opportunity to alleviate some of the pressure felt by health care professionals in Bancroft. In my hand is a proposal from the Victorian Order of Nurses for a nurse practitioner who could assist local physicians in Bancroft. This very day in this House you spoke of your government's support of nurse practitioners to improve primary care, yet you turned down this worthy application.

Minister, consider these Ontarians who have no access to a family doctor or primary care services. Will you accept your responsibility for providing adequate health

care? Will you immediately review your decision to fund a nurse practitioner to assist family physicians in the community of Bancroft? Will you take some of those advertising dollars and spend them in Bancroft?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Yes, the member has spoken to nurse practitioners, and as the member knows, it was our government that put in place the legislation that recognized nurse practitioners. In fact, I am very pleased to say that we were able to move forward originally with 120 nurse practitioners and most recently with 106 additional new nurse practitioners. We will be continuing to expand our program in order to ensure that underserved communities throughout the province will continue to get the access to physicians and nurses and the nurse practitioners that are required.

1540

ONTARIO GLOBAL TRADERS AWARDS

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. I understand that Ecolo Odor Control Systems Worldwide Inc, a manufacturer of odour control systems located in Mississauga, recently won a provincial Global Traders Award. Minister, would you please tell the House why the Global Traders Award is so important.

Hon Al Palladini (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I'd like to thank the honourable member from Mississauga East for the question. Exporting is vital to our economic success. Over half of our gross domestic product is generated through exports and they sustain 1.6 million jobs in Ontario.

The Global Traders Award is to create an export culture that encourages small and medium-sized businesses to compete in the global marketplace, at the same time recognizing them for the tremendous contribution they make to creating jobs in Ontario. Each nominee represents the best in their exporting excellence and in their community.

My colleague's constituent represents the many successful firms we have in our province, and we're very proud to celebrate those achievements.

Mr DeFaria: I understand the regional award ceremonies also include a global trade day forum. Can you explain to the House what discussions take place at such forums and who is eligible to participate?

Hon Mr Palladini: The Ontario global trade day forums feature a half-day program of workshops, round-table discussions and networking sessions. The topics of each forum are developed with input from the local participants who participate in a specific community. The objective of the Ontario trade days is to help companies become better and more informed about exporting by networking with other successful exporters. Our goal for the Ontario trade days is to encourage more small and medium-sized Ontario firms to export their goods and services globally, which will translate into more new jobs for Ontarians. Anyone interested in attending these

forums can get in touch with us at Ontario Exports Inc or at 1-877-46-TRADE.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): My question is to the minister responsible for women's issues. This weekend the Toronto Star revealed that a charity, the National Society for Abused Women and Children, claims to be providing counselling services for victims of domestic violence, funding for shelters that house victims and their children, and community outreach and support for victims' groups. The charity has been registered for over a year now and estimates are that they have raised about \$116,000 from Ontario residents, but it has yet to fulfill the promises that have been set out. They have about half a dozen people working there; none of them have a background in shelters, social services or counselling. They've raised \$116,000, but only two cheques of \$200 have been offered to shelters at this point in time. The founder says that while they don't provide any of the services they advertise, Rome wasn't built in a day; that was his response. He and his co-chair say they receive expense money but refuse to say how much expense money they have.

The people of Ontario deserve to know that their charitable donations are being spent on the services this organization—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the member's time is up. Minister.

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): I'd like to thank the member opposite for her question. I certainly feel the same concern that you do. Of course, we can't presume anything at this particular point, but I think the best thing we could do is look into this, get some more information and talk to Revenue Canada. I make a commitment today to work with the member opposite to do something to have a look at this.

Ms Lankin: Thank you, Minister. Revenue Canada is part of who approves charitable organizations, but so does the office of the public guardian and trustee here in Ontario. I'm asking you to do three things specifically today: that your ministry ensure that the office of the public guardian and trustee investigates and audits the national society; that you urge the public guardian and trustee to bring an application for review to the superior court of justice, where a judge can investigate potential improprieties; and that your ministry publish a list of legitimate charities that collect money for victims of domestic violence, including a list of the services these charities provide money to.

Victims of domestic abuse suffer enough indignities without having thousands of dollars of donated money to help with those services sitting either untouched or inappropriately spent. Will you take the suggestions I've put forward and undertake an immediate investigation, audit, action and public advocacy for those legitimate

charities that are raising money for these important services?

Hon Mrs Johns: I once again would like to thank the member opposite for her question. Let me start by prefacing and saying that this government will not tolerate violence against women. We do a number of things internally to make sure we protect women in the province, including spending \$110 million a year on violence prevention issues.

I think it's inappropriate for me to talk about the process I should take at this point, but I have committed to work with the member opposite. It's very important that we make sure women get the services they need and that the dollars put forward to go to services for women are rightly allocated to them.

I continue to want to work with the member. I will do that, and we'll make arrangements afterwards to have a look at the issues.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Last year, independent experts found the 401 from London to Windsor to be narrow, steep and unforgiving, that is, no place to recover from any kind of error. The fatality level on that stretch of highway has increased more than 1,500% in 13 months. Minister, your government is treating human tragedy with callous disregard. It is not a PR exercise for your government to once again massage public opinion with empty promises. It is a critical safety issue, and you must take action immediately.

As always, your government is long on promises and short on delivery. Five million dollars was promised to allow for some slight improvement in the hiring of 11 OPP officers to be dispatched through Chatham-Kent. The money has not come through and the OPP have been forced to put down their plans. The accident rate is not slowing down; in fact, it has almost doubled since your inadequate announcements in Chatham. It was too little and now it's too late. You announced immediate funding—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. I'm afraid the member's time is up on the question. It was a minute, I'm afraid, and I do have some people checking as well. I apologize, but the minute is up. Minister of Transportation?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): When we're dealing with human tragedy on the road, we all have to say that we all have to be part of the solution.

I want to point out that we have in fact redeployed police; they are in place and they're working. In the first two months of this year, some 1,250 speeding tickets were issued in this area compared with 700 last year. There were 19 accidents this year compared with 37 accidents last year.

In the few months we had before the winter season, when construction is not possible, we fully paved the outside shoulder of one third of the road between London

and Windsor. We will continue as soon as the construction season starts.

The Speaker: Order. The minister's time is up. Supplementary?

Mr Hoy: You announced immediate funding last September to hire more OPP officers and you trumpeted your promise in the Legislature day after day. In January, the Solicitor General promised at the funeral of an OPP officer killed on the 401 that the money would be released within days, yet we have heard repeated rumours that the money cannot be given out before the new fiscal year. This is a disgrace, Minister. There is a public campaign, spearheaded by accident victims, calling for your resignation. When are you going to step down?

Hon Mr Turnbull: I refer the question to the Solicitor General.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Before we go to petitions, I'd like all the members to join me in welcoming the pages.

Interjection: Doesn't he get to answer?

The Speaker: That was the answer.

Alison Brohman, from Kitchener Centre; Jordyn Clark, from Durham; Lukas de Roo, from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex; Massimo De Simone, from Whitby-Ajax; Rowan Denny, from Simcoe-Grey; Claire Eamer, from Leeds-Grenville; Victoria Ferrara, from Erie-Lincoln; Joshua Hurwitz, from London North Centre; Nicholas Hwang, from Halton; Julia Ivory, from Willowdale; Margaret Kennedy, from Ottawa South; Derrick Leung, from Don Valley West; John Craig McEachnie, from Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge; Timothy O'Mara, from Beaches-East York; Michael Patterson, from Mississauga Centre; Andrea Rubakovic, from Broadview-Greenwood; Danielle Tarrant, from Kenora-Rainy River; Shannon Tufts, from Hamilton West; Sean Turner, from Simcoe North; and Andrew Walker, from Kingston and the Islands.

I believe all members would like to join in welcoming these pages.

1550

HIGHWAY SAFETY

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just very quickly, I apologize; I didn't realize. I thought the minister had sat down on that question. I didn't know he referred it. I thought that was the answer.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Are we not listening, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker: To tell you the truth, I was getting ready to do the pages' names and I did inadvertently miss it. I apologize. I will let the Solicitor General answer, and I apologize to the Minister of Transportation.

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): Thank you, Mr Speaker. That would have been the fastest answer on record, I think.

At the time that the Minister of Transportation made his announcement, there were 16 temporary transfers in the OPP to deal with that particular issue. In the interim, as you can understand, there is a commitment to make 22 permanent, full-time police officers transferred in the area. We have to backfill the positions. That process is currently under way. That process will be completed very shortly.

To answer the member's question, immediately after the Minister of Transportation's commitment, 16 officers were pulled from other parts of the province to deal with that issue specifically. The police were on the job. If I could just state quickly, that particular area has on average about five blitzes a month, and each blitz results in hundreds of charges.

The OPP are on the job, will continue to be on the job. There is a commitment to have that transfer completed very shortly. It will be done. We have temporary officers there in the interim. They are doing the job, and I believe doing the job well.

PETITIONS

SENIOR CITIZENS' HOUSING

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which I'd like to read.

"Whereas the seniors in Ontario are largely being forgotten by this government, with the vast majority of tax cuts benefiting large corporations and the most wealthy in our society; and

"Whereas due to the government's downloading of responsibility for property taxes to the municipalities, a heavier burden is being placed on seniors living in their own homes; and

"Whereas many seniors, because of their low pension income, are increasingly unable to afford the high cost of upkeep of their homes, prescription drugs and other user fees, and higher property taxes and are being forced to sell and move into high-priced rental accommodation; and

"Whereas the availability of affordable rental accommodation is becoming a serious problem for seniors since the elimination of rent controls and the provincial government's decision to stop building affordable housing for seniors; and

"Whereas the increasing burden on vulnerable seniors is unfair and unjust to seniors who sacrificed and paid taxes all their lives; and

"Whereas the provincial government has shown little interest in helping seniors remain in their homes in honour and dignity;

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

"The time has come to remove education levies from the property taxes of low-income seniors."

I concur with the intent of the petitioners, and I will affix my signature to it.

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): I have a bunch of petitions here to do with adoption secrecy.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas existing adoption secrecy legislation is outdated and unjust;

“Whereas Canada has ratified standards of civil and human rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; these rights are denied to persons affected by secrecy provisions in adoption laws of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts in Ontario;

“Whereas 20% of persons in Ontario are directly or indirectly affected by restricted rights to personal information available to other citizens;

“Whereas the adopted person’s right to his or her birth identity is rooted in a basic and fundamental human need;

“Whereas most birth parents did not ask for lifelong confidentiality; it was imposed on them involuntarily;

“Whereas research shows that not knowing basic personal information has harmed adopted persons, birth parents, adoptive parents and other birth relatives;

“Whereas research shows that access to adoption information does not cause harm;

“Whereas research shows that unqualified access to information in adoption satisfies the overwhelming majority of the parties involved;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to enact revision of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts to:

“Permit unrestricted access to full personal identifying birth information to adopted persons and adult children of adopted persons; and unrestricted access to the adopted person’s amended birth certificate to birth parents, birth grandparents and siblings and other birth relatives, when the adopted person reaches age 18;

“Permit unrestricted access to identifying information to adoptive parents of minor children, emancipated minor adoptees and individuals with legal guardianship for an adopted person in special circumstances;

“Allow adopted persons and birth relatives to file a notice stating their wish for no contact;

“Replace mandatory reunion counselling with optional counselling;

“Permit access to agency and court files when original statistical information is insufficient for identification of and contact with birth relatives;

“Recognize open adoptions in the legislation.”

I will affix my signature to this petition.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): “Whereas the carnage and the tragedy continues on Highway 401 between London and Windsor; and

“Whereas traffic levels on all sections of Highway 401 continue to increase; and

“Whereas Canada’s number one trade and travel route was designed in the 1950s for fewer vehicles and lighter trucks; and

“Whereas road funding is almost completely paid through vehicle permit and driver licensing fees;

“We, the undersigned members of the Canadian Automobile Association and other residents of Ontario, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately upgrade Highway 401 to at least a six-lane highway, with full paved shoulders, rumble strips and centre median barriers; and

“We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly place firm pressure on the federal government to invest its gasoline tax revenues in road safety improvements.”

I gladly affix my signature to the petition.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): “Whereas the Harris government has cut \$40 million from the budget of the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp, which has resulted in a health care crisis in Hamilton-Wentworth and left the HHSC with a \$40-million deficit; and

“Whereas the HHSC is now planning to downsize and cut back services at the Henderson General Hospital by converting the hospital to a daycare hospital with urgent care, rather than an emergency department; and

“Whereas this will have a serious impact on emergency services for the 200,000 residents of Hamilton Mountain, upper Stoney Creek, Glanbrook, Ancaster and other communities above the escarpment; and

“Whereas the mountain population is a rapidly growing community and deserves and needs a full-service hospital; and

“Whereas an ambulatory care centre is not an acceptable replacement for a 24-hour emergency ward; and

“Whereas it does not make sense to spend \$100 million for a new cancer centre rather than half that amount to expand existing facilities at the Henderson General Hospital; and

“Whereas Mike Harris said in February the Henderson would remain open for acute and cancer care;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario direct the Harris government to restore the funding cuts to the Hamilton Health Sciences Corp and develop long-term solutions for the maintenance of appropriate acute care services at the Henderson Hospital to serve the needs of

the growing population of Hamilton-Wentworth and central south Ontario.”

As I agree entirely with the constituents in Hamilton, I affix my name to this petition.

PRIX D'ESSENCE
GASOLINE PRICES

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell) : Cette pétition est adressée à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

“Attendu que le prix des produits pétroliers a augmenté significativement dans les dernières six mois ;

“Whereas the Mike Harris government has done nothing to protect consumers and is afraid to take on big oil companies;

“Attendu que le marché de vente en gros pour les produits pétroliers est contrôlé par un oligopole d'huile qui gère 85 % du marché de vente en gros ;

“Whereas the long-term increase in the price is mostly due to taxes that have doubled in the past decade;

“Attendu que le ministre fédéral des Finances, Paul Martin, est prêt à discuter avec les provinces afin de baisser les taxes sur l'essence ;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows: that Mike Harris take initiative and lower provincial taxes on petroleum products.

“Nous, soussignés, adressons la demande suivante à l'Assemblée législative : que Mike Harris prenne initiative et baisse les taxes provinciales sur le prix des produits pétroliers.”

J'appuie fortement cette pétition en y régissant ma signature.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Pursuant to standing order 30(b), I'm required to interrupt the proceedings and immediately call orders of the day.

1600

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CHRISTOPHER'S LAW
(SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY), 1999

LOI CHRISTOPHER DE 1999
SUR LE REGISTRE
DES DÉLINQUANTS SEXUELS

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): Notwithstanding standing order 77(b), I seek unanimous consent to call third reading of Bill 31, An Act, in memory of Christopher Stephenson, to establish and maintain a registry of sex offenders to protect children and communities.

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

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: I believe we have consent to split the debate time this afternoon equally amongst the three caucuses.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there consent to split the time between the three caucuses equally? It is agreed.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: I'll be brief with the time I'm going to be speaking, so I can share that time with—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: Oh, sorry.

I move third reading of Bill 31, An Act, in memory of Christopher Stephenson, to establish and maintain a registry of sex offenders to protect children and communities.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Tsubouchi has moved third reading of Bill 31.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: As I said, I'll try to be brief with my remarks so my colleagues can comment on what I believe is a very important piece of legislation.

Just to share with the people of Ontario, there's a little bit of history here, if I might talk about that. This piece of legislation is named after Christopher Stephenson, a young boy who was molested and killed by a pedophile who was out on federal statutory release. The jury made a recommendation that there should be a national sex offender registry. This was about 10 years ago. Unfortunately, there has been a vacuum and no one has really stepped in to try to deal with this issue. That's why this government is bringing forward this bill at this time.

Is this ideal? I don't believe it is. I think ideally we should have a national sex offender registry. It's well known that sex offenders do move from place to place and certainly across borders as well. I believe that a lot of my provincial colleagues will certainly support us on this, but I don't think the ultimate solution would be to have each province bringing in separate pieces of legislation. Ideally, it should be one actual sex offender registry that the federal government does come forward with. Unfortunately, that wasn't forthcoming.

I'd like to take the opportunity as well to recognize the efforts of Jim and Anna Stephenson, the parents of Christopher Stephenson, who for the last 10 years have dedicated their lives and advocated on behalf of victims to try to get a sex offender registry established. I believe that as a result of their work, their dedication and their strength, this House, if and when this legislation is passed, will certainly recognize what had happened many years ago and will recognize that some good can come out of a very bad situation. It's unfortunate this happens from time to time. When we do bring in pieces of legislation as a result, whether it's the Sergeant Rick McDonald memorial bill, whether it's Christopher's Law, that sometimes when something very bad happens in the communities out there in the province of Ontario, we bring in something that hopefully will protect other people, other children, across the province.

I want to recognize as well that there's been a great deal of support from victims' organizations, the police community and the concerned public. A number of these organizations—CAVEAT, for example, which is a national anti-violence group, the Police Association of Ontario, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the OPP association, and even places like Sarnia, where the

city council passed a resolution asking for swift passage of this bill.

I believe all of us are concerned with public safety. At the end of the day, that's what we're concerned with. History has shown that many sex offenders do reoffend. That's why it's important for the police to have this important tool to keep track of sex offenders within communities.

I can only emphasize as well that I believe there has been a great failure on behalf of the federal government to step up to the plate here. They do have a responsibility, and many of us recognize the need to have this as a national program. But at the end of the day, public safety and the rights of victims are the priorities for this government.

We owe a great deal of thanks to people such as Jim and Anna Stephenson; to the police service, who really have advocated on behalf of the Stephensons and come forward in support of this bill; victims' groups; and to victims and victims' families as well, because they are the people who are affected by these things. We owe it to them, to the communities and to the victims and victims' families to swiftly enact a law that will protect our communities and our children from sexual predators.

The Deputy Speaker: I recognize the member for Brant.

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Mr Speaker, welcome back. I'm sure you're here to get things going.

Interjections.

Mr Levac: Frank was on the switch. Sorry about that.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I just want to read a recommendation that—

Failure of sound system

—of Christopher Stephenson. "It is recommended that the Solicitor General of Canada, in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General, police and other appropriate bodies, establish a registry for convicted, dangerous, high-risk sexual offenders, and require each such offender to register with the police in the jurisdiction where the offender will reside or is residing. If a summary of this information could be kept in a central registry for access by local police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and others, it could greatly assist the investigation and apprehension of sexual offenders."

That's how this process started over a decade ago. By introducing Bill 31, or Christopher's Law, for third reading, we move one step closer to fulfilling a major commitment that we made to the people of Ontario, and that is creating a province-wide sex offender registry, the first of its kind in Canada. It will certainly enhance public safety. It's appropriate that we've named Bill 31 after 11-year-old Christopher Stephenson, who was brutally assaulted and then murdered by a pedophile on federal statutory release.

I had the privilege of briefing Christopher's parents, Jim and Anna Stephenson, during the committee hearings on February 28. Mr and Mrs Stephenson and I were most impressed at the strong and continued interest expressed

by all parties in this process. We have made substantial progress since the introduction of the bill last December. This registry will mean that we finally have the sophisticated means to keep track of sexual offenders who prey on the most vulnerable people of any age in our communities.

The Stephensons have stressed that the legislation for a sex offender registry gives special meaning to their son's short life, but it will also be instrumental in preventing such tragedies in the future. This proposed registry will honour Christopher's memory. It will provide a strong measure of protection for those targeted by sexual predators. It will also be the culmination of 10 years of dedicated efforts on the part of Christopher's parents in getting action on this registry proposal.

1610

Since second reading, my colleagues and I have received overwhelming support from victims' rights organizations, police services and the concerned public. We've heard from organizations like CAVEAT, a national anti-violence group, from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, and from the Ontario Police Association.

The city council in Sarnia passed a motion calling for swift passage of a sex offender registry.

We all share a primary objective to help protect our children and adults at risk, in public places, in schools or wherever they may be.

Our government is honouring its pledge to create safer communities by establishing this registry which will help Ontarians be safe. Of course we're disappointed with the federal Liberal government, which has ignored the need for a national registry. Given that vacuum, it is the duty of our government to set a vital precedent for our country by creating a registry that serves and protects our citizens and deters offenders.

As I've emphasized before, a provincial sex offender registry would provide our police services with the essential tools of investigation: the tool, namely, of knowing where offenders are in the community and a way of keeping track of their locations.

Local police already have the authority to use their discretion to notify residents and disclose names of offenders in the interest of public safety. Under this proposed legislation they would also be given the authority to arrest those who fail to comply with Christopher's Law.

When all is said and done, our government is acting to protect our vulnerable citizens because the federal government has failed to do so.

Under this law, both public safety and victims' rights are top priorities. Keeping track of offenders goes a long way in ensuring community protection and preventing tragedies. Quick passage of this bill sends a clear message that we in Ontario have zero tolerance for those who pose a dire threat to our communities and to our children.

In summary, we owe it to the Stephensons, to the victims and their families and to vulnerable people, to

police services and to every community in this province to swiftly enact a law that will serve as a major crime prevention and crime-fighting strategy in Ontario.

I am happy to say—and the Stephenson family was there through the entire hearings—that the Stephenson family is extremely pleased with all three parties in this House as to the support they received on this bill. We had some rather good debate on some amendments that were put forward, some that went into other jurisdictions and so on, but at the end of the day the will of all the members of the committee was to have some legislation that was enforceable in Ontario and for the greater good of all citizens.

These are some of the offences for which people would have to register with their local police service:

Sexual interference: That of course is with children under the age of 14, section 151 of the Criminal Code.

Invitation to sexual touching: Again that's with children under 14, section 152 of the Criminal Code.

Sexual exploitation: section 153 of the Criminal Code.

Incest: section 155 of the Criminal Code.

Bestiality: section 160 of the Criminal Code.

Child pornography: That is in section 163 of the Criminal Code. I'm sure you would want to know that, Mr Speaker.

Exposure involving children under the age of 14: section 173 of the Criminal Code.

Parent or guardian procuring sexual activity involving people under the age of 18: section 170 of the Criminal Code.

Sexual assault: section 271 of the Criminal Code.

Aggravated sexual assault: section 273 of the Criminal Code.

Those are the types of offences for which people who are convicted would have to register with their local police service. I know the member from Niagara fully supports people having to do that so that police services know the whereabouts of pedophiles in our communities who pose a threat to children. In a case where they are being sought out, if there's an investigation in their community, it certainly helps even in the process of elimination. In some cases, some of these offenders may not have done anything, yet a child goes missing in a community and the first thing you need to do is go through the process of elimination. If you know where the offender is, you can quickly eliminate that person as a potential suspect.

So those are a few of the initiatives here. Not only has our government looked at legislation to help police and communities, but to go along with the legislation you need to come up with financial resources in order to help communities adapt and be able to enforce the legislation. That is why we came up with the community policing partnership program, which is a five-year partnership between the province and municipalities to hire new front-line police officers. The government of Ontario is providing the funding for 50% of the salary costs of those police officers.

That has a profound impact in every community that I've gone to. In London, that's 30 new officers to be out on the street in order to either conduct investigations or be there on a proactive basis. This morning I was in the Woodstock area, where it was six officers, and in their community they are enormously grateful because, as the member from Niagara knows, after the social contract there were very few officers left on the street, most of whom had to go home because the police services could not afford to pay them. We've made a commitment to not only support police and Ontarians but support them through financial initiatives such as these 1,000 new police officers.

But that's not all. The Partners Against Crime program, which provides front-line policing and community crime prevention grants—there's an investment of \$2.1 million in 1998-99 for that. The Partners Against Crime front-line policing crime prevention program, which is funded through the proceeds of crime, allows all municipal police officers and the Ontario Provincial Police to apply for funds for front-line policing and community-focused crime prevention programs. There is approximately \$1.5 million available under that program.

How do you best use the resources of these programs to effect some change in Ontario and to benefit real people? Our government believes that in order to prevent crime, you must target criminals. Certainly what we continue hearing from the federal Liberals—because I do have to remind you that in this case the provincial Liberals support this legislation. But the federal Liberals, who have failed to act on any community safety initiatives, keep talking about education and helping people—helping people come out of parole, giving them rights, letting them out into the community after a short period of incarceration for very serious crimes. We believe that if you've committed a crime, the best way to prevent you from further committing any crimes is to serve your sentence, the entire sentence. That is why along with legislation like Christopher's Law comes funding for front-line policing and also come changes to parole to make it more difficult for serious offenders to get parole.

On that note, I thank you. I'm sharing my time with—let me just check here.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member for Guelph-Wellington.

1620

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): I rise today to speak in support of Bill 31, commonly known as Christopher's Law. This is a piece of legislation that I think speaks to the issue of leadership and, most importantly, to the issue of protecting the most vulnerable in our society, our children. When we come to this Legislature, many of us come as parents. We send our children off to school or to various community activities and we assume, quite frankly, that the world will unfold as it should, that our children will undertake their activities and will come home to us safe and sound to resume another day. As in

the case of the Stephenson family, of course, things went horribly wrong, and this act is established in memory of Christopher.

Establishing a sex offender registry is an important thing for Ontario. We will be the first province in Canada to have established such a registry. When I was sitting on the committee reviewing this legislation and hearing public presentations on this bill, I was startled that our federal Liberal government had not taken action on this. As my colleague Mr Mazzilli indicated, this legislation stems from a recommendation that a national registry be established. I refer, though, to a letter that was sent to the justice committee here in Ontario and signed by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Canada, Anne McLellan. In it, she indicates: "It is well within the provincial jurisdiction to create sex offender registries, and I believe this is the proper level of government to implement registries, given the ability of provinces and municipalities to adapt registry operations to local circumstances."

I found this surprising and disappointing, as did many of the presenters who came before our committee. Surely, when people are so mobile in our country—people can move from one jurisdiction to another—the best place to have established such a registry would have been nationally. The reason the federal government seems to have been reluctant to undertake a registry was that they turned to what is called the Canadian Police Information Centre, or CPIC, indicating that this is a national registry of information on criminal convictions that is available to police agencies across Canada.

Well, that is accurate, but what is not so readily known is that when someone undertakes to victimize a child in this heinous way, they are very often repeat offenders. This particular information centre database doesn't give accurate and up-to-date information for police. We were told in our committee that it's a matter of only a few hours if that perpetrator is to be found, and the child is to be safe. So time is of the essence, and having an accurate and up-to-date database is essential. That is what this registry will do.

This morning I had the pleasure of speaking to an organization of agricultural leaders, and they were talking about the issue of leadership. When I was researching my presentation for them this morning, I came upon this quote, which I thought fit what we are discussing this afternoon. It said: "Statesmanship is the art of changing a nation from what it is to what it ought to be." I would like to compliment our Solicitor General, the Premier and members of our government for taking it upon themselves to do what ought to be done and what should have been done by our federal Liberal government. It's interesting today that while the Premier was in the House, he was again taking the federal Liberals to task for their inability to come to the table and fully fund health care. Again, only 11 cents of every dollar is paid under a plan that was supposed to be 50-50—disappointing from the point of view of leadership. Here in Ontario we have not been afraid to provide that leadership, and if

this legislation is passed—and I believe it will be—this sex offender registry will establish us as leaders in Ontario and in Canada.

In our committee hearings we found that this is not a new thing. Although new to Canada and new to Ontario, in the United States a sex offender registry has been in place in some jurisdictions—in California, for instance—since 1947. In 1996 an act called the Wetterling Act, amended by Megan's Law, required all states to develop community notification systems. Now all the states and the District of Columbia have registries and notification systems in place. They have their own standards for determining when disclosure is necessary for public protection. But the interesting thing is that as a result of federal leadership by federal statutes, there are base standards in place for registration. The act was amended in 1998 to require states to participate in the national sex offender registry. How unfortunate that our federal Liberal government could not have taken that kind of leadership.

Here in Ontario we understand how important community safety is. My colleague indicated a number of community policing programs, of which we have been supportive. I know in my own community we have benefited from a number of these community policing initiatives, with more police officers and more local community safety programs. My community does appreciate them and does feel safer as a result of those initiatives.

What does this new law actually do? It requires sex offenders to register with their own local police service within 15 days of release from custody. That means that the police in our local communities would have the information on file of any sex offenders who are on probation or parole. Individuals whom the courts have determined to have committed sex offences but who receive absolute or conditional discharge would also be required to register. Police would have the power to arrest sex offenders who break this law. They would be able to obtain warrants electronically on short notice.

There are also requirements in this legislation that convicted sex offenders register their names and addresses with police in their communities and that they update this information on an annual basis or any time their address changes. This would be accessible to local police services. Under the Community Safety Act, the provincial government has given local police services the authority to disclose the names of sex offenders to protect the public.

This is not an easy topic to talk about. As my colleague read out the various offences to which this legislation would apply, I think it's fair to say that most or all of those topics make us very uncomfortable. But the fact is there are people in this world who are indeed predators. They victimize the most vulnerable, and they victimize our most innocent. If it isn't our government and our lawmakers who stand up to find ways to protect those individuals, who take the leadership to give tools to those who must act within our communities, then I ask, who would stand in defence of these poor innocents?

I'm very pleased to be part of a government that has taken the initiative to do this. Again, I regret that our federal cousins, the Liberal government, have not chosen to undertake this legislation. Almost every organization that spoke before our committee in support of this legislation expressed that same regret and indicated that if the federal Liberal government had been stronger on this, we would have a more strengthened system in place.

Nevertheless, we will be the leaders. We will continue to do what we know is right in the best interests of the children in our various jurisdictions. It's well known that sex offenders often present a significant risk of re-offending when they are released into the community. We hope that some of the anxieties resulting from their situation, knowing that they have to register, knowing the capability of the police to track them down very quickly, will be, most importantly, a deterrent to this type of crime happening in the future.

Again, my compliments to the Solicitor General for having the leadership to bring this legislation forward. I hope all members here in the House will join with me in supporting Bill 31, Christopher's Law.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member for Mississauga East.

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): I am pleased to stand today and participate in the debate on Bill 31, an act to set up a registry for sex offenders in Ontario. This act basically results from recommendations by the jury on the inquest into the death of Christopher Stephenson. These recommendations were made some time ago, in 1988, following the death of Christopher Stephenson, who was brutally murdered by a pedophile who was released from federal parole.

1630

At that time the recommendation from the jury was as follows:

"It is recommended that the Solicitor General of Canada, in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General, police and other appropriate bodies, establish a registry for convicted, dangerous, high-risk sexual offenders and require each such offender to register with the police in the jurisdiction where the offender will reside or is residing. If a summary of this information could be kept in a central registry for access by local police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and others, it would greatly assist the investigation and apprehension of sexual offenders."

As you can see, the recommendation was not just for the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General, but also for the Solicitor General of Canada to establish such a registry. I am pleased to stand up today with our government's move in the right direction, and I regret that the Solicitor General for Canada and the federal Liberal Party have not taken similar steps in this matter.

The reason I regret it is that our courts have recognized that sex offenders are very serious offenders. This is reflected in the records of the correctional services which show that 2,974 sex offenders are incarcerated in federal institutions and 21% of the total federal peniten-

tiary population on December 31, 1996, were sex offenders. It also shows that almost half of all federal inmates over the age of 55 are sex offenders. Sex offenders are more likely to receive prison terms. In 1997-98, 57% of those convicted of sex offences in Canada were sent to prison as compared to 38% of those convicted of other violent offences. Whereas 4,041 sexual offenders under federal jurisdiction on December 31, 1996, constituted 18% of the total offender population, 2,974 of those who were incarcerated, which is three quarters of those convicted, constituted 21% of the total incarcerated offender population.

The sentences sex offenders receive are longer than those given for other violent offences. In 1997-98, 37% of sentences given to sex offenders exceeded one year, whereas for other violent offences only 14% exceeded one year.

The reason I mention these statistics is to show how our society views the seriousness of sex offences. The proposed law, Bill 31, Christopher's Law, will go a long way in solving this problem.

I was privileged to be part of the committee that held hearings on this issue, and I was quite impressed with the submissions we received from all people and organizations that attended and made submissions. It was clear, especially from our police force, that this was a significant tool in their arsenal to follow up and prevent future offences.

Sex offenders often represent a significant risk of reoffending when they are released into the community. That's why we need a registry. The registry will also accommodate the police, who in the past had to rely on the CPIC, the Canadian Police Information Centre. But CPIC does not follow offenders who have completed their parole or their probation period. They would fall out of the system and would not be followed.

With the sex registry system, the police will be able to follow even people who have completed their sentence and their period of probation, because they will be required to register with their local police. They will be required to update that registration on a yearly basis. For those who fail to comply, there will be a penalty of up to \$25,000 or a maximum jail term of one year for the first offence and two years less a day for any subsequent offences.

The offences that will require registration are offences that most Canadians find abhorrent, and they would like to have individuals convicted of such offences to be monitored, such offences as sexual offences under section 151: invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation of victims between 14 and 17, incest, bestiality, child pornography, exposure, sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, threats to third persons of bodily harm involved in a sexual assault, and aggravated sexual assault.

When you take this in conjunction with other measures our government has taken for public safety, it's just one more arsenal to foster public safety in Ontario. Our government has moved in other directions such as

the community policing partnership program, which will see municipalities hire 1,000 new front-line police officers, and the partners against crime program, which has an investment in 1998-99 of \$2.1 million in prevention grants. Our government has indicated in this new session that child protection and public safety will be number one on our agenda for this new session.

I was quite impressed by the submissions made during the public hearings that we held on this issue, and particularly the submissions of the chief of police for Hamilton-Wentworth, who commended the law and indicated that the sex offender registry in Ontario will go a long way in solving re-commission of crimes, especially of course sex offences. He also indicated that he was quite disappointed that the federal government has not followed the lead of the Ontario government. He indicated that he has hopes that the federal government will follow this lead.

If the federal government does not follow the lead of Ontario, the other provinces will be claiming for some action from the federal government, because any sex offender will know that they are not welcome in Ontario. They will know that once they come to Ontario they will have to register and they will not be coming into this province; they'll probably be going elsewhere in Canada, and that will require the federal government to move on and issue a national sex offender registry. I hope that will happen very soon.

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I know I've only got a few minutes, but I am pleased to speak to Bill 31, this act in memory of Christopher Stephenson. I am going to speak for a moment just as a father and as a grandfather. Isn't it a shame that children over the years have had to die in this province before legislation like this is enacted? Isn't it a shame children have to be protected this way in our society today—a society that I believe has declined in morals, ethics, compassion and indeed in values—and isn't it a shame that we have to constantly enact legislation to protect our communities, our families, our youth? We as a government will protect the people of Ontario. Isn't it a shame that the federal government has not had the time or the initiative to do something about this type of situation? We will alleviate the fears of the families of this province and we will allow and make it safe for children to walk on the streets in this province.

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By enacting this particular bill, I believe it is very important that we know where these sex offenders are locating, whether they be in this province or indeed in this country, because they do have a knack, unfortunately, of repeatedly preying—and I want to emphasize that word—on the youth of our communities and indeed on the youth of province. We must know where these people are. We must have control of their movements. Certainly enacting either a fine or some of the other things that are going to be enacted in the bill, or indeed putting them back into jail again, hopefully will deter them from not registering as they are going to be required to do.

I want to compliment all the police services for their co-operation and their partnerships. I hope all of them—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr Levac: Mr Speaker, before I begin I'd just inform the House that my time will be split with the member from St Paul's and the member from St Catharines for the 40 minutes.

I want to start by reiterating my prayer and my sympathy to the Stephenson family. Prayer is ongoing; it never stops. To them I commit my continued prayers, and to those who have suffered as a result of this type of hideous crime I will add those people to my prayers as well.

I want to take a few moments to highlight some of the things that the Liberal Party under Dalton McGuinty has been indicating its willingness to do, but first to reinforce to the Solicitor General and to his parliamentary assistant from the beginning till now and until the final reading of this bill our undying support for the legislation. I know there have been offerings from the member from Niagara Centre to offer support, but I offer my hand as well, as I have done at the very beginning and will continue to do so. Co-operation in this House is not all that regular, but when it does happen, it's a proud moment for the children of this province, particularly in what we're trying to do here.

There are many, many more things to do, as he knows. He has indicated, I'm very pleased to say, a willingness to listen to some of the proposals that members on this side of the House have for the protection of children. Quite frankly, we cannot afford to allow any partisanship to take place and overrun our efforts. I know he has a heartfelt sincerity to ensure that our children are protected.

We want to make that message clear to the province of Ontario. To the members of the province of Ontario our children are sacred. They are our province, now and for the future. With those things being stated, I would like to offer just a review of some of the things I believe we need to start to look at.

Again, 100% support for the bill; the registry is a good first step, a piece of the puzzle, as we indicated earlier. Besides being in favour of the bill, the Ontario Liberals will fight to ensure that all of our communities are safe from crime, not just this particular hideous crime but all crime. We will make those efforts. A member on the other side had indicated that it's a shame that our society has become this way. I agree, but in reality—and we must step into reality—these crimes will continue. We must take steps to be proactive and to try to insist that we are prepared for when they do happen; not only do we know that they could happen, but that when they do happen we respond quickly to them and that we have that ability. That's what this bill does. It provides that weapon that the police need to act quickly and to make sure that if something's happening in our province that we don't want to have happen, the police, in their wisdom and their ability, have access to this technology that allows us

to say very quickly: "What's out there? Who's out there?" By having that ability, I'm telling you right now that it's going to be harder and harder for those perpetrators to perform those hideous acts.

I also want to say this: The federal government is responsible for ensuring that the entire country's safety is there. We should not allow a border to stop us from pursuing what we think is the best track to take, but again, I want to make this perfectly clear: It's a piece of the puzzle. If we get and when we get a national registry, it's a piece of the puzzle. We must provide, with every opportunity, those pieces of that puzzle to ensure that those kids can be as safe as they possibly can. That comes from educating the parents as to what to look out for, that comes from educating the schools as to what to look out for, the police officers as to what to look out for, and this Legislature as to what to look out for in terms of legislating smart laws that help stop the problem—actually, not even get in its way, because there are some opportunities for us to pass legislation that tends to get in the way of good law enforcement.

We want to take a look at the establishment of this registry as part of a question that needs to get asked. This was a promise made in 1995; we are now into the year 2000. It's a silly question, but the Premier was very quick in making sure that his priority, a bill to attack those squeegee kids, was passed very, very quickly. This is 1995 legislation that was talked about, the registry. We're now into the year 2000. I would say very clearly that Christopher's Law could have and should have been in existence since 1995—and, quite frankly, before that.

The other issue about the tragic death of Christopher Stephenson involves the supervision of offenders living in the community. The parole and probation officers have the highest caseloads in the country—117 cases to an average of 72. It's a very, very tough to do a job with a caseload of 117 to 1. If there's a drastic criticism of the federal government, it's not spending enough money to do the job, it's not agreeing to put a registry in place. So be it. Well, government, it's time for you to buck up. Make sure that the probation officers have got a good caseload so that they can do their job better. Are they at fault? Absolutely not. They're hamstrung right now. They don't have enough money being poured into the system that says that our priority is the children, because if probation monies were available, those caseloads would be lower and the chance of those people re-offending because of the supervision would diminish. So we need to take a very strong look at improving the probation officers' situation.

We also need to make sure that many sex offenders are already well known in their communities. As an example, the North Bay Nugget reported, after the initial introduction of the bill back in April 1999, that Jim Stephenson himself, Christopher's father, wasn't "certain that a registry would have saved his son's life. Only adequate law enforcement, parole services and rehabilitation provide maximum community safety."

I commend him for that heartfelt comment, simply because there's a man who went beyond the tragic death

of his own son and recognized, importantly, that this registry is simply a small tool, one piece of that puzzle. He recognized that those other pieces of the puzzle are still missing. We need to fill those holes quickly, and I challenge the government to do so as quickly as possible with some of the initiatives that are going to be presented by both the NDP and the Liberals. As I've said earlier, this is not about party issues; this is about the improvement of our system to safeguard our children.

Some of the initiatives that have been introduced that are known of, and I hope the Conservative government is doing some research—and quite frankly, on this side, if you introduce the bill, so be it. As long as we get that protection in place for those children, we will support it.

Safe school zones: It's not just the students in school who are causing problems around school; it's those strangers who are infiltrating with their drugs and weapons who need to be addressed. As part of 1999 election campaign, our leader put forward the idea of creating a safe school zone so that anybody found inside that school zone—anybody—with any kind of weapon or any kind of drugs will automatically result in a stiffer penalty. You can take that zone and expand it in any direction you want to protect those children and keep them away from the things that we're trying to say they shouldn't be having in the first place.

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Project P: again, an opportunity for the Ontario government to put in some more money. We support greater funding for the Ontario Provincial Police Project P in the fight against child pornography—another link to that problem of the pedophile. Easy access to pornography, child pornography in that instance, is a catalyst to the problem. We need to have Project P beefed up to the best of our ability in this government.

Better mental health supports: We continue to argue that the province has the responsibility to ensure that nobody is released from any of our mental health institutions without ensuring that there is someplace for them to go and that they continue to receive the kind of supervision and care they need. It isn't that you are simply going to say to them, "You must take your medicine." That type of legislation doesn't work. You must put the programs in place and you must have the availability of the workers to ensure that those with mental illness will not re-offend if they are offending, because there's not always violence involved in that. But what it does is put pressure, for those who have committed any crimes, on to the case load of the probation officers who are watching, guardedly, those pedophiles.

We also support, very clearly, stronger victims' rights. Again, as the result of a lawsuit initiated by a victims' group, the Victims' Bill of Rights was long ago determined by an Ontario judge to be absolutely useless. Government lawyers in suits argued that they were simply making a statement of principle, denying that it confers any kind of rights. The lawyers for the Attorney General's office argued that the statute does not impose any obligation on any specific office or person within the

criminal justice system. Justice Gerald Day called the Ontario legislation flawed and toothless. So that's another piece of the puzzle that needs to be fixed and another piece of the puzzle that needs to complement the legislation that we're debating today.

I also want to point out very clearly that enough cannot be said about the Stephenson's efforts on behalf of their son and for all victims of a pedophile attack. To them I commend my support and, as I said earlier, my prayers, but also, importantly, pressuring the government to ensure (a) that this legislation passes, which it's going to, and (b) that other legislation gets enacted in order to supply what's necessary to stop this rage.

While the Premier was busy attacking squeegee kids in the final days of the session, we were still debating, and actually we are still debating today, this legislation, which I would assume and I'm going to presume everybody in the province thinks is a much more important piece of legislation than taking on 250 squeegee kids. Very much so. I would challenge anyone to stand up and say otherwise.

On this side of the House, we have a private member's bill from the member from Sudbury, who has the support of many groups, including our party. I know the party on the other side is quite aware of his legislation and have indicated a willingness to give it serious debate in passing. We also have from the Police Association of Ontario Bill Baxter indicating a very large support for the act to amend the Highway Traffic Act, which basically stops those johns out there from soliciting sex of prostitutes under 18 years of age. If enacted, it again speaks to this issue, is directly linked to this issue, and indeed will indicate to the OPP, the POA, research for development of psychology and our Toronto Police Association, care of Craig Bromell, that we're on side. We want this legislation.

In closing, I want to make it very clear that the Liberal Party wants to support the member. It most definitely supports the Solicitor General in this small piece of the puzzle. It's a significant piece of the puzzle. It's a piece of the puzzle that makes it loud and clear that we will not tolerate our children being abused in any way, shape or form. To him I offer my hand, and I offer him my congratulations for bringing forth this legislation regardless of whether he or any other member feels the federal government is not doing its job. My friend, this is a good start, because it could jump-start the federal government into saying we need a national registry. It's a positive step. I would only ask the government to say that as your example follows, so should your words. Your words should be based on positive reinforcement. Your words should be based on invitation. Your words should be based on initiating a grassroots movement that tells the federal government we believe it's time, we believe it's wanted and we believe it's needed.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): Of course we support this bill. I support this bill; the official opposition supports this bill. We have supported this bill for some time. It has been the subject of three throne speeches and

it has been the subject of discussion for over two years now. I'll speak to that in a moment. I do want to discuss what happened before the justice committee, but before I do that just a word about Bill 32, which was introduced the same day as this bill, Bill 31, by the member for Sudbury, Rick Bartolucci, who is here in the House, as he always is.

This is a private member's bill to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require a driver's licence to be suspended if a motor vehicle is used when purchasing sexual services from a child. It is another prong in the ongoing attack against sexual offences. It is a bill which has the support of the police, police chiefs and victims' groups. The member for Sudbury has received support from all across the province on this subject. I dare say this is a piece of pioneering legislation which deserves support from all sides, just as this bill, Christopher's Law, is receiving support from all sides of the House.

The reason I raise this is that it's very important for us at this moment, as we're debating Christopher's Law, to rededicate ourselves to the ongoing attack against sexual offences. There is not one bill or one approach that is going to work. We need to try all the approaches. Whether it comes from one side of the House or the other, I think it's important to get these bills passed as soon as possible. It's part of our rededication to the memory of Christopher Stephenson, to all the victims of sexual offences and their families. I certainly rededicated myself to this at the time of the justice committee hearings. I do so again. I call on all members of this House to do so not only tonight, but tomorrow and hereafter. That's the point of naming this bill after Christopher. I hope we're going to get the same kind of support for the member for Sudbury's bill.

This bill was the subject of some debate at the committee hearings. By and large the police associations, victims' rights groups, most of the groups that came before the committee supported the bill. Those that did not did so primarily on civil libertarian grounds. In other words, they said that the right to privacy for someone who was convicted of a sexual offence ought to trump the right to public access. I have to say I'm troubled by—and this is a predominant problem—this focus on rights talk. It's a peculiarly and particularly American phenomenon. That's because to some extent in the United States their Constitution guarantees the right to privacy. We don't have a guarantee to the right to privacy here in Canada. The difficulty with rights talk is that you end up having groups battling for their rights to subordinate or trump the rights of others. Along the way, it becomes a battle among various stakeholders.

In this case, it's pretty obvious that the rights to public access ought to prevail. But I like to think of the support of this bill as less about the triumph of the right to public access as the triumph of individual responsibility.

1700

Most of us dedicate ourselves as citizens in this province to conduct ourselves in a responsible manner. That means we certainly obey the existing laws and

regulations that are on the books, we obey the orders of the Speaker of the House as best we can and we otherwise take responsibility for ourselves, within our families, within our neighbourhoods and within the jobs we hold or the public service that we commit ourselves to.

Within our society people have rights. We know about that. Many of them are enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But we also have responsibilities. Those who are convicted of sexual offences may not be able to be locked up for good, but they do have to carry with them the stigma and the responsibility for that conviction and, for pedophiles, for the scourge that pedophilia is in our society. So when they go into a community, they have to let the community know they are moving into that community. This is reasonable and it's safe. I would say it is commonsensical, except that's become an unusual turn of phrase today.

What's important here is that the registry works. I think everybody on both sides of the House is committed to the registry working. There's a real concern that we don't want people's names ending up on that registry who ought not to be on the registry. Think about it: Can you imagine, if your name somehow ended up on that registry, what that would do to you in your community, to your reputation and to your life? We on the justice committee are confident that the safeguards will be in place to ensure that nobody who ought not end up on the registry will end up on the registry.

My concern with the bill has nothing to do with what is in the bill itself. The concern, again, is with respect to the priorities of this government. I have to say that while we normally endeavour to blow wind into the sails of government, I was quite willing to stand up here today and not discuss the shortcomings and the partisan prioritizing or lack thereof that took place, because really there is tripartisan support for this bill. But then I heard the government members stand up and start talking about who else? Who else do they talk about when it comes to issues of crime? It's these other politicians that you should be blaming about crime in Ontario. We heard more fed-bashing. We heard more talk about what another government is doing instead of what this government should be doing.

This government should have passed this bill earlier than it did. I can't believe anybody would suggest for a moment that the squeegee bill is more a priority to Ontarians than Christopher's Law. It's just not. Christopher's Law has been the subject of three throne speeches, and we have been discussing the bill for over two years. The squeegee bill was prioritized by this government and time allocation motions slammed through. The debate on that bill was limited, the time spent before committee was limited and this useless squeegee bill ended up passing before Christopher's Law.

I think the government would have to agree that those are mismanaged priorities, that the people of Ontario care more about ensuring that pedophiles fulfill their responsi-

bilities to their community by registering with their local community through the sex offender registry, than passing the sweep-it-under-the-rug act, which we already see is going to have no effect whatsoever.

Also with respect to bashing another government, there's a place for that and it's called Parliament Hill. When Prime Minister Klees wins his leadership race and is taking the mantle one day down the road, I can assure you that I will not stand in this House and whine about Prime Minister Klees, because my job is here in Ontario dealing with provincial matters. There is something called the official opposition up on capital hill. The official opposition has a critic, and I can assure you that the justice critic is there to blow wind into the sails of government. Our job here is to deal with Ontario provincial issues.

We did some digging on this. We looked at all of the press releases that have come out of the chief law officer, the person who the media have proclaimed Mr Law and Order, the Attorney General, and all the statements that the Attorney General has made in the House. What we found out was that more than 85% of the time that Mr Law and Order stands up in this House, he talks about squeegees or he blames other politicians for Ontario crime problems. When it comes to crime, I daresay that this government is all talk, no action.

Then we looked at the press releases, because of course we've been locked out of this House for all but one day in the year 2000. Maybe, we thought, the press releases and the media events would reflect more the priorities of Ontarians. What we found is that in fact more than 90% of the press releases coming out of that ministry dealt with either squeegees or blaming other politicians. Again, all talk, no action.

Now we get to this law, a fine example of a law which we are all supporting on this side of the House; however, a law which has been the discussion of three throne speeches, the discussion of significant debate and was subordinated in terms of a priority over the squeegee bill. Again, this government, when it comes to crime, appears to be all talk, no action.

I think most Ontarians care about in-your-face crime. I think most Ontarians are concerned about property crime to their homes, to their cars, vandalism, stolen goods. They're concerned about assaults. These are in-your-face crimes that people have to deal with in their day-to-day lives. What are we doing on this in-your-face crime? Right now, I haven't seen a single bill or a single statement from the government on these in-your-face crimes, and I would urge the government to look at the proposals that are out there. Rick Bartolucci's private member's bill is one example. We Liberals have proposed a five-point plan to curb gun violence and recoup its costs. We have also proposed that the budget for Project P in the OPP, as was already discussed, be substantially increased to deal with the demographics of this province. A handful of officers dealing with this problem is not a big enough commitment.

Domestic assault courts: There are lots of reannouncements by the government about a budget item from the previous administration, but I'm not seeing any courts being built. With respect to crown attorneys, again lots of reannouncements from this government on a budget line item matter, but what we're not seeing is any action.

We're about to see parental responsibility legislation. I haven't seen it yet, but as soon as I see it, if it squares with the media reports, there are some serious questions to be asked. For example, why is this legislation happening in 2000 when it was the subject of submissions to a House of Commons committee by the Attorney General under this government in 1996? Why has this government been talking about this legislation for years but not doing anything about it? Why is this legislation dealing only with petty crimes and not with the serious in-your-face crimes involving personal injury, involving break and enter? That's going to be more than the \$6,000 claims that can be launched in Small Claims Court. Why are they limiting it to petty crimes? These are important questions that will need to be answered by the government to refute this charge that in fact yet again, as with the squeegee bill, they are grandstanding and they are posturing. Again this government, when it comes to crime, is all talk, no action.

I only have a little time left so I'd like to finish by saying a few words about Christopher's Law and the victims of crime which this bill seeks to honour. Obviously the tragedy of the murder of Christopher Stephenson is a tragedy beyond description. This bill does honour his life, his memory and the lives and memories of other victims of crime.

As I said before the justice committee, I can't imagine for a moment what is going on in the minds of the Stephensons, who have ushered this bill along from day one. I'm sure it will be a bittersweet moment when this bill passes, and a moment when all of us, as I said before, can rededicate ourselves, I know I have, to stopping the scourge of sexual offences by supporting this bill, by supporting the member for Sudbury's bill, by doing everything we can to deal with the issue of the safety of our streets. It's a commitment of the Ontario Liberal Party, it's a commitment of this member and it's a commitment of the official opposition that we will continue to push along.

1710

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I'm pleased to contribute a few comments to this bill, which offers some promise on an issue that is very difficult for governments to deal with, and for the justice system to deal with in years gone by. I think most people are going to be in favour of this bill in principle. Certainly I am, and I commend the parents of Christopher Stephenson for the role they have played, the crusade they've been involved in, not only dealing with their own son's unfortunate circumstances but with children who might be placed in similar circumstances. They are to be commended for that, and I'm sure that is something all members of this House would agree with, without qualification.

With all pieces of legislation, I think it's important to note the level of financial commitment that goes with them. It reminds me of when governments constantly talk about tax cuts. When we talk about tax cuts, that means a diminishing of services. As long as people know that, I suppose that's a legitimate political choice to make. But in so many cases there is a suggestion out there that we can have these tax cuts, which continue to favour the wealthiest people in our society, and have services provided that all of us feel are important. Some of those services are associated with this bill. You need the resources to implement the bill. You need the resources to carry out the stipulations found in this bill. Unfortunately, in other cases, that has not been the situation that has existed.

We support the establishment of this registry, but many of us will ask why it took this period of time. The government was talking about this in 1995. We're now in the year 2000 and we're finally dealing with the bill. Yet we've had bills that are probably of less consequence. I think of the squeegee person bill. It's of less consequence than this bill. I would have preferred to see this bill passed some time ago. Be that as it may, as the lawyers say, I know this Legislature will give this bill speedy passage as we deal with third reading today.

The issue we have out there that must be looked at carefully involves the supervision of offenders living in the community. Our parole and probation officers have the highest caseloads in the entire country. The Harris government should be providing them with more resources so that offenders living in our neighbourhoods are fully supervised. That's what I mean when I talk about resources. A lot of people want to be tough on law and order, and I explain to them that to be really and genuinely tough on law and order you have to have the resources to fulfill the obligations contained within the legislation.

For instance, today on the streets of Ontario we have fewer front-line police people on the beat than when the NDP was in power. This government always likes to paint the NDP as not wanting to have a lot of police in our society. But when the NDP were in power, when they presided over this province, they had more police officers out there supervising this province, enforcing the laws of this province and acting in a preventive way than this government has today. We hear these lob-ball questions about the number of police officers, but when I talk to police officers in this province, a lot of them wonder where that new, net number of police happen to be, because they simply don't see them.

When you have legislation, it has to be meaningful. We all remember the previous Attorney General making a point about the victims' rights legislation he brought forward. Well, we found out that that legislation had next to no teeth and not the resources to make it effective. It was a good idea in concept, no question about it.

I can tell you from experience in my community, in talking to families of victims—and I think we all know a very famous case in our community. I would call it an

infamous case because of the nature of it: Paul Bernardo and Ms Homolka being involved in a crime against a young girl in our community by the name of Kristen French. I know the French family very well. I know what they have gone through. Though I can't experience it and say that I would know emotionally, having known the parents well and knowing the family well, I know the great difficulty they go through every time they have to go into court, every time they have to fight to prevent those awful tapes from being played in court. That's another thing they're asking for, that these tapes not be played in any future case for everybody in the courtroom. They're not asking that they be destroyed—though heaven knows they would love to see those tapes destroyed forever; they're a bad memory—but simply that if there is a court case or a legal proceeding which must use these tapes, we don't have an audience out there. I know it doesn't make the news media happy but the news media don't have to hear or see the tapes—because hearing is also an important component—nor others who line up in the gallery to be here for these cases. They understand that a jury or officers of the court may have to see those tapes, painful as it is. I know they want to find a way administratively or in a regulatory sense or in a legislative sense to bring that about, because it hasn't worked legally through the courts.

There is a case of families of victims who have had a very difficult time. I know all of us in the House, whenever you see that case come up yet again—I see Bernardo was in court the other day. I don't usually talk about this publicly because I always feel it's an exploitation, but I get annoyed when I look publicly at this person showing up in court, looking for some kind of overturning of the case. I thought Rex Murphy on CBC, with a minute or a minute-and-a-half commentary, put it in the right context of how sick he was of seeing those two appearing in court, trying to change things around. If they'd just go away, people would be happy.

It's very difficult for victims, and we all know victims out there, families of victims, who carry this with them almost all their life. So when I look at that other bill, which was a bill dealing with victims' rights, long ago it was determined by an Ontario judge to be absolutely useless, according to the judge. Government lawyers in the suit argued that this is a statement of principle, denying that it confers any kind of rights. Lawyers for the Attorney General argued, "The statute does not impose an obligation on any specific office or person within the criminal justice system." Justice Gerald Day called the Ontario legislation "flawed and toothless." While it was a good statement of principle—and there was a lot of talk about it—if you talk to the families of victims, they will tell you that while it's better than a kick in the shins, it's not much better. It's a great statement but there aren't the resources, there aren't the teeth to enforce it.

My colleague Rick Bartolucci, the member for Sudbury, has two pieces of legislation that he wants to see passed and I think would receive the approval of this House, if brought forward. One is Bill 6, children

involved in prostitution, and Bill 32, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require a driver's licence to be suspended if a motor vehicle is used when purchasing sexual services from a child. He says there's total support around the province for both these bills. I know because he has conducted his consultations and I would agree that there's that kind of support.

We will support this bill this afternoon. It is not perfect, but it is a step, I believe, in the right direction. I urge the government to provide the necessary resources to be able to implement the provisions of this bill. We need far more people supervising these people who come out of the prison system. You have to know that someday they're going to be released from prison, unless they're in a life situation. When they come out they have to be carefully supervised by probation officers, if they're not going to prison and it's a probation sentence, or by parole officers if they're coming out of prison. Unless you have those people with the proper resources to supervise these people, then the bill isn't going to be as effective as it might be.

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I concur with the critic of the Solicitor General and the critic of the Attorney General of the official opposition, the Liberal Party, that for this bill to be as effective as it could be is going to require all of the necessary resources that will in fact require an expenditure and investment by this government, and I urge them to do so.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Thank you, Speaker. First, if I may ask for unanimous consent to have the Speaker—that's you—put the question for third reading of this Bill 31 at the end of this afternoon's debate, and if a recorded vote is necessary, that it be deferred until tomorrow at the time for deferred votes.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Kormos has asked for unanimous consent to place the question this evening. If that happens and a recorded vote is necessary, that that be taken tomorrow during the time period for deferred votes. Do we have unanimous consent? Agreed.

Mr Kormos: I understand that by having done that I was accommodating somebody in the government benches. I find myself in a most peculiar position, but it is the first day back and I suppose I've used up my quota of largesse, of goodwill for the government.

New Democrats are going to support this bill, just as we supported it at first reading and just as we supported it on second reading.

I've been fascinated by the tone of the so-called debate this afternoon, because virtually every speaker to this point—not everyone but darned near everyone—has prefaced their comments by saying, "I don't want to be partisan about this bill." I know what that means. I'm not going to put to you that I don't want to be partisan about this bill. I think there are some very important considerations around Bill 31 that have to be part of this debate.

Again, I'll make it very clear. We support the sex offender registry. We made some very strong efforts during the course of second reading and then in committee to improve the bill, to make it better, to make it stronger, to make it more effective. We were frustrated in that regard. Fair enough. I understand that it's difficult to win those sorts of partisan battles even in the context of a bill that the government would say they are approaching from a very non-partisan point of view.

I couldn't help but note—and I'm sure people listening this afternoon couldn't—the clear effort on the part of the parliamentary assistant to try to politicize the issue and use it to do some federal Liberal bashing. Then my Liberal colleagues respond in kind, rise to the bait and do some Tory bashing. I'm in that wonderful position, I have the wonderful luxury of being a New Democrat, which means that I can go after both Harris and the Tories, as well as Chrétien and the Liberals, and point out the terrible shortcomings of both those parties and both those administrations.

Mr Bradley: What about Bob Rae?

Mr Kormos: I haven't attended any portrait hangings in the last year, and I'm looking forward to hangings in the future.

Bill 31 is an important piece of legislation. It has been cited by every speaker, every participant in the debate, that it reflects the recommendation of a coroner's jury, the recommendations they made during that inquest as a result of what must have been an incredibly painful exercise for that coroner, those jurors and, needless to say, the Stephenson family, an exercise so painful that I couldn't begin to imagine. There's nothing in my life experience, and I would suggest in most of our life experiences, that permits us to even come close to the incredibly intense pain that a family feels, that parents feel when a child is taken from them in a such a horrific and unspeakable way.

I was shocked during committee hearings to be told by Ontario Provincial Police sources that the life expectancy of a child who has been abducted by a sexual predator could be measured in mere hours. It was a shocking statistic, I think for all of us—mere hours, which means that the police have to be able to respond quickly, effectively and with all the possible tools available to them. It also means, Mr Parliamentary Assistant, that we have to have police out there to be able to do the job.

What I find disappointing is that there are fewer police per capita in this province today than there were in 1994. You can rely upon the statistics or you can go out there and talk to cops in any community in this province. Talk to police officers who are under incredible pressure and stress. Talk to victims of a recent bilking here in Toronto to whom the police had to say, not because the police wanted to, "I'm sorry, it's only a fraud." It was a multi-hundred-thousand-dollar fraud, but victims who went to the police some year and a half ago were told, "No, we can't prioritize this fraud, notwithstanding the size of it." You know as well as I do, Solicitor General, these victims retained their own investigator, Brian Patterson, a

very competent forensic investigator, who obviously was critical in the prosecution of that case, which resulted in a conviction.

So if you don't want to believe the statistics that are acquired and developed by non-partisan institutions like StatsCan, go out there, visit a police station, talk to the cops at any community in this province and they'll tell you about an incredible shortage of staffing, of person power, of police power. There simply aren't enough cops in the majority of our police forces to do the kind of job that those police want to be able to do.

I reflected again on the incredible pain that a family suffers, that a community suffers. Think for a minute about the incredible pain that police officers suffer when they find themselves so seriously understaffed that they can't do the job that they're sworn to do and that they very much want to do as professionals and as career law enforcement people.

The bill is going to pass. I'm extremely disappointed in this government for not having accepted the amendment that would have included sexual offenders under the age of 18 and therefore convicted, found guilty as young offenders. This government doesn't want them to be included in the registry. Please. This government also declined to entertain the most modest proposal of rolling this back 10 years. You see, what happens, Mr Parliamentary Assistant—I think you understand this; I think you know—is that only those persons who will be released from prison terms and/or convicted after the date of royal proclamation of this bill will be compelled to comply with the bill. What you've got out there is thousands and thousands of convicted sexual predators who won't be forced to comply with the bill, who won't be forced to register, and it will be a good number of years before the passage of time closes that gap. So already you've handicapped our police, because they've got the sexual offender registry, and then they also have to go into the pool of all those sex offenders who should have been in the registry but for your say-so, but who won't be. I find that incredibly frustrating in terms of what we expect our police officers to do, especially in these moments of incredible crisis, where speed is of the essence.

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I was very disappointed that this government didn't want to include young offenders and that this government didn't want to roll back the effective dates of the bill to include those convictions which occurred in the past 10 years, because all of the truisms say look, we know that the recidivism rate among sex offenders is incredibly high. That's a given. We know that although a huge number of sex offenders are in our federal institutions, which means sentences of two years-plus, there are still thousands in our provincial institutions where the maximum sentence is but two years less a day. These people are going to be out there on the streets in relatively short order.

This is what makes the registry important, but it's also important that the registry be as all-encompassing as

possible, which takes me to this, because it's impossible to talk about this bill and its passage without talking about what's happening to our prison system: our corrections system here in the province of Ontario, the process of privatization of corrections and the closure of institutions like the Ontario Correctional Institute up in Brampton, internationally acknowledged as having one of the most effective, if not the most effective, treatment programs for sexual offenders.

Don't forget, we're talking about people in provincial institutions who are going to serve a sentence of no more than two years less a day. These are people who are going to be back into the community, come hell or high water, yet this government plans to scuttle the treatment program at the Ontario Correctional Institute in Brampton, one that has drawn attention worldwide as being the most effective program to date in developing meaningful and real treatment for sex offenders—because the real goal here is to avoid the need to access the sex offender registry, isn't it? That's the real goal here. No more victims. You do that in one of two ways. You lock up perpetrators forever—it's an option—or you make sure, for that period of time in which they are in custody, they're getting meaningful treatment programs so that they don't reoffend. That's not rocket science; it's common sense.

Why this government doesn't want to focus on no more victims, in addition to ensuring that we can apprehend offenders at this fastest possible rate and in the most expeditious way quite frankly, leaves me bothered and concerned, because while it's one thing to say we've got a sex offender registry—we will have one, and I'll speak to that in a little bit—it's another thing to say the sex offender registry will only be useful in terms of apprehending offenders after they reoffend. That's when a police investigation commences, after a crime has been committed, not before a crime has been committed.

I say we've got to work on a much broader-based process, not only to ensure that we can apprehend offenders quickly and save the lives and the futures of young victims but that we develop systems and that we support systems like Ontario Correctional Institute and their treatment program. Do you understand? This government wants to shut down the treatment program for sex offenders at the Ontario Correctional Institute. It wants to shut the institution down. That, my friends, is nuts, and it's cruel, and it's short-sighted, and it invites more youthful victims. No fair-minded person in this province can accept the proposition that you would take one of the most successful, if not the most successful, treatment program internationally and shut it down. It's dumb. It's stupid. It's moronic. That fight will be ongoing as this government's orgy of privatization continues.

You didn't want to include young offenders. You didn't want to include adults who had been convicted and served their sentence prior to the enactment date of this legislation. I remember when I indicated in my address to this bill on second reading my desire to have public

hearings during the intersession—it's a long one. It's been at least three months, my goodness, that intersession. Last year, 1999, we sat for, what, 40 days, Mr Marchese?

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): They don't want to work. I don't even remember.

Mr Kormos: Speaker, was it 40 days? In all of 1999 we sat for 40 days.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): How often was the Premier here?

Mr Kormos: I can't speak to a member's absence; you know that. The Speaker has ruled. Don't try to provoke me into commenting on Mr Harris's absence from the House, because I'll be ruled out of order, Ms Churley.

Ms Churley: I'm sorry. I forgot.

Mr Kormos: You of all people, as the Deputy Speaker, should have known not to do that. You're setting me up for a fall. I'm not going to comment on the Premier's absence, neither on his absence from the House nor his absence from the province. I wish he'd at least spend his money in Ontario. We have ski runs in Ontario. We have golf courses in Ontario. We have boating and fishing and hunting in Ontario. You don't have to go to Colorado or other southern foreign climes; you can spend your money in Ontario and keep Ontario jobs in Ontario.

Mr Marchese: But he wanted to escape the province, quite clearly.

Mr Kormos: That's not the issue.

The fact is that this registry will require adequate resources.

I go back to my suggestion, which was accepted, and I appreciate that—the Solicitor General accepted the proposition that there be hearings. They were very short hearings, weren't they? It was difficult, because of the time of the year and because of the absence of any widespread advertising about the hearings, to attract all of those people to the hearings who might have made a contribution, although there were some excellent contributions made. One of the things that we were unable to discuss because of the very abbreviated hearings was the funding and the costing of this.

Tell me if I'm wrong, Parliamentary Assistant. We understand that it's going to be administered by the Ontario Provincial Police. We understand that each local police force is going to have the responsibility to do the intake, I suppose, if that's what you call it, where the offender has to attend in that community where they have moved to and register, and then has to develop a system to relay that information on up to the Ontario Provincial Police, wherever their head office is, the head office of the sex offender registry.

These were the same people who have not been particularly kind to my private member's bill to facilitate access to police record searches by volunteer organizations. The argument is that it will cost so much money, it will be expensive for these police forces to provide this service. My response is that as a taxpayer I am prepared to invest money in our police services so

that they can provide criminal record clearances for potential volunteers for Big Brothers or minor hockey or whichever organization you may think of that is dealing with youthful people or vulnerable people or the aged. I am prepared to pay that as a taxpayer. Aren't you? If you're not prepared to pay that, are you prepared to share some of the price to the victims? Can you in any way absorb any of the cost that the victim absorbs once her or his life has been shattered? I say as a taxpayer that I'm prepared to invest in our police forces so they can guarantee that charitable and volunteer organizations have meaningful and speedy and free access to criminal record searches for volunteers. I'm prepared to make that investment because I think there's payback on that. I really do. But you see, one of the things we weren't able to discuss because you demonstrated—is it parsimony?

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Mr Marchese: Yes.

Mr Kormos: You demonstrated parsimony when it came to that sort of investment with respect to screening volunteers. We never got a chance, because it made me concerned about how thoroughly, how adequately, you are prepared to fund the sex offender registry process.

One of the comments—and this relies upon computer technology. I really wish we could have had more discussion about the status of CPIC nationally, the tool that police forces across the country use to access a whole pile of information, and about the fact that over the course of years it's degraded. There was a recent announcement of some money from the federal government in an effort to restore it, but there's also a strong suspicion that it doesn't come close to what's needed to make this CPIC system, this computer-based police information system, accurate and accessible to police officers across not just the province but the country.

I'm concerned, because if CPIC has fallen into a state of—I suppose it's not quite the family support plan office up in Downsview, but it's certainly headed in that direction. How then can we be assured of the effectiveness and adequacy of what is going to be built up in terms of input, storage and dissemination of information in this sex offender registry process? I'm very concerned about that. The last thing I want to see is this operation the subject matter of a Provincial Auditor's report.

We will be watching carefully, let me tell you, because my concern is that the design, the concept, is a perfectly legitimate one. It's a terribly important one. It gives the police yet one more tool in dealing with this very difficult area of investigation. But if it's underfunded, if it's as disorganized as some of the computer processes that Attorneys General in this province have implemented, then we are in serious trouble.

I was also concerned about the support for the immunity clause that was contained in the bill. You were there; you know what I'm talking about—this boilerplate clause that exempted or relieved the government or any of its officials or agents from any liability for screwing up. Just as this sex offender registry is a very powerful tool, its misuse or an inaccurate input of information can

be devastating. Notwithstanding my own civil libertarian bent, a very strong one, and notwithstanding my own enthusiasm for protection of privacy and freedom of information legislation, I'm prepared to stand and say, "Yes, there are certain people in our society, in our community, whose conduct puts them into a position where they have to forfeit some of those rights to privacy," in the case of sex offenders, with what we know about sex offenders, their propensity for recidivism and the terrible harm they do to young people—young or old people. Let's face it. We've obviously, because of the context of this bill, spent a lot of time addressing sexual predators, pedophiles, but we're talking about sex offenders right across the board here. We're talking about protecting children, protecting women and, yes, men too.

Think for a minute, Parliamentary Assistant. What could be more devastating than to be incorrectly identified as a sex offender, to have that information put out into a computer world with all of its—what are these things—hyperlinks and all those kinds of things where you click and you run your mouse here and run your mouse there? What could be more devastating? Just as I'm prepared to stand as a civil libertarian and say that, yes, we need this registry to give police the tools they need, I am also prepared to say this: When the government screws up, they should be liable. That's part of responsibility. That's the sort of responsibility you talk about fostering, right? Accountability, accept responsibility for what you do. But what did you do? No, you anticipated the kinds of foul-ups that could be incredibly damaging to a person's welfare, livelihood and reputation in his or her community—I'm talking about the inaccurate or false registration of an offender—and you've taken away from them the right to seek remedies for your negligence. I find it peculiar that a government that talks about accountability and accepting responsibility for screw-ups would want to exempt themselves and cover their behinds.

Again, we talked about this in committee, and I hope it never happens. But clearly, the purpose of that immunity section is because of your anticipation that it will happen, isn't it? That's why you put that section in there. You know there is a significant possibility of an erroneous registration. Let me tell you this: We will be watching this system. We will be auditing it on a daily basis. We will insist that offenders are accurately registered so that the police have the most accurate and broadest information pool—database. We've learned. How many family responsibility offices do we want or need?

Let me just mention this to you: I would ask you to check your own staff in your own constituency offices, because Family Responsibility Office foul-ups remain number one on our list. Payers who are legitimately paying are getting dinged because they're misidentified as non-payers. People whose responsibility to pay ended years ago are still being whacked because you couldn't get an iMac running in a computer store.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: No, because we're talking about developing another huge computer database. I'm afraid

the analogy is quite appropriate, my friends. What frightens me is how badly you have mismanaged the Downsview family support plan and Family Responsibility Office, and the incredible harm that has done. I fear that if this sex offender registry system is mismanaged in even 1% of the same way you've screwed up the Family Responsibility Office, you're going to create some horrible grief, you're going to create some real tragedies. Look at how dangerous it will be to have sex offenders whose intake was done but who don't get accurately recorded. That, again, cripples the police when they're trying to do one of these speedy investigations. Also, look at the horrible cost you impose on an individual, who has never been convicted of any offence, who is inaccurately identified. So I caution you about something about which you had better be very cautious and careful. You had better be concerned about the level of investment.

Ms Churley: Can they take the government to court?

Mr Kormos: Well, no. You see, what happened, Ms Churley, is that the government included an immunity clause so they basically can't get sued for screwing up. They're obviously very conscious of the successful litigation by Jane Doe here in the city of Toronto, and very conscious of the family support plan and the Family Responsibility Office. So they included an immunity clause so they can't be sued for fouling up in this most serious of areas.

Ms Churley: So they can ruin somebody's life.

Mr Kormos: In any number of ways.

Talk to police officers and you will understand that they want to get the job done. My God, they want to get the job done, but they have to have the tools to do it. They applaud the sex offender registry, because it's going to help them speed up their identification of potential offenders in a given geographic area. They told you that life expectancy of a kid who is abducted by a sexual predator is but hours—very frightening stuff.

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But then I would put this to you: We know precious little about the process through the course of sentencing after conviction and on into corrections. We were provided with some modest information about people serving sentences in provincial institutions as well as federal. I want you people to understand this. The current parole legislation under the corrections act here in the province of Ontario, unlike the federal counterpart, provides for in camera, secret parole hearings. I have announced and we will be presenting shortly a piece of legislation that will amend the corrections act to provide for completely open and public parole processes here in Ontario.

I think it's critical that the victim has a right to know what arguments a parole claimant is making when she or he is seeking to have their sentence shortened or abbreviated. I think it's critical that the public know, that the press know. I think it's critical that these decisions be based on evidence that's recorded and that's publicly accessible, and that decisions be ultimately based on a pattern or process of precedent.

So I put it to the parliamentary assistant that I would expect, as I've given you my support for Bill 31—because it was the right thing to do, do you understand? I supported Bill 31 because it was the right thing to do. It was a Conservative bill but it could have come as readily from any one of the three caucuses here. Let me suggest to you that you should be supporting my private member's bill to open up parole hearings here in the province of Ontario because it's the right thing to do.

You should be advocating with your caucus colleagues to similarly lend their support to ensure that that private member's bill receives speedy second and third reading so that no longer in Ontario are parole hearings conducted behind closed doors, so that victims, communities and the public can understand what evidence or what information a parole board is taking into consideration before they deal with a parole claimant and they understand the reasons why a parole claimant is being released back into the community, effectively having their sentence shortened.

I want you to join with me, Mr Mazzilli, in calling upon your colleagues in the Conservative caucus to ensure that the Ontario Correctional Institute stays open, stays public and that the incredibly valuable programs that take place there in terms of the treatment of sex offenders, among others, remain in place and indeed are built upon and enhanced.

Mr Mazzilli, I want you to do that because you're the parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General and I believe you when you tell me that you have a strong commitment to public safety. I believe you; I take you at your word. But if you have that strong commitment to public safety, you'll support my private member's bill to make parole hearings open; you'll support my call to keep the Ontario Correctional Institute open at Brampton with the programs that take place there; and now that the sex offender registry is going to be law in a very short while, you'll impose upon your boss, the Solicitor General and tell him to encourage his staff, people right over there, Mr King, among others, bright people, capable people, staff who serve their bosses well and faithfully—some minions, others ambitious young people who in their own right some day will be sitting in this Parliament—to start looking at policy processes whereby we can include young offenders in the sex offender registry.

Because I don't buy the constitutionality. Give me a break. Horse feathers. You've never been shy before, that's never stopped you; it never bothered you. Your history of litigation around constitutional issues isn't particularly good. That's just the way it is. I understand that. I read the papers; I read some of these court judgments. Perhaps an FOI question to put is, how much in costs has this government had to pay to opposing parties in all the unsuccessful litigation this government's been involved in? But let the courts deal with the issue of constitutionality, because I'm telling you the people of this province want to be protected from sexual offenders whether they're adults or whether they're youthful, whether they're 19 or whether they're 17.

We know there are some serious problems around youthful offenders and the adequacy of treatment programs, problems that you aren't solving with your boot camps and your privatization, your for-profit, American-based Wackenhut Corrections Corp of America, what have you, making profits off corrections and doing it by having fewer and fewer staff, poorer-trained staff, lower-paid staff and a virtual absence of any meaningful rehabilitation or treatment programs for some of the most troubled people in our society and in our community.

That's not how you build public safety. You do it by committing yourself to no more victims, not just to speedy apprehension of the offender. When you're talking about offenders you're inevitably dealing after the fact and by then it's too late. Of course we've got to catch the offender and we've got to make sure she or he is locked up and dealt with as meaningfully as possible, but understand that when you're dealing with an offender you're also dealing with a victim. I challenge you to get your act together to start developing policy and programs that result in fewer victims, not just speedier apprehension of offenders.

You want to turf kids out of school for being violent? God bless. I don't think there's a single person in the Legislature or in the community who would disagree with your proposition that a violent kid shouldn't be in there with other kids, but you don't just turf them out on the street so that they're violent, disturbed, troubled and uneducated.

You want to make parents responsible for the misdeeds of their kids? OK, go ahead; you've got the power to do it. But restore some of those supports those families had historically to help them deal with troubled kids, with kids who suffer from any number of personality disorders and learning disabilities and other shortcomings and faults and flaws that, by God, are probably as common, if not more frequent, here than they are in the general population. Think about it. If you want to make parents culpable for what their kids do, go ahead, but put guidance counsellors back into schools. Put some of the special support programs for kids with any range of disorders and disabilities back into our schools and back into our public health system. Make

sure family and children's services is adequately funded. Make sure children's mental health, whether it's in Niagara region or in Toronto or northern Ontario or the east or west of this province, is adequately funded, so that kids are getting the effective treatment they need before they find themselves in front of the judge's dais and then locked away in one of your damn boot camps.

Let's start talking about fewer victims along with speedier apprehension of offenders. Let's start talking about community safety and building community safety with investments in the right places and with the right institutions and with the right people. Let's stop talking about beating up on people out there who are struggling, who find themselves assaulted over and over again by a government that applauds only wealth and corporate finessing.

You're going to have a sex offender registry, but please, my friends, make sure it's done right so that it works to save that kid's life or that woman's life and/or their future. Make sure you've gone beyond the mere public relations announcement. I heard all the hugging and the kissing and, "We're not partisan here and we're not partisan there." Somehow everybody wants to embrace. This place had the image of a bawdy house earlier this afternoon. It's more than just saying the right things about an issue that happens to have a great deal of public currency right now, and this does. I understand that. It goes beyond merely mouthing the words. You can't just talk the talk, you've got to walk the walk. Be prepared to invest in these things and we might have a safer community.

The Acting Speaker: By direction of the House, I will now put the question. Mr Tsubouchi has moved third reading of Bill 31, Christopher's Law.

Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

There will be a division, according to my direction, immediately before oral question period tomorrow.

It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 1801.

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Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / -Nord	assistant deputy government whip / whip adjoint suppléant du gouvernement
Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC)	Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation
Elliott, Brenda (PC)	Guelph-Wellington	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation and minister responsible for seniors and women / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires civiques, de la Culture et des Loisirs et ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie L. (PC)	Parry Sound-Muskoka	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC)	Whitby-Ajax	Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Galt, Doug (PC)	Northumberland	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Gerretsen, John (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	Scarborough East / -Est	
Gill, Raminder (PC)	Bramalea-Gore- Malton-Springdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
Gravelle, Michael (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	
Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora-Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Hon / L'hon Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC)	Nipissing	Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif
Hastings, John (PC)	Etobicoke North / -Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Transports
Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham-Kent Essex	
Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC)	Erie-Lincoln	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC)	Burlington	Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme
Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC)	Huron-Bruce	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
Johnson, Bert (PC)	Perth-Middlesex	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président de la Chambre et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Kells, Morley (PC)	Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Parliamentary assistant to the Premier adjoint parlementaire au premier ministre
Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Parkdale-High Park	
Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC)	Oak Ridges	Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip, deputy government House leader / ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement, leader parlementaire adjoint
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Niagara Centre / -Centre	
Kwinter, Monte (L)	York Centre / -Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	
Lankin, Frances (ND)	Beaches-East York	
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity-Spadina	
Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC)	Mississauga South / -Sud	Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Martel, Shelley (ND)	Nickel Belt	
Martin, Tony (ND)	Sault Ste Marie	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General and minister responsible for native affairs / adjoint parlementaire au procureur général et ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Maves, Bart (PC)	Niagara Falls	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Mazzilli, Frank (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General / adjoint parlementaire au solliciteur général
McGuinty, Dalton (L)	Ottawa South / -Sud	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
McLeod, Lyn (L)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	
Molinari, Tina R. (PC)	Thornhill	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York North / -Nord	assistant deputy government whip / whip adjointe suppléante du gouvernement
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey	
Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	
Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Durham	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Palladini, Hon / L'hon Al (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Parsons, Ernie (L)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
Patten, Richard (L)	Ottawa Centre / -Centre	
Peters, Steve (L)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
Phillips, Gerry (L)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
Pupatello, Sandra (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	
Ramsay, David (L)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC)	Leeds-Grenville	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Davenport	
Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Sergio, Mario (L)	York West / -Ouest	deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Smitherman, George (L)	Toronto-Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	
Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Spina, Joseph (PC)	Brampton Centre / -Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Tourisme
Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Peterborough	
Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Éducation

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Tilson, David (PC)	Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC)	Markham	Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC)	Don Valley West / -Ouest	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	deputy government whip / whip adjoint du gouvernement
Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Wood, Bob (PC)	London West / -Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / adjoint parlementaire au président du Conseil de gestion
Young, David (PC)	Willowdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Finances
Wentworth-Burlington	Vacant	

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Frances Lankin, David Young
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These lists appear in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding appears when space permits.

Ces listes figurent dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions paraît si l'espace est disponible.

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