



**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 37th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 1 May 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 1^{er} mai 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Monday 1 May 2000

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 1^{er} mai 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): Tomorrow the government will probably proclaim that they balanced the budget. They will take the platitudes from across the province that their efforts at balancing the budget, their decisions to do all these cuts, were in the best interests of Ontario.

Let me tell you, nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is, northeastern and northwestern Ontario continue to suffer under the Mike Harris government. In a recent study it was pointed out that 17.3% of Sudburians live below the poverty level. I don't think any government, whether it be a Progressive Conservative government, a Reform government or an Alliance government, should be proud of the fact that 17.3% of Sudburians live below the poverty level.

On top of that, this government is asking Sudbury for \$45 million so that they can achieve the health care goals of the Mike Harris government. The reality is, there will be a balanced budget tomorrow, but there is a huge human deficit. There is a huge deficit in northeastern Ontario, in northwestern Ontario. It may be balanced for the first time in 10 years, but 10 years ago there were not the human disasters that there are today.

ORGAN DONATION

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Last Thursday some of my constituents from my riding of Durham helped organize a conference presented by the Organ Donation Ontario volunteer committee of Durham region.

I want to congratulate a number of my constituents who worked hard on the committee that organized this important conference. Audrey Gregg, John Willoughby and Pat Corlett each played an important role in this event.

One of the highlights of the conference came near the end of the day when Linda Rumble and Sandra Holdsworth shared their stories with the conference delegates. Linda, who is a family member of a donor, spoke about the excellent care she and her family received from the medical staff as a whole that helped the family through

this challenging time. Sandra is a transplant recipient who is living proof of the importance of increased awareness about organ donation.

I must also recognize the outstanding contribution of another constituent, Hilda Gatchell. Ms Gatchell was the chair of the committee that organized the event. Her tireless work ensured that the event was such a great success.

Organ donation, put simply, saves lives. It is important that we raise awareness of the issue and that we encourage people to sit down with their families and discuss this important issue. Events such as Organ Donor Awareness 2000 encourages public debate on the issue.

I am also pleased that our Premier has made an increased number of organ donors a personal goal. In fact, he has set an inspirational goal of doubling Ontario's donation rate. Everyone should give this thought and consider organ donation.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): Tomorrow is budget day. If we are to believe some of the news reports, the Minister of Finance will continue this Common Sense Revolution, a revolution that has seen the most disadvantaged in our society become even more desperate. In today's *Globe and Mail*, the minister stated that he "agonized" over the cuts and that he's "a compassionate Conservative."

To portray this government as being compassionate rings very hollow. The minister said, "I think most societies are judged by how well they treat the less fortunate, and, at the end of the day, I think that's what the role of government is."

One of the first roles of this government was to cut welfare rates by 21% for the most vulnerable in our society. Is that what a compassionate Conservative is? If this government really believes in helping the less fortunate, it has failed miserably: more homeless people, more hungry children, less affordable housing, higher tuition fees, a health care system in chaos, and the list goes on.

However, I will be generous in my hopes for tomorrow. I will give this government the benefit of the doubt. I look forward to a budget where, as the minister states, "Really you just take money from people who are better off in society and you redistribute it in benefits for all." I expect a commitment to helping the most disadvantaged, housing our homeless, feeding our hungry children, caring for our sick, disabled and elderly, building afford-

able housing, creating greater access to education, and giving tax cuts to the poorest of our society. I will then proclaim this budget day a great day. I will then stand up and applaud them for having seen the error of their ways, which they of course admitted to.

NICHOLLS/CIVIC NURSES
ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): Today marks the 100-year celebration of the Nicholls/Civic Nurses Alumnae Association in Peterborough. The alumnae association has continued to exist for the nurses who graduated from the local hospital between the years of 1891 and 1974, the year of the last graduating class. My late mother was one of those graduates.

The dedication and loyalty of the former graduates to continue as active members of their alumnae association deserves recognition. Today a dinner will be held to celebrate this special occasion. More than 300 nurses from both across Canada and internationally will gather in Peterborough for this event.

The alumnae association has continued to support the Civic Hospital, now Peterborough Regional Hospital, through donations to purchase furnishings and decorations for patients' and family rooms. The alumnae association also coordinates the collection and documentation of hospital and nursing memorabilia for the museum and archives located in the hospital.

As the representative for Peterborough, I would like to commend the Nicholls/Civic Nurses Alumnae Association for the work they do on behalf of our hospital and community. Many patients and family members are more comfortable, thanks to their work.

Congratulations as you celebrate 100 years of service.

GO TRANSIT

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): When the Robarts administration established Government of Ontario or GO Transit in 1967, it was seen as a significant and progressive step towards a public transit system which would connect various communities in the Golden Horseshoe to the provincial capital of Toronto, and provide commuters and travellers with an alternative to the often clogged and crowded highway system. Substantial capital investment in tracks and trains and generous operating funding made GO Transit an early success and prompted subsequent governments to expand its services and modernize its operation.

The abandonment of GO Transit, and indeed of all public transit, by the Harris government has contributed to gridlock, forced a widening of highways and contributed immensely to air pollution and fuel consumption in our province.

Tomorrow's budget is a golden opportunity for the Ontario government to reinvest in public transportation and to reinvigorate GO Transit. It is time, for instance, to extend GO Transit to St Catharines and Niagara Falls to

provide commuters with an alternative to crammed, increasingly expensive and often unsafe highways, and to make it easier for tourists from the greater Toronto area to visit Niagara.

Finance Minister Ernie Eves has a chance to vastly improve the movement of people and the quality of air in Ontario. He should seize that chance tomorrow in his budget.

FRESH START
CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): Today I rise to give congratulations to a company by the name of Fresh Start. Fresh Start Cleaning and Maintenance is a small company that has had tremendous economic success. In fact, over the last three years their growth in business has been over 500%. They have half a million dollars in revenue and 100 employees. But the business success is not the whole story here.

This is a company that began as a community economic development project 10 years ago. It's a company run by and for psychiatric survivors. It's a place where people who have had a struggle in their life are overcoming that struggle and, with the support of a supportive workplace, are making changes in their lives that are real.

This company happens to provide cleaning services to my constituency office in Beaches-East York, as well as to the member from Toronto Centre-Rosedale. They provide these services to corporations, to not-for-profit companies. It's a regular business, but the story behind it is quite incredible.

The over 100 people who are currently working there are people who are no longer using the services of our psychiatric hospitals, for example. They estimate that's a saving to the province of \$2.7 million a year. There's another \$150,000 saving in social assistance costs as these people are working. But the biggest story is how they've achieved self-esteem, a sense of dignity and a sense of control over their lives. At the beginning of Mental Health Week, it's an appropriate tribute.

1340

DAVE FERGUSON

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): I rise today to make all members aware of the outstanding leadership of a Canadian entrepreneur who has exemplified outstanding achievement within both the corporate and community sectors. The Retail Council of Canada selected Dave Ferguson as Distinguished Canadian Retailer of the Year for 2000.

His distinguished career has spanned more than 30 years in North America's retail industry. As president and CEO of Wal-Mart Canada since 1995, Wal-Mart Canada's growth has accelerated and has witnessed the opening of 35 new stores and the creation of more than 14,000 quality retail and construction jobs nationwide. It

is expected that 14 new stores will open in 2000. Wal-Mart Canada is based in Mississauga.

In addition to his corporate achievements, Mr Ferguson has demonstrated strong community spirit. Under his leadership, Wal-Mart Canada has built one of the country's strongest, ongoing community involvement programs. Over the past few years, the company has raised and donated more than \$6 million to local charities and causes, some of them in my riding.

Mr Ferguson will receive his honourable recognition at the Excellence in Retailing Awards taking place June 19 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): May is Sexual Assault Prevention Month. It is incumbent upon us as legislators to recommit ourselves to preventing sexual assault, educating the public and considering whether we, as the Legislative Assembly, are doing everything within our power to deal with this cancer in our society.

We know, or we should know, that sexual assault is any unwanted sexual advance or contact achieved by force, threats, manipulation or violence. It may be physical or non-physical. It may be committed by strangers, but more often than not sexual assault is committed by friends, acquaintances and relatives. Research indicates that one out of every three women, one out of every nine men and one out of every four children are victims of sexual assault. It is a crime of violence, not of sex. It is a crime of violence, anger and control that hurts both victims and those who love them.

Because most sexual assaults are not reported to the police, it is one of those crimes that cannot be visited upon through crackdowns and more investment in prosecutors and enforcement—because most people aren't reporting these crimes. It makes prevention all the more important, and it's necessary for us to consider what we should be doing, in addition to educating the public to prevent crime.

Those Ontarians who have been victims of sexual assault can pick up a phone and call a sexual assault counsellor in their community. I visited one such sexual centre in Quinte and district, ably represented by MPP Ernie Parsons. I can tell you that they're not getting the stable funding they need in order to run their sexual assault crisis line. We need an appropriate investment in this and all sexual assault crisis centres, and I look forward in the ensuing days to seeing what the government's going to do about this matter.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): On April 27, I had the honour and privilege of attending the eighth annual Police Appreciation Night held at Le Parc in Markham. One of the beneficiaries of this year's dinner is the Ontario Special Olympics Spring Games.

The Special Olympics will commence with a torch run, followed by opening ceremonies on May 11. Competitions will be held in a variety of different venues throughout York region and will conclude at Canada's Wonderland on May 14. Competitions will be held in swimming, bowling, hockey and powerlifting.

In addition to the Special Olympics, several officers from the York Region Police Force were honoured for excellence in policing. Three constables, Peter Cepelak, Christine Irvine-Leitch and Philip Mapley were honoured for bravery in the line of duty for diving into frigid waters in a Newmarket golf course pond after a van crashed through a concrete fence and ended up under water. Constable Carolyn Matthews was recognized for bravery for saving the life of a woman whose house was on fire. Staff Sergeant Rodney Sine was recognized for outstanding service to the community. He was instrumental in developing the values, influences and peers program that now runs in elementary schools across York region. Sergeant Will Janes was honoured for excellence in expanding the RIDE program.

More than \$100,000 was raised at the dinner, which was attended by York region mayors, councillors and business leaders. On behalf of the constituents of Thornhill, I congratulate the York region police for their outstanding work and ongoing generosity to the Special Olympics athletes, and we wish our Special Olympians all the best.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Stewart: Pursuant to standing order 109(b), the report sets out the assignment of ministries and offices of the government to the standing committees on general government, and justice and social policy.

The Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 109(b), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Monday, May 1,

2000, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

Hon Mr Sterling: Pursuant to the request of the member for St Catharines, I move that pursuant to standing order (9)(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Tuesday, May 2, 2000, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): I am pleased to announce today that the Ontario government is providing more than \$500,000 in grants to 38 Ontario organizations involved in addressing violence against women. These local, community-based organizations are involved in delivering prevention, treatment and education on violence against women.

The Ontario government is committed to ending violence against women, providing safe streets, safe communities and preventing crime. Violence against women will not be tolerated. Across Ontario, our government is investing more than \$110 million annually through 10 ministries to address and to prevent violence against women and their children.

Two government initiatives that specifically address the needs of women who have been sexually assaulted include, first of all, funding for 33 community-based sexual assault centres across the province. They offer crisis counselling to women who are victims of sexual assault and they provide training for the board members of these agencies. Secondly, we provide funding for 28 hospital-based sexual assault treatment centres across the province. They provide 24-hour emergency medical care, forensic documentation, crisis intervention, medical follow-up and referrals to community agencies for long-term support services.

Through our violence against women prevention initiatives, the Ontario Women's Directorate supports more than 40 programs and initiatives which provide safety, support victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

1350

Earlier this year, I attended a graduation ceremony held by the Cultural Interpreters Services of Peel. Cultural interpreters are specially trained to provide language and cultural interpretation services to assist non-English-

and non-French-speaking victims of violence gain access to the services they so desperately need. We have increased funding for cultural interpreters to more than \$1.6 million a year. In addition to the enhanced community-based program, cultural interpreter services have also been provided in the new domestic violence courts across the province.

Other initiatives include the hiring of 1,000 new police officers and provision of modern law enforcement equipment, and the establishment of a Victims' Bill of Rights.

Our government will continue on its safe streets, safe communities commitment. This commitment has already led to a number of breakthroughs in community safety in our province.

May is Sexual Assault Prevention Month. It bears repeating that this government will not tolerate violence against women and their children.

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): I am pleased to respond to this, given that May is Sexual Assault Prevention Month in our province and our country.

We welcome the infusion of the half million dollars, but it does little to replace the \$2.56 million for counselling programs and second-stage housing that your government took away in 1996. This is significant, because prevention is very important here. As my colleague alluded to earlier, most sexual assaults happen in domestic situations. It is not strangers who are doing this; it's family and so-called friends.

In order to address prevention, however, you have to address attitudinal changes, and that's a longer-term investment, I understand, and a longer-term goal. However, the sooner we start investing in the longer term and stop worrying about future elections, the better we'll be.

There is a low reportage of sexual assault in domestic situations, and it cuts across all socio-economic backgrounds. In fact I can tell you that middle-class and upper middle-class women are less likely to report sexual assault if it occurs from a partner or a friend. It's too embarrassing, it's a stigma and it's something that's just not acceptable in their social status. They feel embarrassed, helpless and betrayed. Equally important, Minister, is the stay-at-home mother who doesn't have the kind of professional support outside the home, and I hope you look at that as well. Mothers on social assistance or mothers of families that are the working poor in our province also have a hard time reporting sexual assault if it's in a domestic state.

I want to talk about what I know a little about and that is children and how this affects them. When I was in private practice and did a lot of work for the courts, the things that came out of children's mouths who had either observed or heard about their mothers being sexually assaulted were unbearable. We have to get to those children, because there is a high probability that they will do the same. Even though they are hurt and angry, they will do the same when they grow up—statements like: "My mother deserved it. She must have deserved it, because

my dad's my dad. He's a good man." or "Maybe it's something I did." Regardless of their thoughts, their feelings or their illness, they will grow up to do the same unless we stop them at the education and counselling level.

A couple of months ago I visited a second-stage house in Woodstock. This place had five full-time people and was cut down to one in the previous mandate. When I approached the second-stage housing, the director was actually shovelling snow; she was doing everything. The counselling program was cut. I thank the Minister of Community and Social Services for giving this lady a meeting, and I hope that that has implications for restoring the counselling program to the children in that place. For some of these women it's almost too late; they've been too hurt to trust again. But it's not too late for the children.

The other area I'd like to concentrate on in the short time I have is education. Minister, with all due respect, I would have preferred to see the money that you spent on the millennium book spent on materials on sexual assault prevention in the schools. Date rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment is high in our high schools. I'm amazed, as the mother of a young girl, how high it is, and it's scary.

When I interviewed these young ladies in my previous role at the Board of Education, again, some of the statements were unheard of and really rang some bells to me as a mother—and I'm teaching my kid right away on how to respond—things like: "Well, he only does it when he's angry. He only does it when he's frustrated. I know he really loves me." We have a lot of work to do. At the very least, commit to investing a similar amount of money to what you did in the millennium book to materials for this.

I'd like to read from a statement of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which stated in number 28 of its principal subjects of concern:

"The committee is concerned that the significant reduction in provincial social assistance programs, the unavailability of affordable and appropriate housing and widespread discrimination with respect to housing creates obstacles to women escaping domestic violence. Many women are forced, as a result of these obstacles, to choose between returning to violence or staying in a violent situation on the one hand, or homelessness and inadequate food and clothing for themselves and their children on the other."

Minister, a couple of generations ago there was a stigma in saying that you had a learning disability. Through education, we taught students that it's okay to stand up and say: "I have a learning disability. I need help." Let's teach them to stand up and say: "There's domestic violence in my home. My mother needs help. My father needs help. I need help."

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): I'm pleased to have the opportunity to join in placing my comments on behalf of our caucus on the record for Sexual Assault Prevention Month.

While it is always welcome news when the government makes announcements that they are going to make an investment in this important area, I do have to say that I lack a lot of information. The minister was not very specific in terms of the kinds of programs this particular infusion of \$500,000 will support. In fact, in the statement the only two specifics that are talked about are the community-based sexual assault centres and the hospital-based sexual assault treatment centres, both of which are programs that have been in place in this province for many, many years, long preceding this particular government, where we know that, for example, in terms of the community-based sexual assault centres, there is a desperate need for more stable funding. It's unclear to me whether the money announced today will go towards supporting that or whether it will go somewhere else.

I'm particularly concerned when I see the minister mix in a number of issues. She goes on to speak in the rest of the entire statement about general violence-against-women prevention initiatives, in particular, looking at issues dealing with spousal assault and assault on children. All of these issues are critically important, and we must all be dedicated to an eradication of violence of any kind in our society, particularly the kind of violence that stems from power over those who have none in the situation of sexual assault, in the situation spousal assault and in the situation of child abuse.

It also clear that it's important, when we have something as specific as a period of time to bring in education around sexual assault, that we spend our time talking about that and not mixing various sorts of initiatives together here. For example, the minister goes on to talk about domestic violence courts. Part of the initiatives there came out of the May-Iles recommendation. I could spend the rest of my time talking about those recommendations from the coroner's inquest that haven't been met, in particular, the need for community-based services.

People in the community will tell you, over and over again, that there are women who choose not to follow the court route because of all the problems inherent in that. The community-based supports there are very necessary for them, yet that's where we have seen cuts to shelters in second-stage housing programs. Again, that doesn't deal specifically with the topic that we're here to talk about today.

The minister goes on to talk about the hiring of 1,000 new police officers. The government has yet to admit that, as of today, we are still 1,200 officers short of the number of officers we had on the street in 1994. This is not a record to be proud of: hiring back fewer than you caused to be laid off with the various cuts in funding that you've made.

1400

The minister goes on to talk about the Victims' Bill of Rights, a bill which has been, in court, denounced—it's as empty as the rhetoric from the other side of the House—as something that provides no rights at all. It's a statement of sentiment. It's nice to have sentiment; it's much better to have rights that are enforceable and to

have the ability through our community agencies to prevent these things in the first place.

I remain pleased that we are standing and again, as we do every year, uniting our voices together to say that it is of utmost importance to see the eradication of this kind of violence, of sexual assault, and all that it means in terms of the trauma in people's lives.

It is a pleasure to hear the minister make an announcement that \$500,000 in grants are going to be made. I would like to know the details. Are they one-time grants? Is any of that stable funding? Is any of that going specifically to the sexual assault help lines that have been established that people can't staff? The women's assault help line in 1997 was turning away 50,000 calls a year, and it has gotten worse since then.

There are specifics out there that need to be addressed. Without the details, I don't know how far these announcements go. I hope they meet some of these needs. I hope we can continue to work together to improve the record of all of us with respect to our society and eradication of violence. I hope the next time the statement is more fulsome in dealing with the topic at hand, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, not mixing in all of your justice initiatives and attempting to take credit and saying it's having an impact in this area. I hope that we can see some real progress, measurable progress, and come back with results that show that the \$500,000 in grants that you invest this year protect women, real women, and make a difference in their lives by the time we come back to this event next year.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PRIMARY CARE REFORM

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question today is for the Premier. Last week we learned that you have, for all intents and purposes, given up on primary care reform in Ontario. You have abdicated your responsibility to modernize health care, to restructure it in such a way that it will restore public confidence.

Let us end this charade. Why don't you just stand up now, own up, fess up, and admit that you never really were interested in moving forward on primary care reform in Ontario and that as far as you are concerned it's never ever going to happen under a Harris government?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Last week what we learned, and tomorrow in the budget what we will learn, is the biggest advance in the history of North America in primary care reform, in rostering, in quality, 24-hour, seven-day-a-week health care. What we will also see is that it's done co-operatively with the OMA.

The leader of the flip-flop party at one point said, "It should be mandatory." Then we heard him give a speech to the fundraisers—these are the wealthy doctors who for some reason or other still attend a Liberal fundraising

event—and what he said there was, "No, it should be voluntary."

Now we have an agreement arrived at on a voluntary basis, an historic agreement with the biggest advance certainly in Canada, and I believe in North America, to primary care reform and rostering, the likes of which has never been seen anywhere in Canada. Yet still nobody knows: Are you for rostering? Are you against it? Are you mandatory? Are you voluntary? Are you—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock, please. Let's wait for the people to settle down.

The leader of the official opposition.

Mr McGuinty: Mike, I've got to tell you, arrogance looks really good on you. And in passing, let me extend a very warm welcome to the Premier, who has deigned to honour us with his presence here today.

Premier, your record speaks for itself. You have done nothing to move the cause of 24-7 health care forward in Ontario. In fact, what we've learned about this deal is that you're working more to hike up costs for individual patients and families in Ontario than anybody else in the history of this province. Not only have you not moved forward on primary care reform, Premier, but you have agreed to delist and ensure that Ontarians begin to pay \$50 million more in health care costs in Ontario. That's what this deal is all about. It has nothing to do with improving health care for Ontarians, but it has everything to do with jacking up the prices they pay for health care as residents of this province.

Premier, again I ask you to stand up and end the charade; admit you intend to do nothing when it comes to putting in place 24-7 health care for Ontarians.

Hon Mr Harris: Arrogance is when you argue with reporters about whether you ever had a balanced budget or not, and the Provincial Auditor says this: "The Liberal practice of pre-flowing money via regular pre-flows, both budget and non-budget, can be viewed as an attempt to manage operating results." That's arrogance. You told us to check with the auditor. We checked with the auditor, and that's what the auditor said.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier take his seat. We'll just let the clock wind down. It's fine by me.

The Premier had a little time left, if he wanted to continue.

Hon Mr Harris: Since the first half of your question dealt with arrogance, you are the epitome of arrogance in everything you do.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock for a minute. For the benefit of all members, it would be helpful if we did address things through the Chair. As you know, there's a long-standing parliamentary tradition to do it through the Chair. That way we don't get into personal attacks across

at each other. If members could remember to try to direct it through the Speaker, that would be helpful. I believe we're at the final supplementary; the Premier's time was up.

Mr McGuinty: This response speaks volumes about the state of this government and its real priorities in Ontario. I asked a question, Speaker, and you heard it very clearly, as did the viewers. I asked a question specifically about primary care reform. I asked a question that has everything to do with modernizing health care in Ontario. I asked a question that has everything to do with the most important value that we share as Ontarians, which is protecting our sick and our most vulnerable. This Premier talked to me about a balanced budget when I was talking about health care. That tells us everything, that at the end of the day he's prepared to put dollars and cents ahead of health care for Ontarians. That's what the Premier is telling us.

The Premier stands to respond.

The Speaker: Stop the clock. The Premier knows I will call on him when it's his turn to answer. I think we had a few more seconds left in the final supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: Mike, the good news is that shortly your time will be up; that's the good news.

Premier, one more time, if I could have you—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat. Stop the clock. We'll wait for the government benches to come to order.

Start the clock.

Mr McGuinty: Painful though it may be for you, Premier, I'm going to ask you to turn your mind to the issue of health care in Ontario and I'm going to ask you one more time to admit before all Ontarians that you have never had and do not have at this time any plans to put into place 24-7 health care for Ontario.

Hon Mr Harris: To the arrogant leader of the Liberal Party, let me say this: To stand in your place today and attack the very integrity of the OMA, of every doctor in this province who came to the table with our negotiating team and our Minister of Health, who came to the table—

1410

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier take his seat. Let the clock run down, then. We're not going to continue when you shout back and forth. Both sides are doing it today, so we'll just let the clock wind down, because I'm not going to sit here while people are shouting across at each other. There will be no question period, then. Premier.

Hon Mr Harris: The Liberal benches may not want to hear this, but the fact of the matter is that you are attacking the integrity of every doctor in the province of Ontario, who made a major commitment through this negotiated agreement towards primary care reform, unlike anything seen in this country, certainly in living memory while I have been around. It is a firm commitment and it is a proposal to proceed forward.

Now, it is not ordered, it is not compulsory, it is not the government dictating, because that is the only thing we haven't done. We did it co-operatively, which I know bothers the Liberal Party. They don't like to see things done co-operatively. If you think we should have ordered it, say so, because one day you say one thing and the next day another.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): We've got a new Premier here today. He's the guy who wants to work together with everybody. This is news.

My second question is for the Premier as well. Last week we had an announcement telling us that you have for all intents and purposes given up on ensuring that there are places in our public, affordable universities in Ontario for all of those students who are marching through primary and secondary school today. You have said you have given up on making places for them and instead you have extended an open arm to private American universities, which will be charging the likes of \$40,000 in tuition for our young people.

Premier, why have you given up on the right of Ontario families and their children to attend affordable public universities in Ontario, something that is absolutely essential to our future economic prosperity?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think, quite frankly, even the members of the opposition know, certainly the university and college community knows and the students and parents know that this government has put more dollars into the largest expansion of colleges and universities ever in the history of the province. We've already announced close to \$1 billion of expansions, of growth for our colleges and universities. We've already announced the operating funding commitments to go with those new spaces. We have, through Super-Build—and the only reason we were able to do it—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Premier take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Premier, continue, please.

Hon Mr Harris: The record is very clear: that in addition to exploring opportunities for more excellence and more opportunities to keep Ontario students here instead of going south of the border or to Britain or to Europe for their education, and in addition to the massive expansion in confidence in the public institutions, which have applauded our initiatives, I might add, we have taken the largest steps forward for quality, accessibility, excellence and new spaces—

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

Mr McGuinty: Premier, check the facts. In the last five years in North America, if you take a look at the 60 different jurisdictions, all of the states and all of the provinces, we rank 59th here in Ontario. That is your personal claim to fame. We were ranked 59 out of 60 in

terms of increasing investments in our public universities. The question is, what do they get, the leaders of all those other jurisdictions in North America, that you don't get? They get that it's absolutely essential in a knowledge-based global market economy that we continue to invest in our young people and our publicly funded universities. That's what they get.

The question for you, Premier, is: Why is it that you have given up on Ontario's young people? Why is it that you've given up on our public universities? Why is it that instead you've extended an open arm to private American universities which our children are not going to be able to afford to attend? Do you not understand how important it is to maintain in place a modernized public university system which Ontario youth can afford?

Hon Mr Harris: The record is very clear: We've put in more money, more expansion, new spaces, more capital dollars certainly than ever in the history of Ontario. We have shown tremendous confidence in and strength into our universities and our colleges. Once again, I'm a little shocked when we hear the president of university after university say: "You know what? We are now so well-financed and funded and have such excellence that we can compete with the world. We can be the best in the world."

Interruption.

The Speaker: The Premier take his seat. Stop the clock. I would just remind our guests in the gallery that demonstrations and yelling at the members are not allowed. We love to have you here—I know all the members do—but we can't have a situation where people in the gallery are shouting. If that happens, unfortunately you will be asked to leave. I would appreciate your cooperation in this regard. I know sometimes the issues are very heated and people tend to get away, but that even includes clapping and so on. So I would appreciate your indulgence, for those of you in the gallery.

I believe we're at final supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, you may have decided that it's your job to look out for the interests of university presidents, but just so it's perfectly clear, I think my job is to look out for the interests of Ontario families and their young people.

Premier, just so you understand how bad things are getting and how little you are doing, universities are telling us that in 2003, as a result of the double-cohort mess that you have created, there are going to be 33,000 students knocking at the doors. We're also learning that over the course of the next decade there is going to be a net increase in enrolment of over 90,000 Ontario young people. You are doing absolutely nothing and your minister is doing absolutely nothing to prepare for this.

In fact, let the record speak for itself. When this minister was confronted by a student last week who said, "Where am I going to get \$40,000 a year?" she effectively said, "Let your parents come up with the money," which means, as far as she's concerned, "Let them eat cake."

I believe that we have a responsibility, Premier. We in this province and in this Legislature have a responsibility to keep the door open to the generations that have yet to come behind us. We've got a responsibility to make sure we have in place a modern, effective, efficient, publicly supported university system that is affordable for our young people.

So I ask you one more time, why are you giving up on our young people, and why are you giving up on our future?

Hon Mr Harris: I think the member raises some issues of double cohort and a growing number of students, which is why we have provided for close to 90,000 new spaces here in our colleges and here in our universities—our public colleges, our publicly funded colleges. If you want to talk about students, your government hiked tuition 30% and never gave one nickel in increase in student assistance. We're the party that has put over \$1 billion into bursaries. We're the party that has put record numbers of dollars into OSAP and student aid and bursaries and assistance.

I know what Liberals say. It's why you're irrelevant. Here's what thinking people say. They said this in the editorial in the *Globe and Mail*.

"Following New Brunswick's lead, Ontario will allow the formation of private universities, a decision oddly late in coming and sadly opposed by some." You, sir, are the sad one.

PRIMARY CARE REFORM

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. This is your agreement with the Ontario Medical Association, which your cabinet colleagues said didn't exist last week, until we exposed it.

As we predicted, despite all your rhetoric about primary care, there is absolutely nothing in this document that will promote primary care. You did the same thing you did three years ago: When push came to shove, you sold out. The fee increases in this alone will cost Ontario's citizens over \$217 million. But what do the patients get? No effective strategy for dealing with the shortage of doctors, no insurance that the doctor is going to be in for the families that don't have one, nothing that will move forward on nurse practitioners or nurses being put into primary care. Premier, why did you cave in? Why didn't you insist on a plan which would ensure that physicians and nurse practitioners and nurses would be in for all the patients of Ontario, not just some? Will you go back to the table and get the kind of agreement that you spent so much time talking about?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): You're right; the agreement does cost in the \$200-million range. That's a little under 8% over four years, which is within the guidelines we set, not only for our own negotiations but for money we transfer to our partners in the broader public sector.

With regard to primary care reform, this agreement is all about primary care reform, it's all about rostering, it's all about encouraging, with the co-operation of the OMA, our family doctors to roster patients. You will hear more about this perhaps in later days.

The agreement is yet to be ratified, as you know, but let me at least acknowledge this: At least you, sir, and the New Democratic Party have been consistent in saying we should just order doctors to do it. You wouldn't do it, but you have been consistent in telling us we should order people to do things, unlike the Liberal Party, who say one day, "You should order," and the next day "voluntary," depending on whom they're talking to. I think you're wrong, but I at least give you credit for consistency.

1420

Mr Hampton: Premier, we are talking here about literally thousands of families across Ontario that do not have access to a family doctor. We are talking about patients who have small children who wait eight weeks for a doctor's appointment—a little boy who loses so much weight that he weighs less than his two-year-old brother. That's what we're talking about here, and your agreement does nothing about that.

Your expert, Dr McKendry, who went out there and surveyed this problem for you, said in Thunder Bay three weeks ago that there are now 100 communities that are short 415 physicians, the worst record ever. He said that unless you're ready to move forward on primary care, this situation is going to get worse. Premier, what do you have to say to your own expert, Dr Robert McKendry, who said you must move forward or the problem is going to get worse? What do you have to say to him?

Hon Mr Harris: What we are talking about here is a Minister of Health who has done more to correct the damage that your party left and that the Liberals left than any other Minister of Health has done. Back when you cut enrolment in the medical schools in 1992, an NDP decision, probably supported by the Liberals—I can't remember at the moment—we have had challenges. We understand that. With the Liberals slashing \$1.7 billion out of our health care funding at the same time as we're trying to deal with an aging population, trying to deal with new drugs, new techniques, and trying to deal with primary care reform, it has been a challenge. We accept that and we acknowledge that. But I can tell you that no minister has done more to implement the McKendry recommendations or the recommendations of primary care reform or to help everybody have access to a family doctor than has this Minister of Health or this Minister of Finance, as you will hear tomorrow in the budget.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Final supplementary.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): Premier, I feel like I should send the agreement over to you and ask you to read it, because it does nothing to move primary care forward; it does nothing on recruitment and retention of physicians. In fact, it moves in the wrong direction.

The other thing it does is that it sets up a process of delisting another \$50 million of OHIP services. Since you've come to office, now with this agreement, that's \$100 million of OHIP services to be delisted. Compare that to the \$10 million of delisting before you became Premier. That's money that is coming out of the public's pocket; that is privatization of the services.

Here we are about to have a budget tomorrow, where you're going to say it's a balanced budget, there's a surplus and you're going to pay down the debt. You're going to say you're going to spend more on health, that you've got all these investments to make. Tell me, why was it necessary, then, to take away \$50 million of services from the public and make them pay for it from their own pocket? Why is it necessary? Why are you privatizing this system?

Hon Mr Harris: I am surprised that the New Democratic Party has moved off primary care reform, because they have been advocates for that, and they have a track record of credibility that the Liberals would envy on that issue. I am surprised you moved off that into an area of delisting, which you started. You started delisting. Our minister has talked about modernizing the system, not delisting. You, the party that delisted all these drugs—whereas this Minister of Health has added net to the drug formulary 50 times more drugs than you cut out—all you did was cut, delist, and you don't have a good record on that.

I am surprised you would shift from where you do have some credibility of interest in primary care reform, unlike the Liberals, to an area where you were just as disastrous as the Liberals, and that is in delisting and taking away services.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. It seems that your answer to all the health care crises and education crises you create is always the same: privatize. Here you've privatized \$100 million in health care services over two agreements.

But I want to talk just about universities, because we've pointed out example after example over the last five years of how your short funding of colleges and universities is creating all kinds of problems for our students, and last week we got your answer. What is your answer? You are going to invite scandal-plagued institutions, scandal-plagued private, for-profit universities like the University of Phoenix to come into Ontario; the same University of Phoenix that has been fined \$6 million by the federal Department of Education in the United States for misusing student aid funds.

Premier, can you tell us how something like the University of Phoenix, which has been convicted of misusing student aid funds, is going to help the secondary students of Ontario?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I really am surprised at this party. Here is a leader who went to university in the United States—

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): And graduated.

Hon Mr Harris: And graduated, I might add. Mr Speaker, every once in a while an intervention is appropriate.

Now, when we have, through SuperBuild, had the largest investment and expansion of our college and university system, taking care of over 90,000 new student placements through the SuperBuild announcements that we've made to date, I'm surprised that you wouldn't understand that, in addition to that, it disappoints us, with the quality and the excellence that we have in our institutions here in Ontario, that we still have students who go to, say, Dartmouth or Harvard or to universities in England. Our goal is to make sure that we get students from around the world coming to Ontario, where we know our publicly funded universities and colleges—

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

Mr Hampton: Premier, the question was this: You're opening the door to the University of Phoenix, an institution that regularly is hauled before the federal Department of Education in the United States for misusing student aid funds. You respond by saying, "Well, you, Mr Hampton, went to a university in the States." Yes, I did. I went to a university where the tuition fees today in Canadian dollars would be \$40,000 a year. Most students can't afford that—I couldn't afford it—and that's the gist of the question, Premier.

You're inviting scandal-driven institutions like the University of Phoenix. You're saying that institutions that will charge \$40,000 a year in tuition fees are the answer. Explain to us, Premier, how that's an answer. How are students going to be able to afford \$40,000 a year? How is a scandal-plagued institution like the University of Phoenix going to help our students? That's the answer we want to hear.

Hon Mr Harris: As you know, many Ontario students are now leaving and going to other universities. Some now, with the Internet and the changes that are taking place, can stay right here in Ontario and get degrees from universities all around the world.

What we have put in place is a recognition of this reality. We've said we need now to investigate and set up a process where we can look at those universities that we think can add value, can work in partnership perhaps with our universities or colleges here and use this new technology. I don't know why, because you think one university is bad—why that university would get through a screening process, and why you would want to eliminate Dartmouth and Harvard from coming to Ontario.

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. You know, it's strange that you can't find money to modernize health care in Ontario and you can't find money to modernize our

university system and ensure that it remains affordable and accessible, but when it comes to the matter—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Would the member take his seat. Stop the clock.

Interruption.

The Speaker: This House stands in recess for 15 minutes.

The House recessed from 1432 to 1447.

The Speaker: I believe it was the leader of the official opposition.

Mr McGuinty: To the Premier: I want to return to the issue of the Harris land flips and the Harris land scandal, the details of which have been revealed to a shocked Ontario public over the course of the past few weeks.

I want to return to one specific deal in particular. That's the one that converted a cemetery into a gold mine for a close friend of the Conservative Party here in Ontario. That deal involved a piece of land, an otherwise insignificant 25-foot strip of land, that was turned over to Mr Damiani, a close friend of your cabinet. The issue that we're trying to figure out over here on this side of the House is whether he paid anything at all for that strip of land that converted an otherwise inexpensive cemetery into \$25-million gold mine. We know that the land was never put out to public tender. We know that your minister was involved in the deal. What we're trying to get from you is whether any money at all was charged for this 25-foot strip of land. Was this a freebie for a friend of the government?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Actually, it is embarrassing for any MPP to ask that kind of question, in that kind of tone, with that kind of language, with that kind of rhetoric, with that kind of misinformation.

What we do know is that there were a number of deals. I have no knowledge of any individual deals; neither does the minister, of this deal or any other. What we know is that there are some deals for which the chairman and the CEO have come to the minister and said: "We should be doing an audit of some of these deals, these practices over the last 15 years. Could we do that?"

The minister said yes, and if there is anything untoward, they'll take a look at it. So if you would send any information you have to the forensic audit team or to the Deputy Attorney General or to the OPP, we'll be looking into all these matters.

But I can tell you that your question, your attitude, your tone is a disgrace to the profession of politician.

The Speaker: Time is up. Supplementary.

Mr McGuinty: Premier, what is truly disgraceful is your refusal and the refusal of your minister to bring forward all the facts so that we can get to the bottom of this matter right now.

I have a memo put out by the ORC dated June 17, and it is in relation to this 25-foot strip of land. In it, a representative of Mr Damiani says he believed that the 25-foot strip was included in the purchase price of the first piece of land. The person who wrote this asked, "How do I go

for market value for one abutting owner and not the other?" because it turns out that Sun Life owned the land on the other side and they were using this same 25-foot strip of land.

What we've got here is the conversion of a cemetery into a \$25-million gold mine. We've got the fact that this has not been put out for public tender. We've got the fact that this was not offered for sale to the abutting neighbour. We've got the fact that, because you haven't answered the question yet, there is a distinct possibility that Mr Damiani got this land for free. We've got all of those facts combined, and that makes for a continuing stink emanating from the ORC and the leadership you have failed to provide on this issue.

Premier, once more, why is that you have given up protecting the interests of taxpayers of Ontario when it comes to your land flip?

Hon Mr Harris: I believe what we have—and I'm not privy to any of the deals—is a deal that hasn't closed, that's under investigation, and all the facts are being made available to all those who should have them. The only thing that stinks here is you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I'm going to ask the Premier to withdraw that. You cannot say that to another member.

Hon Mr Harris: I would be happy to withdraw, Mr Speaker. But let me say this: You are an embarrassment to this House.

The Speaker: The Premier take his seat. The member take his seat.

Let me say this: Personal accusations going back and forth can't continue in here. I say this to the Premier: This is the third time I've seen him do it—to the member for Parkdale-High Park on one occasion and to the member for Scarborough-Agincourt—and I will not tolerate it again. If there are any more personal comments that get thrown across—and I don't know whether a Premier has ever been thrown out, but I will name the Premier. If he yells across one more personal insult to any member, I will have to name the Premier.

Applause.

The Speaker: I thank the members, but as I've said in the past, it's not very helpful when members clap for the Speaker's ruling.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, and it's a very important question I have.

Just before I get to my question, I attended a volunteer awards ceremony last Friday evening on behalf of the minister and the government of Ontario. The volunteers in our community are doing wonderful work in our hospitals and are disgusted at the federal Liberals' transfer payments to the province of Ontario only providing 11% for health care.

Today I read with some surprise a report saying that the funding for the Ontario Human Rights Commission

may or may not have decreased or increased. Can you put some clarity into that issue, Minister?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): I'd like to thank the member for London-Fanshawe for his question. I'd like also to offer to the opposition that when they're going to put some information out in the public, if they want to check with the ministry first, I'd be happy to answer, because some of the comments just weren't true.

I think it's important for us all to recognize that the Ontario Human Rights Commission is doing a better job than they've ever done before in the province. In 1999-2000, 60% of all complaints filed were resolved within a six-month period. Half of the new cases were dealt with through voluntary mediation, and of those, over 70% were resolved within a six-month period or less. The average time it takes for a case to be resolved through the Ontario Human Rights Commission right now is down from 22 months in 1997 to 18 months. They are making moves all the time to reduce—

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

Mr Mazzilli: Minister, I guess we can't believe everything we hear from the opposition. Certainly in this case it's not any different from other things that we hear. They are continually saying that the federal government has increased federal transfers for health care. In fact, what do we find? They've decreased since 1994.

But back to this issue, which is very important: How many cases is the Ontario Human Rights Commission hearing at this point in time?

Hon Mrs Johns: I'd like to thank the member for the question, because it's really important to correct the record. I don't like to blame other parties, but let me say that I think it's the pot calling the kettle black. The NDP had a dismal record in office when it came to success in resolving Human Rights Commission cases. The number of cases either not dealt with or dismissed was less in 1998-99 than it was in 1994-95, so we're doing a better job of going through the cases and resolving the cases. We're also going through twice as many cases—and they are receiving a hearing—than happened when the NDP were in power in 1994. So we're hearing twice as many cases. In 1998-99, 867 cases were settled, compared to just 293 cases in 1994-95.

I think you'll hear from the chair of the Ontario Human Rights Commission that things are going well at the Human Rights Commission, that they're far exceeding the expectations that they have in the budget. I can tell you that we're pleased with the way the program is working.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I have a question for the Premier. Liberals believe that children with Down's syndrome, children who have learning disabilities, should get extra priority in school, should be

looked after. I want to ask you about the failure of your minister to do that.

Tomorrow you're going to present a budget and you're going to pretend everything is fine in this province, but part of the cost of your tax cuts and your other things has been taking money away from disadvantaged kids. In the Durham Board of Education alone, \$11 million was being spent by that board because you wouldn't provide for these disabled kids to get their special attention in school. They tried that for a year; then they cut \$3 million. Now they are cutting another \$1.4 million. You're abandoning these kids. In the Durham board and boards all around the province, it's the price you're making the most vulnerable kids in school today pay for your twisted priorities.

Premier, the day before the budget, will you stand up and assure us that your standards don't stoop that low, that you will include these kids, that you will fix the problems that your minister has been unwilling to fix with special-needs kids in this province?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): I think the minister can respond.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I guess I would ask the honourable member where he has been since I've been minister, because one of the first issues that I identified—

Interjections.

Hon Mrs Ecker: They don't want to hear the answer now that they've asked me the question.

One of the first issues that I identified as needing to be fixed was to further improve the services for special-needs children in our province. That's why we have increased again, for the third year in a row, more money for special needs, another \$40 million, as well as providing additional flexibility to boards, which boards and parents asked for, as well as working on standards so that we make sure those students are getting the support they need, something else we were asked to do that we are working on. All of these steps we are taking because we do recognize the special needs of those children. We do recognize that with the right support they too can have an education and deserve an education.

Mr Kennedy: Maybe the Premier was too embarrassed to give that answer, but the minister is referring to the students in her own area, in the Durham board, where the superintendent in charge of special education has seen none of the \$40 million of ghost money that you've announced sometime next year—not one penny—and says that some 50% to 60% of their special-needs kids won't be eligible for that cruel slide rule that you've set up to take kids out so you can save money in this program.

Wendy Shulte has a son, Justin, who has a childhood illness that interfered with his ability to learn languages. He no longer qualifies for assistance. He's headed for a grade 4 class without assistance unless the board cannibalizes some other program to make it happen. Minister, they've laid off 120 teachers. They've cut \$8 million in assistance to special-needs kids on your watch, in your

riding, to the students whose parents elected you to look after them.

Minister, I want to ask you today, will you guarantee a standard of care, the same standard of care that existed before you came in with your cut-and-slash agenda, will be there for special-needs kids? Will you review the formula? Will you put more money in, and will you make sure that Justin Shulte and all the thousands of special-needs kids don't have to pay the cost for your twisted priorities in the budget tomorrow?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Again, with all due respect to the honourable member, where has he been? For the third year in a row, we are increasing special-needs funding. We have just started a massive reform of how that money goes to boards so that there are better standards and better guarantees out there for parents and their children so that they get those services. Perhaps the reason the Durham board hasn't yet seen any money from the \$40 million is because the boards are only now submitting ISA claims and the paperwork for the eligibility that has to be done to make sure that this money is indeed going for special-needs children.

The other thing I would like to say is that if the honourable member had taken the briefing that my staff offered, and unfortunately he didn't, he would understand that the eligibility criteria for funding are not the same as the services and supports that students should be getting. So, regardless of where a student falls in some wonderful financial criteria, the individual education—

Interjections.

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): My question today is for the minister responsible for children. Our government has made children's initiatives a priority, particularly for children below the age of four. In the Blueprint, we promised, "We'll give every Ontario child the opportunity for a good start in life, with early childhood learning, and with better protection and support for them and their families." Indeed, it was our government that established the first ever position of minister responsible for children.

Minister, I understand that recently you attended the World Bank Global Conference 2000 on investing in our children's future. I'm wondering if you could share with the members of this House, based on what you observed at the conference, how Ontario is comparing with other jurisdictions around the world in terms of investing in our children's future.

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): I'd like to thank Brenda Elliott, the member for Guelph-Wellington, for this question. It was indeed a great privilege for me to attend the World Bank global conference in Washington and to host the opening session on investing in children with Dr Fraser Mustard. I learned a great deal from meeting with individuals from

around the world who are also committed to improving the future outcomes of our children.

World-renowned Dr William Foege, an epidemiologist who worked on the successful eradication of small pox in the 1970s and recipient of many international awards, including the World Health Organization Health for All medal, spoke at the conference. In his closing remarks, Dr Foege singled out Ontario as one of the only two jurisdictions in the world that he knew of that are leading the way for the rest of the world—

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

Mrs Elliott: That's marvellous news. You mentioned Dr Fraser Mustard, also Margaret McCain, who of course we called upon to assist us with the Early Years studies. I understand that early childhood development programs are most effective when they are community-based. How is our Early Years study implementation ongoing with this emphasis on community-based services?

Hon Mrs Marland: I just want to finish what I was saying and then answer the second question. The important thing to know is that Dr Foege stood at the World Bank conference and acknowledged and praised Ontario for being one of two that had ministers responsible solely for children.

I'm proud of Premier Harris's vision and his commitment to the children of this province. There was a strong consensus among the countries represented at this conference, poor nations and rich nations alike, that there is a need for local community-based early childhood development programs, rather than the traditional top-down, cookie-cutter approach that governments have used in the past.

The worldwide consensus supports the recommendations made by the Early Years study and provides us with further—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up. I'm sorry. Time passes quickly, I know.

The leader of the third party.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. Dr Kin Yip Chun has waited eight years to receive justice from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. An investigator who looked at his complaint has concluded that his complaint indeed has merit, but he has waited eight years for a hearing, eight years for justice. Justice delayed is justice denied.

Sadly, he is one of hundreds of cases that have waited four years, six years, eight years. In fact, over the last two years, in 1998 and 1999, the Ombudsman has singled out your government's sad record at the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Now, you say things are improving at the Human Rights Commission, so I'm going to take you up on your statements. If things are improving, will

you guarantee that Dr Chun will get the hearing he deserves after waiting eight years?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women): As the member opposite knows, I am not allowed to speak about cases before the Human Rights Commission. But let me say that it's very clear that the people who have caused the backlog at the Ontario Human Rights Commission were the NDP. In 1994-95, they cut \$2 million from the budget of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and since that time we have been working to expedite complaints, to move cases forward within the commission—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Would the minister take her seat. I apologize to the minister for the interruption. Minister, continue.

Hon Mrs Johns: It's important for everybody to be able to get their hearing at the Human Rights Commission. As I said earlier, in 1999-2000, 60% of all complaints filed were resolved within a six-month period or less. Half of the new cases were dealt with through voluntary mediation and, of those, 70% of the cases were resolved in six months or less. The Ontario Human Rights Commission is doing a terrific job at going through the cases more quickly, making sure that people have hearings as quickly as possible and that people's rights are protected.

The Speaker: The minister's time is up.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Minister, I've just got to tell you, I find your response unsavoury, malodorous and offensive. You're only devoting a couple of dollars and a couple of services to the Human Rights Commission.

We saw what happened when your government shut down regional offices for the family support plan: It created chaos and misery for thousands of people. What you're now doing is ignoring what the Ombudsman said, the advice of the Ombudsman. You cut \$1.2 million from the Human Rights Commission. You're shutting down eight regional offices. Staff have been laid off. In 1999, the backlog increased to 485 cases from 325. Madame la ministre, you're shutting down the shop. How can you say things are getting better? You're shutting down everything.

Hon Mrs Johns: To the member opposite and the previous minister of this ministry, let me say that it's time you checked the facts. I don't know where you're getting those kinds of cuts. The people in every regional office are still there. We moved them into other buildings so that we didn't have bricks and mortar just for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, but we have people in all of those communities to be able to work with people who need it.

Let me say once more that cuts were made in 1994-95 of \$2 million. We did not cut \$1.2 million from the budget this year. I don't know where they're getting their information, but it's incorrect. We continue to work to be able to get more cases through, more people heard. In

fact, we have moved the number of cases that are being heard every year to 800 from 293 in the year the person opposite was minister.

1510

HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): My question is for the Minister of Health. Your new agreement with the Ontario Medical Association says that \$50 million will be found through tightening and modernization. You know, as we all do, that tightening means delisting and that delisting means people paying for more of their health care privately.

The first thing you're going to delist is rehabilitation services; \$17 million worth of rehabilitation services comes from OHIP billings right now. It's not enough to meet the need, and that's why more and more rehabilitation is being paid for privately—by those who can afford to pay for it.

If you stop paying for rehabilitation out of OHIP, Minister, you must put those dollars into the same services in other settings. If you don't, seniors and others who can't pay \$1,000 or more out of their own pocket to get needed rehabilitation will just be left out. I ask you today, will you guarantee that the \$17 million worth of rehabilitation services you are going to delist will be put back into publicly funded rehabilitation care? Will you assure us that you will not use this money to pay for physicians' salary increases?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I'm not quite sure what the member is speaking about, but I can certainly share with the member the fact that if you take a look at this agreement, this agreement actually does respond to the specific needs of people in the province of Ontario. In fact, she will see in here that this agreement actually allows for increased access to emergency services. It also allows for increased access to specialists. It also takes into consideration the fact that as our population is aging, they have a need for more complex care, and so it recognizes that additional benefits are to be provided for seniors over the age of 75. It also recognizes that home care is a fact of life, and we need to ensure that the appropriate system of home care services is provided and that the physician has the key role.

This agreement does more to ensure that more services are available to people in this province than ever before, plus the fact that they're going to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mrs McLeod: You know exactly what I'm talking about, and I will take your refusal to answer the last question and my supplementary as an affirmation of the fact that you are going to be shifting services from public funds to the private payer. The physician services committee has been given the task of telling you where you will find your \$50 million. The physician services committee has already recommended to you delisting rehabilitation and audiology. They recommended it last year;

you delayed it. They will recommend it again this year. So you are going to delist rehabilitation services and you are going to delist audiology services.

Delisting audiology might be all right, provided you will guarantee that hearing tests are not going to be something else that people, again particularly seniors, will have to pay for out of their own pocket. You were supposed to come up with an alternate plan for audiology services last April. There is still no plan and there is no place else right now that people can get the hearing tests they need.

Minister, I will ask you again, will you assure us that seniors and others will not have to pay for hearing tests, that they will not have to pay more to get rehabilitation so that you can find the money you need to pay doctors' salaries through your agreement with the OMA?

Hon Mrs Witmer: I think it's unfortunate that the member opposite would speculate about events that have not occurred. It's very important to take into consideration that the tentative agreement—and I stress tentative agreement—that is in place actually specifically responds to the needs of people in this province, very particularly the needs of people who need the emergency room service. It speaks to retaining physicians in the province of Ontario. It speaks to recruitment. It speaks to ensuring that people can work together in the primary care reform network.

We look forward to seeing more health providers providing the appropriate level of services. It is a fair agreement that will provide more services than ever before for people in this province, and it doesn't speak to the issues that the member is bringing up today.

SKILLS TRAINING

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): My question is directed to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. I am sure that you and all of us are aware of the skills shortages in Ontario. The shortages are especially acute in Cambridge, with its booming economy. This is a troubling problem we need to address in order to compete in the global economy. What is your ministry doing to prevent this problem from stalling our province's economic growth?

Hon Al Palladini (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): It is true that the number of skilled workers needed has surpassed the number of skilled workers trained in our province on a yearly basis. Because of the positive economic environment that the Harris government has created, we have a contribution in that. That's why we have developed a program called the strategic skills investment program. Our government has invested \$45 million in 28 programs, which has triggered a \$135-million investment by the private sector over the last two years. Its success has encouraged 300 companies and 85 business associations and organizations to financially support this program. It's also why our government will continue to commit an additional \$85 million over the next five years. We understand that our highly

skilled, well-educated workforce is one of our key competitive advantages, and Ontario is going to maintain that strategy.

Mr Martiniuk: Conestoga College is in Cambridge riding, and it's a college we are all proud of. Conestoga has been awarded some money for their information technology training centre proposal that will address some of the shortages in the information technology sector. Can you please tell me more about the strategic skills investment program, Minister, and how others can participate in this program that addresses skill shortages in our province?

Hon Mr Palladini: I want to mention to colleagues in the House that we want to make sure that when businesses look to invest in our communities, we're going to be ready. The strategic skills investment program will make sure we have the workforce to compete.

As the member for Cambridge said, on April 20, 2000, along with announcing Conestoga College's proposal that will be funded \$2.6 million, I also announced six other winning proposals to help us accomplish a great deal more. Contrary to what the Liberal leader has to say, our young people are going to get the tools they need to compete globally. I'm sure the members of this House will want to share with their constituents that the fourth call for proposals through the strategic skills investment program has begun and is now accessible on our Web site, www.ontario-canada.com. Our government recognizes the importance of developing skills today for jobs tomorrow.

LITHOTRIPTY

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): My question is to the Minister of Health and it concerns lithotripsy in eastern Ontario. Minister, I was really struck and quite frankly very concerned by your response to me on April 20 of this year on this question, so my follow-up question to you today is simply this: What has changed about your commitment to fund lithotripsy at the Ottawa Hospital from that time in December 1997, when you, as Minister of Health, wrote to an individual in Vanier, eastern Ontario? Let me quote part of your December 18, 1997, letter to that individual: "The Ontario Ministry of Health has recently reviewed a proposal for lithotripsy services in Ottawa. We have advised both the Ottawa General Hospital and the Ottawa Civic Hospital that we would support the development of a lithotripsy program as one of the services to be offered at the new Ottawa Hospital."

You were much less supportive in your response to me on April 20, 2000, than you were in that letter two and a half years ago. Minister, what has changed?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the member knows, we continue to monitor the need for services in the province of Ontario, and when there is an additional need for services, as there may well be at some point in the future, then we will ensure that those services are provided. But

at the present time, all of the information that we have and all of the review that we have done indicates that there is sufficient capacity within the province. There has been no increase.

1520

Mr Conway: Minister, you know, because your colleagues from places like Nepean and Ottawa and Carleton have told you, that over the last number of years, not just in Ottawa-Carleton but throughout eastern Ontario, hundreds of volunteers have gone out and raised nearly \$1 million to buy this lithotripter, which is sitting in a crate at the Ottawa Hospital, while hundreds of people not just from Ottawa-Carleton but from places like Pembroke and Perth and Prescott either go under the knife in Ottawa or go down the road with this very painful condition to Montreal, Toronto or London.

My question in supplementary is this: What advice, Minister, do you have to all of those volunteers who raised all of that money so a very important piece of high-tech health technology could be purchased only to sit unopened in a crate at the Ottawa Hospital while constituents of mine are forced to either go under the knife in Ottawa or, worse still, in this terribly painful condition go down the road 600 kilometres to London?

Hon Mrs Witmer: We presently fund two lithotripters in the province, one in London and one in Toronto. These two centres currently provide about 5,000 procedures annually for patients across the province. We did review again in the summer of 1999 the need for additional services, and I can assure the member that the need has remained constant. In fact, the Ottawa Hospital agrees that the programs in London and Toronto today have access capacity and that they can accommodate emergency referrals in a 48- to 72-hour period.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas 13 people died during the first seven months of 1999 on Highway 401 between London and Windsor; and

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

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

"Whereas road funding is almost completely paid through vehicle permit and driving licence fees; and

"Whereas Ontario road users pay 28 cents per litre of tax on gasoline, adding up to \$2.7 billion in provincial gas taxes and over \$2.3 billion in federal gas taxes;

"We, the undersigned members of the Canadian Automobile Association and other residents of Ontario, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

to immediately upgrade Highway 401 to at least a six-lane highway with full paved shoulders and rumble strips; and

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

I affix my name to this petition.

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I have thousands of signed petitions here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians with a developmental disability are in growing danger of inadequate support because compensation to staff of 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 institutions or similar work in other settings; 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 affix my signature. Thousands of people have signed this.

LORD’S PRAYER

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): I have a petition signed by a number of people from the Chatham-Merlin area. It reads as follows:

“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; and

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

“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 use of this prayer in municipal chambers in Ontario.”

I’ll affix my signature.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Further petitions.

SAFE STREETS LEGISLATION

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): Welcome back, Speaker.

I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas charities such as the Goodfellows, the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, firefighters and many others participate in fundraisers on streets, sidewalks and parking lots;

“Whereas Bill 8 effectively bans these types of activities, putting police forces in the position of ignoring the law or hindering legitimate charities; and

“Whereas charitable organizations are dependent on these fundraisers to raise much-needed money and awareness;

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

“We ask the government of Ontario to amend provincial legislation to allow charitable organizations to conduct fundraising campaigns on roadways, sidewalks and parking lots.”

In support I affix my signature.

ABORTION

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): Mr Speaker, it’s a pleasure to see you back in the chair after your short, brief absence.

One more bit of news, if I may, while I’m on my feet here. You would probably like to know that the provincial Legiskaters played the federal MPs and we defeated them 12-2 last Thursday.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): That would more properly be done in members’ statements or something, but maybe we could just continue with petitions.

Mr O’Toole: “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 his lease this amount will be \$5 million;

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

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

This is submitted by Maria Speciale, as well as other people from my riding of Durham.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Certainly we're hoping that in tomorrow's budget we will hear some news about the northern health travel grant and the inadequacy of the funding for that program, which is sending many people to sign petitions. I will read it now, sir.

"To the Legislative 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."

I have hundreds of people's names, with over 10,000 signatures overall. I hope the government will listen.

1530

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): "Whereas the prayer, Our Father, also called the Lord's Prayer, has always been used to open the proceedings of municipal chambers and the Ontario Legislative Assembly since the beginning of Upper Canada under Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe 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 the 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 customs and do all in its power to maintain the use of the prayer in municipal chambers in the province of Ontario."

I'll affix my name to this too.

HUNTING IN WILDERNESS PARKS

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): This is to the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas wilderness class parks are quoted on the Ontario Parks Web site as 'substantial areas where the forces of nature are permitted to function freely and where visitors travel by non-mechanized means and experience expansive solitude, challenge and personal integration';

"Whereas sport hunting should not be permitted in wilderness class parks, which are intended to preserve and protect biodiversity in its natural state. Hunting in wilderness parks will disrupt and damage ecosystems, introduce mechanized transportation and intrude upon the use of other visitors;

We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

To withdraw the policy change in the Living Legacy report that will allow sport hunting in wilderness class parks.

This is signed by, it looks like, a couple of hundred people in the Bracebridge and Huntsville area.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Harris government's plan to force the sale of subsidized housing in Hamilton-Wentworth will create a crisis for 700 local families; and

"Whereas in addition to these 700 families there are 3,700 other families on waiting lists who will be left without affordable accommodation; and

"Whereas the Harris government's housing sell-off is mean-spirited and targets the poorest families, who are now threatened with possible eviction;

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

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario direct the Harris government to save these affordable housing units for low-income families, and support new affordable housing to help the 3,700 families on waiting lists throughout Hamilton-Wentworth."

I add my name to the those of these petitioners.

ILLEGAL TIMBER CUTTING

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas timber cutters are trespassing on private and crown land, cutting, removing and selling trees, leaving a financial, environmental, aesthetic and emotional devastation in their wake; and

“Whereas the OPP have no authority to stop a cutter from cutting in the event of a boundary dispute, but may only inform the cutter that a complaint has been lodged; and

“Whereas the mills accept all timber from their contractors whether it is stolen or not; and

“Whereas the practice of the crown attorney’s office to relegate these obvious theft issues to civil court places an unreasonable and prohibitive financial burden on the landowner who is the victim; and

“Whereas the offending cutters are protected by their numbered companies, lease their equipment and declare bankruptcy rather than pay fines and restitution, and immediately register a new numbered company, the landowner-victim must then pay:

“(1) All court costs and legal fees incurred by the offender as well as their own legal fees;

“(2) The cost of the survey;

“(3) The cost of hiring and posting bond for a bailiff, an appraiser, a salesman and bond for each piece of property and for equipment seized from the convicted cutter at the rate of at least \$2,000 for each of the above-listed;

“(4) The cost of cleanup and reforestation; and

“Whereas traditionally settlements to landowners, the victims, have amounted to the price of stumpage fees for the stripped area, while the cutter profits from the full price of the timber from the mill; and

“Whereas, because the offending cutter must work quickly to avoid detection, he/she leaves the land devastated, with little or no thought to environmental areas of concern, such as wetlands and reforestation;

“Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to acknowledge the unfairness to landowners-victims in the overwhelming support of illegal cutting of private and crown lands.

“We advocate:

“(1) That the cases be tried as grand theft in a criminal court;

“(2) That in the event of a boundary dispute the party who is to benefit financially (ie, the cutter) be responsible for the cost of a survey by a registered surveyor and not a forester;

“(3) Final judgements should not only include fines, all costs incurred for pursuit of justice and stumpage fees, but the full price of the timber, the cost of cleaning up the clear-cut area and the cost of reforestation and maintenance of the cut area, thus making theft of timber from private and crown lands potentially non-profitable; and

“(4) Contracts of convicted cutters should be subject to suspension or termination, just as drunk drivers lose their licences.”

This is a major issue in the Thunder Bay district and I’m sure it is one across the province. I am pleased to support this, as does my colleague from Thunder Bay-Atikokan.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I continue to receive petitions from Buzz Hargrove on behalf of his members in Ontario. I would like to point out that these petitions were circulated by Cecil Mackasey and Rick Roberts of CAW Local 222. Many congratulations to them.

“Whereas this year 130,000 Canadians will contract cancer and there are at minimum 17 funerals every day for Canadian workers who died from cancer caused by workplace exposure to cancer-causing substances known as carcinogens; and

“Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 80% of all cancers have environmental causes and the International Labour Organization estimates that one million workers globally have cancer because of exposure at work to carcinogens; and

“Whereas most cancers can be beaten if government had the political will to make industry replace toxic substances with non-toxic substances; and

“Whereas very few health organizations study the link between occupations and cancer, even though more study of this link is an important step to defeating this dreadful disease;

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

“That it become a legal requirement that occupational history be recorded on a standard form when a patient presents at a physician for diagnosis or treatment of cancer and that the diagnosis and occupational history be forwarded to a central cancer registry for analysis as to the link between cancer and occupation.”

On behalf of my NDP colleagues, I proudly add my name to those of these petitioners.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 62, An Act to enact, amend and repeal various Acts in order to encourage direct democracy through municipal referendums, to provide additional tools to assist restructuring municipalities and to deal with other municipal matters, when Bill 62 is next called as a government order, the

Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on justice and social policy; and

That no deferral of the second reading vote pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

That the standing committee on justice and social policy shall be authorized to meet for one day, and that the committee be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment on that day until completion of clause-by-clause consideration; and

That, at 4:30 pm on that day, those amendments which have not been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following completion of clause-by-clause consideration, and not later than May 17, 2000. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on or before May 17, 2000, the bill shall be deemed to have been passed by the committee and to be reported to and received by the House;

That upon receiving the report of the standing committee on justice and social policy, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading;

That when the order for third reading is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill. At the end of such time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment;

That the vote on third reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred until the next sessional day during the routine proceeding "Deferred Votes"; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

1540

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): The Chair recognizes the member for Essex.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): When I first came here this afternoon, I was prepared to speak on second reading of Bill 62, but as you now know, there has been a motion introduced to close debate on this, to censure any further debate. Now we're left with yet another motion that to me is rather ironic, particularly when it comes to this bill. We just heard the minister, in introducing the motion on Bill 62, using the words "encourage direct democracy," and yet what this closure motion is doing this afternoon is absolutely stomping on democracy. In other words,

there are colleagues of mine, and there are colleagues I suppose on the back bench of the government, who were prepared to speak to this bill. We all had recommendations to make towards this bill, and now, because debate is going to be limited, we won't have that opportunity.

I don't know how many times since 1995 this government has used closure; in fact, I've lost count. Back in 1993, when I first came to this place, I thought I came here as a representative of my riding to speak out on all sorts of legislation; to, yes, in some cases bring forward amendments to that legislation; and, on those occasions when we can—and we have—to support government legislation. But it's difficult to do when the opportunity to speak on behalf of your constituents is taken away from you. I remind the backbenchers that not only are you limiting our democracy in this place, but the cabinet, the Premier's office, those around the Premier who decide that these debates should be limited are taking away your democracy as well. I think you should well heed that.

At first I thought, well, with my 10 minutes I should simply stand in my place and say nothing, because essentially that's what the government is telling us: "We don't want to hear from you. We've heard enough. We don't want to hear any more. We don't care about the democracy that's mentioned in Bill 62. We just want to get on with it and get out of here, and by May 17," or whatever date was given, "we'll get through this thing."

To those who read about these debates or read about these bills, make no mistake: This particular motion for closure this afternoon will pass because, after all, the government has the majority and they will see that it's done. And make no mistake that this bill in fact will pass, because again they have the majority and they will see that it is done.

What I can't quite understand, though, is that when this government comes forward and wants to speak about direct democracy, I have yet to know—and I could be corrected—that there was ever a referendum in this province that reduced the number of municipalities. I don't recall a referendum in the Chatham-Kent-Essex riding or in the Chatham-Kent area that asked the residents of that municipality whether they want to be amalgamated or not. I recall that when the city of Toronto in fact did hold a referendum, the government chose to ignore it. I don't know why then we would assume that this government would listen to anything Bill 62 may have to offer to us.

But when it passes and when it becomes law, let's suppose that in the area of Essex county and Windsor we hold a referendum. There isn't anything that affects the residents of my riding more than the attempt by the city of Windsor to take over an inordinate, significant part of Essex county. If this bill passes, I would suggest that what we would do in Essex county and in those seven municipalities is in fact have a referendum. You'll get a resounding no, that we don't want to be part of the city of Windsor, that a fair offer has been made by the county to the city, and that we think the minister, having had that offer in his possession and having had the position of the

city of Windsor in his possession, will say, "I think that's a fair offer." In fact, he could help us by avoiding the cost to the taxpayer of a referendum if the minister would make up his mind.

I also point out to those who may be interested that this referendum legislation limits referenda in municipalities to those issues that only affect the municipality, to the interests of the municipality. I've heard the Chair of Management Board suggest that now that they have, behind closed doors and unannounced, allowed casinos to be placed at racetracks, that will be, as the Chair of Management Board has said, put to a referendum. But the interesting thing there is that that is not just in the interests of the municipality; it's also in the interests of the province.

I point this out not to argue whether casinos should or should not be extended into the venue of racetracks. I don't argue that point. I only point out that a referendum held in a municipality in which a racetrack exists isn't only of interest to that municipality. The province has a huge stake in it because they take a whole bunch of money. It isn't all left in the municipality. In fact, if the government would come along and say, "Yes, we will leave all that money in the municipality. We will give all that money to charity. We don't want any of it," that might change the whole argument that surrounds some of those casinos in some of those municipalities.

I can recall a few years ago when the Premier said, when he was the leader of the third party, that the government of the day didn't have a revenue problem; they had a spending problem. Yet what do they do? They are now going to take in about \$2 billion a year in revenue from casinos across this province. To me it would indicate that there certainly is a revenue problem and that the government is solving that problem by taking a great deal of money through gambling in this province.

But to sum up in the limited time I have because of this closure motion, I only say that this bill speaks to democracy, but certainly the motion that we're dealing with this afternoon does not speak to democracy. In fact, it takes away from the democracy of this Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I had looked forward to participating in what I thought was going to be a full debate on Bill 62, which is really a follow-up from Bill 25, although the changes that have to be fixed from Bill 25 in this act are veiled behind a central piece which the government puts forward as referendum legislation. But here we are today and the government has decided again that it will use its majority to force a closure motion, to shut down debate, to in fact stop the opposition from its ability to expose this government's legislation and how shallow and how silly it really is. So I'll have to use this time in terms of condemning the closure motion as also the single ability I will have to speak to the bill itself.

1550

If you look at the bill, there are three important points that have to be made. First of all, the government uses the

centrepiece, the referendum, as the reason behind bringing the bill forward in the first place. If you look at the referendum process, which my colleague from Trinity-Spadina will do in more detail than I, you really see that it is (a) undemocratic and (b) completely unworkable. It offers to municipalities an ability to talk to their citizens about important issues. But really, if you look at the face of it in the details in the bill, it provides nothing of the sort.

Second, it really is about the mess that has been left from Bill 25. You will know that Bill 25 was legislation that this government introduced in this House on December 6, which they rammed through this House before we rose last Christmas, to force restructuring in four areas: in Ottawa, Hamilton, Haldimand-Norfolk and in my own community of Sudbury. As this government is wont to do when it insists on rushing things, a whole bunch of mistakes were made; a whole bunch of things were left out. Really what Bill 62 is all about is using a good portion of the bill to fix the mistakes that have been made and that people have now picked up on.

Third, and most important for me as the representative of a community that is now undergoing a forced restructuring courtesy of this government, is the silence on issues of transition that flow from this bill. This bill is silent on two of the most significant issues that have flowed from Bill 25, and that's where I want to begin my remarks today.

The first has to do with who will pay for the cost of the transition not only in Sudbury, but in Hamilton, in Ottawa and in Haldimand-Norfolk. It's interesting that just after this bill was introduced on December 2, the minister did a telephone conference with a number of reporters in Sudbury, and he was asked that very question. We have a concern that taxpayers in our municipality are going to get handed the bill for a restructuring process that this government has forced on us. Tony Clement said to the Sudbury Star on December 7 that "the province won't say yet if it is prepared to pay the millions of dollars needed to create the new city.

"That is not part of the bill," municipal affairs minister Tony Clement said" as he unveiled this legislation.

He was asked for a timeline on when a decision would be made with respect to who pays for the transition costs in Sudbury and he could not provide a timeline for Sudbury or the other affected regions. "The government is still deliberating on the best way to approach those (costs)," the minister said.

"That will not form part of the legislation, but we will be dealing with that separately."

We are four months after the fact, we have a transition team that is underway, we have a restructuring process that has been forced on us that is underway and we still don't know who is going to pay the \$12-million costs that are associated with that forced restructuring. I point out that the \$12-million cost was estimated by the special adviser, Mr Hugh Thomas. That was his estimate: \$12 million of transition costs over three years. But the city of Sudbury, for example, which has been a propo-

ment of one tier, has put that cost closer to \$18 million. And the regional chair, Frank Mazzuca, has put that cost closer to \$18 million, based on work that staff of the region and of the city have done.

So we have somewhere between \$12 million and \$18 million of costs that no one wants to talk about, that this government doesn't want to deal with, that this legislation, which comes four months after this restructuring was forced on us, is silent on. Who will pay the costs of the transition that the Harris government has forced on Sudbury?

It's interesting because another proponent of restructuring was the chamber of commerce in Sudbury, but even the chamber of commerce said the following, and I quote the same article of December 7:

"It would be 'unconscionable' to expect local taxpayers to bear the burden of those costs, said Victor Skot, chairman of the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce.

"Since the province provided transition funds for restructuring in other communities, not paying the bill in Sudbury would be 'unfair and biased' and would demonstrate 'partiality and inequity' by the government, Skot said."

I don't agree all the time with what the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce has to say, but I agree with them in this case. It would be a clear case of inequity if the government didn't fund the costs related to the transition, between \$12 million and \$18 million, whatever that final cost ends up being.

What's interesting is I don't think this government has any intention whatsoever of funding the transition costs in Sudbury. I say that for two reasons: First, because the delay in making a decision has gone so long. If the government were interested in providing those costs to us and somehow softening the blow of the forced restructuring that we now have to go through, then at the time the legislation was put forward the government would have also made an announcement that it intended to pay the costs, as in fairness it should do, since it's this government forcing the restructuring on us. That hasn't happened. That leads me to think the government has no intention of paying those costs.

The second reason that I believe the government has no intention of paying these costs comes from Bill 25 itself, and when I spoke on Bill 25 last fall, I pointed this out as well. There is a provision that this government specifically put in Bill 25 that would force the city to pick up these costs. If you look at clause 36(3)(a), it says:

"A regulation under clause (2)(c) may provide, for example,

"(a) that the city may undertake long-term borrowing to pay for operational expenditures on transitional costs, as defined in the regulation, subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed."

You see, I think it's already in the bill and what the government's going to do—I'm just not sure when they're going to do it—is say to the city of Sudbury, "Thank you very much, but your taxpayers are going to

have to pick up the between \$12 million and \$18 million of transition costs that we're foisting upon you."

I think that is horribly unfair and discriminates horribly against my community and the three others that were affected by Bill 25. I say that because I contrast what the government has done in my community with what the government did in the city of Toronto when it forced the amalgamation in Toronto through Bill 103. What's interesting is that the government picked up a good portion of the transition costs that were associated with the megacity through Bill 103. I've got a press release dated January 5, 1998, that was put out by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It says:

"Province Confirms Toronto Transition Support

"The province confirmed that it will provide the city of Toronto with a \$100-million interest-free loan this year. Additional financing of up to \$100 million, also interest-free, could be available next year if it is needed. ... The city must commit to repay the loan over three years beginning in the fiscal year 2000-01. Final payment will be due by March 31, 2003."

It also says, "The province will provide up to \$50 million in additional, non-refundable financial assistance"—code word for a grant—"for transportation and communications projects to be undertaken by the new amalgamated city of Toronto." It seems to me that if this government was prepared to force amalgamation in Toronto and was prepared to pay a significant portion of that in the form of a grant and then was prepared to deal with it by providing a loan, then the Harris government should do the same thing in the other communities where it's forcing restructuring.

I say that particularly because just last week the task forces that are dealing with the restructuring in Sudbury came forward with respect to the cost of policing and the cost of firefighting. Isn't it interesting that they are noting that it's going to cost an additional \$2.2 million for the city of greater Sudbury to have police in all of the areas that now have to be covered in the new city. It says this was largely an unforeseen expense, as no one expected Hugh Thomas, the provincial adviser on municipal restructuring, to expand the boundaries of the city of greater Sudbury to include six unorganized townships with about 1,200 people. As a result of the boundary changes that affect the unorganized area, we now have a serious expenditure in policing costs that no one seemed to know about, that wasn't anticipated in the \$12-million transition costs that Mr Thomas talked about. In fact, in order to provide the communications services, the city of greater Sudbury is now going to have to build three radio towers, at a cost of about \$1.2 million, to bring radio coverage to those unorganized areas so that police can communicate effectively in those areas. The committee said the following:

"Establishing communications capacity would be a significant cost of restructuring. Communications is an officer safety issue. The first criteria for police communication is the capacity to securely receive and send information and to receive and ask for detail or clarity. This

requires the communication system be capable of broadcast and reception throughout the whole area policed.”

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Not only are we affected with respect to police; the same report pointed out that communications is now emerging as a costly issue with the fire department. There are currently seven local fire departments in the region, and all use different radio frequencies and equipment. They can't even talk with one another on their radios.

So then the article lists all of the new additional costs to pay for portable radios, truck radios, on and on. We now have a new \$2.2-million additional cost just for communications for police and for fire departments that Hugh Thomas never thought about and that this government hasn't dealt with. Surely if the government could give the city of Toronto \$50 million for transportation and communications, then this same government should start to deal with the communications problem that we're starting to identify.

There is nothing fair about the city of Sudbury paying all of the transition costs associated with the restructuring that has been forced on us by this government, especially if you look at what this government did in Chatham-Kent and what this government did in the city of Toronto.

It's also horribly unfair that the taxpayers in our region have to pick up the costs of the transition team. This was also forced on us when Bill 25 was passed last Christmas. If you compare that to what happened in Bill 103, you will see that this government, the Harris government, picked up the costs of the transition team, the expert advice that had to be hired and any of the facilities that had to be rented. But in Bill 25, the citizens of the regional municipality of Sudbury have to pick up that cost, and we ask, why? Why that discrepancy? Why that discrimination? Clearly, in Bill 103, you just have to look through the legislation and you will see that these costs were picked up by this government, not only for the transition team but for the financial advisory board as well.

The legislation states in Bill 103, section 13, that there will be a financial advisory committee, it will be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and that the remuneration shall be fixed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and all “reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their duties” picked up. It says the same thing in the legislation with respect to the transition team, and it goes further and says that both the financial advisory board and the transition team, if they needed to hire staff, arrange for facilities, obtain expert advice, would have all of those costs covered too.

Those costs were covered in a memorandum of understanding that was written on April 23, 1997, and finally signed in August 1997, an agreement between the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the transition team. In that memorandum of understanding, which I have a copy of, under the section of financial arrangements, it says, “Funding requirements of the team”—that's the transition team—“will be recorded in the annual appropriations

for the ministry.” In section 3.2: “A budget of \$3.5 million has been approved for the operation of the transition team. Any revisions to this budget will require prior approval by the minister and Management Board.” In fact, there was a revision. At the end of the day, this government, the Harris government, paid \$3.8 million for the operation of the transition team and the financial advisory board in the new city of Toronto. They paid that cost.

But when you go to the city of Sudbury and the legislation which affects us in Bill 25, it says, under section 27:

“(1) The regional municipality of Sudbury shall pay the expenses of the transition board for 2000, in the amounts and at the times specified by the transition board.

“(2) The transition board shall give the council of the regional municipality an estimate of its expenses and the regional municipality shall include them in its operating budget for the year 2000.

“(3) The expenses of the transition board include the remuneration and expenses” of the members.

It gets better than that, because not only do we have to pay their costs for the whole time they operate in the year 2000, but, if they operate after January 31, 2001, as they can do, according to Bill 25, then the new city of Sudbury has to pay for those costs too. In Bill 25, under section 17, it says, “The city shall pay the expenses of the transition board for 2001, in the amounts and at the times specified by the transition board.”

There is no fairness in having Sudbury regional taxpayers pick up the costs of the compensation for the transition team, for any expert advice they hire and any facilities they lease when this government, with respect to Toronto, paid those costs. There is no excuse for that. There is no reason for that. There is no legitimate reason why we are stuck with that bill, why our taxpayers in the regional municipality of Sudbury are stuck with that bill, when in the city of Toronto that cost was covered, \$3.8 million of it, entirely by this government. Yet here we are in Bill 62, which is supposed to be about restructuring and other things—in fact what it does is really fix the mess that comes from Bill 25—and the government has nothing to say about why they are quite happy to discriminate against municipalities where they are forcing restructuring, why they were quite happy to pay \$3.8 million, which was the cost of the transition team and financial advisory board in the city of Toronto amalgamation, and why they have forced the regional taxpayers in Sudbury to pick up the costs of the transition team and related expenses as well. There's nothing fair, nothing just about it, and the government should have included in Bill 62 a repeal of the section which forces that cost upon us and a section whereby those costs would have been paid by this government.

I said earlier that the bill is also about how we hide the mess that was created by Bill 25 because the government was in such a rush to get things done that they had any number of mistakes that they are now trying to clean up

in this bill. If you look at the bill, over half of it, all of part I and a good half of part II, has nothing to do with referendum at all but has everything to do with all of the technical changes, all the things that have to be fixed because of the mistakes that were made. If you look through it, you see that all of the roles that should have been clarified in Bill 25 now have to be clarified in Bill 62, because the government forgot to do that in Bill 25. They were in such a hurry to ram it through without any public hearings, they made a whole host of mistakes that they're trying to fix now. I suspect that's why they've got the piece of referendum that they're trying to focus on as the central piece so that people won't know the mess that was really created and how this bill is about fixing it all.

What's interesting, in part I at least, is that there is a provision for two new councillors in the city of Hamilton and one new councillor in the city of Ottawa. I oppose that as well, because what that does is allow the government to fix some problems in Conservative ridings that they hold. In Sudbury, there's no change in the number of councillors. The provision that's on the table now, the proposal that's on the books right now, is for 12 part-time councillors, two per six wards, to look after a new city that will have a population of 163,000 people. Yet the government sees fit in this bill to give a few more seats to help some of its Conservative members in Ottawa, to give a few more seats and make some changes in Hamilton to help some of its friends there too. That was one of the reasons I opposed Bill 25, because the government has used pieces of it to help some of their friends and at the same time in ridings that they don't hold the government says, "Whatever prevails will prevail, and we're not interested in hearing whether or not 12 people working part-time can adequately represent people who live in the greater region of Sudbury."

What's interesting in part II of the bill are those two very significant areas that those of us on this side of the House really objected to in Bill 25, and that has to do with the change to the Municipal Act that the government made in Bill 25 which allowed 75 electors in a municipality to come forward to the government with a restructuring commission, and the government would have, under Bill 25, actually allowed that restructuring commission to sit. What it allowed in a municipality, for people who were democratically elected, was for an end-run of a group of folks who didn't like what the municipalities had to say. A particular group who had a special interest in seeing amalgamation forced could do an end-run around the legitimately elected, accountable politicians, go to the minister with a restructuring commission and the minister would have, under Bill 25, ordered that to be done—75 people in a municipality with the capacity to do an end-run around the legitimately elected council. Thank goodness the government has finally seen the error of its ways and is repealing that, changing that in this particular bill.

The other change they're making—and again this is not part of the government's focus, because they're try-

ing to focus on the referendum piece of that to divert attention away from the mess they made of Bill 25. The second area and the second very obnoxious change that was made in Bill 25 had to do with what we call the Henry VIII clause, which was a clause, essentially, that gave enormous powers to this cabinet to make changes and never have to come back to the Legislative Assembly to have those changes occur. So the particular change that they're making very quietly in this bill is to repeal the section that allowed for the Lieutenant Governor in council to make regulations providing for consequential amendments to any act that in the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor in council are necessary for the effective implementation of the act.

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I think they probably figured out that they were erring on the wrong side of most of the constitutional experts in this province, who had taken the government to task, indeed chastised this government, with respect to the new, additional powers the government was taking on itself through this section. I remember when we did the debate on Bill 25, I quoted Ed Morgan from the University of Toronto law faculty, expert in constitutional law, who said of the section that the government is now repealing: "The cabinet is not above the law. This says the cabinet is the law."

We had another expert, Joseph Magnet, who is a constitutional expert and teaches law at the University of Ottawa, who said that if the bill was passed in this form, "the Legislature may itself be acting illegally by unconstitutionally delegating to the cabinet its authority to make laws."

Finally, we had a third constitutional expert, David Elliott, who teaches at Carleton law faculty, who called this section "astounding and extraordinary."

I guess the government finally decided they had gone too far with respect to this section, that indeed they were grabbing too much power and not allowing the rest of the elected members in this place to ever have a say and are using this bill to try and change that. They're doing it again quietly, trying to have the centrepiece as the referendum while they put in a number of the changes that they have been forced to make behind the scenes.

In conclusion, let me say that really the bill is a smokescreen to hide the mess that came with Bill 25 because the government was in such a rush and didn't have any public hearings when they rammed it through before last Christmas. It's also a bill that I can't support because it's silent on the some of the issues that are so critical to people in Sudbury, who are now forced to deal with this forced restructuring, particularly who will deal with the transition costs, the between \$12 million and \$18 million of transitional costs that this government is foisting upon us, and why is it that regional taxpayers in our area have to pay for the cost of the transition team when this government in Toronto picked up \$3.8 million of those costs itself.

I regret that the government has to move to this time allocation motion today. I'm not surprised. It's reflective

of what they did on Bill 25 when they shut down debate. No doubt we will be here in the next session with another bill fixing the mistakes that flow from both Bill 25 and Bill 62.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It's an honour to rise in this House and speak on the time allocation motion put forward by the honourable member. During the past week we have had many members speak to this bill, and it's now time that we move on to other important pieces of legislation. That is why I am in support of the honourable member's motion.

Bill 62, the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, is another important step in strengthening the democratic system of our province. If this House passes the bill, it will provide a legal framework for voters to have a say in local decisions. The bill will also address some of the concerns that have arisen in the process of municipal restructuring. Yes, there may have been some mistakes made but, for example, we are eliminating the legislation that would allow 75 residents to petition a request to the commissioner. I believe that's an important piece of legislation up in my area as well.

I'm going to direct most of my time this afternoon to talking specifically on the referendum sections of this bill because they are of great interest to the people in my riding of Simcoe North.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): For that jail.

Mr Dunlop: Exactly. The Mike Harris government thinks it is very important for governments to actually listen to the concerns of taxpayers. For this reason, just recently I was very fortunate to be part of the Premier's Task Force on Rural Economic Renewal in Ontario. We had 120 deputations in 14 separate municipalities and attended over 20 separate meetings. We listened to the concerns of the people in rural Ontario. It was very interesting to listen to municipal politicians throughout the province and how well they have adjusted to the local services realignment. The concerns we hear from the opposite side are always negative. The fact of the matter is that municipal politicians have done a very good job on this.

An important way to ensure that governments are held accountable is through direct democracy. I'd like to take this time to commend the minister for bringing forward this important piece of legislation. I know that the minister has worked long and hard to bring more direct democracy to our political system. Referendums are important for a thriving democracy because they strengthen the credibility of the political system in the eyes of the public.

Pollsters, journalists such as Peter Newman and scholars such as historian Michael Bliss have noted that Canadians today are generally cynical about politicians and politics in general. Actually, this is very important because I think in the past they've had too many governments, from all levels, particularly federal and provincial, that have made promises and haven't kept them. That's something our government is very proud of. They tend to believe that the political system is not responsive

to their needs and that all too often politicians pursue their own interests in the eyes of the public. I feel that by increasing the control voters exercise over their politicians, popular confidence in democratic politics can be expanded and enhanced by giving more people a say in the process.

I also believe that referenda campaigns can serve to educate the public about policy issues that are important. It is no secret that any referenda campaigns invariably generate a great deal of publicity, including extensive media debates. As well, voters are likely to receive material directly from the yes and no campaigns, and that's fair. Thus voters will be provided with innumerable opportunities to inform themselves about the merits of the issues in question before they vote. Such opportunities for popular education of the citizenry do not occur when policy decisions are decided by council alone.

Referenda are an important tool for holding politicians accountable. If governments know that their decisions may be subjected to a popular vote, they'll be more sensitive to public opinion when formulating policies.

Under the current system, municipalities can ask their voters questions but they don't have to listen to them. Under this legislation, if 50% or more of the eligible voters show up at the polls and vote either yes or no to a question put forward on the ballot, the municipality must act on it. It is very important to note that a binding question cannot take away an existing right such as the right to appeal certain council decisions to the Ontario Municipal Board or to a court.

As things stand now, municipalities can ask all sorts of questions, some of them politically motivated, and they are not bound in any way by the results. In recent elections, many municipalities have asked questions about matters over which they have no jurisdiction to implement. The voter response to such a question is entirely meaningless if the municipality can't do anything about it. Of course, maybe that's human nature, where we have this rapid desire to make comments about other areas of jurisdiction and make our views known in areas where we really have no control.

The government believes that if a municipality can't do anything about a particular issue then there's no point in putting that question on the ballot, and, I might add, at great expense. That's a waste of taxpayer time and money. Municipalities will only be permitted to hold referendums about issues that fall within their jurisdiction to implement.

Direct democracy is not a new concept for this government. In fact, this government has led the fight for participatory democracy and has imposed these types of processes on us because we understand that the people should have more of a say in the way a government works, especially in the areas of raising taxes.

Last fall we introduced and passed the Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act—which I believe was supported by our friends from the Liberal side—which protects hard-working, Ontario families from irresponsible government spending that results in deficits and

accumulating debt. Voter approval is now required before introducing a new tax or raising a wide variety of taxes, including personal income tax, corporate taxes, retail sales tax, employer health tax, gasoline and fuel tax, and education property tax.

This bold concept rests with a simple principle: If governments want to take more money from the people of this province, governments will actually have to ask them for it. Just ask what happened if the former provincial Liberal or NDP governments imposed such a measure. Obviously they were too busy raising taxes to think about who ultimately pays for them. But then again, the Leader of the Opposition opposes the very idea of direct democracy, as he told Robert Fisher on Focus Ontario in 1997. "I'm not a big fan of referenda" is what he said then; two years later he signed a pledge to "pass taxpayer protection legislation within the first 100 days, making any increases in existing tax rates or new taxes subject to approval by voters in a binding referendum." But unlike the legislation that we introduced and passed, he would have raised taxes and then asked the people of this fair province. It's kind of like the weather in my hometown of Coldwater in November: If you don't like Mr McGuinty's opinion, just wait five minutes and it will change.

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I would like to say a few words on the intention of this bill. In the 1999 election, I was given the enormous honour of being elected to represent the people of Simcoe North. I know that every person in this House understands the enormous pride and pleasure you get when you are chosen to represent your family, friends and communities in this magnificent building. I, like many of us in this House, recognize that the democracy system which we have does work. It gets frustrating from time to time—you seem overwhelmed by the magnitude of things and the issues that you have to deal with—but I think it's incumbent upon all of us that we stay committed to this cause, that we don't lose sight of the objectives: that we are representing our residents; that we do want better democracy; that we do want more accountability. I feel that by passing this legislation we're moving one more step towards that goal of continuing to enhance and expand democracy in our province.

I hope the members of this House can support this time allocation motion so that we can give the municipalities the option of putting a binding referendum question on this year's municipal election ballot.

Mr Bradley: The bill of course does exactly the opposite to enhancing democracy. It restricts democracy in this province because it gives the Minister of Municipal Affairs or, probably more importantly, some back-room whiz kid the opportunity to approve any item, any question that would go on a ballot. So any thought that this is enhancing democracy—as this government always does when it comes to dealing with democracy, it's shrinking democracy.

I am wondering what the people who are running the Grantham High School reunion would think of this. The

Grantham High School reunion in St Catharines is being held, as you might know, Mr Speaker, on Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20 of this year. The reason that it's interesting to you is that the former member for Perth was a graduate of Grantham High School—actually, she ran against me for president of the student council at that time—and she was your predecessor, Karen Haslam. I know you would want everyone to know that if people want to get information on the Grantham High School reunion, which is being held on the long weekend in May, they can access the computer at www.Grantham-2000.com. That's how you access it.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: The member from Rexdale knows that I enjoy computers very much and that I'm right up to date on Web sites and so on.

I encourage all those who were at Grantham—and perhaps you can pass the message along to Ms Haslam—to participate in this Grantham High School reunion once again. I even invite the member from Rexdale. A former staffer of his, Dallas Saunders, attended Grantham High School as well and will no doubt be back for that event.

I want to say as well—I heard the member for Nickel Belt speak about the merger taking place up there—I'm having more and more people ask me about the book *Merger Mania* by Dr Andrew Sancton of the University of Western Ontario. Everyone is asking for this book now. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has it. It's Dr Andrew Sancton.

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): He's an American.

Mr Bradley: No, he's a Canadian. He's at the University of Western Ontario.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Etobicoke North, come to order.

Mr Bradley: Because they may be into your territory soon, Mr Speaker, the name of the book is *Merger Mania: The Assault on Local Government*. I know that many of the people in Mitchell will be very concerned about the potential for wiping Mitchell out completely and simply having one big region in your area. I know you wouldn't let that happen. Dr Sancton indicates all the reasons why you shouldn't.

I should say to members of the House that there's a strange thing happening in Niagara. The left wing and the right wing are lining up together in favour of a merger—one big region. The left wing are under the misimpression that somehow they're going to have more influence on the 16 or 17 Conservatives who will be elected to the regional council because of course you have to have a lot of money to run, therefore people of modest means would have a difficult time getting elected to a regional council, whereas now they could have access at the ward level to the ward councillors because it doesn't cost as much to run in those elections.

Dr Sancton points out four things: number one, that you don't save money with these mergers. In fact, it often costs more money.

The second thing he points out is that you don't have to speak with one big voice in your so-called region to be successful. If you look at some of the places in the States that compete with us, like Boston—greater Boston has numerous municipalities; greater Los Angeles. Think of all the US cities. They have many, many municipalities within them, and that does not prevent people from going to invest in those areas.

Third, even within a region, when municipalities compete with one another, often business likes that. They like people who are going to compete with one another for their business.

Fourth, he is insulted by this talk show appeal to people of saying we need fewer politicians because that's where all the expense is. Of course, that's where the least expense is; that's where the most access is. Indeed, many members of this Legislature over the years were elected at the local level where people had the greatest access to them.

So I certainly recommend *Merger Mania: The Assault on Local Government*, by Dr Andrew Sancton to anybody who is concerned about a huge mega-city coming to their area of the province. The member for Cumberland, the former mayor of Gloucester, will be interested in this, I'm sure, because they're having a merger in his particular area.

I also want to say that here we are back into yet another time allocation motion. Those are nice words for a closure motion that chokes off debate in this Legislature. The previous speaker from Simcoe North talked about enhancing democracy, but time after time this government has done something to diminish democracy.

I want to diverge a bit. I was watching PBS, the Public Broadcasting System, the other night. They had an excellent program—

Mr Hastings: That's an American network.

Mr Bradley: Let me explain for those who are bar-racking from the other side why I would do so. If you want to understand this government, you have to look at what they're doing in the United States and then you understand where these people are getting their ideas.

I want to start out by saying I don't want you to be offended by the person's name I mention, because there's one significant difference. I watched the three-hour biography, if you will, of George Wallace. There was one significant difference between this government and George Wallace. This government is not racist. George Wallace was racist in his politics.

I was just jotting down, as I was watching it—it reminded me so much of the people to whom this government has appealed. George Wallace talked an awful lot about law and order to stir up the troops. Second, the dangers of big government; he appealed to the people who didn't like—what did he call them?—the pointy-headed pinko professors in Washington; in other words, anti-academic, anti those people who would believe in liberal arts education. I don't mean that in a political sense.

The enemy was the federal government. When he found out that race didn't work for him any more he went after the federal government, and the federal government was the enemy for him. He talked about the Supreme Court and how the Supreme Court was handcuffing what the police wanted to do in his country. I'm just showing you the themes that George Wallace talked about.

“What do you like about George Wallace?” they asked some of the folks in Alabama. They said: “We like the fact that he talks common sense. He talks in terms everybody understands, simple and straightforward terms.” It reminded me very much of what I've seen happen in this province, with one very big difference, as I say, and that is he appealed to race; this government does not appeal to race. That's a significant difference to note. But I think people should see that program just to see how that appeal went out.

1630

The second part was *Burning the Woods*, I think. The first was *The Politics of Rage*, something like that, and it really reminded me of how you play those hot-button issues to such an extent. Play them very simplistically and you can be successful, because people don't always have time to think of the intricacies of the issues. That reminds me of this bill.

One thing I must give you great credit for over there—I like to give people on the other side credit once in a while—is for your ability to spin-doctor, that is, to put out a message that may be totally contrary to the facts. I turned on my radio this morning to the 7 o'clock local news and it said: “Ernie Eves is going to bring in the first balanced budget in 30 years.” Well, I just about fell off my chair when I heard that, because I well remembered, by looking in the legislative library, by listening to minister after minister of finance and by looking at the figures provided by the Provincial Auditor that in fact the last balanced budget in this province—\$90 million in surplus—was in 1989.

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): What happened to it?

Mr Bradley: No, no, you're thinking of 1990.

Where I want to give you credit is that apparently you've spun that well. I expect at the *National Post*, no matter what you say, that's going to be gospel. I understand that. They're busy trying to get Tom Long elected—and the *Toronto Sun*. I saw in the *Toronto Sun* that it was accepted. Except that where you have been successful—I saw some others who've bought into this nonsense. Now, I don't mind you saying that you've done a good job and the others didn't do a good job. That's politics. But this is simply factually incorrect, and yet you've spun it to an extent that you've fooled some people out there.

I'll give you credit, as I say. I guess as a politician you sit back and say the other side is good at getting a message out. Well, that is a very superior way of doing it, but it is not true. Nevertheless, I just want to give you some credit once in a while, because I don't often do it.

The second thing is I want to give the Premier credit for something. When he came to St Catharines, I said to him, "Let's get ready; let's get that big mega-city going," and the Premier said: "We're not ready to do it yet. We're not prepared to impose it at this point in time."

I thought that was fine for the Premier to say that. We had some local people attacking him. There I was; I had to defend the Premier in that particular instance because he wasn't moving ahead quickly. He had obviously seen the problems he created in Wentworth-Burlington and Stoney Creek and places like that with the folks there so he did not want to proceed quickly. But I wanted to give him credit in that particular instance.

I also want to talk about the cultural clubs. How does that fit into this, you ask? Well, it's a time allocation motion. You want to choke off debate on everything and I've only got two and half minutes to complete this. The cultural clubs, such as the Canadian Polish Society, the Ukrainian Black Sea Hall, Club Roma, Club Heidelberg, just to mention a few in St Catharines, have found themselves with their property taxes doubled and tripled as a result of change in a memo, an interpretative memorandum sent out by the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Revenue that simply says, "What used to be treated as residential is now treated as commercial." I encourage all of you to look this up and get it changed.

Now, some of the municipalities—I heard one particular mayor get up and say: "Oh, we're going to solve this problem. I talked to the minister at the fundraiser." Well, thank you very much. You people have talked to the minister too. That doesn't solve a lot of things. What you have to do is go to the top. So I went to Ernie Eves, the provincial Treasurer, who is almost the top, at least.

I think all that has to be done is a change in the interpretative memo that simply says it shall revert to the way it was in 1998, that they shall be considered residential; cultural clubs, which are non-profit and contribute so much to our society, should be changed. I think my friend from Kitchener probably would agree with me because he's got some great cultural clubs in his area. He had a wonderful group of people of German descent down on the special day he had when his bill was before the House. So I urge you people to go back and put some pressure on the government to do this. I think Mr Eves would probably be prepared to do this simply with an interpretative memo. If it took a piece of legislation in this House to do it—I don't think it does, but if it took it—I'm sure that would go through quickly in this House without a time allocation motion such as we're facing today.

The last thing I want to say is that with the budget coming up tomorrow you've got a decision. You can either put the money into a tax cut or you can put the money into health care, public transit and other things like that; and also devote it to debt reduction, because I used to hear my chamber of commerce and my taxpayers coalition, when the NDP was in power, say, "The debt is out of hand." You people have added \$21 billion to the debt since you've been in power. I think you should

address the debt. I'm for addressing it in a meaningful way, instead of giving away more tax cuts. You've given your tax cuts already; you should get your credit for that. Now I have to relinquish my time.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): It gives me great pleasure to take part in the debate on the time allocation motion. As we got elected last June 3 and came into this House, it was a great honour for me because I am a new member and I learn and listen. I realized that the government of Ontario was made up of 58 members running this great province of ours. Then I realized that the city of Toronto is also being governed, so-called, by 58 members, and that didn't make sense. I said, "Such a city, 58 members, and the whole government of Ontario—big plans—and still only 58 members," and my thinking was that perhaps something should be done about that. And lo and behold, something is being done. I personally don't think they've gone far enough, but we'll leave it at that for now.

On the time allocation motion that we're discussing today, a lot of times the members opposite feel, or at least they say, we're cutting back the debate. At the same time as people at home listen to the debate going on, a lot of the time, in fact more often than not, members opposite are not on track. They're talking about some other things which are never on the actual subject. I'd like to encourage the people at home to watch and see which side of the House stays on track, stays on the message.

Our government is committed to furthering democratic representation in Ontario. Let me give you some of the background facts as to why we're discussing this issue, Bill 62, the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act. On August 27, 1996, the government released a discussion paper outlining alternatives for using referendums in Ontario. Public hearings on the discussion paper were held in the fall of 1996. A lot of times members opposite say there was no public input. Let me assure you for the record that based on what the committee heard from the public they recommended that legislation be introduced that would allow province-wide referendums.

In March 1998, Mr Clement, a great member from Brampton South at that time, and now Brampton West-Mississauga, a colleague of mine—I am one of the three Bramptonian team members and I'm very honoured to be that—toured the province to listen to Ontarians' views on referendums and on draft referendum legislation. He heard that although Ontarians liked the idea of direct democracy, many were nervous about having widespread referendums in Ontario. Therefore, the government has begun to introduce referendum rules through our Taxpayer Protection Act rather than proceeding immediately with a broader initiative. Voters in the last election agreed with Premier Harris's commitment to empower citizens through local initiatives as they re-elected our government with a second majority.

Like Premier Harris and Minister Clement, I believe that governments need to be more accountable to tax-

payers. Referendums can be useful tools in achieving this goal. That is why I strongly support this bill.

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Looking back, our party has been the leading voice for citizen initiatives in Ontario. In 1996, our government released a discussion paper outlining alternatives for using referendums. Based on our open dialogue with Ontarians, legislation was introduced that would allow province-wide referendums. This was a victory for many people who for too long have felt left out of the democratic decision-making process. One would suspect that the opposition would welcome such a move, but we were surprised when Mr McGuinty boldly told Ontario's voters that "you just don't need referendum legislation." Thankfully, the Premier ignored Mr McGuinty, as he should have, and chose instead to listen to the average, hard-working Ontarian.

On December 14, 1998, Premier Harris introduced Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act. A key component of this legislation is the requirement for voter approval prior to the provincial government raising existing taxes or introducing a new tax. This is a novel concept in Ontario and only the beginning of our commitment to returning government to the people from whose authority it emanates.

While the average Ontarian rejoices, what do you suppose was the preferred Liberal solution to empowering Ontario voters? Let me share with you another quote from Mr McGuinty. He said, "The reason politicians are elected is to make decisions on the people's behalf." Arguing as the Liberals do that politicians, not taxpayers, should have the final say in hiking taxes is much like saying that the fox should be in charge of the henhouse.

Bill 62 is an extension of our commitment to grassroots democracy. Under the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, 2000, Ontario voters will be empowered to bring about binding changes at the municipal level of government when they vote. Bill 62 restores power to local voters to ensure that municipal councils respond to their needs. It prevents local politicians from irresponsibly hiking their taxes and destroying the small business sector which creates local jobs. If this bill is passed, municipal voters will be able to insist on better representation and, if they so desire, lower taxes. By setting a fair minimum level of voter turnout of 50%, Bill 62 makes certain that referendum results truly reflect the opinion and priorities of the public at large.

We as a government have been unrelentingly harsh against special interests that hijack majority rule. Unlike the opposition, this government is on the side of the quiet majority who do not wave placards and signs, who do not chain themselves to barriers or block traffic. We support the people to decide their future.

The lost years of Peterson and Rae, between 1987 and 1995, are only now being repaired. During that time, municipal affairs were sometimes abused and sometimes neglected. We in the government take seriously our responsibility to oversee and guide municipal development. Under our stewardship, the ongoing neglect of

municipal government of the Peterson and Rae years has been reversed. Municipalities have been streamlined and in some instances amalgamated to reflect the changing reality of Ontario demographics.

Let me be clear. It is our government which respects and trusts the voters to determine what is in their best interests. It is the opposition who believe that government always knows best. I am glad that we disagree on this most important point. Through Bill 62 we are again demonstrating that we are as committed as ever to working with our municipal counterparts to ensure that Ontario remains the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family. Now I'm going to get into some specifics, even though the members opposite tend to go away from the points.

The Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, 2000, would permit municipalities to ask clear, concise, yes-or-no referendum questions about issues that fall within their jurisdictions. That's very important: their jurisdictions. If at least 50% of the eligible electors vote on the issue, the results would be binding.

The legislation is being introduced to bring new accountability to the referendum process. By linking the scope of questions to the appropriate authority and making the results binding, the legislation would help prevent the ineffective use of referendums and waste of taxpayers' money.

"More direct democracy in the form of referendums has been a consistent government commitment since the 1995 provincial election," Minister Clement said. "The province led the fight for participatory government and has imposed these types of processes on itself as well."

Subject to approval in the Legislature, the province would establish rules relating to a question on a municipal ballot and with sufficient voter turnout would make the results of such a question binding on local councils. At present, municipalities can put any questions within their jurisdiction on the municipal ballot, but the results of these questions at present are not binding. Under the proposed legislation, upper-tier and local councils could ask questions relating to matters that fall within their jurisdiction. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing could continue to place non-binding questions on municipal ballots. If the minister wanted to test local opinion on a municipal matter, the province would cover the cost of notifying the public, which makes up the major part of the cost.

Under the proposed legislation, the question must deal with matters within the jurisdiction of the municipality. The question must be phrased to result in a yes-or-no answer. The question must be clear and concise. The language must be unbiased, and there is a requirement for full and accurate disclosure to electors of the impacts of implementing or not approving the proposal, including financial impacts. The results of questions could not deny other rights, for example the right to appeal.

I know the time is running short. Therefore I am asking and urging all members, including members opposite,

to join with me in supporting this bill to increase participatory democracy in Ontario.

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): It's sad to stand here again. Here we go again: time allocation. It's just amazing, when you look at the record of this government and you talk about democracy. In the last session alone, last fall, nine of the 13 bills that were passed had to be pushed through, forced through, down people's throats through time allocation. I think that's a real disgrace and it's a sad day for democracy. You talk about democracy, that this bill is all about direct democracy, but how you're forcing it through has nothing to do with that. I'm elected by a democratic process but I feel that my rights as a democratically elected individual are stifled continually by this government when it comes to time allocation.

I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Municipal Affairs recognized some of his mistakes that he implemented in Bill 25. I think it's important to know that he, after the fact, listened to the people about taking out the provision of 75 electors bringing forth a commissioner and repealing that great Henry VIII clause. Gosh, I've never heard of something so ludicrous, that would have given that kind of power to cabinet to supersede provincial legislation.

1650

But what this government fails to recognize—and some of you on the other side surprise me, because you come from a municipal background. I'm really proud of the apprenticeship that I served at the municipal level. You need to recognize, and your government fails to recognize, the important role that municipal government plays in this province. You fail to recognize that the local governments are the hands-on politicians, the politicians who are most accessible to the public on a regular basis. You know too that those politicians at the municipal level are also democratically elected, but this legislation that you are proposing regarding referendums totally undermines the confidence that people have in their municipal politicians, their elected officials.

The previous speaker made reference to consultations. "Consultation" seems to be the buzzword of this government, but it's something they just pay lip service to. With this legislation, did you talk to the municipal politicians? No, you didn't. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario says, "We have yet to be convinced of the need for this legislation." You talk about how you want to develop partnerships, to work together, trying to bring us over to the dark side, to come over there. No, thank you, because it's obvious you don't listen to people. I think that's something you lose sight of as a government. Certainly something that I recognize at the municipal level, and I wish some of you would recognize too, is the importance of listening, of working with and developing partnerships with municipal officials, not ramming things down their throats.

It surprises me too to see the piecemeal changes that we are seeing when it comes to the Municipal Act. Last fall in the omnibus legislation, Bill 25, we again saw the

lack of consultation, the lack of working with municipal politicians, going in and ramming through restructuring of municipalities. Here we are with Bill 62 in front of us, and again it's piecemeal change that's taking place to the Municipal Act. It's really a shame. The government has paid lip service—they have circulated papers and they have talked about this—but they haven't taken action. I urge the Minister of Municipal Affairs to listen to what the municipal politicians and the municipal organizations in this province are saying, that instead of dealing with changes to the Municipal Act on a piecemeal basis—I would just recall another one.

The member for Stoney Creek, in his private member's business last week, talked about changes that needed to be made within the Municipal Act. Instead of doing these things on an ad hoc basis, why don't you sit down with the municipalities and the municipal organizations and take the right approach, which is taking a serious look at the Municipal Act and overhauling the Municipal Act to ensure that we have a piece of legislation that is going to serve the citizens of this province for the 21st century?

The province needs to think about how it works with municipalities and the relationship it has with municipalities. One way the government could make great strides in the partnership at the municipal level—I've used this analogy before and I am going to use it again, because it's something that bothered me at the municipal government level. Municipalities in this country kind of look at things like a three-storey outhouse. On the top floor of this great outhouse that we've got in this province is the federal government, the middle storey of this outhouse is the provincial government, and on the bottom floor are the local politicians and the local citizens. Municipal politicians constantly feel like they are being dumped on, and I think you on the other side need to change that attitude towards municipalities.

Back to the legislation that's in front of us today: The member made reference to the question that is going to be placed on this referendum paper, but what's extremely troubling to the municipal politicians in this province is, when is the minister going to define, make the definition of what item is of a provincial interest? That's not been clearly made and that's a real mistake.

The other aspect of this legislation that I chuckle over is this question of 50% turnout. We're going to have to see a dramatic change in voter participation at the municipal level. I'd like to thank Peter Leack, the city clerk for St Thomas, who provided me with some interesting statistics. In 17 elections that have taken place in the city of St Thomas since 1960, only four of those elections had a better than 50% turnout. Of that, two of those elections just crossed that 50% barrier.

The province again has failed the people of Ontario again.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): You're so negative.

Mr Peters: I'll come to that. Again, they go and draft legislation without consultation. This is not a democratic

piece of legislation. This is more like a dictatorial piece of legislation that's been put in and is going to be rammed down the throats of the municipal politicians in this province.

The consultation: The government's going to say, "We've talked to some municipal politicians and we're going to consult." My understanding is that it's going to be public hearings: one day, one place—Toronto. Well, there's a heck of a lot more to this province of Ontario than the city of Toronto. It's a real disgrace that you're not taking this consultation, these public hearings out so that you can get input from all the people of this province. It's kind of interesting too—you talk about municipal referendums. You look at the municipal referendum that took place in the city of Toronto—whether they wanted to be amalgamated or not—an overwhelming no towards that amalgamation vote but did the province listen to the people? No, the province didn't listen to the people, and that's a real shame.

I want to wrap up with some comments because you say that you've consulted with the municipal politicians and that the municipal politicians are on side with this. I can tell you that the municipal politicians aren't on side with this. This is a news release from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario: "AMO President Michael Power said, 'Credibility, accountability and consistency and the wise use of taxpayer's dollars cannot be achieved by this legislation if we cannot clarify for the public and ourselves what is within the municipal jurisdiction. If this to be on a case-by-case basis as the minister has stated, then there will be greater confusion and frustration for the public and the two orders of government.'

"There is an overwhelming need to complete the job of setting out what is a provincial versus a municipal government responsibility. 'We have been trying to convince the province that this work is critical,' said Michael Power, 'Today's announcement makes this even more urgent. Otherwise, the province has created another piece of legislation that appears to bring it a number of unintended impacts.' In the absence of clarity and where overlap of responsibility exists, then the province must be similarly bound by a municipal referendum outcome, and must do everything within its powers to implement the results of the question. ...

"Municipal government leads all orders of government in terms of direct access, openness and accountability. At the municipal level, public consultation is carried out as good practice."

It's very obvious that this government doesn't follow that practice.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): It's always a pleasure to have a few moments to be able to speak to some of the—

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey): You've got 18 minutes.

Mr Marchese: A mere 18 minutes?

Hon Mr Stockwell: Yes.

Mr Marchese: Look how thick this thing is. It's a thick bill. How much can you cover in 18 minutes? Well,

we have to start somewhere. They moved closure today. Why would they move closure on a bill that is their pride and joy? You would think that they would want to be able to sit through this as long as they possibly could. Why now? Why? Because direct democracy is something that you want to be able to sell to the public, don't you? Well then, extend the period that—

Hon Mr Stockwell: You always want more time.

Mr Marchese: You're much taller than I am, Stockwell. I wish I could be as tall as you are. It would make such a big difference in this place. I'll do a Stockwell later, if I can, but at the moment I have to focus. I only have 17 minutes.

If this is your pride and joy, we need more time in this place to debate. You wanted more time, Monsieur Stockwell, when you were here. We gave you loads of time to debate. Do you remember that? You were happy. You were like a fly in—I don't want to say it.

1700

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: I can't say it, because this present Speaker in the chair stops me for every word that isn't sanitized. Like a fly in—you get the picture.

So a bill, the pride and joy of this government—what do we get? Closure. And then what do we get? One afternoon of clause-by-clause. Now, to you good people of Ontario, what does "clause-by-clause" mean? It means nothing. What it means here is we get two hours and it's out of the way; it's gone, kicked out.

Why would they do that? Why would this government do that? My feeling is they would want to talk to the public and say: "Look, good public, we're giving you power. Because this is something important to us, we want to spend a whole lot of time doing it and telling you about it." But they're not doing that. Why? Because the bill doesn't do what it says or they say it should do. That's the problem. The titles of these bills always belie the substance contained therein.

It reads as follows: "An Act to enact, amend and repeal various Acts," muchos acts, as you can see, "in order to encourage direct democracy," so all these changes in here are designed to encourage direct democracy, and I'll speak to that in a moment, but isn't that risible—let me make it simpler: laughable—"through municipal referendums, to provide additional tools"—remember that, tools?—"to assist restructuring municipalities and to deal with other municipal matters."

The point of this is that the substance belies the title.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Get closer to your mike.

Mr Marchese: I like to move around, Monsieur Stockwell, mon ami, mon cher.

You'll recall the other day when we were dealing with the Parental Responsibility Act. The Parental Responsibility Act was another jewel for these guys, a law-and-order kind of bill, right? What did they give us after closure, meaning ending the debate, pushing debate out this door? Two little afternoons. We're likely to get the minister to come and "blah, blah, blah" for a whole hour, then another "blah, blah, blah" through questions of the

individual—a whole waste of one day—and then we've got one more day left to debate the substance of the pride and joy, the crown jewel, the Parental Responsibility Act, that act which deals with law and order.

It's a smoke-and-mirrors kind of politics, placebo politics. You know what "placebo" means, right? When you go to the doctor, they give you a sugar pill; it's called a placebo. Then they give another group the real medicine and they test out whether the real medicine works or the placebo works. That's what this government is offering us: not the substance of a cure, but placebo politics. It's all designed to make the population beguiled, to appear as if you're getting something that they are not giving you. But the way this government operates is, "Does it make you feel good, general public of Ontario?" If the answer is yes, that's all they want. They get one hit from the media the first day and then they move on, because they don't want the general public to read—God bless, I wish that they would read, and wish that some of them could read, because if they read the substance of most of these bills, they would find it's empty on that.

There's so much more to say; I'll move on.

You'll recall, Speaker—oh, you weren't there. I went to the press conference of mon ami Monsieur Clement, and do you know what? The first part of it says, "An Act to enact, amend and repeal various Acts in order to encourage direct democracy." All these amendments Monsieur Clement didn't speak about. Not once did he say, "There are a whole lot of amendments we want to make to a previous bill that will encourage us to do" whatever. Not once did the minister speak about all these changes contained in Bill 62. Why? Because he's hiding his incompetence, not just his but the government's incompetence, in dealing with municipal matters.

Do you understand what I'm saying, good public of Ontario? I'm saying that these incompetent types produce bills and produce laws that later have to be changed by other bills because not only didn't they take the time to do it right, but because they don't know what they're doing. The sad thing is that the public doesn't know and so surreptitiously—meaning like reptiles creeping under the carpet—they introduce changes that the public is oblivious to. The good public over there is oblivious to this and the good public watching this doesn't have a clue. The government relies on the public's ignorance to be able to do its malodorous work.

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): Malodorous?

Mr Marchese: Malodorous.

My friend from Nickel Belt touched upon some of the changes that had to be made in Bill 25 in order to be able to correct it, and it's contained in this Bill 62—lots of pages, as you can see. It was the Henry VIII clauses, the clauses that gave the government, the cabinet, power to be able to do what they wanted. When they probably realized the absurdity of it, they said: "We'd better change it, but let's not tell people. We'll just change it and simply talk about referenda. Why bore the good citizens of Ontario with all this detail and the incompe-

tence of the government? We might as well just tell them what we think they need."

So what do we offer them? Referenda.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: You guys are smart. So they say to the good public of Ontario, "We're going to give you direct democracy," because it's a good Alliance kind of direct democracy principle, a Conservative-Reform-Alliance principle, direct democracy. It's an evolutionary kind of name. It's like a moving target. "What do you want today? We're going to sell it to you soon, and if it doesn't work, we're going to change it again." You guys are good.

On the referendum it says—

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Monsieur Beaubien, écoutez une seconde.

For a referendum to be binding, the turnout must be at least 50% of the electorate—people who vote, people who can vote—and at least 50% plus one must vote in favour. Does the good public of Ontario realize how absurd that is? Does the good public—the taxpayers—know that I don't recall in the history of this country any municipality where we had a turnout of 50% of the electorate? Let's just admit there might have been one.

Hon Mr Stockwell: St Thomas—

Mr Marchese: Bring out the facts in your speech.

Hon Mr Stockwell: You weren't listening.

Mr Marchese: I'm going to listen to you, M. Stockwell, when you come around.

Fifty per cent of the electorate has got to go and vote, and then 50% of that plus one in order for this, whatever issue, to be binding. I'll speak to that in a second.

Hon Mr Stockwell: What should the number be?

Mr Marchese: No, it's just risible. But let me go on.

For example, the new city of Toronto had a turnout of 45.65% in 1997—a big turnout for Toronto; a highly politicized public in the city of Toronto, wouldn't you say? This was for an election with a hotly contested mayoralty race. You remember Mr Lastman, Barbara Hall, two good candidates angry about the amalgamation that you people forced on the city of Toronto, that this legislation would not be able to deal with because amalgamation is not part of the power that is given to it. Because of the forced amalgamation, 46% of the population, more or less, turned out in a hotly contested mayoralty race.

1710

So I say to you, are we ever going to have 50% of the electorate voting? According to history in my memory—perhaps there are greater Conservative minds on the other side, but I doubt it. Give me a whole list. Historically, in this province—and if you say "one, two, three, four," it's a problemo. Why? Because it should be, in the majority of cases, that 50% of the population votes, as opposed to, in a slim minority of cases, where a few municipalities will vote, for whatever reason, in their municipalities, and probably a very small-

Hon Mr Stockwell: What's the number?

Mr Marchese: I'm not in government. "You got the wheels," Mr Stockwell used to say. It's not what I say; it's what you say that counts. So I ask you to determine what you think the good politics is, but I'm telling you, the public doesn't have direct democracy because the majority of Ontario's population in municipalities don't go to vote with that kind of plurality—50%, right?

So what have you given to the public? You give them affectation about this; you give them some quackery; you give them some contrivance; you give them some pettifoggery; some skulduggery; some artful piece of—

Interjections.

Mr Marchese: That's all you give them. Give them something that's real, instead of saying, "Does it feel good?" "Yeah." "That's all you need to know." "Is there any substance?" "No; it's irrelevant." "Is there any evidence to prove this will work?" "It's irrelevant." Evidence, with this Conservative government, has nothing to do with placebo politics. "We just give them what they want."

Mr Long—I'm looking forward to him, because Monsieur Long is not a man of substance that I can see. The few things he's talking about are, "We've got to cut bureaucracy"—these Tories have done that; "We've got to give more tax cuts"—holy God, the province has been ruined by the tax cuts. Wait until the next recession comes. Holy God, you guys have no money to deal with a recession. You've frittered it away. You've given it away to people who have deep pockets, your buddies. We're going to have big problems down the line that Monsieur Long won't know how to handle, that fine American friend of mine. He should go back to the US and deal with that kind of dirty politics over there. But we have to wait for him to do that.

I remember the minister, Monsieur Clement, when he came to the press conference. He talked about, "The public, the voters will have a stronger voice." Oh yeah? "There will be increased municipal accountability." Oh yeah? Municipalities are going to be restricted in terms of the kinds of questions they'll be able to put to a referendum. The province will decide jurisdictional issues, so as soon as a municipality steps out of their potential power, the province comes in and says, "Uh-uh. You can't do that."

When he was asked, "What about amalgamations," the answer he gave was, "Oh, that's hypothetical." Funny, hey? It was "hypothetical." It was clear that it was a jurisdictional issue and that the municipality wouldn't be able to ask it, or that the cities previously couldn't hold that municipal referendum they had, but he said, "Oh, that's hypothetical." He doesn't even have the courage to say, "That couldn't be an issue that could be raised, because it's beyond the jurisdiction of the municipality." Amalgamation. Surely they should be able to do that, but they can't. Mr Clement didn't even have the courage to say, "You can't do it."

The only thing the chief electoral officer will have a say in is if the question is vague or unclear. But jurisdictional stuff, the big boys with the power of fiat will

determine that, as usual, the Henry VIII kind of clauses that appear and disappear according to the whims of this government.

By the way, in terms of direct democracy, the public will not be able to initiate referenda. Isn't that direct democracy? According to the ideological-pathological views of this Conservative government, it is. Direct democracy means the public will have the power to be able to initiate referenda. With Bill 62, the public won't be able to do that, so how is that direct democracy? How is that empowering citizens? Well, it isn't. It says to municipalities, "You will be able to hold referenda," which they can do now, "but only as circumscribed by poor little wee provincial Premier and cabinet caucus, who will decide what's good for any city here in Ontario." They decide that. It's risible, Monsieur le Président, this whole affair.

So you wonder, what can municipalities do? Perhaps deal with licensing peanut vendors. That would be a good way. I'm sure that half the population of Toronto would love to deal with the licensing of peanut vendors and the like, because that's the kind of power they're giving municipalities—no power to the people, some power to municipalities, limited, truncated, because the province decides what jurisdictional powers cities have. The poor cities can't even decide what is important to them. "Could we deal with downloading?" "Uh-uh." "Why not?" "Because we say so. It's a Henry VIII kind of power. It's absolute. You can't because we say so." But why is downloading not a municipal issue when this government sucks money away from municipalities and they don't have the power to say, "We want to deal with that"? What does it mean? What kind of power do we have, Madame Ecker? What kind of power do they have? Speak after me, please. I want to hear from you, Madame Ecker.

This bill is a sham. It's pathological, it's affectation, it's quackery, it's contrived, it's pettifoggery, skulduggery, it's artful, anything but real politics. I want to hear from the public. I hope they let me know what they think about this.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I'd like to, just for a moment, as I begin my presentation, respond to some of the comments made by the member for Trinity-Spadina. I expect that he supported the social contract, and he's the one who's standing here telling us about democracy when they broke every single contract in Ontario; every negotiated deal that was here with your union, your supporters, and you voted in favour to break it. Is that democracy? Is that the democratic process you were telling us about? I see from your smile and your head on your desk that you empathize with my comments. I won't rub it in any more. I feel sorry for you.

We're addressing Bill 62, the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, and I can tell you that if there's anything I can support it's referendums. That's really the basis of democracy, and the more referendum activity we can have, I believe, the better.

This bill is another step towards quality and efficiency for municipal governments, and certainly I'm all for them. Prior to our taking office, the big hue and cry around the riding was, "When are these education taxes ever going to stop going up?" We froze them at 0.46% of the assessment, then dropped them by some 10%, and they're going to go down further. That is helping our municipalities with their taxes and, with the tremendous drop in the cost of social services, almost 50% of our people who were on welfare in 1995 are now off it; in my riding it's more around 60%. Look at the dollars that are being saved for municipalities.

As we move with some of the restructuring we've been doing in Toronto, Chatham-Kent and other regions where restructuring has gone on, tremendous steps have gone forward. It was interesting, when I was in Kent with the task force on rural economic renewal that I'm chairing, and also in Wellington county, that two people, one in each municipality, came forward and said: "I'll tell you, did I ever struggle against restructuring. I fought it tooth and nail. Now, two years later, it's the best thing since sliced bread. Let me tell you what it did for us," and they went down the list of all the savings. They were just so happy that had in fact occurred. On the list goes, more recently, the restructuring that has taken place in Hamilton and Ottawa, certainly logical steps to move ahead.

The main goal of this bill is to promote direct democracy in local politics. There's no question certainly in my riding, in Toronto and I think in a lot of other areas that there has been an increasing demand for referenda. People are asking for this, and we need to recognize it, and that's exactly what this bill is going to do. With this bill, once it's passed, in the future a referendum will become binding provided that they vote in favour of it and at least 50% of the population comes out to vote.

1720

I think there has been a lot of confusion in the past between what is a referendum and what is a plebiscite. Of course a referendum is binding and a plebiscite is something that's a guiding direction. Unfortunately, that's been mixed up consistently. Even our federal government has mixed up those particular terms.

There is a requirement in the legislation that whatever is put on the referendum question will be implemented within 180 days. If they don't get 50%, then it will be guidance, considered more as a plebiscite, you might say.

One of the big problems we've had in the past when municipalities have tried to have a referendum was with the writing of the question and having it properly vetted. You can write a question where it doesn't matter how you answer it, you're going to be right, or, in how you answer another one, you're always going to be wrong. It's very important how the question is written so that the answer, yes or no, is indeed very clear-cut.

I heard the member for Trinity-Spadina criticizing about it being within that jurisdiction. It makes so much sense to limit it to the jurisdiction where the vote is being

taken. Why go spending money on areas that are not involved in your particular jurisdiction?

Moving right along, this bill is going to bring a lot of recognition to rural Ontario and give a stronger voice on municipal councils in rural Ontario. I can tell you that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is very enthused and very interested and wants to see more support and more strength, more voice in the councils from rural Ontario. They should be very pleased with this particular bill. You take, for example, the city of Ottawa adding one more rural member on their council so that there's one from each of the constituent townships around Ottawa, and in Hamilton two more rural members are going to be on their council. That is really what we're talking about with a strong voice for rural Ontario to represent those rural issues that only the people from rural Ontario really understand and can carry forward. This government is recognizing the importance of rural Ontario in what's going on out there as we look at places like Hamilton and Ottawa adding those extra people to the council from rural Ontario. It is also interested in rural Ontario. The Premier recently appointed a Premier's Task Force on Rural Economic Renewal that is out there listening to the people of Ontario. I hope the report we put forward, the interim report to the Minister of Finance, will be reflected in the budget tomorrow.

A little closer to home, some of the things that have been going on in my riding as they relate to restructuring: the city of Quinte West, where some four municipalities have come together, with a tremendous number of financial advantages for that community. They are two years down the road, and in a moment I'll bring some of those to your attention. Also in the last election, Campbellford-Seymour came together. I remember about a month and a half after the last municipal election being at an annual meeting of their fair board. The mayor spoke and then the reeve spoke. Each of them had been in their respective municipalities before, and now they were combined. They were saying: "Now we have two photocopiers, we have two fax machines. Look at the duplication that was going on." What did they do with that extra equipment? They gave it to some of the volunteer organizations in their community. That's the kind of advantage we are seeing with some of the restructuring that's going on in a small sort of way, such as in my municipality.

I want for a moment to give you an example after two years of what's been going on in the city of Quinte West. These figures came out late last fall. They had record economic growth, had new building values totalling \$74 million, had seen 273 houses built, issued a total of 927 building permits, saved \$80,000 in audit services, saved \$299,000 in insurance premiums, saved \$800,000 by becoming a single-tier city, turned a pre-amalgamation deficit of \$1.7 million into a 1998 surplus of \$481,832, improved the general reserves in reserve funds by \$4.4 million in 1998 and cut the pre-amalgamation long-term debt by \$1,707,000. They also cut the 1999 city budget by 13.7% or over \$3 million as compared to 1998.

Those are some of the advantages that we're gaining in rural Ontario and across Ontario with the amalgamations.

I for one am very enthusiastic about this bill that has been brought forward, Bill 62, the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, and will be able to support this time allocation motion and be able to support this bill when it comes before the House.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): I think it's an ironically titled bill, to put it politely—let's start off that way—the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, and what do we have? We have a time allocation motion today cutting off debate. Interesting concept. They talk about democracy and yet they are literally cutting off debate, forcing this through. Why are they doing that? Because it's another one of the pieces of legislation that this government continually moves through the Legislature as quickly as they can that are really about them maintaining and taking over more control and actually denying democracy to various parts of our province.

In terms of this legislation, it's particularly galling and quite extraordinary to have them call this act the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act when indeed it's very clear that what it's about is taking it away. The fact is, municipalities are under an extraordinary amount of pressure in this province. My colleague from Northumberland made reference to this providing a stronger voice to rural Ontarians. Indeed, it just simply takes it away. He made other references to the fact that people want to have this. That's not true as well. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario has made it very clear that they do not believe this legislation is necessary. It's not timely, and they have a great number of problems with it.

But again what it really comes down to is that municipalities are under a lot of pressure. They are desperately trying to hang on by their teeth and by their fingernails to try to look after their citizens. There are a number of things the province continues to do—and downloading obviously is the best example—whereby they want to have a voice. They want to have some way to slow down the province. I think the province knows that is the case and there are a variety of referendums the municipalities themselves would very much like to bring forward; this province is absolutely going to be sure they don't.

Mr Clement, the minister, when he first introduced this, made reference to the fact that this would be a good device by which to make decisions on whether or not you're going to fund a local arena. It's an important issue in every community. But the fact is, when you look at the kinds of issues that are out there now, that municipalities would like to have an opportunity to ask their citizens about, this bill is quite precisely about denying that. So, they can dress it up any way they want.

I must admit I'm not as concerned as perhaps others are that 50% plus one of the electorate needs to vote. I think if the issue is one that is of great concern to a lot of people, then people will go out and vote. I recognize that the history is there. There's no question. There is usually

not that kind of a turnout, but that concerns me less, although it has obviously been a factor, than the fact that it really cuts off an opportunity for people to express themselves on issues that are important.

The member for Northumberland made reference to, "Why waste your time or money on issues of provincial concern only?" That's simply insulting. This is a government that runs around and talks constantly about how there's only one taxpayer, but then they are going to choose the issues that the actual municipalities and the citizens should actually have some impact on. It's astonishing. There are so many examples of it that I could give, and obviously I don't have a great deal of time, but when I think as the transportation critic, the battles we fought over the privatization of road maintenance in this province, a couple of things become very clear. One, the privatization—and the auditor has confirmed this—is ultimately going to cost the taxpayers of this province a great deal more money. Many municipalities across the province made very strong reference to the fact that they had grave concerns about it.

1730

My point is, for those who may choose to heckle me, a number of municipalities were very concerned about this issue. It affected them a great deal. A lot of people lost their lives on the highways this year, and I won't stand here and say it was caused as a result of that. All I'm saying is that the concern about road maintenance is a great one in this province. It seems very clear that ultimately road maintenance will cost us, the taxpayers, more money, and there is some compelling evidence as well that it may not be that the roads are being maintained as safely. That being the case, what I'm suggesting is perhaps a municipality might want to ask their citizens about that. Well, that certainly wouldn't be an opportunity that would be allowed under this.

As long as you've got a government that says, "We'll determine what the referendum will be," it is not direct democracy. It is not allowing more democracy; it is withholding it.

There are situations developing across this province, and again, in my community—and my colleague from Brant will relate to this—in terms of private jails. We know what's happening in Penetang. We know what's happening there. The fact is that in Thunder Bay right now there is a possibility—they keep hanging out this carrot—that indeed there may be a great big new jail in Thunder Bay. What is of great concern to a lot of us is that we do not want this to be a private jail. The evidence is overwhelming that this is a very bad move to make in terms of the safety of everyone concerned, the whole system basically thrown into disarray. If the people of Thunder Bay wanted to do a referendum on that, I would suggest this legislation will make sure they cannot do it.

To have the government members stand here and try and talk about the fact that this increases democracy, and to read their script, is simply unbelievable. The fact is it's very clear what this legislation is all about. This legislation is about making sure that the municipalities do not

interfere in matters the government wants to simply bring their iron hand down on. That's what this bill is all about.

There are so many areas where—and we are going to be seeing a lot more as time goes on, I fear. We look at the downloading exercise, and I look at the situation, also in my riding, which is the issue related to the amalgamation of four communities and many unorganized communities in Beardmore, Geraldton, Longlac and Nakina with Caramat and Jellicoe. The ruling has come down that the community of Greenstone will now be in place. There's a lot of issues associated with this, but one of my concerns that I continue to express, certainly to my constituents, is what is amalgamating Greenstone really about? Is it perhaps about the fact that now the province will have an opportunity to download all the secondary highways to the municipality at great cost, and potentially Highway 11 itself? I sure would like some assurance that's not going to happen.

But I'll tell you something else: It would be nice if there could be a referendum, if the municipality would have the opportunity to at least ask the people whether they want this to happen or not. That's not going to happen. No matter what the government tells me, that they will give them a certain amount of money to look after it, we know that down the road—excuse the expression—it's going to cost more, and that means it's going to be another attack on municipalities. So it continues to alarm me.

There are other issues that relate to municipalities that I think are very clearly putting more and more pressure on the municipalities to actually be able to maintain the services to people, issues that they indeed may want to ask their constituents about through a referendum. Well, they're not going to be able to do it.

No matter how you colour this, I think it just simply ends up being a piece of legislation that ultimately is being put in place—one, as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario made clear, it's legislation they do not support. They do not need it. They do not think it's timely, and it's of no particular benefit to them. Some of the aspects of referendums which they thought would have been reasonably positive are being removed.

Two, the fact is that the government has made it very clear that they are going to have complete control over what the referendum questions would be. The issue has been brought up about the 50% plus one. As I expressed earlier, I'm not as concerned with that, although it is also a number that may be very difficult to attain. But again, it ultimately comes back to the fact that municipalities are being deprived of democracy through this legislation as far as I'm concerned. To try and paint it any other way—although, as we all know in the Legislature, there is a long history of legislation that goes forward with titles that would appear to benefit the citizens of our province that I certainly would argue do not do so.

When you have a time allocation motion put forward on a piece of legislation that is called “direct democracy through municipal referendums,” as I said at the beginning, it's ironic, but it's also kind of cruel. When you've

got something out there that is not going to be of any benefit, that is going to take away the opportunities for people to actually have real democracy, that has to concern all of us.

I listened to the government members express themselves in terms of how they believe this will be of greater benefit to their citizens, and I tell you, I would sure like to ask them how and why they think that is the case. They have not been able to give me any real evidence that indeed this legislation itself is going to be of any real benefit other than to take away the opportunity for them to comment on issues such as, as has been discussed earlier, the forced amalgamation of Toronto back a couple of years ago, which you well know was a huge, major issue which was ignored by the government.

This ultimately appears to be nothing more than an attempt to control the agenda, to have all control out of the central government, something we're seeing more and more of. As we see more downloading, particularly those of us in the north, it concerns us enormously. We indeed want to have direct democracy; we want our citizens to have a chance to comment on these things. Obviously under this legislation, that will be taken away.

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

Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to ask for unanimous consent to place an amendment to section 5 which would provide bilingual services where warranted in the new city of Ottawa.

The Acting Speaker: We're dealing with a time allocation motion here. It would be out of order. You could ask for consent at another time.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I'll be sharing my time in this debate, the time allocation motion on Bill 62, Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act, with the member from Kitchener.

It's important to hear what we've heard from the Liberals. I'm assuming certainly that they are going to oppose this piece of legislation that gives direct democracy back to citizens. I suspect that.

What is the intent of this legislation? It would give Ontario voters a stronger voice in their local democratic process and increase municipal accountability. That's really what they're opposing; that's one of the things. If passed, the Direct Democracy Through Municipal Referendums Act would provide a legal framework for voters to have a say in local decisions. That's again what they are opposing. They're opposing local voters having a say in local decisions.

The legislation would permit municipal councils to ask voters clear, concise, yes-or-no questions about issues that fall within the municipalities' jurisdictions. Again, what are the Liberals opposing? Clear questions. Of course, we know that Liberals do not like to ask clear questions. That's certainly not new.

This is all part of what we have done as a province, because we've accepted legislation like that to control provincial governments. Last fall we introduced and

passed the Taxpayer Protection and Balanced Budget Act, which protects Ontario families from irresponsible government spending that results in deficits and accumulating debt. Again, that was opposed.

When you bring that to the municipal level, we've accepted that, and voters from now on will have to approve any time there's any type of tax increase, whether it's personal income tax, corporate taxes, retail sales tax, employer health tax, gasoline and fuel taxes, or education.

So now we have municipalities that are going to be responsible to the citizens for all these things, a province that is responsible, yet we do not have a federal government that is responsible when it comes to any accountability to anybody. What we have is a federal government that has continued to increase taxes. They've cut transfers to our province for health care, and now we're receiving only 11% of the total cost of health care in Ontario. Yet there's \$3 billion in grant assistance going out to I don't know who. It certainly doesn't help the homeless people in our province. It certainly doesn't help the health care system in our province. It certainly doesn't help taxpayers who are raising families and have young children and need this money to feed and clothe their own families. But it's important, because Liberals have a very unique way of doing things.

1740

I want to go back to a Toronto Star quote back on September 14, 1990, shortly after Floyd Laughren took over the books from the Liberals, because the member for St Catharines talked about how they balanced the budget. Here's a quote from the Toronto Star:

"There's something strange with the speed with which the surplus became a deficit. The gap is not only in dollars. It's in credibility."

He was right. Of course, you know what that was all about. The Liberal government of the day claimed that somehow there was a surplus, and when Mr Laughren took over as finance minister he found out that there was a \$2-billion deficit.

The very same day, Bob Rae, September 14, 1990, Toronto Star:

"The fiscal projections for this year and future years are substantively different from the ones I've previously seen from the Liberal government. I intend to get to the bottom of this, of how and why the numbers that are being thrown around now are so different from the ones that were thrown in front of the public in July. The public has the right to know this information and to know that this is the legacy of the previous"—Liberal—"government."

So there was a clear leader, Premier Rae, and Floyd Laughren. They came in and were told that there was a balanced budget and perhaps a surplus. In fact, there was a \$2-billion deficit. But that's the kind of balanced budget we've seen from Liberal governments across this country, where on one hand they talk about it having to be balanced.

But we need to go back to what's really important, because the Liberals have opposed all of the tax cuts in this province. Continually, on a day-to-day basis in this House, I hear Liberals talking about, "You should not have cut taxes; you should have done this"—

Interjections.

Mr Mazzilli: They don't get it. They're yelling over there. You know what? The debate is over. Tax cuts create jobs. You don't get it. The people of Ontario have seen that.

Let me tell you the results of those tax cuts. Ontario's economy has turned around since Mike Harris took office: 701,000 new jobs created; not only 701,000 new jobs created in this province but almost half a million people off welfare. You know what? These are people who had become desperate because there was no opportunity under Liberal-minded governments. They had to stay home and live off a system that they did not wish to live off, because there was no opportunity. Today half a million people are going to work in this province, and they have the dignity to come home and face their families, their children. Those people voted for the Mike Harris government because they now have a government that they're fully comfortable with.

It's important because it has come out from—I think the member for Trinity-Spadina talked about the leadership of Tom Long. I'll join in that debate about the leadership bid of Tom Long because it is an important debate. The member for Trinity-Spadina is probably disgusted with the federal Liberals, and he should be, because again no priorities, not in the area of health care, not in the area of tax cuts, not in the area of infrastructure. When you look at the gasoline taxes collected by the federal government, a very small percentage comes back to Ontario in the way of infrastructure for roads. As a result, we have the 401 completely upgraded with revenues from the provincial government, record numbers spent on the 401.

But you know what? We need to do more. We certainly need to get some federal government input. If not, they should not collect the taxes that are supposed to go to that system.

But again, I think Tom Long would certainly address a problem like that, where a government takes in money and doesn't give back Ontario's fair share. I'm sure he would, through his leadership, cut taxes and increase transfers to the provinces so that our aging population has access to very important medical procedures.

The little bit of time that I have left I will share with the member from Kitchener.

Mr Wettlaufer: The members of the opposition have asked why time allocation is necessary. I think it's very important to note that any time that time allocation is introduced, it's a very difficult time for the House leader to figure out whether or not it is necessary. In this case, I think we have seen the level of debate, and that is why it's so necessary. We have issues that are very timely, and time is of the essence here. I would like to address some of these things.

One of the things that we're looking at, of course, is the region of Waterloo. We are providing for a directly elected council for the regional municipality of Waterloo, and to reduce the size of the local councils in my riding. Kitchener and Waterloo and some of the townships have requested a reduction in the size. This was in a letter that they wrote to the minister. Time is of the essence; we have to get on with this. This is why we are moving the time allocation motion.

Of course, it's not just the regional municipality of Waterloo. It's also the regional municipality of Halton. The chair has requested a vote on regional council matters. Time is of the essence on this as well.

We are enabling separated municipalities and counties that amalgamate to maintain their own different tax ratios. That is very important. We have, for instance—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham has moved government notice of motion number 44. Shall the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. It will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1748 to 1758.

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

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Baird, John R.
Barrett, Toby

Hardeman, Ernie
Hastings, John
Hodgson, Chris

Ouellette, Jerry J.
Palladini, Al
Runciman, Robert W.

Beaubien, Marcel
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Brad
Coburn, Brian
Cunningham, Dianne
DeFaria, Carl
Dunlop, Garfield
Ecker, Janet
Elliott, Brenda
Flaherty, Jim
Galt, Doug
Gilchrist, Steve
Gill, Raminder
Guzzo, Garry J.

Hudak, Tim
Jackson, Cameron
Johns, Helen
Johnson, Bert
Kells, Morley
Klees, Frank
Marland, Margaret
Martiniuk, Gerry
Mazzilli, Frank
Molinari, Tina R.
Munro, Julia
Mushinski, Marilyn
Newman, Dan
O'Toole, John

Sampson, Rob
Snobelen, John
Spina, Joseph
Sterling, Norman W.
Stewart, R. Gary
Stockwell, Chris
Tascona, Joseph N.
Tilson, David
Tsubouchi, David H.
Wettlaufer, Wayne
Witmer, Elizabeth
Wood, Bob
Young, David

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will rise one at a time.

Nays

Agostino, Dominic
Bartolucci, Rick
Bountrogianni, Marie
Christopherson, David
Churley, Marilyn
Conway, Sean G.
Crozier, Bruce
Curling, Alvin

Di Cocco, Caroline
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duncan, Dwight
Gravelle, Michael
Hampton, Howard
Hoy, Pat
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Lankin, Frances

Levac, David
Marchese, Rosario
Martel, Shelley
McLeod, Lyn
Peters, Steve
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramsay, David

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 50; the nays are 23.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

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

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Agostino, Dominic (L)	Hamilton East / -Est	chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC)	Nepean-Carleton	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Environnement
Bartolucci, Rick (L)	Sudbury	deputy opposition House leader / chef parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition
Beaubien, Marcel (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	
Bisson, Gilles (ND)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	
Bountrogianni, Marie (L)	Hamilton Mountain	
Boyer, Claudette (L)	Ottawa-Vanier	
Bradley, James J. (L)	St Catharines	
Brown, Michael A. (L)	Algoma-Manitoulin	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Bryant, Michael (L)	St Paul's	
Caplan, David (L)	Don Valley East / -Est	deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC)	Oakville	Speaker / Président
Christopherson, David (ND)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	New Democratic Party House leader / chef parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Richesses naturelles
Churley, Marilyn (ND)	Broadview-Greenwood	chief New Democratic Party whip / whip en chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Clark, Brad (PC)	Stoney Creek	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, assistant deputy government whip / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée, whip adjoint suppléant du gouvernement
Cleary, John C. (L)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	
Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC)	Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coburn, Brian (PC)	Carleton-Gloucester	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Colle, Mike (L)	Eglinton-Lawrence	
Conway, Sean G. (L)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Cordiano, Joseph (L)	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	
Crozier, Bruce (L)	Essex	
Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Curling, Alvin (L)	Scarborough-Rouge River	

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

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

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

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Gerard Kennedy
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Sean G. Conway, Alvin Curling,
Gerard Kennedy, Frank Mazzilli, John R. O'Toole,
R. Gary Stewart, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Finance and economic affairs /
Finances et affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Marcel Beaubien
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Doug Galt
Ted Arnott, Marcel Beaubien, David Christopherson,
Doug Galt, Monte Kwinter, Tina R. Molinari,
Gerry Phillips, David Young
Clerk / Greffier: Tom Prins

General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Steve Gilchrist
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro
Toby Barrett, Marie Bountrogianni, Ted Chudleigh,
Garfield Dunlop, Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac,
Rosario Marchese, Julia Munro
Clerk / Greffier: Viktor Kaczkowski

Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: James J. Bradley
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bruce Crozier
James J. Bradley, Bruce Crozier, Leona Dombrowsky,
Bert Johnson, Morley Kells, Tony Martin,
Joseph Spina, Bob Wood
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

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

Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Mushinski
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Carl DeFaria
Marcel Beaubien, Michael Bryant, Carl DeFaria,
Brenda Elliott, Garry J. Guzzo, Peter Kormos,
Lyn McLeod, Marilyn Mushinski
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: R. Gary Stewart
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Brad Clark
Marilyn Churley, Brad Clark, Caroline Di Cocco,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Jerry J. Ouellette, R. Gary Stewart, Joseph N. Tascona, Wayne Wettlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Public accounts / Comptes publics

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John C. Cleary, John Gerretsen, John Hastings,
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Marilyn Mushinski, Richard Patten
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**Regulations and private bills /
Règlements et projets de loi privés**

Chair / Présidente: Frances Lankin
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Brian Coburn,
Garfield Dunlop, Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy,
Frances Lankin, Bill Murdoch
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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

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