



**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

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**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 12 April 2000**

**Mercredi 12 avril 2000**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

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*The House met at 1330.*

*Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PROVISIONNEMENT DE L'ÉDUCATION

EDUCATION FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> Claudette Boyer (Ottawa-Vanier)** : Merci, monsieur le Président. Aujourd'hui je suis fortement préoccupée par la qualité de vie professionnelle de nos enseignants et enseignantes.

Our teachers' professional well-being is of great concern to me.

Beaucoup d'enseignants et d'enseignantes sont découragés et démoralisés. Le gouvernement continue de faire des coupures en éducation tout en insistant qu'il n'y aurait aucun effet néfaste dans les salles de classe ou à la qualité de l'éducation fournie à nos enfants.

The students are the first to suffer in such situations. Key ministerial policies and regulations do not favour ideal conditions in our education system. Parents are right in asking if their children are receiving the quality of education promised by our government.

Prenons comme exemple le nombre élevé d'élèves dans les salles de classe ; les coupures aux services de soutien dans les écoles ; les réductions au temps de gestion, surtout au palier secondaire ; le manque d'outils pédagogiques et de manuels, et j'en passe. Comment peut-on croire que tous ces éléments n'ont pas d'effet sur nos enfants, que tous ces effets, tous ces éléments n'ont aucun effet sur les relations entre les enseignants et les élèves, entre les enseignants et les parents ?

This leaves teachers saying that they have had enough. There are many more of them taking long-term leave and suffering from exhaustion and depression. Yet, teachers want the best for their students and they still care deeply about the quality of education in this province. Unfortunately, they are prevented from providing it.

Il est temps de reconnaître la contribution importante des enseignants et des enseignantes au tissu social de notre province.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

**Mrs Julia Munro (York North)**: This week is National Volunteer Week. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers in Ontario, and

particularly the volunteers in my riding of York North, who give their gift of time, talent and energy to make our community a better place to live.

Volunteering is part of a Canadian way of life. International studies confirm that Canadians give more of their time than most others in the world. Volunteering means stepping outside our private lives to make a difference in our public life. In Canada there are an estimated 7.5 million people who volunteered their time in the past year. From this, it is easy to see that health, recreation, culture, sports and the environment for people of all ages and walks of life benefit from the work of volunteers in our communities.

This week honours those people who make a difference. In my riding of York North, the township of King will be celebrating and recognizing three outstanding volunteers: Irene Palmer, Eileen Shaw and Margaret Brookes. These three women have made a difference. Their commitment to volunteering has enriched our lives.

In my riding of York North, thousands of volunteers give their time to hundreds of agencies and organizations that help make York North a better place to live, work and raise a family.

CHRISTOPHER PALMER

**Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River)**: Oftentimes we see individuals in need of a home, in need of food, and we walk by thinking, "Oh, society's uncaring," but the true story is that we live in a compassionate society.

On the night of February 14, Christopher Palmer was murdered by a gunman who pumped five bullets into him in front of 300 people. No relatives or friends came forward to claim his body, which lay in a cold, stainless steel cooling cabinet in a Toronto morgue. However, there are compassionate and kind-hearted individuals in our community who want to extend the dignity of a proper and decent burial to Christopher, although he was a stranger to them.

A government is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable and deprived, and so are organizations and individuals. The action of organizations and individuals in this situation restores my confidence in humanity. Yes, there are good people out there. Though unknown, Christopher Palmer will be given a proper funeral.

Christopher Palmer's murder remains unsolved. Of the 300 patrons at the nightclub that evening, not one has come forward to assist the police in the investigation. As

high school teacher Lennox Farrell said to his students, "The silence about wrongdoings and unlawful acts, goaded by a fear of revenge, is a plague that so afflicts our own students too."

I appeal to the people who were there that night to come forward and assist the police in investigating this case.

A trust account has been set up. Donations can be made to Roach and Schwartz in Trust to offset the costs. The visitation is Sunday, April 16, at 3 pm and the funeral is on Monday, April 17, at 10 am at the Ogden Funeral Home, 646 St Clair Avenue West.

#### JOB CREATION

**Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland):** I am pleased to rise today to inform this House that the unprecedented job growth in Ontario is still continuing. In March, Ontario's unemployment rate continued to decline, just like the public's confidence in the leader of the Liberal Party. We should all be proud that the unemployment rate is at 5.6%.

The number of jobs being created is truly remarkable. Over 28,000 net new jobs were gained last month. That brings us to a total of 701,000 net new jobs that have been created since the throne speech in 1995. Most important, however, is that Ontario is gaining full-time jobs. Full-time employment rose by over 32,000 jobs last month alone.

According to Statistics Canada, Northumberland county and surrounding areas have witnessed the unemployment rate drop from 9.9% in 1995 to 7.1% in March of this year. But I can tell you there's still lots more to do.

Essentially, companies are recognizing that Ontario is a good place to do business. This government has cut taxes in order to attract investment and create jobs, and our plan is proving to be very successful.

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I extend sincere congratulations to the thousands of Ontarians who got jobs in March and were able to come home and say: "Guess what? I got the job."

#### HAZARDOUS WASTE

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** The Safety-Kleen site in Sarnia-Lambton is still importing hundreds of thousands of tonnes of toxic hazardous waste from outside the province. Toxic hazardous waste has come in from the United States and from as far away as the Caribbean and Saudi Arabia. This site is still doing business as usual, even though the integrity of the liner has been breached, even though the company is in financial trouble in South Carolina and even though every tonne of toxic hazardous waste imported will mean millions of taxpayer dollars for eventual cleanup.

1340

I brought this to the attention of the Minister of the Environment in October 1999. The minister announced

changes, but this province is still accepting toxic hazardous waste at higher levels than ever before. Ontario has the jurisdictional authority to accept or reject toxic hazardous waste importation. Ontario should be moving forward to become a model for high environmental standards for the world. Instead, as is evident at the Safety-Kleen site, this province under the Harris Tories has been regressing when it comes to the environment. I wonder whom Harris will blame for the dismal track record.

#### HEART AND SOUL CAMPAIGN

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On March 28 I was pleased to participate in the launch of our community's Heart and Soul Campaign. The campaign is a single fundraising effort by three community partners: the Sudbury Regional Hospital Corp, the Northeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre and St Joseph's Health Centre. Each is involved in a major health care capital project and must contribute a local share to project costs. The partners collectively must raise \$45.7 million, the largest fundraising campaign ever undertaken by our community.

The three projects include the expansion and renovation of the Sudbury Regional Hospital, Laurentian site, as ordered by the Health Services Restructuring Commission. The bulk of the money to be raised is needed for this mandated government cost. The second is the increase in size and the addition of more linear accelerators at the cancer treatment centre to meet future cancer needs. The third is the proposal to develop 168 long-term-care beds at St Joseph's Health Centre to care for more seniors in our community.

Two of these three facilities serve people from across northeastern Ontario and, given the extraordinary local share to be raised, Sudbury regional council is approaching this government for help to ensure that we can meet regional health care needs. I trust ministers in this government will meet with our community leaders and listen carefully to what they have to say. We're prepared to do our share, but this government must recognize our additional burden as a regional centre for health care and agree to do more so we can all meet our responsibilities.

#### FRUIT WINES

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** It's my pleasure to rise again today to congratulate two excellent wineries located in my riding of Durham. These wineries are on the cutting edge of a relatively new wine industry: fruit wines.

On March 6, the newly formed Fruit Wines of Canada Association held their first national fruit wine competition. At the competition, Ocala Orchard Farm Winery, owned by Alissa and Irwin Smith, brought home two gold and two bronze medals. Congratulations.

Fred and Sandy Archibald, owners of Archibald Orchards, located just north of my home in Bowmanville,

also made Durham proud by winning nine awards, including two gold medals.

I encourage all members of the House to support this young industry by trying a bottle of fruit wine today. I can think of no better way to acquaint yourself with these wines than by trying one of the medal-winning wines from Durham region. Indeed, you won't go wrong with a fruit wine from Durham region. At this recent competition, Durham wines walked away with 21% of all awards presented.

As an addition to my statement today, I would also like to congratulate the Orono Lumber midget hockey team, as they won the Ontario Minor Hockey League's midget D provincial championship just recently.

As a member of the Legiskaters, who recently sampled the bitter taste of defeat in a match against Quebec, our counterparts, I am pleased that the sweet taste of victory has returned to my riding of Durham in the form of hockey championships, as well as the excellent wine industry in Durham. It makes me so proud to represent an important riding such as Durham and to occasionally share my speaking time with the member from Northumberland.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** I think it's fair to say that many of us are only beginning to understand the long-term battle that people with eating disorders face. In fact, I was shocked to learn recently that people with eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all people with a psychiatric problem, even more so than depression.

In northwestern Ontario, we are fortunate that the St Joseph's Care Group has a well-established program to help those with this serious disorder. But the problem is that St Joseph's has been forced to rely solely on its own operating funds to keep this important program going. So much more needs to be done.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health provides funding support for eating disorder programs in other parts of the province, and in fact recently announced financial support for an expansion of services in eastern Ontario. Yet, despite an intense lobbying effort over the past several years, Health Minister Witmer refuses to fund our program in Thunder Bay. The minister's most recent response to our efforts is both stunning and infuriating. In a recent letter, she indicated, "The majority of funding allocated in the last few years has been to increase specialized treatment services in parts of the province where the need is greatest." She then suggests that those in need should contact the program run by the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. How utterly appalling.

Minister, let me address you directly. Our needs are just as great as anywhere else in the province. To tell us to deal with a southern Ontario facility when a full-service program could be available in the north is absurd. Rethink this, Minister. We need and deserve this support.

#### TERRY FOX

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North):** This is a very dramatic day in the lives of Ontarians and Canadians. Today we celebrate and commemorate the 20th anniversary of Terry Fox's heroic run across Canada to raise money and awareness for cancer research.

On April 12, 1980, with little fanfare, Terry started his inspirational journey in St John's, Newfoundland. Although it was difficult to garner attention at the outset, enthusiasm soon grew, and the money collected along his route began to mount.

He ran 43 kilometres per day throughout the Atlantic provinces, Quebec and Ontario. He called his run the Marathon of Hope, and it became the inspiration for an annual charity run to continue the worthy cause started by Terry 20 years ago. I have been proud to be a participant in the Etobicoke North Terry Fox Run for the last seven years.

Sadly, in September 1980, Terry was forced to end his run outside of Thunder Bay. An entire nation was stunned and saddened. This true Canadian hero was gone, but his legacy was just beginning. To this date, the Marathon of Hope has raised an estimated \$250 million worldwide for cancer research. Terry Fox is no longer with us, but his enduring spirit lives on.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I beg leave to inform the House that the Clerk has received the fifth report of the standing committee on government agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 106, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr3, An Act respecting Peterborough Regional Health Centre

Bill Pr 5, An Act respecting The Ross Memorial Hospital

Bill Pr 16, An Act to incorporate Talpiot College.

Your committee further recommends that the fees and the actual cost of printing at all stages be remitted on Bill Pr16, An Act to incorporate Talpiot College.

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

## DEFERRED VOTES

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** We now have a deferred vote on the motion by Mr Harris relating to health care funding. Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1349 to 1354.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

|                    |                    |                     |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Arnott, Ted        | Hardeman, Ernie    | Mushinski, Marilyn  |
| Baird, John R.     | Harris, Michael D. | Newman, Dan         |
| Barrett, Toby      | Hastings, John     | O'Toole, John       |
| Beaubien, Marcel   | Hodgson, Chris     | Palladini, Al       |
| Chudleigh, Ted     | Hudak, Tim         | Runciman, Robert W. |
| Churley, Marilyn   | Jackson, Cameron   | Sampson, Rob        |
| Clark, Brad        | Johns, Helen       | Snobelen, John      |
| Clement, Tony      | Kells, Morley      | Spina, Joseph       |
| Coburn, Brian      | Klees, Frank       | Sterling, Norman W. |
| Cunningham, Dianne | Kormos, Peter      | Stewart, R. Gary    |
| Dunlop, Garfield   | Lankin, Frances    | Stockwell, Chris    |
| Ecker, Janet       | Marchese, Rosario  | Tasca, Joseph N.    |
| Eves, Ernie L.     | Martel, Shelley    | Tilson, David       |
| Flaherty, Jim      | Martin, Tony       | Tsubouchi, David H. |
| Galt, Doug         | Martiniuk, Gerry   | Turnbull, David     |
| Gilchrist, Steve   | Mazzilli, Frank    | Wettlaufer, Wayne   |
| Gill, Raminder     | Molinari, Tina R.  | Wilson, Jim         |
| Guzzo, Garry J.    | Munro, Julia       | Wood, Bob           |
| Hampton, Howard    | Murdoch, Bill      | Young, David        |

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

#### Nays

|                      |                    |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Agostino, Dominic    | Di Cocco, Caroline | McLeod, Lyn        |
| Bartolucci, Rick     | Dombrowsky, Leona  | Parsons, Ernie     |
| Bountrogianni, Marie | Gerretsen, John    | Patten, Richard    |
| Boyer, Claudette     | Gravelle, Michael  | Peters, Steve      |
| Bryant, Michael      | Kennedy, Gerard    | Phillips, Gerry    |
| Caplan, David        | Kwinter, Monte     | Ramsay, David      |
| Colle, Mike          | Lalonde, Jean-Marc | Smitherman, George |
| Conway, Sean G.      | Levac, David       |                    |
| Curling, Alvin       | McGuinty, Dalton   |                    |

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 57; the nays are 25.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would seek unanimous consent of the House to place a Liberal amendment to the Harris motion just passed as a principal motion.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? I heard some noes.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Doctors have

repeatedly told us that it's unsafe for people with cancer to wait more than four weeks before receiving radiation treatment. My party and I believe we have a very heavy obligation to make sure that all Ontarians who are suffering from cancer have access to treatment in a timely way. That means, in Ontario, radiation within four weeks.

**1400**

Minister, four months ago we learned that only—and this is terribly embarrassing—one third of Ontario cancer patients are getting access to radiation treatment within the recommended period of time. When I raised my concerns with you then, you promised that, come the end of March, this March past, you would ensure that one half of our cancer patients would be receiving timely radiation treatment in Ontario. March has come and gone, and we are very interested in learning from you, here and now, whether or not you reached your lofty goal to ensure that 50% of Ontario cancer patients are receiving their radiation treatment in a timely way.

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Our government has made cancer care a priority for this province. We have invested over \$155 million into cancer services and cancer care. In fact, we are constructing five new cancer facilities throughout the province in order that we can provide these services closer to home.

I would also say to you that Cancer Care Ontario indicated to us, through Tom McGowan, that he expected that, come the spring of 2000, "We will have broken the back of the radiation waiting problem." Under the leadership of Cancer Care Ontario, with the resources that have been given to them, they are doing everything they can in order to ensure that waiting times and waiting lists are reduced. They have actively and aggressively recruited—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr McGuinty:** Let's just back it up for a moment. Four months ago, the Provincial Auditor made an unprecedented finding. He said that only one third of Ontario cancer patients were getting their treatment within the recommended four weeks. I raised that matter with you in the Legislature. You said, in the most solemn fashion, that you were going to ensure that we achieve the lofty target of 50% by this March immediately past.

The fact of the matter is—and you were too embarrassed, obviously, to admit it just now—we are only providing, today in Ontario, timely treatment to 40% of our cancer patients, not 100%, not 90% or 80% or 70% or 60%, not even your goal of 50%. We've only achieved 40% in Ontario. To make matters worse, Cancer Care Ontario is now telling us they will not be able to achieve your target of 50% for another 12 months. You have failed miserably in this regard. I ask you now, on behalf of Ontario cancer patients and their families, why did you fail them?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** As the leader knows, Cancer Care Ontario was created in 1997 in order that standards and

guidelines for the treatment of patients who require cancer services could be coordinated. I know that Cancer Care Ontario is doing everything they possibly can. One of the areas where they are more actively working now is on the recruitment of radiation therapists in order that the human resources are there. We have expanded the radiation therapist program from 50 students to 75. I know they will continue to do everything they humanly can in order to ensure—in fact, we are the only province in Canada that is moving toward the four-week standard.

**Mr McGuinty:** Ontarians understand that ultimately the buck stops with you. You said that by this March past, 50% of Ontario cancer patients could look forward to receiving radiation treatment in a timely way, within the four-week period recommended by their own doctors. Today, it's at 40% and we learn that it's going to take a further 12 months to get up to the lofty height of 50%. Today in Ontario six out of 10 cancer patients cannot look forward to receiving the treatment recommended by their own doctors.

To make matters worse, your cancer care experts are telling you they need \$60 million this year. If you were genuinely committed to resolving this matter, you would give them that. But they tell me you're only going to give them \$40 million. You have millions and millions of dollars to run completely useless, partisan television ads, but apparently you have no money when it comes to ensuring that Ontario cancer patients and their families can look forward to treatment in a timely way.

Minister, how is it that you can continue to tell Ontario cancer patients and their families can look forward to treatment in a timely way? How can you continue to tell Ontario cancer patients and their families, "Get in line"?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** I guess I'm a little surprised to hear the leader of the third party talk about more money when we have already increased health care funding in this province, and when we asked the federal government for more money he refused to sign a letter that had been written by our Premier and signed by the leader of the third party. So where's the money from the federal government?

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr McGuinty:** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Back to the Minister of Health for a moment: You should know that Ontarians are growing very tired of the blame game and are looking to you for leadership on health care in Ontario.

#### STUDENT ASSISTANCE

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** Minister, I want to raise with you the case of Barbara, a 23-year-old student in Ontario attending Ryerson Polytechnic University. She is a single mother. She is very bright, she's an exceptionally hard worker and she wants to be a success not only for her own sake but for the sake of her three-year-old boy. She's an engineering student, and she should have a promising future ahead of

her. The problem is that so far she has accumulated \$50,000 of student debt. She needs money for tuition, room and board, food, and day care for her child.

Tuition fees have skyrocketed on your government's watch. You have changed the rules so that she can no longer receive welfare. She's got to borrow every cent. And now, to make matters worse, Ryerson university is considering deregulating engineering. If they do that, she tells me she will not be able to finish her studies.

Minister, why are you letting Barbara down?

**Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** It has been the tradition of this province, through a number of governments, that people like Barbara are a priority, in that this year there is more money in student assistance than in any other government's budget. Both accessibility and excellence have been a priority. In this case, I would invite Barbara to get in touch with my office or you, Mr Leader, to let us know what the real problem is. I would be happy to talk to Barbara.

**Mr McGuinty:** Minister, let me tell you what is happening out there. There's a new study out of the University of Guelph. It shows that in 1987, 40% of students at that university came from families that earned \$40,000 or less in family income. Ten years later, that number was down to 28%. Children of families with modest means are being left behind in Ontario. To become a lawyer in Ontario today will soon be \$44,000 in tuition alone; to become a doctor in our province today, \$44,000 in tuition alone; to become a dentist in Ontario today, \$55,000 in tuition alone. The professions are shortly going to become something that is handed down from generation to generation inside our wealthy families. I like the old rules you and I played by, Minister, the rules that said if you worked hard and had good marks you got to go on and it didn't matter how much money your parents had.

You promised that nobody in this province would be deprived of a post-secondary education because of financing. I am telling you, and the study is telling you, that children in families of modest means are being shut out of university. You're letting those families down. How can you justify that?

1410

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** In response to the leader of the third party, full-time enrolment at both our colleges and universities is up this year to a higher level than ever before. We have the largest rate of accessibility in this province for 18- to 24-year-olds than any other province. Having said that, I think the leader makes a good point, and that is why OSAP funding is up 30% over the amount you provided when you were government. Furthermore, we are committed right now that in any of the increased funding for OSAP, one third be put back into supporting students. We have new Aiming for the Top scholarships that do address students in need. At this point in time there is no other government that has put more than half a billion dollars into student assistance in this province or in this country.

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just want to bring to the House's attention the last two ministers who have made comments responding to a question from the leader of the official opposition—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I thank the member. I am sure that all the members will be aware of the leader of the official opposition.

Final supplementary.

**Mr McGuinty:** Minister, you are painfully out of touch on this issue. Let me tell you about the kind of conversation that is going on around Ontario kitchen tables. It goes something like this: Parents are looking at their kids and saying, "You're bright, you're hard-working, you've got good marks, but in our family, just so you know, kids, we can't afford doctors, we can't afford dentists, we can't afford lawyers, we can't afford engineers." That is what's happening, and this study is confirming that. Access to post-secondary education is becoming entirely dependent on the extent of a family's personal wealth. That's what is happening in Ontario today.

You specifically committed that no Ontario young person would be shut out of post-secondary studies because of money. The fact of the matter is, they are doing that.

I ask you again, on behalf of those families and those young people who are turning to less expensive careers, to less expensive university programs, what you intend to do to help them.

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** In response to the leader of the Liberal Party in Ontario, I would like to say that I believe it is he who is totally out of touch. What is going around, the talk at the kitchen table these days, is: "What do you want to be? You've got a job. You're paying down your debt. There's more money available than ever before for student assistance. You've got hope. There's a job." That's what the parents are talking about.

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** I will continue to say to the parents of the students and to the students in this province that there will be a space for every qualified and motivated student in this province in the years to come, as there have been in the past. There have never been more students—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Take a seat. Order. Would the minister take her seat, please. The member for Kingston and the Islands and the member for Sudbury, please come to order. I can't hear the answer.

Minister.

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** I would like to address the response today to the young students who are in this audience. These students up here have hopes and aspirations and dreams, and I want to give them the promise that there will be a space for every single one of them who is qualified and motivated to be there.

#### NURSING HOMES

**Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, yesterday

in question period you seemed unaware of your government's decision to suspend annual reviews of nursing homes. After question period, in the scrum, you told reporters that there was no requirement for annual reviews and that your government had introduced new service agreements, and you left the impression that you were moving to self-regulation. Then you got back to your office, you called all the reporters and said you didn't really mean that, that you were going to continue with annual reviews and that you would ensure that they would happen.

This morning, with yet again another version of your response, you said that it was in 1993 and that the NDP did away with the need to have annual reviews.

Duck, deflect blame; it's so classic from over there.

Here are the 1993 amendments; here's the 1999 Nursing Homes Act. I'll tell you what it does. It sets out the requirement for service agreements, which you tried to take credit for yesterday. It doesn't take away from any provision of licensing, of inspection or of posting.

Minister, just tell us why your government pulled compliance officers away from doing their job and tell us what you're going to do about it now to fix the problem.

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** What I indicated yesterday was that there was not, as you had indicated, any requirement under the law or regulation—it was a matter of policy—for annual reviews. I never indicated in any way, shape or form and never mentioned the word "self-regulation." I know you were headed in that direction and you were also trying to talk about privatization.

However, let me say that I did appreciate the fact that I finally received a letter from you, after question period. It had the names of four nursing homes in it. I can assure you that all four of those had inspections in 1999. It might interest the member of the third party to know that since 1992, when you were in government and when you were Minister of Health, there has never been full compliance achieved at any time.

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

**Ms Lankin:** Minister, this morning, in response to some of the questions from reporters as you were entering the cabinet meeting, you said, "The licence renewals are not done on an annual basis." I'm quoting you. I'm taking that right from the tape of your interview. Subsection 5(8) of the Nursing Homes Act says, "A licence expires 12 months after the date of its issue or renewal."

Yesterday you said there was no requirement, although every other government has interpreted the legislation and the provisions for licensing, for inspection and for posting to say that you have to inspect to know if they're compliant, that you have to know if they're in compliance in order to give them a licence. But you said it's policy.

Frankly, we don't care at this point in time. We want to know, why did your government direct that the compliance officers be taken off the job of doing their annual reviews? Why did you stop it for virtually two



years in this province? Why did you do that? How many were renewed without a licence and without an inspection? How many didn't get inspections? Those are the questions that were put to you in the scrum this morning. Those are the questions I put to you. You still refuse to answer them. Try again today.

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** If there was neglect of any seniors in this province, it was by your government. For 10 years prior to our announcement in 1998, there were no long-term-care beds undertaken until we made our announcement of 20,000 beds in this province.

Furthermore, not only do we undertake to implement service agreements with nursing homes, but we also have expanded to include the municipal homes for the aged and the charitable homes. We are doing more compliance, more service agreements than your government did. Those people were totally neglected. I would also indicate to you that our funding to the long-term-care sector has increased by 26%, so we are doing more. We are building beds, which you neglected, and we have included more homes than ever before.

Furthermore, I would like to indicate to you that I have asked for a complete assessment of the situation, because I don't believe that not achieving—

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

**Ms Lankin:** It's kind of hard to follow the bouncing ball here.

Minister, in response to your claim now that you're doing service agreements in the municipal sector which were never done before, I suggest you take a look at something like the 1995 Provincial Auditor's report and the comments made in 1993 and 1994, when service agreements were being done in the homes for the aged in the municipal sector.

I suggest that you take a look at the legislation, 5(8), which says that the licence expires every 12 months. I suggest you retract the statement you made to the media this morning saying that licences aren't done on an annual basis.

I suggest you stop ducking and weaving. I suggest that you admit your government directed compliance officers to do something else, that you tell us why, and that you say it'll never happen again. That's what the people want to hear, not blaming other people, not trying to blame other governments, not trying to deflect from yourself.

Finally, Minister, just take some responsibility for your own ministry, for those frail seniors, for their families, for compliance with the legislation.

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** We have taken responsibility for these seniors. Let me tell you what the long-term-care minister, Mr Jackson, did on November 3, 1998, when he became aware of the situation at the Van Del Manor Nursing Home. He took over the operation of the nursing home because of the ministry's serious concern for the health, safety and well-being of the residents living in the nursing home. As I indicated to you before, we have expanded the responsibility and we today include the municipal homes for the aged and the charitable homes. We have gone far beyond the scope of interest you had in seniors.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. We understand that negotiations between your government and the Ontario Medical Association may be completed this weekend. This will be the real test of your commitment to preserve medicare, because since 1995 you've been saying, and study after study has been saying and report after report has been saying, that if we want to sustain and preserve medicare, we've got to change the way people have access to their family physician, the nurse practitioner and the nurse.

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The people of Ontario deserve a system where the family doctor and the nurse practitioner are in for all of us, not just some of us. So we're asking you for a commitment. We're asking you for a commitment that in these negotiations with the OMA, people who don't have a family physician, people who can't get access to a nurse practitioner, will see that result from these negotiations and not a situation again where you simply give the doctors more money and we don't get the health care changes we need. What's your commitment, Premier?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** First of all, let me thank the member for his support today for the resolution to get the health dollars slashed by the Liberals out of Ottawa. I appreciate a signal of real leadership in a non-partisan way, lacking by some others in the Legislature.

Secondly, I want to thank the honourable member for his support of our position on primary care reform. I think two parties in this Legislature have talked consistently of primary care reform. Some who don't want to get the funding from Ottawa, johnny-come-latelies, have started to talk about it lately. I think you have been sincere in that. I think your former minister was sincere in that. I'm actually very proud to have been able to be in a position where we can start implementing seven pilot projects, starting with a 24-hour telephone triage in a significant part of this province. As you know, we are in negotiations with the doctors. I would hope that when those negotiations conclude, you will be equally effusive in your praise of our government.

**Mr Hampton:** Premier, let me underline how serious this is. In community after community across this province, people cannot get access to a family physician, people cannot get access to a nurse practitioner. This is crucial.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Just a moment, please. Order. The official opposition has had their questions. It's the third party's turn, and I would appreciate it if there was some quiet when the member presents his question. Sorry to interrupt.

**Mr Hampton:** I realize that the Liberals have a problem with primary care reform because they believe it should be voluntary, in which case it'll never happen.

Premier, the reality is there are people across this province who do not have access to a family doctor and they don't have access to a nurse practitioner. In these

negotiations you have the capacity to show some leadership, to say to the Ontario Medical Association: "We're going to move off fee for service. We're going to move to a situation where doctors work in teams with nurse practitioners and nurses. We're going to expand a number of community health centres, the number of health service organizations, and we're going to ensure that every family across Ontario has access to a family doctor, has access to a nurse practitioner."

That's within your capacity now. I want to hear that after this weekend your government will be standing to announce that in fact that's what has happened, not a couple of more pilot projects but that you've actually shown the leadership to ensure that people who need a family doctor, who need a nurse practitioner, are going to get one after this weekend. Where's the commitment?

**Hon Mr Harris:** Again, I appreciate the member's understanding and commitment to ensuring that we have 24-hour physician care and that those who do have challenges now in many parts of this province in accessing a family doctor have that access. I reiterate that support is appreciated, unlike a party who, I might add—Don Boudria, the federal Liberal whip, seems to have more influence on this party than on his own members, even attending committee meetings. They don't listen to Don Boudria in Ottawa, but this gang does, which is why we're having challenges getting dollars. So I appreciate that.

I want to say that if, after failure by Liberals for five years and New Democrats for five years in spite of your unwavering commitment, there is a Minister of Health anywhere in the country who is able to achieve meaningful primary care reform, it will be this Minister of Health.

#### OAK RIDGES MORaine

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I have a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Today there was an outrageous decision, and this decision was made by your OMB. Your OMB rejected the city of Toronto's and Peel region's requests to have standing at the upcoming, enormously important hearing to decide the fate of the Oak Ridges moraine in Richmond Hill. Incredibly, the OMB denied Toronto and Peel the right to join conservationists in the town of Richmond Hill in their fight to stop the development of the moraine.

Minister, Richmond Hill has said no to development, along with its residents, environmentalists and 465 scientists. Given that Richmond Hill and environmentalists have very limited financial resources to fight these developers at the OMB, and given that Toronto's and Peel's participation was their last hope to mount an effective defence to save the moraine, will you now intercede, using the resources of your ministry and your government, and step in to protect the moraine?

**Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** I hope the honourable member will understand that because the OMB is a quasi-judicial

tribunal, I'm not going to be commenting on any decisions they are making on a particular case.

I can inform the House, and perhaps the honourable member, that less than half of the members of the current OMB were appointed by this government. Indeed, neither of the members of the OMB who are hearing the pre-hearings in the particular case that he mentions were appointed by this government. So if he has any allegations to make, perhaps he should be a bit more explicit.

**Mr Colle:** It's very clear: What has happened today is incredible. The city of Toronto and the region of Peel wanted to help protect the moraine because the people of Peel and the people of Toronto know that we're all interconnected through the Humber River, through the Credit River, that we're all in one bioregion. What the OMB did today basically said they don't want to hear the other side of the story now because it takes so much money. In fact, one developer, Mr Lebovic, has spent half a million dollars already on studies before this application. Now the environmentalists and the local residents won't have the money to hire the Bay Street lawyers and the planners. Now it looks as if it's all on the side of the developers at the OMB.

Would you step in with your government resources to ensure that the environmentalists and the town of Richmond Hill can afford to pay for the very, very expensive studies to bring forth the case of the moraine? Right now basically it will just be on the side of the developers. Would you step in and help—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Order. The member's time is up. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**Hon Mr Clement:** I would appeal to the honourable member to understand that this is a quasi-judicial process. I would appeal to the honourable member to understand that certainly on this side of the House we have to allow a quasi-judicial process to take its course. I hope the honourable member understands that. He aspires to be a member of the government some day, and yet he leads with rhetoric, which can perhaps be detrimental to the effective administration of justice in this province. I know that isn't what he meant but that could be the effect.

The honourable member wants this side of the House to protect provincial interest. I can announce to this House, as I've announced on previous days, that the provincial government is a party to the hearings, to represent the provincial interest, to protect the provincial interest, to represent the provincial policy statement, which is very clear with respect to the protection of natural heritage in our province. That is the position of the provincial government. We are at the hearings to protect that interest.

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#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. When the job numbers came out

on Friday, I was so pleased to see that the unemployment rate in my great riding of Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale declined to 5.4%. That's down from 8.7% when we took office in 1995. I'm sure it has something to do with the two major investments that have recently come to Brampton; namely Coca-Cola investing \$150 million to build a new facility at the 410 and 407, and Old Navy locating its national warehouse and distribution centre on McLaughlin Road. What is your ministry doing to facilitate increased investment in the province?

**Hon Al Palladini (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** I'd like to thank the honourable member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale for the question. Ontario now has an open-for-business attitude. We have created a positive economic environment by cutting taxes and eliminating barriers to growth, and businesses have responded by creating over 700,000 jobs since June 1995. The Market Ontario campaign that we launched in 1996 has also been very successful, in that now Ontario attracts nearly 60% of any investment that comes into Canada. We are definitely on target to create those 725,000 jobs that the opposition members said we couldn't create.

**Mr Gill:** Those are certainly very good numbers that my constituents would like to hear. There's no question that our economy is firing on all cylinders, especially in my riding. The tax cuts we brought in are certainly fueling that growth, but what measures are our government and your ministry, in particular, taking to maintain the momentum of this impressive growth?

**Hon Mr Palladini:** Now that we have achieved that type of growth, I can assure you that we will not sit back and rest on our laurels. We have many programs that our government has initiated, and one of the programs, which is called the Wisdom Exchange, allows an opportunity for business leaders to get together and discuss their concerns and also take a look at how we can become more efficient and productive. This government has brought in a key account manager for the very first time in the history of Ontario. We actually have people knocking on businesses' doors to see, what can our government do? How can we create a better, positive economic environment so they can create more jobs? Businesses have done a tremendous job in creating all those jobs in Ontario, and yes, we are booming, and we're going to continue to make sure that we're going to have that type of growth.

#### ONTARIO WORKS

**Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** My question today is for the minister responsible for community and social services. I've become aware that people on Ontario Works are being forced to sign liens against their homes. As I understand it, these liens for basic financial assistance will include not only benefits paid for accommodation, but also for food, clothing, dental and drug expenses, our most basic needs. Even those who are participating in community placements have been targeted and are being

forced to mortgage their only asset—their home—for food, shelter and other basic needs.

The small amount of equity which recipients are allowed to keep would be eaten up by fees to pay lawyers and real estate agents when they sell their home. If the Ontario Works program is really a hand up and not a boot out, explain the justice of applying liens for basic needs, even to those who participate in community placements.

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** This government's view is that welfare is a program of last resort. Our government is committed to ensuring that every dollar in the welfare system is spent helping those people who are genuinely in need. We're keeping our commitment to meet people's needs by ensuring that that money goes to support those people with no other alternative.

It is my judgment and the judgment of those of us on this side of the House that if someone owns their own home, there is another alternative. But we don't want anyone to have to lose their home because of a policy of the Ontario Works Act. That is why for the first 12 months, while someone goes out to get back into the working world, there's no change whatsoever in the policy, but if they are on welfare for more than 12 months, they're required to pay the taxpayers back for the help the taxpayers have offered them.

You can't say to someone sitting on a home with \$20,000, \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000 in equity that they can keep that equity and get subsidized by the taxpayers at the same time. There are other people in that community who are working hard to build up a down payment so that they can realize the dream of home ownership. For us, welfare is for those who are truly in need, with no alternative.

**Mrs Dombrowsky:** Hastings county has been pressured by your ministry to issue liens to over 130 families on Ontario Works. These families must sign liens on their homes by today or their benefits will be terminated. Many of these homes have been passed down from one generation to another. They are not just buildings, but homes filled with love and memories.

I'd like to tell you about a single mom from Hastings county who is working three part-time jobs and still volunteers 40 hours a month in her daughter's school. She owns a very modest home and sees this asset as the only way she might be able to provide for her daughter's post-secondary education. Each month she requires only a small amount of assistance from Ontario Works to top up what she earns juggling three part-time jobs. Now she must sign a lien on her home.

Minister, how can you implement a policy that will ultimately make this woman choose between food, necessities and shelter and her daughter's future?

**Hon Mr Baird:** It will come as no surprise to the member opposite that I don't accept the premise of her question. There is no element of choice involved. If someone, as the individual she told the story of, is working on three jobs—and we have more than 60,000

people in the province participating in the government's earnfare program, so that is something that is quite common. If they are working at three jobs and require a modest amount, \$100 or \$200, to supplement that, in addition to the drug benefit and the other benefits under social assistance, it would be a matter of a very small lien.

Our view is, if you own your own home—you mentioned a situation where someone would have passed that home down three times. If someone is sitting there with a home worth \$50,000, \$60,000 or \$100,000, they should not be expecting a handout from their fellow citizens. One of the fundamental premises is that welfare is a program of last resort for people with no other alternative. I know the members opposite don't support that. They believe people on welfare should be allowed to own cottages, for goodness' sake.

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

#### WELFARE REFORM

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** My question today is also for the Minister of Community and Social Services. There has been a lot of discussion lately about our government's policy of zero tolerance. I can understand that measures are needed in order to ensure that our welfare system is not abused. We also heard today how the welfare system in the last decade, between 1985 and 1995, was nothing but a bottomless money pit with no safeguards against fraud.

However, some people have expressed concern that your implementation of a zero tolerance policy demonstrates a lack of flexibility.

Can you please tell me if you have any knowledge of any other jurisdiction in Canada that has a zero tolerance policy that punishes people for fraud with a lifetime ban?

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**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** The bottom line for our government is that we will not tolerate fraud. In our view, welfare is for the needy and not for the greedy.

To answer the question that the member asked, is there any other jurisdiction in Canada—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Take a seat. Order. Both of the oppositions have asked questions; it's now the government's turn in the rotation. I would appreciate if there was some quiet when they ask a question. I can't hear the question being asked.

**Hon Mr Baird:** To the member who asked the question, this has been a criticism. Is there any other jurisdiction in Canada that has a zero tolerance for fraud? The member opposite will undoubtedly be surprised, as will my colleagues in the Liberal Party be most surprised, to learn that the federal government in Ottawa has proposed a zero tolerance policy. In fact, last week the federal minister of immigration, Elinor Caplan, unveiled a zero

tolerance policy for people who commit fraud or misrepresent themselves during the immigration process.

I know that imitation is the highest form of flattery. We're very proud to see that the federal Liberals in Ottawa are watching the good example of the Harris government—

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

**Ms Mushinski:** Minister, I appreciate your answer but I still have a few concerns. Our government promised in the Blueprint to continue to crack down on fraud. Now your rules say that anyone convicted of defrauding the social assistance system will be cut off for life. I understand the need to have penalties for people who rip off the welfare system, the system that should be there for people who truly need it. Nevertheless, how do I respond to constituents who tell me that this is too much and that there is no other crime in the country that receives a life sentence? After all, Liberals let convicted murderers out of jail after only 15 years.

Minister, are you worried that you have gone too far?

**Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East):** What a disgraceful comparison.

**Hon Mr Baird:** We believe that we've got to take a whole bunch of initiatives to ensure that—

**Mr Agostino:** You should be ashamed of yourself.

**The Speaker:** Member for Hamilton East, come to order, please.

**Hon Mr Baird:** Our government believes we have a responsibility to ensure that every taxpayer's dollar they bring to us to support people on social assistance is spent wisely and is spent well. That's what the taxpayers expect.

The members opposite may be interested to learn that in a recent COMPAS survey, 76% of social services workers said there was a continued need to work hard to address fraud. I'll be the first to admit that because of our welfare reform, a lot has changed in the province of Ontario. The Liberal and NDP governments gave cheques to people in prison—

**Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West):** Let's talk about an open-ended, \$180-million contract. Let's review the contract, Minister.

**The Speaker:** Would the member for Windsor West come to order as well. We can't have question period if I can't hear the questions and the answers, and we can't have a situation where members are shouting across at members when they're trying to answer. Everyone has an equal opportunity to ask questions in this House, and it's only polite that we listen to the answers and the questions.

Minister, continue, please.

**Hon Mr Baird:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

The Liberals and the NDP gave cheques to people in prison. The Liberals and the NDP believe in giving cheques to cottagers. The Liberals and the NDP believe in giving cheques to fraud artists.

This government takes a very different view. It's those welfare reforms which have helped see more than 485,000 people leave the system, which is—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Would the minister take his seat. Order. Member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, come to order. This is his last warning as well. We can't continue to have that. The members for Hamilton East and Toronto Centre-Rosedale, come to order. It is the last warning for both of you.

#### OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier, and he's supposed to be here, but he's not.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** The Premier is here.  
*Interjections.*

**Mr Hampton:** Well, it is so unusual to see the Premier here.

**The Speaker:** Order. Take your seat for a quick second.

Leader of the third party.

**Mr Hampton:** Premier, today New Democrats are putting forward an opposition day motion to save the Oak Ridges moraine and green Ontario's land use planning system.

In 1971, your predecessor, Bill Davis, surprised and delighted thousands of Ontario citizens by stopping the Spadina Expressway. That battle was a defining issue for the thousands of people fighting for good urban planning and liveable communities.

Today, the decision is the Oak Ridges moraine. You have a chance to be like Bill Davis and rise to the occasion. Premier, will you come through for the people and do the right thing and freeze development on the Oak Ridges moraine?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** It seems a number of ministers want to answer this question, but I'd be pleased to answer. Let's review a little bit the history of the Oak Ridges moraine. In 1990, I think it was the Peterson government that declared a provincial interest in the moraine. We agreed. In 1991, your government introduced implementation guidelines. We agreed. Bud Wildman, minister of the day, said this about those guidelines, "They would ensure that significant features and functions of the moraine are protected for future generations because they were designed to accomplish the following eight principles." I could read those out but the Speaker might not give me time to read all eight of them. We agree with that. We agree with the eight principles. We agree with protecting all the values of the moraine. We agreed with your government. We agreed with the Peterson government.

At the time, Glenn Harrington of the Conservation Council of Ontario said, "Some of the NDP guidelines were quite strict." The fact is that both the 1990 interest and the 1991 provincial guidelines, taken by the two governments of the day, are fully supported by our government. Since those steps have been taken, all regions across the moraine have incorporated the 1991 guidelines into—

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

**Mr Hampton:** Let's cut to the chase on the supplementary. What your government did right away in 1995 was, you took the teeth out of the Planning Act which would have ensured that on the Oak Ridges moraine the kind of ecosystem planning with environmental integrity could happen. In so doing, you opened the door to your developer friends. Here's the reality: Since 1995 it is reported that your party has accepted over \$700,000 in contributions from developers who are active the near the Oak Ridges moraine, and we all know that public land is being manipulated for private gain at the Ontario Realty Corp.

Here is your chance to rise to the occasion, as your predecessor Bill Davis did, to stop listening to the developers and to do the right thing. If we had the good Planning Act provisions in place, which your government took out in 1995, then much of this wouldn't be happening. Will you do that, Premier? Will you freeze development on the Oak Ridges moraine and then ensure that Planning Act changes are put in place that will protect these kinds of important environmental situations?

**Hon Mr Harris:** I'm disappointed that you seem to disagree with your former government's policy, your former minister's policy. I thought Bud Wildman has a substantial interest in the environment. I'm really disappointed now that you don't have confidence in that. Since the provincial steps were taken, I said to you, all regions across the moraine have incorporated the NDP 1991 guidelines in their official plans. Because of our changes, they now have substantially more authority than they had before.

Further, regions have moved to develop a coordinated strategy to protect the moraine, something we support, something we encourage, something we are assisting with and something we applaud. As to your allegations with the ORC, they're not allegations that you will repeat outside because they are totally false.

Finally, let me talk about donations. We also have looked at donations, not that they ever affect our government policy, because they never have, and we're alarmed actually that we don't seem to get as much in corporate donations as the Ontario Liberal Party gets.

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

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#### GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday we heard from your Minister of the Environment that your government has absolutely no plans to deal with the low water levels of the Great Lakes, and that you have absolutely refused to place a moratorium on all water-taking permits. You know that this affects not only farmers—

**Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment):** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Minister of the Environment on a point of order, and if he could get to it very quickly.

**Hon Mr Newman:** Mr Speaker, I said no such thing yesterday.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I would suggest that the minister check Hansard.

You know that this affects not only farmers—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Members, come to order. We need to be able to hear the question as well.

**Mr Gerretsen:** Premier, this not only affects farmers but it also affects many tourist operators. As a matter of fact, it threatens our fastest-growing industry: our \$14 billion tourist industry. Premier, this affects our environment and our economy. The cleanup of the Great Lakes simply must continue, including the 15 toxic hot spots, including the one in Kingston. Why has Ontario not signed the Canada-Ontario Great Lakes agreement, which expired in March, not only endangering the health of Ontarians but also affecting our tourist industry?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** First of all, in response to the preamble to the question, let me say the Minister of the Environment said no such thing yesterday. Second, I can tell you that from the Ministry of the Environment's point of view, from our cabinet's point of view and from our government's point of view we enthusiastically would like to be able to renew the Great Lakes agreement with the federal government. We are at the table, at their ready to do so, and we hope we are successful.

I don't want to point fingers; I'm not saying any side or the other is slowing things down or to blame. But I have been assured by federal officials in the Prime Minister's office, I believe, as well as has been reported to me, that they too would like to conclude an extension and a new agreement on the Great Lakes. So we're all on the same wavelength. Perhaps if, as an oversight body to that, we can have backbench participation—

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** OK. Time is up.

**Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York):** It's been over a minute.

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

We do have people watching the clock. I would appreciate it if the members wouldn't shout when the question is over. If that starts, it continues on. We have people watching it. I try my best; we sometimes miss it. But we do have people at the table and I would appreciate it if the members wouldn't shout "Time." I will watch the clock; you can ask the questions.

**Mr Gerretsen:** The Premier will probably know this matter was raised in the federal House the other day as well. The federal minister said that he is ready to sign the agreement; he's got the money on the table. What I want from you are the same assurances. Are you going to sign the agreement this week so there's not a lag in the time factor by the fact that the agreement expired on March 31? Are you prepared to sign and put in the necessary funding?

**Hon Mr Harris:** Given that he's a federal politician and a Liberal, you should take with a grain of salt anything he said in the House of Commons or anything he said to you. Nonetheless, unlike the federal Liberals, who wish to assess blame when they fail to come to an agreement, I said both parties are interested in signing an extension of the agreement or a new agreement and we will continue to work towards that without assessing blame.

#### YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** My question is to the Attorney General of Ontario. Minister, during a recent period of intersession here at the Legislature, I had the opportunity to touch base with a number of my constituents. I compliment the member for Cambridge, Mr Martiniuk, and the Crime Control Commission for visiting my riding. One of the concerns that was raised again and again was the issue of youth vandalism. In fact, youth violence and increasing youth violence were addressed and, more recently, threats of violence over the Internet in my riding. I know that citizens across Ontario have witnessed a startling trend of youth crime. Particularly, it seems to be on the rise. Unfortunately, your friends the federal Liberals have avoided the subject for years and have failed to show any form of leadership.

Minister, can you stand today and apprise the citizens not just of Durham but of Ontario of the weaknesses of our Liberal friends dealing with youth crime and the youth justice system?

**Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs):** I thank my colleague from Durham for the question. Violent youth crime is a very serious concern in Ontario and across Canada. The reality is that the incidence of violent crime has increased by about 77% over the past 10 years. Not only has the incidence increased, but the violence is more intense and the crimes, when they do occur, are more violent. Also, the use of weapons has increased in violent youth crime. In addition, we're seeing more incidents of ganging up, of gang activity in violent youth crime. These are all reasons that we should have serious concern in this regard.

The other part of it is, when we're talking about young people, the usual victims of violent youth crime are other young people in our schools, in our parks and in our streets. We need to intervene in the lives of young people to make a difference. Young people have the right not only to be safe but to feel safe in their schools and in their communities. The Young Offenders Act fails to do that—

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

**Mr O'Toole:** I'd like to thank the minister for the answer. I think the federal Liberals can learn a lot from the effective policies that you, our Attorney General, have brought to combat the issue of youth crime.

The federal Liberals refuse to get it, really. I was appalled but not surprised that the federal Liberals

refused to even hear Ontario's delegation in the recent hearings on youth crime legislation. Imagine the arrogance, refusing to listen to one third of Canada's population. While they don't want our input, they have taken more than \$200 million out of Ontario's youth justice system by freezing funding for young offender services since 1989. It seems that they just don't consider youth crime to be a priority.

I know you would like to be able to let my constituents in Durham know how you are dealing with the fact that for too many years, victims of youth crime in Ontario had no recourse to recover damages and that no voice in the justice system was effective. Minister, could you share with the House today what this government has done and is doing to put the rights of victims at the forefront of the justice system?

**Hon Mr Flaherty:** We have taken concrete steps with respect to victims, certainly, by hiring 59 new crown attorneys, at a cost of over \$8 million. The time there is to be spent with victims, so that the crown attorneys have more time to spend with victims, including victims of violent youth crime. We have proceeded with the pilot projects with respect to youth justice committees and of course we've established the strict discipline facilities.

The parental responsibility bill was introduced last week in this House and will be debated, I understand, at second reading. That gives victims of crime, including property offences, the opportunity to go through the Small Claims Court process with presumptions in their favour, which should be an effective system of calling for parents to take responsibility for the conduct of their children with respect to property crimes.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane):** I have a question for the Minister of Health. Gilbert and Laura Baker from Moosonee, since 1966, have made 17 trips to Sudbury for his cancer treatment, at a total cost of \$35,000. They only receive \$197 per trip. Their trips average between \$900 and \$3,000, depending on the length of stay in Sudbury. As you know, southern Ontario patients who are directed to Sudbury, Thunder Bay or Buffalo for their cancer treatments receive full reimbursement for travel, including airfare, accommodation and meals.

I believe this is totally unfair. This is an example of clear-cut discrimination against northern Ontario cancer patients. In fact, when I contacted the Ontario Human Rights Commission, they agreed that the situation falls under their jurisdiction and that they have begun to receive complaints. Minister, when are you going to ensure that northern Ontario cancer patients receive the very same assistance that cancer patients from southern Ontario receive?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** As the member knows, the mechanics of applying for the grant and the process that is used today is the very same process that your party found

acceptable when it was introduced in 1985, and to which you made absolutely no changes.

As you know, our government has worked very hard to ensure that there are more specialists and more facilities available in northern Ontario. We're building a new cancer centre in Sault Ste Marie, and certainly work has been ongoing to ensure that we have the people in the north to provide the appropriate level of service.

1500

#### PETITIONS

##### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas we, the consumers, believe fuel prices are too high throughout Ontario; and

"Whereas we, the consumers, support the Ontario Liberal caucus's attempt to have the Mike Harris government pass legislation that addresses this concern; and

"Whereas we, the consumers, want the Mike Harris government to act so that the consumers can get a break at the pumps rather than going broke at them; and

"Whereas we, the consumers, are fuming at being hosed at the pumps and want Mike Harris to gauge our anger;

"Furthermore, we, the consumers, want Mike Harris to know we want to be able to go to the pumps and fill our tanks without emptying our pockets;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 16, the Gasoline Pricing Act, introduced by St Catharines MPP Jim Bradley; Bill 18, the Gas Price Watchdog Act, introduced by Eglinton-Lawrence MPP Mike Colle; and Bill 52, the Petroleum Products Price Freeze Act, introduced by Sudbury MPP Rick Bartolucci."

I am in complete agreement and sign my signature to it.

##### PESTICIDES

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the following cities in Ontario—Toronto, Waterloo, Ottawa, Kitchener and Cambridge—already have in place restrictive policies for the landscape/cosmetic use of pesticides on publicly owned land; and

"Whereas synthetic chemical pesticides and fertilizers now routinely used for landscape/cosmetic use are harmful to human health and the environment; and

"Whereas these products are unnecessary because sustainable, healthy and effective lawn care alternatives are available,

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

"The province of Ontario phase out the landscape/cosmetic use of synthetic chemical pesticides on both

public and privately owned land by the year 2001 and immediately develop and implement a comprehensive public education program to demonstrate the efficiency of sustainable lawn and garden maintenance practices.”

I completely agree with this petition and I will affix my signature to it.

#### KARLA HOMOLKA

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo were responsible for terrorizing entire communities in southern Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ontario government of the day made a deal with the devil with Karla Homolka resulting in a sentence that does not truly make her pay for her crimes; and

“Whereas our communities have not yet fully recovered from the trauma and sadness caused by Karla Homolka; and

“Whereas Karla Homolka believes that she should be entitled to pass to leave prison with an escort; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario believe that criminals should be forced to serve sentences that reflect the seriousness of their crimes;

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

“That the government of Ontario will:

“Do everything within its power to ensure that Karla Homolka serves her full sentence;

“Continue to reform parole and make it more difficult for serious offenders to return to our streets;

“Fight the federal government’s plan to release up to 1,600 more convicted criminals on to our streets in Ontario; and

“Ensure that the Ontario government’s sex offender registry is functioning as quickly as possible.”

I put my signature to this petition.

#### AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas, agriculture and agri-food is the second-largest industry in Ontario; and

“Whereas the Harris government has cut the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs budget to the bone, despite their 1995 commitment that, if elected, they would not make any cuts to the Ministry of Agriculture; and

“Whereas farmers in Prince Edward-Hastings support their MPP, Ernie Parsons, in his fight to reverse the Harris government’s decision to close agricultural offices and dismiss field staff,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the dismantling of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and restore funding to keep our local agriculture offices open.”

I am pleased to add my signature to this petition.

#### LORD’S PRAYER

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I present a petition supporting the Lord’s Prayer as a valued tradition for many people in Ontario, a petition similar to yesterday’s petition from the riding of Simcoe North.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer, also called ‘Our Father,’ has been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada in the 18th century;

“Whereas such use of the Lord’s Prayer is part of Ontario’s long-standing heritage and a tradition that continues to play a significant role in contemporary Ontario life;

“Whereas the Lord’s Prayer is a most meaningful expression of the religious convictions of many Ontario citizens;

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

“That the Parliament of Ontario maintain the use of the Lord’s Prayer in its proceedings in accordance with its long-standing, established custom and do all in its power to maintain the use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I am in complete agreement with the sentiments expressed in the petition and hereby affix my signature.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I have a petition to the Legislature Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the northern health travel grant was introduced in 1987 in recognition of the fact that northern Ontario residents are often forced to receive treatment outside their own communities because of the lack of available services; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged that the costs associated with that travel should not be fully borne by those residents and therefore that financial support should be provided by the Ontario government through the travel grant program; and

“Whereas travel, accommodation and other costs have escalated sharply since the program was first put in place, particularly in the area of air travel; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has provided funds so that southern Ontario patients needing care at the Northwestern Ontario Cancer Centre have all their expenses paid while receiving treatment in the north which creates a double standard for health care delivery in the province; and

“Whereas northern Ontario residents should not receive a different level of health care nor be discriminated against because of their geographical locations;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the



unfairness and inadequacy of the northern health travel grant program and commit to a review of the program with a goal of providing 100% funding of the travel costs for residents needing care outside their communities until such time as that care is available in our communities.”

Once again, these petitions are being signed by dozens of concerned constituents in northwestern Ontario, and I have affixed my signature in full agreement with them.

#### ABORTION

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Mr Speaker, I certainly hope you saved time for the member for Scarborough Centre, because I know she's most deserving.

I am presenting petitions on behalf of the CWL of my riding of Durham, and Pat Wilson specifically.

“To the Parliament of Ontario:

“Whereas we have recently learned that our tax money is being used to pay the rent on the Morgentaler abortuary; and

“Whereas by the end of this lease this amount will be \$5 million;

“Whereas we strongly object to this use of our tax dollars;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to immediately cease these payments.”

I'm pleased to sign my name to this petition.

#### DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** I have a petition to the Legislature of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontarians with a developmental disability are growing in danger of inadequate support because compensation to staff not-for-profit agencies is, based on a recent survey, on average, 20% to 25% less than compensation for others doing the same work in provincial government; and

“Whereas there are hundreds of senior parents in Ontario who saved the Ontario government millions of dollars by keeping their child with a developmental disability at home, and who are still caring for their adult child; and

“Whereas there is no place for most of these adults with a developmental disability to go when the parents are no longer able to provide care; and

“Whereas these parents live with constant anxiety and despair; and

“Whereas these adult children will end up in Ontario nursing homes and hospitals if there is no appropriate place to provide care;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“To significantly increase compensation for workers in not-for-profit agencies so that it is comparable to the compensation of government-funded workers in identical or similar occupations; and

“To provide the resources necessary to give appropriate support to Ontarians with a developmental

disability who at present have no place to go when their parents are no longer able to care for them.”

I agree with this petition and I have affixed my signature hereto.

#### KARLA HOMOLKA

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** This is a continuation of the petition regarding Karla Homolka and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo were responsible for terrorizing entire communities in southern Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ontario government of the day made a deal with the devil with Karla Homolka resulting in a sentence that does not truly make her pay for her crimes; and

“Whereas our communities have not yet fully recovered from the trauma and sadness caused by Karla Homolka; and

“Whereas Karla Homolka believes that she should be entitled to pass to leave prison with an escort; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario believe that criminals should be forced to serve sentences that reflect the seriousness of their crimes;

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

“That the government of Ontario will:

“Do everything within its power to ensure that Karla Homolka serves her full sentence;

“Continue to reform parole and make it more difficult for serious offenders to return to our streets;

“Fight the federal government's plan to release up to 1,600 more convicted criminals on to Ontario streets; and

“Ensure that the Ontario government's sex offender registry is functioning as quickly as possible.”

I'm pleased to attach my signature to this petition.

1510

#### OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I have a petition “To protect and maintain the natural features of the Oak Ridges moraine in the town of Richmond Hill for future generations.”

“To the Ontario provincial Legislature:

“Whereas the Oak Ridges moraine in Richmond Hill is the headwaters for the east Humber, Rouge River and the east Don River watersheds, as well as being a critical recharge area for huge aquifers on the Oak Ridges moraine; and

“Whereas the Oak Ridges moraine in Richmond Hill contains five areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI) including Bond Lake and bog ANSI, Wilcox Lake wetlands ANSI, Jefferson Forest ANSI, White Rose bog ANSI and Simeon Forest ANSI; and

“Whereas this area has the largest concentration of kettle lakes and kettle bogs in the GTA supporting numerous fish species and regionally rare plants; and

“Whereas this area supports the highest biodiversity in the GTA with 925 plant species, 99 breeding bird species, 16 reptile and amphibian species and 15 mammal species; and

“Whereas the natural water aquifer recharge functions of the moraine will be replaced by storm water management and infiltration ponds resulting in the concentration of pollutants from urban streets and lawns; and

“Whereas now is the last opportunity for the creation of a major natural park on the Oak Ridges moraine along the east-west Yonge Street corridor;

“We, the undersigned, petition the provincial government to immediately enact strong measures to protect the Oak Ridges moraine corridor in the town of Richmond Hill within an established kettle lakes park.”

I’ll affix my signature to their signatures.

#### HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

##### **Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):**

“Whereas the Parliament of Ontario contracted out road maintenance from the department of highways, especially the winter plowing and sanding to the private contractor; and

“Whereas winter travel is very hazardous, and due to the many highway deaths this year; and

“Whereas many people making their living using Highway 11 and would like it brought up to proper standards; and

“Whereas the level of maintenance has declined and the state of Highway 11 is very dangerous in slippery sections and the condition of the road surface is unsafe;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to reconsider their decision to privatize the winter plowing and sanding or salting of highways in our area, especially Highway 11 to Atikokan and reinstate the department of highways to their former positions of patrols and being in charge of call-outs for proper road clearing and sanding.”

This is signed by no less than 155 concerned citizens of northwestern Ontario. I’ve affixed my signature in agreement with their concerns both for next winter and for the current storm situation in April.

#### ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES LEGISLATION

##### **Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):**

“To the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas Mike Harris promised an Ontarians with Disabilities Act during the 1995 election and renewed that commitment in 1997 but has yet to make good on that promise; and

“Whereas the Harris government has not committed to holding open consultations with the various stakeholders and individuals on the ODA; and

“Whereas Helen Johns, the minister responsible for persons with disabilities, will not commit to the 11 principles outlined by the ODA committee; and

“Whereas a vast majority of Ontario citizens believe there should be an Ontarians with Disabilities Act to remove the barriers facing the 1.5 million persons with disabilities;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“To pass a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act that would remove the barriers facing the 1.5 million persons with disabilities in the province of Ontario.”

I gladly affix my signature.

#### OPPOSITION DAY

#### OAK RIDGES MORaine

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood):** I move:

That this House affirms the necessity of protecting the Oak Ridges moraine and the importance of having a planning system in Ontario that protects our drinking water, wildlife habitats and other natural features; and

That this House calls on the government to freeze development on the Oak Ridges moraine, until a detailed policy statement protecting the moraine from inappropriate development is adopted that is binding on all government decision-makers; and

That this House endorses a return to binding policy statements under the Planning Act that would require all government decision-makers to give priority to environmental values in their planning decisions, as was done under the amendments to the Planning Act passed in 1994. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

I’m proud to be leading this debate off today, not just on behalf of the NDP caucus but on behalf of 165 scientists, the waterfront regeneration trust agency, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Greater Toronto Services Board, which represents all of the GTA municipalities, the Don Watershed Council, over 100 citizens’ groups in Ontario, and thousands and thousands of others across the province.

I want to tell all of those groups that we are aware of the tremendous efforts they have put and continue to put into saving the Oak Ridges moraine. Debbie Crandall and others from the Save the Oak Ridges Moraine—and she’s been in this from the beginning. That coalition, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Sierra Legal Defence Fund—those are just a few of the many who are out there fighting hard to save the moraine, and I congratulate them all. In fact, I believe this resolution represents the views of almost everyone in Ontario except for the developers who want to develop the land and the Mike Harris government.

Incidentally, let me say, as revealed by Earthroots yesterday from their research, that developers—to the Tory party since 1995, when the Harris government was first elected, have jumped from 312,000 to 1.13 million

in 1999. From 1995 to 1999, the Tories received at least \$2.5 million from developers and at least \$700,000 from companies with direct interests in developing the Oak Ridges moraine. Those are the only people I know of who are opposed to saving the Oak Ridges moraine.

I'm here today to say that it's time for Mike Harris to do what Bill Davis did with the Spadina Expressway and just say no to development on the Oak Ridges moraine. Tony Clement should freeze development now; no more excuses.

Mr Speaker, let me remind you why everyone should support this resolution today. The Oak Ridges moraine is one of the last continuous corridors of green space left in southern Ontario. The 160-kilometre moraine contains the headwaters of 35 rivers and streams, including the Don, Humber and Rouge. Its most precious resource is hidden underground in the water; it is the water. The moraine acts like a gigantic sponge as the sands and gravel absorb rain and snow. It delivers this water to aquifers in the ground. These aquifers then store, filter and slowly release water to 65 rivers and streams.

It comes down to this: The moraine—and we've all heard this before—is like a big rain barrel that provides clean, fresh water to rivers and wells that supply water to over a quarter of a million people. Urban development even with expensive technology, despite what the developers say, cannot duplicate the sensitive, complex natural interaction that protects the integrity of that water supply.

More development in the Oak Ridges moraine will also mean the loss of hundreds of plant and animal species. It will contribute to urban sprawl which is already lurching out of control, creating more congested traffic and contributing to smog.

As my leader indicated in his question today, the NDP government undertook a massive, three-year, \$2-million planning study on the Oak Ridges moraine. It was presented to us in 1994, but we never had the opportunity to act on it because an election was called and Mike Harris, as we all know, was elected in 1995. This comprehensive study has been gathering dust ever since.

**1520**

As well, the NDP brought in a new green Planning Act after two years of consultation around the province. One of the first things the new Harris government did was to repeal that bill. I remember; I sat on the committee. That was Bill 163 and they completely gutted it. They tore the heart right out of that bill. Indeed, if our Planning Act were still in place today, most of the proposed development for the Oak Ridges moraine could not even be on the table.

I'm going to mention one of the most relevant sections the Tory bill took out. I call that bill, by the way, and called it then, the destruction of the environment act, because that's really what it did. Section 3 of the destruction of the environment act changes the requirement that planning decisions "must be consistent with provincial policy" to "must have regard for provincial policy." I can tell you, Mr Speaker, with all of the groups who had concerns about the changing of this Planning Act, that

was the section they all spoke about. We warned the government at that time that it was going to create these kinds of problems, and it's contributed greatly to it.

This was a most significant change which, as I said, many citizens and organizations warned the government about. It meant the loss of a key planning tool for municipalities because there is no clarity to "have regard for" as opposed to "be consistent with," where it's very clear. It leaves an out for developers and it makes it harder for municipalities, when under a lot of pressure from developers, to say no and mean it and have good legislation to back up their no. It means the OMB does not have to give much weight to that section. That's what we're seeing now.

Another section of our Planning Act said: "Development may be permitted only if the quantity and quality of groundwater are protected. Development that will negatively impact on groundwater recharge areas will not be permitted." The Premier and his Minister of Municipal Affairs say, "It is up to the municipalities to make the land use decisions," and then have the gall to say, "We gave them the tools to do just that," when in fact they took away the very tools, most of the tools. The sledgehammer they had in the toolbox is gone. They do not have that opportunity any more to just say no. Your government, this government, the Harris government, took those tools away.

Now what do we have? A big mess. The population along the moraine would grow by nearly 100,000 in the next 20 years based on development plans approved by York, Durham and Peel regions. Another 20 development proposals would bring those numbers up by another 56,000. Then, and of course we all know about this, there are 11,000 new homes developers want to build on agricultural land along Yonge Street which would divide the moraine in two distinct sections. Most of the final decisions made on these developments are going to the OMB, an unelected body with no accountability, a body which has already said it will not consider community opposition in its decision-making.

Today we learn that the OMB denied status to the city of Toronto and Peel region. This decision today by the OMB shows how unacceptable the current planning system is. Toronto's rivers are at stake here, but the OMB does not think that is relevant. On top of that, the government cancelled the intervenor funding program which allowed community groups to participate in a meaningful way in hearings. The citizens before the OMB are now up against developers with very deep pockets, with millions of dollars to spend—it's change to them—to get their way.

The issues on the moraine are complex. We desperately need a freeze. Everybody, let me state again, everybody supports that, except this government and the developers who want to build there. We need a freeze on development while a binding plan specifically for the moraine is put together. Indeed, the moraine is so important that a specific agency modelled on the Niagara Escarpment Commission is also necessary and is being

called for. But the moraine should also be a lesson in what is wrong with the planning system in the province as a whole as a result of this government's changes that suit the developers.

If we want to protect our headwaters, our aquifers, our wildlife habitat and our wetlands, we need a planning system that reflects those values, the kind of planning system that was there before, after John Sewell went out for two years consulting with people. Developers should not be able to use the unelected OMB as a way to ignore the public cry to respect those values and the values for our children and our grandchildren.

I will shortly be presenting a private member's bill that, if passed, will bring back the features of the former planning system that are most essential to protect the moraine and other natural areas across the province. I hope that everybody concerned about saving our water, our environment and the future health and well-being of our children and their children will write to the Premier, phone the Premier, e-mail the Premier, and ask him to support this bill, or, even better, do it himself.

Finally, I would ask all members of this Legislature to support this resolution today as an interim step to stop development while an appropriate green planning act is brought into place.

In closing, I know government members will rise today, as the Premier did and the Minister of Municipal Affairs continues to do—the Minister of the Environment won't even answer questions on it—and say they have the tools to do this themselves. We've all seen what's happened in Richmond Hill. They do not have the tools any more. You took them away. The OMB is unelected and is not accountable, and they are making decisions that have massive repercussions for southern Ontario.

I would urge all members today to support this resolution and to think very carefully before they decide to oppose it.

**Mr Brian Coburn (Carleton-Gloucester):** I'm pleased today to participate in this debate and have an opportunity to speak to the well-recognized important issue of the Oak Ridges moraine, and to recognize that the moraine is indeed a vital resource.

Our government believes, without a doubt, that it is important to protect the environmental interests relative to the hydrogeology, the terrestrial features and the linkages of the Oak Ridges moraine. We know, as everyone knows, that the moraine serves a fundamental purpose. The water that seeps through the ridge, down to the underground streams, feeds many rivers and is a source of drinking water for about a quarter of a million people. The moraine itself is home to the greatest concentration of forests, wetlands, kettle lakes and wildlife habitat in the GTA.

This is indeed a sensitive, significant and important land form and there has long been a desire and a commitment to protect that land form. Back in the 1980s, an ecological strategy was prepared by Mr Ron Kanter called Space for All. It strongly recommended the establishment of a green space framework for the greater

Toronto area, one that included the Niagara Escarpment, the Lake Ontario waterfront and the river valleys running north from Lake Ontario, as well as the Oak Ridges moraine. That report took note of the ecological importance of the moraine. It drew specific attention to the fact that the moraine was the only part of the greater Toronto area green space not protected by legislation or planning controls.

All that changed in 1991, when implementation guidelines on the provincial interest in the Oak Ridges moraine for the greater Toronto area were put into place. These guidelines recognized the unique features of the moraine and worked to protect them. It was absolutely recognized that the guidelines were needed, for while the Oak Ridges moraine is a valued green space, it is home to resort and recreational development as well as urbanization.

#### 1530

These guidelines were intended to give sufficient protection against any development that would endanger the moraine. They involved eight key principles to help determine whether development would be allowed. I just want to go over those eight key principles:

- (1) Prohibit development in significant, natural areas;
- (2) Restrict scattered development;
- (3) Encourage maintaining or enhancing ecological integrity;
- (4) Encourage landform conservation;
- (5) Encourage the protection and the management of the woodlands;
- (6) Prohibit unacceptable development in and around water courses and lakes;
- (7) Restrict expansion of settlements into highly permeable soils;
- (8) Prohibit development that had unacceptable impact on groundwater resources.

When the former minister, Bud Wildman, introduced the 1991 implementation guidelines into the Legislature, he said, "The guidelines will make the municipal land-use planning system more sensitive to environmental concerns and will help ensure that significant features and functions of the moraine are protected for future generations." These are the guidelines we continue to use today.

The three regions of York, Peel and Durham and 15 local municipalities are located in the part of the GTA where the guidelines apply. They have consistently used these guidelines to address planning or development issues. All three regions and many municipalities have incorporated these guidelines into their official plans. The guidelines have been upheld both by municipalities and by the province whenever any application for development or change in land use has been considered on the moraine.

In 1996, our government brought in the Land Use Planning and Protection Act. We brought in a planning system that is policy-led, that provides upfront identification of interests and balances economic development and environmental protection.

We also gave municipalities the autonomy they had long asked for and deserved. Under the Planning Act, municipalities gained new roles and responsibilities, including making local planning decisions to determine the future of their communities, identifying where development makes sense, making decisions on local development applications and protecting environmental features such as the Oak Ridges moraine.

In conjunction with this legislation, our government also issued a provincial policy statement. This policy statement helps municipalities make decisions on land use planning and development issues, and it recognizes that well-managed growth can be both economically and environmentally sound. It calls on municipalities to develop strong communities and to expand urban areas only where there is not enough land supply to accommodate projected growth.

The provincial policy statement asks for a coordinated approach to growth. It includes such statements as: natural heritage features and areas will be protected from incompatible development; developments must show there is no negative impact on the natural features or on the ecological functions of the area; the diversity of natural features and the natural connection between them should be maintained or improved where possible; the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water will be protected or enhanced.

Currently, both the 1991 implementation guidelines and the provincial policy statement are in place, and together they provide the tools for municipalities to protect the Oak Ridges moraine. Together with other planning tools, they assist municipalities to make local decisions on developments within the jurisdiction.

Going back to the provincial policy statement, revised on February 1, 1997, when we talk about implementation and interpretation, I'll just point out to the members a couple of items. There are number of them, but there are a couple that I think are important and relevant.

"There is nothing in this policy statement that is intended to prevent planning authorities from going beyond the minimum standards established as specific policies in developing official plan policies and when making decisions on planning matters, unless doing so would conflict with any other policy. The provincial policy statement is to be read in its entirety and all pertinent policies are to be applied to each situation."

It goes on to say that these policies are to be applied in dealing with planning matters. Official plans will integrate all applicable provincial policies and apply appropriate land use designations and policies. Since the policies focus on end results, the official plan is the most important vehicle for the implementation of the policy statement.

Municipalities: This is goes back; in my former life I have little experience at the municipal level. Municipalities had for a long time wanted to control the destiny of their own communities and have the ability to make decisions that were based on the local uniqueness of their communities, rather than having decisions made

from afar, such as Queen's Park here in Toronto or the government of the day. They could make decisions better because they understood local situations. They have that opportunity with the tools that we have given them with which to operate. The official plan in each and every community is, of course, the bible to the development of that community. The official plan is not something that's written on the back of a napkin; it is something that is developed through extensive consultation with your community to determine where development should take place, to determine the areas that you should protect and to highlight the significance of protecting the environmental concerns of that particular area. As we know, that varies from area to area, and community to community across this province.

In my own community I've certainly had the experience of working with good planning principles. When you come to expanding your community and development, you must adhere to those planning principles for a very definite reason, so you can have some certainty as to a process for those who are the proponents and for those who are the opponents to whatever project is being applied for, so that you know you are operating on a level playing field at the local level when dealing with your local elected officials who are to be in tune and have a responsibility to be able to deal with those needs and concerns and demands within their own community.

Part of that process then becomes the OMB, a quasi-judicial body that bases decisions on facts and good planning principles; that levels the playing field for those who have an interest in a particular issue to put forward their case for and against; and bases those decisions on the integrity of the planning system so that they recognize the uniqueness of particular situation in a community, so that it can be explored to its fullest and then measured with the benchmarks in the Planning Act and good planning principles.

I know that the regions of York, Peel and Durham have each shown that they respect the moraine and understand the need to protect it. In fact, all three regions have agreed to work together on a common, long-term strategy for the protection and management of the Oak Ridges moraine. I certainly commend them for taking that step.

There will indeed be challenges ahead, for there has been increased pressure to build on the moraine, but by establishing a common long-term strategy, that lays out the principles, process and terminology by which people can then project their arguments for or against a particular development or protecting a particular area. They know they have some certainty in implementing under this process and are not being prejudged before they present. We encourage councils to meet those challenges—this is not a responsibility to be taken lightly by the locally elected officials; it is a very challenging situation to make those decisions amidst the emotion of the debate in local communities and to try and get beyond that emotion so that you will make good, sound decisions that your residents can depend on and not have

change from situation to situation—to use the authority that the provincial government has provided to make good local planning decisions reflective of their own community and protect the local ecosystem.

Once again, our government believes that the 1991 implementation guidelines and the provincial policy statements give councils the tools they need to make those decisions. Through those tools, councils have the power to protect the moraine or any other significant area in this province.

**1540**

I'd like to take a moment to reference a situation that is currently in the media. There are currently a number of development applications proposed on the Oak Ridges moraine. However, these applications are before the OMB, so I can't comment on them in their entirety. The province is a party to these matters and will present its case to the board in the same manner as each and every other party. Once more, the OMB is an independent adjudicator which will make a decision on the matter that is based on the evidence.

Ontario is enjoying new-found prosperity right now, and this means increased pressures on areas like the moraine. This means increased pressures on local councils that they live up to their responsibilities and meet their obligations under the Planning Act, meet the obligations they have approved in their official plans, and provide adherence to the provincial policy statements. It is the role of the provincial government to ensure there is a balance between the development we face, based on our prosperity, and the environmental sustainability we all hold so dear.

There's no doubt that the moraine must be given careful and urgent attention. This is an environmentally sensitive area, and we all want to ensure that it continues to absorb water and recharge the rivers as it has done for so many thousands of years. We all want to ensure that our children and our grandchildren are able to enjoy the forests, wetlands, lakes and wildlife of the moraine well into the future.

This is why our government gave local councils the tools and the decision-making capability to make the right decisions when it comes to considering development such as is being proposed on the moraine. I have every confidence that York, Peel and Durham regions, as well as the 15 local municipalities, will continue well into the future to make those right decisions and to protect the Oak Ridges moraine.

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I welcome this opportunity to speak to this motion by the third party. I think it's very timely and I commend them for putting it forward.

It's so timely today that I think actions speak larger than words. Today the government's so-called arbitrator neutral party, the Ontario Municipal Board, made an amazing decision. Two unaccountable, appointed people at the OMB said that the city of Toronto and Peel region, which wanted to help protect the moraine and bring forth studies to protect the moraine, and defend Richmond Hill

which is trying to stop development of the moraine—the Ontario Municipal Board said, “No, you can't have standing”—in other words: “We don't want to hear from you and what your interests are. We don't want you to help Richmond Hill. We don't want you to help the moraine.” That is exactly the truth, in terms of how we are now governed in this province.

The member for Carleton-Gloucester talked about the uniqueness of local municipalities. This is a government that is swallowing up local municipalities by the dozens every day. His own municipality has been wiped out. They talk about uniqueness, and then they talk about, “This is about giving municipalities the tools.”

Do you know how many tools the municipalities have? Essentially they have very few, and the few they have mean that they have to protect the decisions they make as municipalities at the Ontario Municipal Board, because locally, whether it's Richmond Hill or Uxbridge, whatever they decide can be overruled by thus unelected, unaccountable board, the OMB. In fact, the other night, on April 6 in Richmond Hill, there were about 500 citizens of Richmond Hill at the Richmond Hill council. They emphatically and unanimously said no to the development application on Bond Lake. They want to build 2,800 homes on Bond Lake, which is right in the middle of the moraine. They said no. Everybody in the audience said no. You know, the developers didn't even bother to show up at the meeting of town council for that application? They sent a letter basically saying: “We're not going to be there. We will see you at the OMB.” So when you talk about local autonomy and local power, developers in this province are now saying: “It doesn't matter what citizens say. It doesn't matter what councils say, unanimously or otherwise. We are going to take the fight, the decision, to the OMB.”

The OMB is a very interesting body. It's a body which now is basically caught in a position, because the provincial government refuses to put down any comprehensive plan, that they end up making planning decisions. They're a body that now overrules local decisions and, in a vacuum of provincial decisions, makes provincial planning and local decisions. The important ones are now made by the OMB and not by council and by this province. That's the way this government likes it. It's a matter of benign neglect, and they like it that way, protecting the status quo, which means it's a free-for-all in the 905 and the Oak Ridges moraine areas. There is no plan.

The member talked about the 1991 guidelines. He knows, the OMB knows and every lawyer in this province knows that the 1991 guidelines were interim guidelines. They were put in for a temporary period until more comprehensive permanent guidelines were put in. They were interim. In certain rulings the OMB even said that the guidelines were not at all binding; they were voluntary. The member knows that. So to give the impression that those 1991 guidelines are worth anything is really stretching it. We and the environmentalists and local councils—and it's not just three regions. The Oak Ridges

moraine stretches across nine regions, from Peterborough to Peel, and 26 cities. They've all said: "We need more than the 1991 guidelines. We need some comprehensive, sustainable plan that will protect this very fragile bio-region." It's where our water comes from. It's where there's wildlife habitat and fish habitat. There are rare species of birds, fish, trees—the Jefferson Forest and the Ganaraska Forest.

By stepping back and having no plan, this government is allowing the ad hoc carving up of this precious natural masterpiece called the Oak Ridges moraine. It is really unconscionable that they pretend to have a plan when they know full well that local councils have been begging them for help. Regional governments have begged them to intervene. The only people who agree with them that the 1991 guidelines are adequate are the developers and the UDI. They love the 1991 guidelines, because they know those guidelines are a sieve. They're useless.

We need a comprehensive plan based on the 1994 plan, which was put forward and never adopted, to make that stronger. Put in a strong plan. But you can't put in a plan until you put in a freeze because, as I said, right now it's the Wild West out there. Whoever has the deepest pockets goes to the OMB and pays for the best planners and consultants money can buy. They are spending millions at the Ontario Municipal Board to get their way.

The little town of Uxbridge has to raise its property taxes to fight development in Uxbridge. Durham region has to raise its property taxes, or at least get more out of its mill rate, to fight the OMB. The town of Richmond Hill has to spend \$1 million by itself, because at the OMB you don't win unless you've got the money. These lawyers are expensive. In fact, I've always said that OMB hearings are basically a pension plan or an actuarial plan for lawyers and planners. They love it. They're smiling to the bank as much as the developers are. They're in court every day charging \$300, \$400, \$500 or \$600 an hour, while decisions about the moraine are being made by unelected, unaccountable members who are faceless and nameless, who make the decisions about the future of our province.

It's not just the future of Caledon or of towns like Goodwood. The moraine is essentially the water barrel for five million people in the greater Toronto region. Sixty-five rivers and streams originate from the moraine. They go north to Lake Simcoe and south to Lake Ontario. Whether you're in Caledon or Cobourg or Cabbagetown, the moraine connects us all. Like someone in Richmond Hill mentioned the other night, the moraine has to be looked upon as our Central Park of the future.

**1550**

At the turn of the century in New York, there were people who wanted to pave over a green space in the middle of New York City. They said: "We've got progress and prosperity. Pave it over and put buildings on Central Park." There was a group of citizens, like there is now—I think MPP Churley mentioned that. There is a group of citizens from Cobourg to Caledon who are attending meeting after meeting. They are darned angry

because they know their water is being contaminated and that their wildlife is being destroyed, and they have forests, like the Jefferson Forest, that are being bulldozed. They're darned angry. When they see that their government is on the side of the developers, they get even more angry. They say: "Why are we paying taxes and why are we electing people, when you won't stand up and defend Bond Lake or Wilcox Lake, you won't do anything about the Ganaraska River, and you don't care about the Credit River and Palgrave?" That's what they're saying. Go to these meetings in Caledon and go to Goodwood. They all say the same thing: "Why isn't the government doing anything?"

Who is right: the developers or the scientists? Look at what some of the scientists are saying. These are some of the most renowned people, who came to Queen's Park and said, "Listen to us." Four hundred and sixty-five scientists from all over Canada and the world said that the 1991 guidelines are useless to protect the moraine. One scientist, Alan Goodwin, a professor of geology at the University of Toronto said: "I strongly support any effort to prevent excess development and exploitation of this unique and priceless natural phenomenon. It would be unmitigated folly to tamper with this source of pure water for the GTA."

Here's another professor, Andrew Stewart, a PhD in anthropology, from the Royal Ontario Museum: "As a practising archaeologist working in Ontario, I value the cultural heritage aspects of the moraine almost as much as the natural heritage values. As a resident of Toronto, I think the preservation of the moraine is critical to the future healthy development of cities that surround it and to the quality of life of people living in these cities."

Here's another scientist, Karl Konze, BSc, from Guelph: "I would recommend that other alternatives be investigated in already existing urban areas before proceeding with more residential and industrial developments in the Oak Ridges moraine. Higher density housing would also be preferred as it tends to have fewer impacts on the natural environment."

Scientist after scientist condemns this government for its inaction. These are people without political parties.

If you go to meetings in Richmond Hill, Oak Ridges and King City—another incredible place where ordinary people are raising their own money to fight the OMB. They're now going to basically stop a major sewer extension that they feel is going to destroy the environmental integrity of King City. Jane Underhill, the councillor up there, is taking them all on by herself. You've got another brave councillor in Richmond Hill, Brenda Hogg. You've got Debbe Crandall, Linda Pim and Ben Kestey. All these heroes are saying no to developers and no to unbridled development that doesn't make any sense.

If you read the Golden report from a couple of years ago, it said this speedy, reckless development is costly and senseless. If you develop too fast, it costs you more money—in fact it's part of the Blais report, which said that if you don't control this sprawl, it's going to cost

over \$14 billion in extra infrastructure costs, because you're just sprawling all over the countryside.

If you plan properly, with a plan, you save money. You don't have to duplicate roads, sewers, schools and libraries. Right now there is no plan. All we have is sprawl. Whoever has the most money buys a piece of farmland—and talking about farmland, we're about to lose 70,000 hectares of farmland in the GTA. For the most part, all these new developments are farmland, open space that is going to be turned into cookie-cutter homes with driveways, more cars and more roads, and you're going to lose something irreplaceable. How can you replace water? How can you regrow forests like the Jefferson Forest? Right now, this government is allowing the paving of Bayview Avenue right through the Jefferson Forest. That's got to be stopped. That's nonsense. You don't have to extend Bayview Avenue through a forest. You're going to contaminate adjoining water and wells.

To get back to what the Golden report said: "A more compact and efficient development pattern could save an estimated \$12.2 billion in hard infrastructure capital costs over the next 25 years. These potential savings represent roughly 22% of the projected \$55-billion capital investment required to sustain current development patterns. This translates into an annual savings of about \$500 million in capital and maintenance expenses alone. An additional \$200 million could be saved in costs related to air pollution, health care and policing associated with automobile accidents. When lower congestion, parking and land acquisition costs are also factored in, the total annual cost savings of containing sprawl are about \$1 billion annually."

The experts are saying you can save \$1 billion annually if you have a plan in place. From an economic perspective—never mind the environmental perspective—you can save not only the trees, the watercourses and the aquifers, you save \$1 billion a year. But this government wants that quick-fix development, because they're getting a lot of pressure from people in the development industry who want to build now. It's a land grab up there. That's why we need to come to our senses and support a freeze and then put in a plan.

As you know, I've introduced a private member's bill which basically reflects the plan we have in the Niagara Escarpment. We would put in a comprehensive plan protected by a group of representative stakeholders who would make sure this plan was in place. That plan has worked for the Niagara Escarpment. That's why we've been able to protect that jewel that's been recognized by the United Nations as an international biosphere. We've got to do the same thing for the moraine: put in a protective plan for the moraine all the way to Peterborough, whereby there are guidelines that have a strict adherence to water and wildlife protection. It doesn't mean you can't have development in southern Ontario. There's all kinds of room for development off the moraine. We're saying you don't have to have development on the moraine. Put development in areas

that aren't sensitive. Direct the development applications off the moraine. You can build houses until the cows come home, but don't do it on the moraine. There's enough room for decades to come to build houses off the moraine. But the developers are greedy. They want to build on Bond Lake. They want to build in the Uxbridge sensitive areas. They want to build around Caledon. They want to sever the moraine in half in Richmond Hill. This is stupid, speedy development, which doesn't protect future generations. It's development that is dumb. But do you know what it does? It brings in dollars to these industries.

This government should start listening to the scientists. Listen to the STORM Coalition. Listen to your own citizens in Oak Ridges, King City, Uxbridge and Cobourg. They're all saying, "Protect this valuable resource." We must ensure that we take a stand here. I tell people, if they want more information about the moraine, that there's wonderful material available. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists has issued a brochure which is available, with the red tanager, this wonderful bird that will be extinct as the developers get their way. There's a beautiful videotape on the moraine. I hope teachers and Sunday school teachers get this tape and show it in their classrooms across the moraine and across Ontario.

If you'd like to support my private member's bill, these cards are available. I've had thousands of these cards returned. There are also maps. If only we could see the map of the beautiful moraine from Caledon all the way to Cobourg, the plains of Rice Lake, all the way up into Tottenham, through beautiful little communities. It stretches all the way along, like a big eyebrow along Lake Ontario. All the water flows south into Lake Ontario and some of it goes to Lake Simcoe. So all of us who live in this area, Mr Speaker—I know you're way up there north of Sault Ste Marie—the five million of us who live around the moraine, have an interest in it because we all care about open space, we care about our children—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin):** Order. I gave you a little leeway to use a prop initially so that people could see what you were talking about, but you've gone beyond the time that should have been used. I would ask you to please be sensitive to that in the future.

Further debate?

1600

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** I'm pleased that we're having this debate today and I want to thank my colleague Marilyn Churley for making sure this debate happened.

I want to take a few minutes to outline why I think this is so important. I want to take a few minutes to outline what I think the Premier needs to do. As I said earlier today, it's time for the Premier to do what Bill Davis did with the Spadina Expressway, to do the right thing and to say no to unplanned development on the Oak Ridges moraine. Perhaps he should just tell Tony Clement to



freeze development now. Those simple words would do it.

This motion would put some teeth and some green back into our planning system, both on the Oak Ridges moraine and across the province. The moraine is first and foremost about our water, but it's also about wildlife habitat and about having a natural area for people to enjoy; in other words, about people's quality of life. If we don't change the way we develop our cities, we're going to have massive gridlock, dirty water and no natural areas anywhere near where people live. We know that development has to happen, but what's at stake here are the rules under which it will happen and how people's lives will be impacted.

I want to look in detail at what this government has done. The government members say, "Guidelines were put in place in 1988-99 and further guidelines were put in place in 1991 and 1992, and this government subscribes to those guidelines." What the government doesn't say is that immediately in 1995 when they became government, they amended the Planning Act to take the teeth out of the Planning Act. The very part of the Planning Act that would ensure that environmental integrity, that ecosystem considerations, would be primary and foremost in land use planning, this government took away. That's why we're having this debacle now on the Oak Ridges moraine. The government doesn't want to admit that, they want to somehow try to cover it up, but they are responsible for the chaos that is happening out there. They are responsible for the kind of unplanned development, the kind of thoughtless development, that is going to cost more money for society in the longer term and is certainly going to cost us in terms of environmental integrity.

I think most people know the extent of the moraine. It stretches from the Niagara Escarpment in the west to Northumberland county in the east. It forms the headwaters of 35 rivers going both south to Lake Ontario and north to Lake Simcoe. It acts as a giant sponge, soaking in rainwater. In addition to forming the headwaters of rivers, it is a vital source of groundwater and contains many wetlands. It also contains a number of so-called kettle lakes. These lakes do not have any rivers draining them or replenishing them. The moraine also contains beautiful woodlands which form important wildlife habitat, as well as providing recreational space for people.

Four hundred and fifty scientists have signed a statement which confirms the ecological importance of the moraine as well as the need for a development freeze. After a great deal of public outcry, including public meetings with more than 1,000 people, councils in places like Richmond Hill, Peel region and Durham region are onside both with the need for a development freeze and for greater restrictions on development. The one exception is King City, and it is a prime example of why new planning rules are needed and why the Harris government has to put back into the Planning Act the very teeth that you took out in 1995.

What is this about, though? What does this come down to? What it comes down to is this: Earthroots released research showing that this government has taken a staggering \$2.5 million in financial donations from land developers since 1995. They've received over \$700,000 from developers who are active in the Oak Ridges moraine region or want to be active there. What it boils down to is this: On the one hand, we have issues of environmental integrity, we have issues of good urban planning, we have issues of planning, so that we save money on highways, we save money in terms of extended sewer and waterlines and we have liveable communities. On the other side, we have the Conservative Party's need for money from their developer friends. That's what it boils down to.

We hear all kinds of attempts at confusion and obfuscation from this government. We have the minister responsible for housing and municipal affairs saying: "Well, the municipalities have the power to do this. The municipalities can do it." But municipality after municipality has come forward and said: "We can deal with a piece of this, but with this very large ecosystem, we can only deal with our piece, and because the government has taken the teeth out of the Planning Act, the OMB can overrule us. If we do succeed in protecting a piece of it, if other municipalities are either overruled by the OMB or they listen to the developers, protecting our little piece does nothing, because unrestricted development, unplanned development happens all around us."

On the other hand, when you poke the holes in that argument that the municipalities are supposed to be able to do it and you can show that municipalities can't do it by themselves, then this government says, "Well, let the market decide." If the market decides, we will have unplanned development, we will have highways going every which way, we will have polluted water, we will lose the green spaces and we will pay and pay environmentally and financially for years to come, because the market will simply say: "We can make a quick profit here. Let someone else worry about the environment."

This is a job for the provincial government. This is a time when the provincial government has to show some leadership, when the provincial government has to come forward and has to put back into the Planning Act the very teeth that were taken out by this government in 1995, to ensure that the OMB, when they make decisions on land use planning, make their decisions consistent with the guidelines and don't just focus for a minute and "have regard to" the guidelines. Those are the very words this government changed. If the requirement is that the planning "be consistent with," the OMB decisions "be consistent with," then we will get some consistency with these environmental guidelines, but if they only need to "have regard to," they can say, "Well, we read it, we looked at it and we decided not to do it." Then you have the kind of unrestricted development, unplanned development and the huge environmental and financial costs that flow from it.

The ball rests clearly with this government. You have to show some leadership here. You have to do the right

thing and you have to say that you don't believe in unplanned urban sprawl, which will require more highways, more sewers, more water, which will lead to incredible costs for municipalities and for all the taxpayers of the province and which will extract an incredible cost from the natural environment. That's the challenge for this government. That's the challenge you have to meet. No amount of obfuscation, attempting to confuse it and attempting to hide the issue is going to work, because people, on an almost daily basis, are beginning to figure this out.

What is troubling about this—the issue itself is very troubling, but even more troubling is what it symbolizes, because it is a symbol of this government's continuing disregard for the environment. I want to take just a couple of minutes to talk about that continuing disregard for the environment and to point out that this disregard with respect to the Oak Ridges moraine carries on with respect to other activities of this government.

#### 1610

This government likes to say in other areas that it cares about the environment, but recently it came forward and said it was in favour of a policy of hunting in wilderness parks—and there are few of them in the province, not enough—in other words, in the very areas where wildlife is supposed to be protected and secure. In one of the few areas in the province where they're not going to be hunted, this government now says, "We'll throw it open to hunting." It shows, I think, the complete contradiction. If wilderness parks are to be about wilderness, if they're to be the one place where moose or deer or bear or other animals can be free from hunting and have a secure habitat, it is a complete contradiction for this government to then say, "Well, we'll just throw it open to hunting." The Oak Ridges moraine, I would suggest to you, and this government's careless, negligent attitude towards the Oak Ridges moraine, is just a symbol of what's happening in our wilderness parks as well.

Then there's the protection of Ontario groundwater, another very important issue. As soon as the election was over, this government lifted the moratorium on permits to take water from the ground. They refuse to freeze development on the Oak Ridges moraine and they boast that every single drop of water that is required to be taken out based on a proposal, like for housing, has to be scientifically proved that it can be replenished. But we know that a developer putting up five new houses doesn't need a permit. Someone taking up to 50,000 litres a day of water—that's 36 million of these half-litre bottles a year—doesn't need a permit. For those who get new permits, some of which now last for five or 10 years, the government just takes their word for how much water they're actually going to take.

Another example where this government just doesn't care: In this case it's the water developers. They would rather listen to them than think about what this does to the province, what this does to the long-term water supply, what it does to the water table, what it does to the integrity of the ecosystem. They don't care.

Then there's the whole issue—again, this is taking it a bit to the side but I think it's tied to this—of fighting air pollution. After years of taking heat because of their insistence upon so-called voluntary compliance with air pollution rules and guidelines, this government finally said, "We're going to do something." So some truly bright light, I guess one of the whiz kids in the back room, finally realized that there was a way to bring in mandatory air pollution controls that were not mandatory at all. The government's so-called mandatory limits on air pollution are a sham, because they've given a convenient escape hatch for every big air polluter in the province. Companies will be formally allowed to purchase emission reduction credits and apply them to newly mandatory pollution caps.

So companies like Ontario Power Generation can actually increase pollution and say they're meeting pollution limits at the same time. How? By going out and purchasing the credits from other industrial polluters. They can then increase the amount of pollution they're putting out but say, "But we met the mandatory rules." Last fall it was realized that Ontario Power Generation's greenhouse gas emissions for this year will exceed the voluntary caps by 42%, but because this government, in its wisdom, has brought in the capacity to purchase these credits, on paper Ontario Power Generation will be able to say they're meeting the caps. The paper shuffle allows 11 million more tonnes of greenhouse gases to be released, the equivalent of putting another 1.6 million cars on the road in Ontario.

I could go on; I could give you six other examples. I could give you an example about how this government has allowed the whole strategy for cleaning up the Great Lakes to lapse. That isn't important either. Why do I mention these? Because they provide the context of how this government approaches important environmental decisions like the Oak Ridges moraine. It becomes increasingly clear: If it's wilderness parks, if it's taking water from the soil, if it's protecting the Great Lakes, if it's air pollution or if it's the Oak Ridges moraine, the environment doesn't matter. What matters is who can make a quick buck and who, upon making the quick buck, will contribute some of that quick money to the Conservative Party. That's what it comes down to.

This is going to cost us all. This is going to come back to bite everyone in this province. Unlimited urban sprawl, urban sprawl that's going to require more highways, more roads, more sewers, more water, more schools, more libraries, more rinks, all of which are going to have to be paid for at taxpayers' expense, is not thoughtful planning. That kind of urban sprawl puts at risk important ecosystems, ecosystems that contribute to the water quality of literally millions of people, that contribute to the quality of life of literally millions of people. Allowing that kind of urban sprawl and putting those things at risk is unwise.

That's why I say to this government, you can duck, you can dodge, you can try to confuse the issue, you can try to obfuscate, but people are on to you. People

recognize the context, that in decision after decision you don't respect the environment. People recognize what's at stake here and people are saying to you, "Do the right thing."

As I said to the Premier today, he has the chance to be a Bill Davis. He has a chance to sit down and to listen to the people and to do the right thing and say to his developer friends: "Sorry, fellows, not this time. This issue is too important to the integrity of millions of people. It's too important to the quality of life of millions of people. It's too important to the integrity of our environment. It's too important in terms of the down-the-road financial costs. We're going to shut you out and we're going to do the right thing."

I call upon the members of this government: Do the right thing. Rise to the occasion. Recognize what is the right thing to do not only in the short term, but even more so in the medium and in the longer terms. Say to your developer friends: "Not now, fellows. Not this time."

**Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio):** I am pleased to participate in this debate. I want to let the member for Broadview-Greenwood, who tabled this opposition motion today, know that I will not be supporting this motion, not because I don't believe in principle, as I don't believe there is anyone in this House who doesn't agree in principle that we have to protect the moraine. That is the position of this government, that in fact the sensitive areas of the moraine do in fact need to be protected for today and for future generations.

It's interesting when I listen to members opposite, to members of the Liberal Party and members of the NDP: Both parties had the opportunity to be in government in this province over the last 10 years.

Mr Colle now stands in his place and calls for a freeze on development, calls for no development at all to take place on the moraine. There shouldn't be any development on the moraine, he says. But I would ask, if that is a reasonable and rational solution here, why did his party, when in government, not take that step?

I look to the NDP. They were in government for too long in this province, as we remember all too well. They had the opportunity, and they also chose not to take the initiative to stop all development on the moraine. They had the opportunity to do that. I believe you were there, Speaker, in that caucus at the time, and you didn't do that.

I submit to you there's a reason for that. That is simply because it's not the right thing to do.

**1620**

Now, what should we do? I think we have a responsibility in this House to do the reasonable and rational thing in this province, and that is to ensure that the sensitive areas of the moraine are protected; that, yes, where development would negatively affect the environmentally sensitive areas of the moraine, it be prohibited. I submit to you that that is the intent of the 1991 guidelines, to the credit of the NDP. They commissioned some further studies that went on over a period of four years and in fact, under the technical working committee,

developed some guidelines that went beyond the 1991 guidelines.

It's interesting that the municipalities, which for years in this province were calling for more autonomy, resented highly the previous provincial government's initiatives in wanting to take all of the planning control into the seat of power at Queen's Park. Municipalities resented that and called on us to give them the autonomy and the responsibility to administer planning and development at the local level. We did that, and we provided the municipalities with the responsibility, we gave them the authority, to do the planning at the local level. It was the right thing to do.

Now, along with that responsibility for those planning issues comes the responsibility to take that authority and to administer it, and to administer it responsibly on behalf of the citizens. The provincial government does not have, and never has had, the responsibility to say, "A subdivision should be placed here" or that it should be townhouses or semi-detached or single family or "This is the density." The issue of planning, zoning and density is the responsibility, as we all know in this House, of the municipalities.

The Planning Act gives the municipalities the responsibility to approve official plans, and that is the process that we have in place. No one will deny that there are provincial responsibilities here. That's why—to the credit of the Liberal government in 1990. They recognized, as a result of the Kantor report, that the moraine has sensitive areas that are of provincial interest. So the provincial government declared a provincial interest in the Oak Ridges moraine. Going on further, the 1991 interim guidelines, as developed under the NDP, were then adopted, and municipalities were advised, in no uncertain terms, that when applications for development come forward, they must have regard for all of those areas that were outlined in the interim guidelines relative to environmental concerns.

I'd like to read to you from a statement. This comes from the regional municipality of York. The reference is to how plans are now being dealt with related to applications that come forward for development on the moraine. It makes it very clear that "All three regional official plans,"—this is York, Durham and Peel—"approved since 1991, contain policies which can assist in protecting the majority of the essential functions of the moraine."

The region of York official plan incorporates the Oak Ridges moraine implementation guidelines by reference, stating, "That applications for land use change within the Oak Ridges moraine area as shown on map 2 shall be considered where the studies contemplated by the implementation guidelines have been completed or the application meets the intent of the guidelines to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Natural Resources, MMAH and the Ministry of the Environment. This policy is applicable within the regional area and the requirements of the guidelines must be satisfied for applications to be considered in compliance with the regional official plan."

I bring this to your attention because there is a perception—and I must say not helped at all by the Liberal Party in this province, who are the creators, the drafters, the producers of the signs that say “Save, Don’t Pave the Moraine,” leaving the implication that there are no guidelines, there are no rules, there are not standards, there are no requirements for developers today to have to actually prove that their development will not negatively affect the environment.

I have representations in my office from across the province and certainly from within my riding, from people who are very concerned that there may well be a situation in this province where there are no guidelines. There is a perception that if you are a developer you can go out and do whatever you want, you can develop in any way you want. When I have an opportunity to explain to them that that is not the case, that there are guidelines, that in fact developers must go through an approval process, that there is a responsibility at the local municipal level for councils to approve or deny applications, it puts a different perspective on this. What they realize is that the opposition parties are making the moraine a political football. That’s what’s happening here. There hasn’t been as much misrepresentation of the facts since Bill 160. I can tell you that when people come to understand the facts of the matter—

**Ms Churley:** And you’re going to set the record straight, are you, Frank?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Point of order.

**Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East):** Was that parliamentary, Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker:** My ruling was that he was not accusing anybody on the opposite side of misrepresenting—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Klees:** As usual, when we talk about the facts, the opposition party gets very concerned, because the premise of their position is so misplaced.

Having said that, the fact that there are guidelines in place, the fact that there is no such thing in this province, contrary to what opposition parties would like you to believe, as helter-skelter development—there just simply is not—the point of the matter is that, yes, we have to do as a government what we can to ensure that we preserve the moraine. Our government is committed to doing that.

Members of my party know that I have been advocating further steps, not only with my caucus colleagues but with my cabinet colleagues as well, to ensure that we do whatever is necessary, that development that does take place on the moraine takes place only where it will not be in any way negatively affecting the environment.

We speak about science today, and yes, there are many studies that have come forward. There are many studies that also prove there are areas within the moraine where development, if done properly, will not negatively affect the environment. Members opposite know that, which is why when they were in government they chose not to put in place a freeze and chose not to put in place a policy that prevented any development on the moraine.

So why today would they be calling for a policy that would prohibit any development on the moraine? I suggest to you that they’re fear-mongering. I suggest to you that it’s easy enough for them to be where they are in their places in opposition today and promote a policy that will not stand up at the Ontario Municipal Board. Neither will it stand up in a court of law, and it would simply be wasting a lot of time and a lot of money.

What we have to do is ensure that we provide good planning principles for the people of this province; that yes, we protect the moraine. We do what we can to protect it, not only for today but for future generations. That is what I am suggesting to you that we are doing and will continue to do in this province.

1630

## ROYAL ASSENT

### SANCTION ROYALE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour did assent:

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;*

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

## OAK RIDGES MORaine

(continued)

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** It’s really a great honour for me to have an opportunity to join this debate following on the thoughtful remarks of the member for Oak Ridges. Only a short week or so ago, we on this side of the House were looking with great admiration at his meteoric rise and career of future Prime Minister in the making. But in the few short minutes that he’s had a chance to speak on this issue about the Oak Ridges moraine, he has demonstrated to his constituents very clearly that he set out for smaller, not bigger, roles to play in the national debate, because he has demonstrated such an absence of leadership on this issue. Hundred and hundreds, and thousands in some cases, of his constituents have gone to meetings to stand and lead their municipal politicians—a little slow, some might say, to get to this point—to the right place. Yet he’s slow to learn that.

We all look forward to that day, coming not too long from now, when the residents of Oak Ridges, who didn’t

even know him until last week when he looked to go and join that alliance of the Conrad Blacks and Tom Longs and Mike Harris of the world—they didn't even know him and now, as they get a chance to take a look at him on this issue, I'm afraid they're not just not going to like him much.

It's a great pleasure for me to have a chance to join in this debate in support of the motion by the member for Broadview-Greenwood, whose riding, like mine, shares a very important link to the Oak Ridges moraine, and that is the Don River.

Interestingly, we debate this issue on a day when the Ontario Municipal Board says that this is a matter that other regions and other places affected by this cannot participate in, in trying to level the balance at the Ontario Municipal Board and provide resources in support of the courageous actions of the town of Richmond Hill.

I would like to pay tribute to my colleague Mike Colle. In our party's caucus we've been awfully active on this issue and Mike has been leading the way on that. I think all members would agree that he's made an extraordinary commitment to the preservation of the Oak Ridges moraine.

In addition to being the member of the Legislature for a riding that includes the Don River as one of its boundaries, I have been serving as my party's critic for the greater Toronto area. Through the fall last year, on Fridays, making sure that I came to question period just about every day, I went out and visited with the leaders in each of the municipalities: with the mayors and the elected chairs. I must say their words are in sharp contrast to those of the government on this issue, because all of those municipal leaders have declared very clearly that the powers of municipal councils to shape the nature of the communities that they have been elected to represent has been diminished dramatically by the efforts of the government opposite, and to suggest otherwise I think would be a misrepresentation.

The decision-making processes that have been commented upon before in this debate have been dramatically altered by the government opposite, and the effect is very clear. Decision-making about the nature of communities at the municipal level has been diminished in favour of the decision-making at the Ontario Municipal Board to the point that Peter Robertson, who doesn't share a political stripe with me, the mayor of Brampton, a municipality that is undergoing extraordinary growth, said in a meeting last week, along with me and my leader, "At the present time the Ontario Municipal Board is planning our communities."

That comes not from a Liberal, not from some municipal politician out there who's been misled by opposition parties, but from a seasoned leader of a very significant, progressive urban jurisdiction in the greater Toronto area, and a man whose political stripe, I'll remind everybody, is not the same as mine.

I sat in this House on December 13 and spoke a little bit about the impact of the decision of this government to essentially cede all responsibility and authority to the

Ontario Municipal Board to plan the nature of our communities and the impact that's having on the property taxpayer. I'd like to read something from that.

"The Harris government likes to portray itself as a tax-fighting government, but the real story is that its political agenda simply downloads the responsibility for tax increases to local governments. It's not that they don't raise taxes, it's just that they never have to bear the bad news themselves."

To the residents of the town of Uxbridge, this issue about trying to ensure that the nature of their community reflects environmental concerns is a very good example. In order to protect themselves against that, they are facing extraordinarily big tax increases.

The government party likes to say that Liberals have no plan, but we've been very clear on this. We've been leading the government on this because we believe very strongly that we need to work towards policies that are balanced and thoughtful, that respect the fact that the greater Toronto area will grow, but also respect the fact that within the greater Toronto area there are opportunities to have growth where it's appropriate and there are those areas where it is inappropriate. The government has lost sight of that distinction.

We need to recognize the environmental and agricultural heritage of the greater Toronto area. Communities like Scugog, as an example, are under extraordinary pressure to turn very productive farmland into houses. I don't think very many of us will ever forget the quote that was featured in the Toronto Star a few months ago from one builder, Mr Lebovic, I think, who mentioned very specifically that he saw himself as a farmer. He planted sewers in the spring, and in the fall houses came up. I think that's what we're talking about. That's what we're trying to protect.

That's not to say we don't recognize that the greater Toronto area will grow, because clearly it will, by some two million people in the next 20 or 30 years, but the question of where growth takes shape is the responsibility the provincial government has and it is a responsibility the government opposite is failing. We believe in quality-of-life principles for the residents of the greater Toronto area, for those who live here now and for those who will move here in the next 20 or 30 years, but the quality of life of residents in many areas is threatened by the absence of policy from this government.

There are real heroes in this debate—my colleague from Eglinton-Lawrence mentioned many of them by name—but the real heroes are those people, those volunteers in this National Volunteer Week who go out and stand every single day on points of principle in protection of the nature of their communities, recognizing their important agricultural and environmental heritage. Yet they do so in the face of this extraordinary policy vacuum by the government opposite. Scattershot growth is a great enemy of the future of the greater Toronto area. Quality of life cannot be sustained in an environment where there is an absolute absence of provincial leadership that shows that growth is planned

and balanced and thought out, that protects our agricultural and environmental lands and that recognizes the need to have planning decisions that can actually encourage things like public transit.

In conclusion, we look forward to having a government in Ontario that shows leadership, that works to fill the policy vacuum, that can work to change course, to recognize the error of its ways and to follow the very impressive leadership capabilities of the residents of the areas that are so dramatically affected. We encourage the government to act courageously, to recognize that the absence of thought to date still leaves opportunities to change course. On behalf of the residents of the greater Toronto area, I stand and say to members of the government, save, don't pave, the Oak Ridges moraine.

**Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York):** I'm pleased to have just a few brief moments to speak to this. I want to begin by thanking my colleague Marilyn Churley for bringing forward this resolution. It's a very important issue. I know she knows and others will know that I represent a riding that borders on Lake Ontario. It's a waterfront riding. Certainly issues of water quality and air quality and development are all of concern to the constituents in my riding. We have a water treatment facility there. We have a sewage treatment facility there. As there is greater development in the York region, the sewer pipes come down into my riding where that sewage is treated. The water treatment facility depends on water that comes from the headwaters that come down the Don River and into Lake Ontario and many other streams that flow down from the aquifer of the Oak Ridges moraine.

**1640**

These issues have an effect on the constituents of my riding, as they do in many ridings in southern Ontario. I think today's OMB ruling is appalling in its determination that the city of Toronto and others would not be parties to these discussions, that there is no direct link or direct effect on the citizens of Toronto that would warrant them being a party. I think it shows the complete lack of understanding of the environmental sensitivity and interconnectedness of these issues, and it's the very reason we need provincial interests, provincial policies and adherence to provincial policies and that we don't leave these matters simply to the OMB.

I listened with great interest to the member from Oak Ridges. I was going to stand on a point of order, Mr Speaker, and ask you if revisionist history was in order in this House, but I just sort of sat back and said, "Well, we'll hear what he has to say." He spoke at some length about the process, in 1990, of the provincial government having declared a provincial interest, which was a good step. Then he talked about, in 1991, the NDP government having brought in—and he used the words—"interim guidelines," and that's right. They were interim guidelines and, following that, the process began for the development of the comprehensive plan, all of the research, all of the work that needed to go into that, but at the same time, through the process of the Sewell

consultations and then bringing forward Bill 163, major amendments were made to the Planning Act, amendments which were revoked by the Harris government when they came in place, amendments which would have made this discussion irrelevant today because the protections would have been there for the Oak Ridges moraine and for many other environmentally sensitive areas across the province.

I think what we have today is step 1 in sort of a 1-2-3 step. We have Marilyn Churley's resolution, which says, "Right now, let's freeze the development because all of these other issues are going on and the OMB is likely to make decisions without being consistent with and being forced to comply with environmental policies of the province." We need to stop right now until we can get a more comprehensive plan in order.

Step 2 is Mike Colle's private member's bill which would put in place an overarching body like the Niagara Escarpment Commission to look at managing a comprehensive plan for the Oak Ridges moraine.

Step 3 is Marilyn Churley's private member's bill which would bring forward again the greening of the Planning Act, which would ensure that the provisions are in place, that there are provincial policies that deal with issues of groundwater, with natural heritage sites, with wetlands and with environmentally sensitive sites, that those policies are in place and that the work of the provincial government, municipal governments and the OMB must be consistent with those provincial policies, not simply as the Conservative government revoked our legislation and brought in their own version of this, not simply "have regard to" because therein lies the problem.

I think that those three things, the resolution today, the private member's bill from Mr Colle and then the private member's bill from Ms Churley together give us protection for the Oak Ridges moraine and for many other environmentally sensitive spots across the province.

I want to really stress, because I thought the member from Oak Ridges—I'm sure it wasn't on purpose—left out a large part of the history as he was reciting it, and that was the Planning Act amendments, the greening amendments that were there. I've made reference already to the fact that that legislation required provincial and municipal governments and the OMB to take decisions and to take steps that must be "consistent with" provincial policies. What were some of those provincial policies?

Policy 1.1 in the natural heritage section—and this is probably the key one as we're talking about right now with respect to the Oak Ridges moraine—said that "development may be permitted only if the quantity and quality of groundwater are protected. Development that will negatively impact on groundwater recharge areas, headwaters and aquifers which have been identified as sensitive areas will not be permitted."

If you in fact had a provision that you have to be consistent with that, the OMB wouldn't have an opportunity today to even consider putting any development on those sensitive areas.

Policy 1.2 says that “development will not be permitted on significant ravine, river, valley and stream corridors and significant portions of the habitat of threatened and endangered species.”

That in a nutshell—those two policy statements, together with the legislative requirement to be consistent with that—would put an end to the debate. For the member from Oak Ridges moraine to stand here and say he agrees that we shouldn't have development on any of the environmentally sensitive areas of the moraine is quite interesting. I say to him, how are you going to accomplish that? You have no way to accomplish that when you have divested all the responsibility to municipalities that can't even make final decisions because their decisions are reviewable at the OMB, which has no longer, in legislation, any requirement to be consistent with the provincial policies. You've given up the power. He may really believe that there should be no development on the environmentally sensitive areas. His government has no way to enforce that.

If we pass this resolution today to stop until we get the policies in place, if we put in place the overarching authority and then if we bring in and bring back the green aspects of the Planning Act and give the provincial government the policies, we can save the Oak Ridges moraine and many other environmentally sensitive lands across this province.

**Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland):** Thank you for the opportunity to address this particular resolution, the opposition day. I certainly empathize with the member for Broadview-Greenwood in bringing forth this particular motion. I have great concern myself about water pollution, air pollution, soil etc. Our water from our well comes from the eastern tip of the Oak Ridges moraine, so I have a vested interest in this as well.

But I find it rather irritating to have a member from downtown Toronto coming out to tell us in rural Ontario how to run things. We've had Toronto solutions for so long, trying to handle and look after rural Ontario. I think it's just about time that maybe they started looking after some of their own things in Toronto rather than attacking rural Ontario all the time. They talk about solving problems. Maybe it's time they solved some of their own problems in Toronto. They come without funding—they never mention anything about funding—and they trot out Mr Sewell as being the great saviour. Well, I'll tell you, he was no great saviour. Maybe it's time they started looking at some of their own issues. Does rural Ontario ever, in reverse, come and tell you how to run Toronto? They certainly haven't been.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** The fact is, you're wrong.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The member will go back to his seat and withdraw that comment.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Whoever suggested that the member speaking was wrong will withdraw that comment.

**Mr Parsons:** I'd be pleased to withdraw that remark.

**Mr Galt:** Thanks very much, Mr Speaker, for getting that under control.

These people in downtown Toronto want to look at rural Ontario as a parkland, a place to drive through, a place to have their seasonal home or to have their residence and then commute into Toronto, and then object to a few farm operations in rural Ontario. And now they want to take over the planning of rural Ontario. I think this is going just a little too far, a particular group who want to use rural Ontario for their landfill site rather than addressing it on their own.

Speaking of some of the programs, maybe it's time in Toronto they came out with a decent recycling program, something that the small towns and cities in rural Ontario have been doing for a long time. We're still waiting for one in Toronto. They have no program on how to limit the number of vehicles coming into downtown Toronto. You might consider toll roads on the Don Valley or the Gardiner just to limit some of the vehicles and pollution in downtown Toronto.

There are things you could do. You could manage your own garbage. But what did you do environmentally when you were there in office? You brought in an interim waste management board. Maybe you could remind me: Was it \$70 million or was it \$80 million that you spent on that and didn't find a single site during all that time? Our first move was to shut it down, and rightly so. And then what did Ruth Grier bring in but a moratorium on waste-to-energy incineration. That was something you might have used that was worthwhile, put the garbage to a worthwhile cause rather than have it buried—a worthwhile resource. You don't want to recycle it; you don't want to use it for energy. You just put a moratorium on it. Thank heavens we came in with decent standards for waste-to-energy incineration.

They had no standards for landfills, something we brought in. They had weak standards on cleaning up contaminated sites, programs we brought in. They had no program for vehicle pollution, something our government brought in during the last term.

**1650**

Just while the Liberals are sitting there looking quite smug, maybe we should have a quick look at their environmental record. I'll just look at a few things here, for example, a quote from the member for Sarnia-Lambton, who wants to stop the importation of hazardous waste. That was according to a November 30 news release. Then, lo and behold, the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane on January 7 in the Kirkland Lake Gazette was complaining how the MOE doesn't see the recycling of imported hazardous waste as a growth industry—two people from the same party. He wants to see the MOE allow Trans-Cycle Industries to expand its operation to take foreign waste for recycling.

We shouldn't be surprised at the Liberals' weak position on the environment. It goes back a very long way, like a quote in the Toronto Star in November 1987 that shows just how poor the Liberal environmental policy was. The auditor—this is the auditor, and often you trot that one out—told us that Bradley's pro-environ-

ment pronouncements are not being translated into action. "How could Bradley have accomplished anything?" Another quote from the Star says of Bradley: "His own bureaucrats don't seem to be backing him. Something is desperately wrong with this ministry."

We need a balanced approach. We need a balanced approach of sustainable development. Did you notice what was going on in the province of Ontario in the first half of the decade, in the 1990s? All of the cranes disappeared from Toronto. I'm talking about construction cranes. It became an endangered species. Actually, it was obliterated. Office towers in downtown Toronto were empty. University grads were having to move back home with mom and dad because there were no jobs for them. There was no development in Ontario. I can tell you, this debate would never have started in the early 1990s, because there was no development to be debated. People were making decisions in this country—do they stay in Ontario or do they leave? People outside of Ontario were trying to decide if they would come back with the new government. I can tell you, in 1996 there were an awful lot of people saying they were happy to return because now there was some economic stability and sustainable development in Ontario.

What was going on during that lost decade when you talk about the terrible recession? It wasn't a terrible recession in the US. It wasn't a terrible recession in the rest of Canada. As a matter of fact, in the first half decade of the 1990s, there were 350,000 net new jobs created in the rest of Canada. What happened in Ontario? I'm pleased to see the member for Broadview-Greenwood is smiling over there, because you lost a net 50,000 new jobs. That's how many were lost from the province during that period of time, something that you should be indeed very ashamed of. As you raised taxes, revenue from the province went down. I'll tell you, it was most unfortunate.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm starting to worry.

**Mr Galt:** I hear the member for Durham a little concerned about whether he's going to have enough time or not. I will wind this up, recognizing the importance of the Oak Ridges moraine. There is no question. This has been put; planning has been asked for by municipalities. They want to be masters of their own house. The very specific guidelines are out there—as a matter of fact, guidelines the NDP brought in, which I understand our party, when they were the third party in a similar position, supported. Now the NDP doesn't even want to support their own policy that they brought in. I think that's pretty unfortunate. They don't think their policies are good enough.

I have a lot of faith in our municipalities and their planning, there's no question. I see they will be doing what's right for the province, and they'll probably even do what's right for the NDP, but they do ask an awful lot when it comes to environmental issues. They do a lot of talking the talk, but they do very little of walking the walk. Certainly today we're hearing an awful lot of talking the talk.

In connection with the Oak Ridges moraine, the water in my well comes from the Oak Ridges moraine, and I

can assure you that I'm just as concerned about the purity of that water as anybody from downtown Toronto, like the riding of Broadview-Greenwood.

**Mr Parsons:** I'm very pleased to speak to this bill, because I see the Oak Ridges moraine as a problem. The government sees it as an issue; I see it as a problem. It struck me that the difference is that problems need to be solved; issues need only be identified. So what we're dealing with here is that as long as we can identify the problem it's as good as solved. But this one is not as good as solved.

Last summer I had never heard of Oak Ridges moraine. I didn't believe it affected me. Even as the initial reports came out, I thought, "Well, it certainly affects downtown Toronto." But I now believe it has the ability to affect a profound number of people in this province. My engineering training has made it very clear to me that it is easy to analyze and determine and design and fix things that are above-ground. If there is a problem with a bridge, if there's a problem with a building, the problem can be detected and remedied. The difficulty with underground is that everything is a best guess. Where exactly are the underground aquifers? What is the size of them? Where do they receive the water from? Where do they flow to? We don't truly know. I'd like to give an example of that.

My family and I live on a hill, called Oak Hill—no relation at all to the Oak Ridges moraine. Some years ago, there was a decision made to investigate our hill to use as a garbage dump—to purchase the homes and tear them down. Located on the top of Oak Hill is a lake called, amazingly, Oak Lake. The question I asked a hydrogeologist was, "Where does the water in Oak Lake come from?" His response was, "We're not really sure, because there's no ability to track that underground aquifer." He said, "I think the best correlation is between the water level in Lake Superior and the water level in Oak Lake." Lake Superior is hundreds, if not thousands, of miles away, yet it was his belief that the water flowed underground to it. There's no easy way to find out exactly where our water comes from. Our hill is full of springs, but I don't know exactly where they come from. I suppose we'll know some day, if the current government finds a way to sell the water from Lake Superior to the Americans and my tap runs dry, though I suspect that would be done by some cute-named bill like the "There Will Be No More Drownings in Lake Superior Act" or something. But I don't know exactly where my water comes from and I don't know exactly where the water that goes into the Oak Ridges moraine goes to.

I do know, from my drainage training, that when we go to determine what size of culvert or what size of underground pipe we need to consider, we look at factors such as the area of the water that's going to be drained into it and we look at the characteristics of that land. Probably the best example of a natural area that's been altered is the drainage area going into the Don River. When you take a piece of terrain and cover it with asphalt, you no longer get water penetrating there; that



water's going to go into drainage pipes, and we've distorted it. If you put a house up, obviously the rain water won't penetrate there. But it's easy to drive through a subdivision and think, well, you still have the lawns and you have the grass, so even the water coming on to a subdivision will flow down into the ground and end up as a resource of the moraine.

But the reality is that in Ontario, and in fact in North America, we like to have beautiful lawns. So we sow them very tightly with grass seed, we fertilize them, we water them and we try to make an extremely tight nap. One of the effects of that is that the water can't even penetrate our lawns, but runs off our lawns into the curb and gutter and it's lost to the underground resource. I contrast that with an area that's farmed. If you have corn growing in a field, you're going to have a lot of the natural water penetrate. So we're going to end up, potentially, with a significant reduction in the water penetrating the ground.

This is therefore a gamble. There is a saying, that we need to "make haste slowly." This is a gamble, to go ahead and say, "We think we're all right." We have a bunch of scientists who say it's wrong to do it, and we have a bunch of developers who say the province should go ahead and allow the housing to take place on it. If the developers are right and it does not affect the moraine, then great; it worked. But if they're wrong, if just by some chance the developers are wrong and the scientists are right, what's a remedy for the mistake? Some mistakes can be remedied. If we have patients who have their beds out in hallways, that can be remedied. If we have classrooms that are underfunded or classes are too large, that can be remedied. But if we pave the moraine and we put houses on it and we go in and modify it with all kinds of construction, that can't be undone. We can't say, next year or 10 years from now, "Sorry, we shouldn't have done that." It is forever.

**1700**

So this is pretty serious business. When you drive from here to Niagara Falls, drive through much of southern Ontario, you see some of the finest agricultural land in the province under asphalt and houses. That can never be rolled back. Unfortunately, all agricultural land is also excellent, from an engineering viewpoint, to construct on. But we've taken so many of our natural resources and altered them. I've seen where we've had highways and we've constructed new highways to make it curve better or to bypass a town. You'll see these segments of where the old highway was. Cars haven't travelled on them for 40 years, but you can still see where the highway is, because it has not returned to its natural state and never will.

This is too serious to take a gamble on in a hurry. It is arrogant to talk about local councils having the ability to control it when in fact it rests with the OMB. Citizens can appear at local councils, as they've been doing in making a case against this, but they can't afford to appear at the OMB, and may not even have the right to appear at the OMB, when we see cities excluded from having the right to appear at the OMB. So it is misrepresenting that

democracy is taking place when in fact a decision that is ultra-serious for the entire province is being made by an extremely small group.

The development of the Oak Ridges moraine must be controlled, must be planned. This is not a gesture to run into quickly so that a few people can make a lot of money and a lot of people have their lifestyle at risk.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I have to tell you, I'm a bit worried. After I heard the member for Northumberland say that we city people shouldn't speak on the issue, I became seriously concerned that he might introduce a bill saying, "No one north of the 401 can comment on anything having to do with those people outside that region."

I will, as humbly and timidly as I can, make some remarks to this motion, which I strongly support, obviously. But I have to tell you, in advance of getting into my remarks, it's amazing. Power is an ugly thing. It permits members of this assembly to say all sorts of stupidities. And you know what? They do it because they can. That's the abuse of power. With the abuse of power comes arrogance. You see it through the members who have spoken already and others who will follow them.

I can understand why the public has a hell of a time dealing with the truth, because you hear some of the members, some of whom have the more mellifluous voices, saying: "We're doing the right things. We are protecting green space. We're protecting natural environment." Who are they to believe? They listen to these government members that they elected outside of these areas, then they listen to us, and they don't quite know what to do. It's paradoxical; it's a problem.

They on the other side have a problem, and it's a big one. They don't know how to sort this out, because they've got two little problems they have to deal with. The one problem is that thousands of people are speaking out against what's happening in their regions. So it surprises me when the member for Oak Ridges speaks about, "If only the people knew the facts," and Frank is going to be courageous; he's going to go to the public to let them know the facts, and once they know them, they'll change their minds. It surprises me because those hundreds and thousands of people who have gone to those meetings say, "Stop the development." But M. Klees, I guess, hasn't yet found the time—now he has the time, because his leadership opportunities have been pretty well determined. He has the time now to go tell them what the facts are. But the people are saying to them, "Stop the development," and the developers are saying, "Please, we need balance," which is what the member from Northumberland is talking about. That's the balance he is trying to preserve. So the dilemma is how to listen to the thousands of people who are saying, "Stop," who they need for their next election, and how to listen to the developers, who they also need for their next election because they grease the wheels. They don't know what to do.

Their answer is the OMB, the Ontario Municipal Board. I'm not sure anybody has spelled out the

acronym, because I'm sure 99% of the population has no clue who the OMB is: Ontario Municipal Board. They're relying on the Ontario Municipal Board to provide the balance they're looking at, which is a way of escaping their responsibility. That's really what it is.

The people don't have the power. It's quite clear. They went to the meeting saying, "Don't do it," and now they're being referred to the OMB, about which Minister Clement has said, "This is a semi-judicial process we're getting into. Please, let them do the right thing." My point is, if they won't listen to the people and the government abdicates its responsibility to do the right thing, what do we have? We have a problem on our hands. That's what we have.

You've heard the member from Beaches-Woodbine, my colleague Marilyn Churley from Riverdale talk about the reference to language—

**Ms Churley:** Broadview-Greenwood.

**Mr Marchese:** Broadview-Greenwood, formerly Riverdale. You heard her talk about the language that we have made reference to, which is "consistent with" and "regard to." For the general public who are watching this afternoon, I can understand why you have a hell of a time trying to sort this out, because I don't think the Conservative members understand the nuance of language. If they did, they would certainly not have changed the Planning Act that we introduced in 1994.

But your changes are significant, and wording changes are a critical part of that. When they change the act, the language "consistent with" to "regard for," it's different. The nuance has a great deal of import here, because "consistent" means it's got to be literally the same—I should have brought a dictionary to see how they would define it—more or less to be the same as, literally. With "regard to," you may or may not. You can have regard to it, but it's a "may." There's no binding connection to the words "regard to," versus "consistent with."

I give that little lesson, Speaker, because it's important, because the ones I'm trying to convince are the not Conservative members, as usual, because they've made up their mind. They changed our act that we introduced—that they opposed in opposition, that my good friends the Liberals did too at the time, but that's another matter. But that language was critical, and you've changed that. Had you kept that language, you wouldn't have this problem to deal with.

Yet you find people with the soft voices talking about facts in regard to the environment and natural environment and that you people really care and you want balance and all that. Who is the public to believe after they listen to those fine words? That is the serious problem we've got.

That's why I always speak directly to the public, never to them, because I can't convince these people to change their minds. They've already changed the act. Why would they change again? Why would they support a motion that we're introducing, except in a way that you can influence these fine Tories to go back to those principals so as to avoid a future debate of this kind again. We need you, the public, to come back over and

over again to the offices of the MPPs in your regions to tell them what your concerns are. We can't do it. We can only debate in this House with the limited time they have given us.

Yesterday they moved closure. I couldn't speak on the health bill because M. Tascona moved a closure motion just before it was coming to me to speak, and another Liberal. We only had a few moments in this place to put our case to the public. That's all we got.

In the end, the ones who have the power are you, the Ontario citizens. These people, provincial members, say: "We have given the power to the municipalities. We've given them the tools so they can do what they essentially want to protect the environment." Yet the cities are saying, "We oppose this development," the power you have given to them. They're using the tool to say, "We oppose it," and it's heading to the OMB.

**1710**

The problem with the change of the language with regard to "consistent with" is that the OMB could potentially, fearful to me, decide in favour of the developers. If you've given a power to the municipality that can be overridden by the Ontario Municipal Board, what have you given them? Nothing. You've given them a powerless tool that they can't put into effect because the OMB can undo and override. If we had the language that was read into the record earlier by the member from the Beaches that said "consistent with," then the OMB and the municipality would have been bound by such language—and that's the point.

So we need that language. I know these Tories are not going to do it. I know that when the member from Northumberland speaks about balance he's both trying to please the public by confounding them and trying to please the developers by giving them what they want, so they can achieve the balance of a public that hopefully will have been deceived and developers will hopefully get what they want. At what cost? At a serious cost to the people around that region and to people like me who have a public interest.

The member from Northumberland does not understand. This is a public issue that affects all citizens of Ontario. We all have a public interest. It's simple. But you see what I mean? When you have the power that they have, with an absolute majority, they can say all sorts of stupidities and we have so few tools to fight back. I hope some of those members might do the right thing and support the motion put forth by my colleague M<sup>me</sup> Churley, but I don't know.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's my pleasure to address the opposition day resolution of the member for Broadview-Greenwood. I just want to start by saying that, first of all, I live in Durham region. In fact, I live just outside Bowmanville and the water that comes into my house actually comes from the moraine, up near Tyrone, which is north of where I live. So I and my children have a stake in this. In fact, most of my constituents do, in the north part of the riding, of course, which would include Port Perry and regions around Uxbridge, north Whitby, which would be Brooklin. So they're very concerned.

I can say respectfully that I don't disagree with many of the points being made in the resolution. If I could just outline the first part of the statement, it says "this House affirms the necessity of protecting the Oak Ridges moraine and the importance of having a planning system in Ontario that protects our drinking water," which I've just spoken to. Clearly, I don't want to contaminate wildlife habitat in any way. I live with that. I'm fortunate to have that around me where I live, and other natural features. I would not like anyone listening, watching or participating here to think we would exempt any oversight at all to make sure that we protect our environment. If anyone wants to challenge that, I will take difference with that. No one here, on either side of the House, has exclusivity in protecting the environment. Each government in its time over the last decade has had the opportunity.

When I was on planning in the region of Durham and in the municipality of Clarington, I watched carefully one day as Mr Sweeney, Mr Wildman and others—I forget—had a chance to look at protecting sensitive areas. Municipal Affairs was Sorbara or one of them. No, Grier, I guess, was the one who did look at it. I would say that then they all side-stepped the issue of the moraine.

This has been around for longer than 10 years. I can assure you that Mr Gerretsen from Kingston and the Islands, and others, would know, having been in AMO, that it is a significant issue for all of us to find the balance. Respectfully, I believe that we are as a government allowing the process to happen. I suggest to you that the speaker following me what was rapped for any sort of interference, and yet I'm hearing the challenge from members in both the opposition and the third party to interfere in the process that's been set up dutifully for the last many years in this province.

Many of the people who are assigned to the Ontario Municipal Board are life members and cross all party lines. They are left to follow the principles of proper planning that have been left to us as a legacy of the two previous governments. The 1990 and 1991 guidelines and the most recent are very strong. I could quote—and I'm sure others have quoted today—having listened to much of this debate, that those guidelines are set to protect the people of Ontario by the people of Ontario, the duly elected government of the day.

I'm limited on time so I'm going to get to the significance of the debate. The whole debate, technically, is about the change in wording under the Planning Act, under our principles, and the policy statements changing from "consistent with" to "have regard to." I can assure you, that's the debate. That's the whole nub of the issue here: the overarching dictatorial wording of that particular policy position. Mr Marchese said it in his comments as well.

Having served, they exempted any input from locally elected, duly elected, responsible mayors and local politicians from making appropriate planning decisions to suit their municipal needs. Yet they're held accountable by the election process. These guidelines are there for the common good, while recognizing that there's a

need for municipalities to define their own future. The planning principles that I mentioned were there and are to be used and will be used by the Ontario Municipal Board, and they will be held accountable.

There's one part here, though, that is the second part of the resolution—I'm going to wrap up here in about two minutes because I know Mr Gilchrist has a lot to add to this debate—and it is the government's freeze on the moraine. In my view, that's completely inappropriate. I have flown over it, I have walked it, I am familiar with it. It's 160 miles. I know it's the headwaters of many streams and river systems, some of which indeed flow into Toronto, but it also is the shore of Lake Iroquois. It is a significant land formation. I'm sure that they can coexist; in fact they do coexist there today. Much of that landscape is licensed for quarrying and extracting today.

I just want to conclude, because I know Mr Gilchrist has more technical things to add than I. I have listened to my constituents and respectfully I will add their names. Today I spoke to Eleanor McCallum, who is a member in good standing of the Brooklin Horticultural Society and a resident of Port Perry. She is moving a resolution at the Ontario Horticultural Association, with 40,000 members, encouraging them to keep pressuring the government. I respect the work that Eleanor has done in our community; as well as people like Kathy Guselle, John Carew, Josie Watts, Lionel Parker, Robert Nixon, Eileen Henderson and Marion Pearson of Blackstock. The list goes on. I have met with Elva Reid too, and the SAGA organization as well. I will continue to work to protect our environment, which we all share, and make sure that the legacy we leave to our children in the future is a joint responsibility and no one has exclusive territorial rights to protect it. I entrust it to our Minister Newman at environment and Minister Snobelen at natural resources, and Minister Clement at municipal affairs to allow the municipal board to do its job. With that, I thank you for the opportunity to participate in debate today.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** Let me first of all say to the last member who spoke that I at least appreciate the more moderate tone that he took. The previous member on the government side who spoke before that left the impression that unless one lives on the moraine or close to it, somehow you weren't eligible to speak on the matter. I think it should be said once and for all that we're all elected in our own ridings, but once we're here we can speak to each and every issue that comes before this Parliament. For him to somehow suggest that people from downtown Toronto or elsewhere who don't live close to the moraine can't have an opinion on this is absolutely ludicrous. Some people might even suggest that if your property was immediately affected by the moraine and you had something at stake, you may have a conflict of interest. I'm not going to suggest that, but I'm sure that's in the minds of some people: How can people actually speak on this when their own property values may be directly affected by what's happening here?

Let me first of all say that I am a great believer in municipal planning. I believe most of our municipalities

do an excellent job. I am not here to attack the Ontario Municipal Board. I think it's just like any other group of people: You have some excellent members and you have some not so good members, in exactly the same way that you have in my profession and in your profession. You get good people and bad people in everything. I think this notion of attacking municipal planning or attacking the OMB is something that I personally don't share.

1720

Having said that, however, most municipal planning takes place on a very limited scale: the geographic boundaries of those municipalities. Here we're talking about an issue in which there is truly a provincial interest. The province has expressed this many times over the last 150 years. Many provincial parks were acquired and obtained by the province because there was a provincial interest. The Niagara Escarpment Commission was set up because there was a provincial interest. What we are suggesting is that the same may have to be required with respect to the Oak Ridges moraine. That's what's being suggested here. For the government members to basically wash their hands of it and say that somehow the OMB will do the right thing, or that somehow limited municipal decisions in specific geographic areas of municipalities will do the right thing, I think just isn't good enough.

I had the opportunity to attend one of the public meetings and let me first of all say that I was amazed at the number of people who turned out. The particular meeting I attended I'm sure had somewhere between 1,000 to 2,000 people there. There is tremendous interest in this issue. Let me also say that I am not interested in which government in the past could have done something about this. I am getting so sick and tired, and undoubtedly many of the people who watch us on a daily basis get sick and tired, of one side blaming the other side for something the others may have done in government 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago.

Quite frankly, the average person out there doesn't give a hoot. They want to make sure we do the right thing now for ourselves and for future generations. All we're saying in this resolution put forward by Ms Churley is, "Let's freeze the development, let's get the provincial interest statement in place and then let's go." Right now, with the changes that were made to the Planning Act, any provincial interest statement can basically be disregarded at both the municipal council level and at the Ontario Municipal Board level. Some people may very well draw the conclusion from that that the province itself has no interest any more as to what happens in our various communities. I, for one, think that is a shame and that those are not the kind of conditions, not the kind of situations the people of Ontario look for from their provincial government.

We've all heard that 465 scientists, people with different backgrounds, different perspectives on life, are saying, "Don't let anything happen at this stage." Let's get the provincial interest straightened out first. Let's take those principles and put them into action first before

you allow any further development to take place on the moraine.

I believe that is the responsible way to proceed and I would urge the government members and I would urge all members in this House to put aside their partisan shot differences—I've done it as well as the next person—and let us really and truly think of the future generations that will be affected by the decision we make here today. I am totally and completely in support of this resolution and would urge each and every member of this House to vote for it.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** I'm pleased to rise to add a few comments and debate the NDP resolution today. While I certainly welcome the opportunity to speak to the subject, I'm a little distressed that the member would think this is the first place the topic should be raised. I will at least give credit to my Liberal colleagues who took the time to come out to the town hall meetings in Richmond Hill recently and to actually listen to the concerns of the people who are going to be affected by this, by any development up there.

The reality is that this is not a new issue. I am torn because, on its face, Ms Churley's resolution would appear a very compelling one to someone like myself who has a track record of fighting for the Rouge Park, for the agricultural preserve in Pickering, for the mouth of the Rouge, for the Scarborough Bluffs, and, may I say, fighting successfully.

In every case in the last four years, our government did the right thing and recognized the need to preserve a resource, the natural heritage resource of this province, for future generations, for all time. No previous government had protected the headwaters of the Rouge park. We did. It's now the world's largest urban park. We have added 4,000 acres, most of it on the moraine, by the way, in Pickering and created an agricultural preserve—just imagine 50 or 100 years, who knows how many hundreds of years, into the future the knowledge that you will have a working farm literally on the corner of Toronto, and the protection of the Scarborough Bluffs to guarantee that that very important aspect of Scarborough's natural heritage has been protected from further erosion.

We don't need any lectures from anyone on the other side when it comes to protecting the environment. The reality is that in every issue that has come forward since 1995, we have met the test. Clearly we met the test because the people in the affected constituencies re-elected us. We are going to meet the test as well on the Oak Ridges moraine.

While we may quibble and we may have differences of opinion on the technique, let me suggest as well to the member that had she been at the Richmond Hill council meeting—probably the best-attended planning meeting I have ever seen or heard of in the history of Ontario; thousands of people came out to express their strong concern—she would have heard that instead of rhetoric, instead of theatrics, there were people who offered specific suggestions. Let me offer her one that I advanced to the Richmond Hill council that night.

They themselves have taken advantage of area rating of development charges, and I compliment them on doing that. The problem is, having already themselves recognized that you can make a distinction between various parts of your community depending on not just the different costs of development but whether or not you want to allow development, they have set development charges that range from about \$27,000 a hectare up to over \$160,000 a hectare. But it begs a number of questions. Why didn't they set all the land on the moraine at \$160,000? And since no one challenged \$160,000 in the development charges bylaw, why not \$260,000? Why not \$560,000? Why not \$1 million a hectare? It absolutely follows that if the developers can't make money building houses on that site, they won't build. You don't need a new government body. You don't need all sorts of theatrics in this chamber. You need a council that is prepared to take the tools that exist under the Development Charges Act and guarantee that the lands they claim they want to preserve are priced out of the equation.

Right next door, only 3% of the land mass in the city of Markham is on the moraine. On the other side, only 12% of the city of Vaughan is on the moraine. But 48% of Richmond Hill sits on the moraine. Clearly, the council of Richmond Hill has to be the first hurdle. I hope the minister would at least agree with me on that. We can backstop the decisions municipal councils make, but we cannot excuse them from not taking every possible opportunity to throw up the hurdles that they claim they want to see in place to stop unpopular and inappropriate development.

The fact of the matter is that this is an issue that's been outstanding for many years. I could sit here and quote the response of Mr Cooke when a Liberal member, back in 1991, asked exactly the same question you're asking today. His response was that the same policy that is in place under our government was sufficient. We can't use the word "hypocrisy" in here, so I won't, but the fact of the matter is that his answer stands the test of time.

I made it very clear that night to the honourable member that if the local councils fail to meet their responsibilities, I accept that this chamber does have a role to play. I make no bones about that. But what we need are specific legislative initiatives, not rhetoric, not theatrics, not a resolution that, as you know full well, can be used to twist and turn, with different clauses, some of which everyone supports and others that just go too far. The fact of the matter is, what you need to do is put forward specific resolutions.

1730

*Interjection.*

**Mr Gilchrist:** To the honourable member, if in fact she is that serious, I will be tabling a bill in the next few days that does have specific initiatives, that will restore the powers your government took away for appealing OMB decisions, that will put in place strength to official plans. If you and Mr McGuinty and his party have the courage of your convictions, let's not talk about a resolution; let's talk about a specific initiative that will

actually put teeth to what it is you claim you want to see done up in the moraine.

By the way, why are we restricting debate just to the moraine? Because it's fashionable? I could be immodest and suggest that until a certain issue came forward last fall, most of the people in that affected area didn't know the moraine existed. I appreciate the fact that the developers themselves have brought this public enmity upon their heads. I appreciate the fact that they have reaped the whirlwind now. I have every reason to believe that at every level there is a far greater awareness than there was before September 27 of last year. That is the legacy of their attempt to govern by blackmail in this province.

The reality is that we are going to move forward.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Speaker, on a point of order: The member for Scarborough East made a very serious allegation. He referred to government by blackmail. I think he owes it to this House to explain that very serious allegation that there was government by blackmail. We need clarification of that.

**The Acting Speaker:** Would you withdraw that remark.

**Mr Gilchrist:** If you're instructing me to, but it's not directed at anyone in here. I withdraw that remark, and I invite the honourable member to withdraw similar remarks he was making last fall, but I know I'll never live to see that day.

**Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt):** I'm pleased to join the debate and to say that I'll be very much supporting this resolution. The member for Scarborough East just said something that is contradictory to everything the other government members have said. What he has said is, rather than letting the process run its course, as Mr Klees, Mr O'Toole and the member for Northumberland said, this House must bring in some legislation. He has made a strong case for not letting this run its course, for stopping this procedure and bringing in legislation. So he has made a strong case for supporting this resolution.

This resolution essentially says: "Stop the process. Stop it. The Oak Ridges moraine is too important to let it run its course." The member for Scarborough East, Mr Gilchrist, has said the very same thing, that this House needs to take action to fix the disaster that is coming upon us in the Oak Ridges moraine.

I don't know why the government members would not take advantage of this motion. It is a reasonable motion. It simply says, "Freeze this, stop it, and let's give ourselves time to think this through." The member for Scarborough East, who has been involved in this deeply, agrees with that.

So I say, let's do the right thing. The Oak Ridges moraine is perhaps one of the most sensitive environmental areas in the province. We all have our stories about the Oak Ridges moraine. I walk there frequently. I resent the fact that the Conservatives think that because I happen to live in Scarborough, I can't talk about and comment on the Oak Ridges moraine. It is essential to me. I reject the notion that simply because I represent an

area in Scarborough, I have no right to talk about the Oak Ridges moraine. I think all of us have that responsibility.

I would say to the government members—I'm always reluctant to say, "Here's my advice," because the history is that you tend to reject advice from anybody in the opposition—this has a momentum that I guarantee will run over all of you if you don't listen to the people who are concerned about the Oak Ridges moraine. I guarantee that. The process that you are supporting—except for Mr Gilchrist—is wrong and I guarantee you the public will find that out.

Mr Klees essentially said: "This is fearmongering. They don't understand this. The public doesn't understand this process. They shouldn't be worried about the fact that this is going to go to the Ontario Municipal Board."

The Ontario Municipal Board will be making these decisions. The government has changed the rules for the Ontario Municipal Board, which will mean that consideration of the sensitive issues in the Oak Ridges moraine will not have the consideration it should, and if you allow that to happen, I guarantee you that the public will speak out and speak out loudly and punish anybody who ignores their concerns about the Oak Ridges moraine.

I too was deeply involved in the Rouge park. We happened to be the party in power at the time the major decision was made on the Oak Ridges moraine and I saw the impact the people concerned about these issues can have. Take my word for it, if you will, the people who are concerned about the Oak Ridges moraine are going to know the truth. If you allow the process that everyone except Mr Gilchrist seems to be supporting, "Let's just let it run to the OMB," that decision from the OMB will be a disaster for the Oak Ridges moraine.

I might add that there is a growing anger among the citizens about the fact that decisions that are important to them seem to be being made by bodies that are not responsible to their elected officials. I had a case in the area I represent. Ontario Hydro decided to sell off a hydro right-of-way in the area I represent. It was done in a way that the decision was really made by the OMB and there was enormous resentment because the rules of the OMB changed. I guarantee you, if the OMB is allowed to be responsible for this decision, the anger people will feel that their elected people have wiped their hands of it and said, "We can't do anything, that's with the OMB," a quasi-judicial body that is going to make that decision for them on something as sensitive as the Oak Ridges moraine.

I come back to my argument, which is that you in the Conservative caucus are supporting a process that is doomed to do enormous damage to the Oak Ridges moraine. Today you have a chance to stop that, a chance to buy time. You've heard from one of your own members that he thinks this process is wrong. In fact, he thinks we need legislation to fix it. The way we will do that is by supporting this motion. It will buy all of you the time. He can bring forward his bill. My colleague Mr

Colle has a bill and Ms Churley has a bill. This resolution will give us the time to consider those things reasonably, but the train is running. It's an express train to the OMB and the destination is the destruction of the Oak Ridges moraine.

I found the comments from two or three of the Conservative members interesting. I'm sure those of the public who are involved in the Oak Ridges moraine will be interested to read them. One was that it's just fear-mongering, that they don't understand this. I tell you, I have enormous confidence in the good judgment of the public to understand this issue. They understand it. They understand that the government has changed the rules, gone to the OMB, that the OMB no longer has to make sure that this development is "consistent" with environmental concerns, that it must simply "have regard to" them. I gather Mr Gilchrist understands that this process can't work, but the rest of the Conservative caucus has simply opened the gate to let this go to the OMB.

1740

**Mr Gilchrist:** Let's talk about—

**Mr Phillips:** The member for Scarborough East had his chance to yip-yap, and I would appreciate it if he allowed others who may want to express their views to talk. But I just say, the government is doing a huge disservice to the people of Ontario, particularly those who are very much affected by the Oak Ridges moraine, which includes those who live in the vicinity.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The member for Scarborough East will please let the member for Scarborough-Agincourt put his comments on the record.

**Mr Phillips:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It probably comes as no surprise to the public watching that it was the member for Scarborough East, but I just say this to the Conservative members. The other Conservative member said, "People in Toronto don't even have a right to talk about this." What arrogance. Surely anyone in Ontario has the right to talk about something this sensitive when it impacts the environment and when, frankly, we've got hundreds of thousands of the residents of Ontario deeply concerned about it. I think all of us have a right to talk about this.

So I say it is clear. Support the resolution by Ms Churley. It will give us the time to plan this properly. Stop the train. If you don't do that, I can guarantee you that we are heading toward a disaster. I guarantee you the public will understand that, the public will react to it and the public will punish those who don't listen to their legitimate major concerns about one of the most environmentally sensitive areas, certainly in Ontario if not North America. If you don't listen to the public, the public will make you hear them.

**Ms Churley:** I wish very much that the member for Scarborough East hadn't started us on this road to talking about my absence from the Richmond Hill meeting. Let me go on the record here. I wasn't going to get into that. I was going to go that night and I became very ill. I was going to point out to the member that I had attended some meetings and I hadn't seen him there.

For instance, I attended the open community meeting of the Goodwood area residents. Mike Colle was there as well. In fact, I regret very much that I missed that meeting. I tried to go but I was extremely ill that night. I'm very proud of the thousands of people who came out and gave their point of view that night, and I certainly thank them for what they did.

But what it brings me to—because he has brought us down that road—is that I am very sorry that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing isn't here today. He was at a fundraiser with his developer friends on April 6 and not at the April 6 Richmond Hill council meeting. We can all go down that road. When an important discussion was happening, where was he? With his developer friends, raising money. So be careful when you take us down that road. I don't think he had the excuse of being sick. We know where he was.

**Mr Gilchrist:** You weren't sick that night.

**Ms Churley:** Oh, never mind. The member for Oak Ridges, I want to—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Scarborough East, I won't talk to you again.

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

**Ms Churley:** Can you stop the clock? This is getting out of control.

**Hon Mrs Johns:** It's my understanding that we're not supposed to be speaking about people here or not here, and I'd ask that the member apologize.

**The Acting Speaker:** There is no point of order.

**Ms Churley:** Anyway, the member for Oak Ridges didn't insult us today; he insulted the thousands of people, some of whom live in his riding, who agree with us on this, and he should be more careful.

I'd like to thank all the members who spoke in support and I'd like to thank the members from the government who spoke against, because they just reinforced what we already know, that they favour unbridled development over environmental protection.

I'd also like to thank Linda Pim from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and Paul Aird, from the faculty of forestry at the University of Toronto, for being here today. I appreciate their attendance on such very short notice. The way things work around here, we don't know until almost the last minute what we're going to get on an opposition day.

The government members do such a good job of twisting and distorting facts. They talked all day about interim guidelines that were adopted in 1991 as the tool they've given municipalities to control development. We know that isn't so. In fact, in their application to the Environmental Commissioner for review, one of the things that John Adams and David Miller stated—and I'm going to read this for the record—is that the OMB already ruled, in *Memorial Gardens Canada v. Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, 1997*, and I'm quoting here: “The 1991 guidelines are what they say they are, guidelines.

Despite the mandatory wording of many sections, they do not have the force of either a provincial policy statement under section 3 of the Planning Act or policies and official plans.”

I have made it very clear here today, as have other members, that those interim guidelines were meant to be just that. We knew that at the time. What the NDP did as a government was bring in a new Planning Act with tough environmental criteria, which this government took away. Within that Planning Act, the protections that are needed now, the protections that would—I'm sure the member from Scarborough would be very happy. We wouldn't even be here today debating this issue. He wouldn't be in this mess that he's in. I know that he'd like to support this resolution today despite his rhetoric, but he's got a new chairmanship now in his government, so he's got to toe the line again.

Thank you for this opportunity, Mr Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** Ms Churley has moved opposition day number 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1748 to 1758.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

|                       |                    |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Bountroggianni, Marie | Dombrowsky, Leona  | Lankin, Frances    |
| Boyer, Claudette      | Gerretsen, John    | Marchese, Rosario  |
| Caplan, David         | Hampton, Howard    | Martel, Shelley    |
| Churley, Marilyn      | Kennedy, Gerard    | Parsons, Ernie     |
| Colle, Mike           | Kormos, Peter      | Phillips, Gerry    |
| Curling, Alvin        | Kwinter, Monte     | Ramsay, David      |
| Di Cocco, Caroline    | Lalonde, Jean-Marc | Smitherman, George |

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

|                    |                    |                     |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Arnott, Ted        | Hardeman, Ernie    | Runciman, Robert W. |
| Baird, John R.     | Hastings, John     | Sampson, Rob        |
| Barrett, Toby      | Hodgson, Chris     | Snobelen, John      |
| Beaubien, Marcel   | Hudak, Tim         | Spina, Joseph       |
| Clark, Brad        | Johns, Helen       | Sterling, Norman W. |
| Clement, Tony      | Kells, Morley      | Stewart, R. Gary    |
| Coburn, Brian      | Klees, Frank       | Stockwell, Chris    |
| Cunningham, Dianne | Martiniuk, Gerry   | Tascona, Joseph N.  |
| Dunlop, Garfield   | Mazzilli, Frank    | Tilson, David       |
| Ecker, Janet       | Molinari, Tina R.  | Turnbull, David     |
| Flaherty, Jim      | Munro, Julia       | Wilson, Jim         |
| Galt, Doug         | Mushinski, Marilyn | Wood, Bob           |
| Gill, Raminder     | O'Toole, John      | Young, David        |
| Guzzo, Garry J.    | Palladini, Al      |                     |

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 21; the nays are 41.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

It being 6 of the clock, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

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