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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 15 May 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 15 mai 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 15 May 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 15 mai 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

POLICE WEEK

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): Today marks the beginning of Police Week. From today, Monday, May 15, to Sunday, May 21, communities all across Ontario will have an opportunity to see and hear what our police service does to keep us safe and secure.

I know that we are fortunate and blessed to have such a professional and dedicated group of women and men who give of themselves to do a job that few people could do. This is one of the very few professions in which when you go to work you could make the ultimate sacrifice as part of your job.

To the women and men of our police service, we say thank you. Thank you for the job you do day in and day out. You are appreciated and respected.

To the families, loved ones and friends of our police officers, we say thank you. Thank you for sharing these noble women and men with us. Thank you for your patience and understanding about the career path they followed.

To the community partners that help our police service and make their jobs just a little easier to do, we say thank you.

To the citizens of Ontario, I ask that when you visit the displays in the malls and in the open houses at the police stations, the career days at our schools, or wherever you find a police officer, you take the time to say: "Thank you. Thank you for a job well done."

It's time to show our appreciation and say thank you to the men and women who keep us safe and secure. Let us not take any of our public servants for granted.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): The 2000 budget recently introduced by the finance minister marks the start of a new era in Ontario. The budget was a reason to celebrate, because for the first time in over half a century Ontario's budget has been balanced for two consecutive years.

In the days following the budget announcement, I was absolutely shocked and disgusted to see that Prime

Minister Chrétien was trying to take credit for Ontario's balanced budget. The Prime Minister completely misrepresented the facts when he stated that the federal government's actions allowed Ontario to balance the budget. The Ontario budget is balanced because of job growth and economic prosperity that is the result of our government's fight against taxes.

The Prime Minister seems to forget that his government did everything possible to offset the benefit of tax cuts to Ontarians. While we were cutting taxes, he was raising the Canada pension plan and employment insurance premiums. The credit for a balanced budget surely doesn't rest with Mr Chrétien. The credit rests with those hard-working Ontarians who have stimulated the economy by spending their tax cuts in this province.

Instead of taking credit for our success, Mr Chrétien should be thanking our government. The federal government's budget has only been balanced as a result of Ontario's economic growth.

Our budget was a monumental day for Ontarians and our government. I find it absolutely appalling that the Prime Minister is trying to take credit for it. Those Liberal scoundrels will do anything to grab the headlines.

PROVISIONNEMENT DE L'ÉDUCATION

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell) : Je voudrais tout d'abord souhaiter la bienvenue aux élèves de l'école secondaire régionale de Hawkesbury qui nous visitent aujourd'hui. Bienvenue, gens de chez nous.

J'aimerais aussi parler des conséquences de la réduction de 1,4\$ milliard dans le domaine de l'éducation. On nous a informé qu'il sera nécessaire de fermer au-delà de 130 écoles du secteur rural de l'Ontario, dont certaines de langue française de ma circonscription, d'ici septembre 2001. Pouvez-vous imaginer l'effet de cette annonce s'il s'agissait d'écoles du grand Toronto ? Il semble que ce gouvernement s'attend à ce que l'Ontario rural accepte ces réductions sans ne rien dire.

Chaque jour je reçois des appels de parents qui s'inquiètent de l'éducation de leurs enfants, et certains se demandent aussi ce qu'ils vont faire parce qu'ils ont besoin de l'aide de leurs enfants sur la ferme familiale après l'école.

La ministre a parlé la semaine dernière des enseignants qui devraient travailler en dehors des heures de classes pour offrir des activités parascolaires aux

élèves. Elle n'a pas besoin de s'en préoccuper dans ma circonscription, parce que nos enfants qui seront appelés à passer plus de temps en autobus ne seront pas en mesure d'assister à ces activités.

Ceci doit cesser, et cesser dès maintenant. Les enfants des régions rurales ont droit à la même éducation que les enfants des centres urbains. Nous devons examiner plus en détail la formule de financement des régions rurales pour nous assurer d'une équité dans l'ensemble de l'Ontario.

COMMUNITY DAY

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Last Saturday in my riding of Durham the Mearns Park Neighbourhood Watch and Newcastle Optimist Club held a wonderful community event called Respect for the Law, the Environment and the Community Day, a day filled with events, exhibits and entertainment.

The Durham regional police were on hand to register bicycles so that they could be traced, if stolen. The Bowmanville Zoo brought along a rather large boa constrictor that proved to be a big hit with most of the children. The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority set up a display for the summer environmental camp. Durham East 4-H club showed up to encourage young people from cities in the Durham area to join this fun and educational community organization.

The Newcastle Optimist club hosted a barbecue. Without Optimists like Connie Trowsse, Reg and Diane Tressider and the president, Marianne Yateman, these community events would not be possible. In fact, Marianne is also the head of the committee that organized this event. Her fellow committee members included: Jane Wraith, Dwayne and Dave Morton, Steve Cooke and Maggie Irvine, Darlene and Dave Boyd, Doreen Gilroy and Shelagh Hannah. I want to congratulate these people, as well as my constituents. It's hard-working volunteers, business and community groups that help make small-town Ontario such a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I know that highlighting these events in the House may seem small to some, but it makes me very proud to represent such strong community builders in my riding of Durham. I'd like all members to take time this summer and visit the riding of Durham.

COMMUNITY LIVING WEEK

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): Yesterday the mayor of Toronto, Mel Lastman, declared the week of May 10 as Community Living Week in the city of Toronto. This is a week that is designated to recognize the ability and rights of developmentally challenged adults and children to participate and live in their communities. The mission statement for the Toronto Association for Community Living is to support the full inclusion of people who are identified as having an intellectual disability in all aspects of community living.

The Ontario-wide organization began in Kirkland Lake in 1947, with the Toronto chapter establishing itself one year later. In the past 50 years, the OACL has grown to over 12,000 members with 100 affiliated local associations.

The Toronto Association for Community Living is an integral part of our city and of our entire community. It provides service to more than 5,000 adults and children with developmental disabilities. There are four branches: Toronto, Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke. The association operates 70 programs.

Recently, I visited the York Employment Training Services Centre in my own riding to view first-hand the good works of the Toronto Association for Community Living. I encourage every member of this House to support their efforts, because we need their help to help others to live and work in our city and in our province.

1340

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Today marks the beginning of Community Living Week, and I would like to challenge the government to take this as an opportunity to put forward a new plan and a new vision to help people living with developmental disabilities and their families. I challenge the government to:

(1) Adequately compensate workers within the developmental disabilities sector. Low salaries are driving away competent staff and that directly affects people with those disabilities. A survey done by KPMG found that salaries in not-for-profit agencies are 20% to 25% lower than those for people doing similar work in government facilities or other human services sectors.

(2) Recognize that there are a growing number of older parents who are no longer able to support their sons and daughters at home. Without immediate funding and program supports, many individuals will find themselves in crisis, as many are now.

(3) Come forward with a new plan for community-based service, a new vision that will help people living with developmental disabilities better integrate into our communities. This new vision should include a meaningful Ontarians with Disabilities Act that guarantees existing community barriers will be removed and future barriers will be prevented.

Without a meaningful ODA in place, people living with disabilities in Ontario have no guarantee that they can access public buildings, services and programs. The government promised this five years ago. I call upon them again today to bring in this act.

SAM MURPHY

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): I'd like to pay tribute to an exceptional resident of Peterborough, Mr Justice Sam Murphy, who recently died at the age of 68.

Sam Murphy was a valuable contributor to his community as a judge, as a lawyer, as a volunteer and as a family person. He has been described as one of Peterborough's favourite sons. Mr Justice Sam Murphy

was a very dedicated lawyer and, following his appointment to the bench in 1979, he served the Peterborough area with tremendous ability and distinction. He became a provincial court judge in 1979, and in 1987 a district court judge and, currently, the Superior Court of Justice. He held this position until his recent death.

Along with his many interests, education was very high on Mr Murphy's list. He served as a public school board trustee and board chairman, and worked with Sir Sandford Fleming College and Trent University.

Sam Murphy was extremely proud of his Peterborough roots. His passing is a great loss to our community, to the administration of justice in the Peterborough area and to his many friends and family members. He was an exceptional person with qualities that will make him long remembered and missed by the residents of Peterborough.

RURAL SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I draw the attention of this House to the bizarre irony of the 2000 rural summer jobs program announced by the Minister of Agriculture. This program had set itself a goal of providing summer employment for some 4,500 students. The irony is that this government is in the process of eliminating 4,500 student jobs. Why? Because the Minister of Education will not allow the Thames Valley District School Board and others to start their school year a couple of days late, a long-standing tradition and practice around the tobacco farming belt—4,500 student jobs, \$16 million in wages and a minister who refuses to budge. At East Elgin high school in Aylmer, Ontario, within my riding, a full 25% of the students rely on these jobs for income. What will happen to these jobs if they are not given to the students? They will go to foreign migrant workers who will spend their money out of the country.

For years, school boards have delayed the start of the school year, and suddenly the rug has been pulled from under them. The minister refuses to sway from the Tory, one-size-fits-all philosophy. The minister claims that she has no problems with school boards being flexible in terms of how they organize the school year, yet demands that these boards not follow a practice that has been going on in rural communities for years.

Let's be clear here: Who is not being flexible, Minister? With tuition soaring, growing concern over delinquent loans and students graduating with huge debt loads, the government should be more interested in being part of the solution rather than adding to the problem. They might even try using a little common sense. I call on the Minister of Education to reverse this decision.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I rise today to sing the praises of a recent provincial budget.

It's a provincial budget that actually cut taxes; a provincial budget that increased spending on health care; a provincial budget that increased spending on education; a provincial budget that put a government into position to begin paying its debt.

It's a budget that has been criticized by the union bosses of big labour. It's a budget criticized by so-called social activists because it cut taxes.

It's a budget that gives hope to the working men and women of the province. I'm not speaking about Ontario's latest budget. No, I'm speaking about Manitoba's New Democratic budget. Yes, the New Democrats of Manitoba have joined the Progressive Conservatives of Ontario in a common sense revolution. Manitoba's Premier, Gary Doer, has recognized the wisdom of Mike Harris and our own Minister of Finance, the Honourable Ernie Eves.

I call on every provincial government and our own NDP and Liberal members to give serious consideration to the Manitoba example. Gary Doer gets it. We get it. Why can't Dalton McGuinty get it? Perhaps it's because he's still not up to the job.

VISITORS

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am very happy to introduce a guest in the House today. Her name is Sherrylynn Colley Veigh and she's an educator from Windsor. Here is one educator who is so committed to young people that she insisted that all of us, including those of us in the Legislature, participate in finding some solution to the rave and ecstasy issue that exists out there.

Some of you may recall last December my speaking to you about my experience at a rave club. Since that time, I want to announce that this morning we have launched an educational video piece entitled *Dancing in the Dark*. Today, through the sponsorship of many tremendous community-minded organizations like the Windsor police, the Windsor Police Association, the OPPA and Apotex, for example, we have been able to launch sets of these curriculum pieces for every school board in Ontario, both English and French boards.

What I want to say in this very brief point of order is thank you to everybody who participated in the development of this piece.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): That's not a point of order.

Mr Bob Wood (London West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wonder if the House would join with me in welcoming a group of grades 7 and 8 students from Matthews Hall in the great riding of London West.

The Speaker: It's not a point of order, but we recognize them.

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think someone has taken the seat of the member for Kingston and the Islands, because he's a stranger in the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
AMENDMENT ACT
(DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS), 2000
LOI DE 2000 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA PROTECTION DU POISSON
ET DE LA FAUNE
(CORMORAN À AIGRETTES)

Mr Brown moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 76, An Act to amend the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997 in respect of double-crested cormorants / Projet de loi 76, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la protection du poisson et de la faune à l'égard du cormoran à aigrettes.

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

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): The bill amends the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, to permit the hunting of double-crested cormorants subject to specific restrictions. Section 1 of the bill permits the hunting of double-crested cormorants from September 5 to the end of December in any year. It goes on to impose daily and seasonal limitations in the number of double-crested cormorants which may be hunted. Section 2 of the bill makes it illegal for a person to destroy, take or possess the nests or eggs of double-crested cormorants.

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 15, Tuesday, May 16, and Wednesday, May 17, 2000, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.

1350

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader): I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list for private members' public business: Mr Bryant, Mr

Cordiano and Mr Brown exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Bryant assumes ballot item 33, Mr Cordiano assumes ballot item 36 and Mr Brown assumes ballot item 69; and Mr Patton and M^{me} Boyer exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Patton assumes ballot item 54 and M^{me} Boyer assumes ballot item 29.

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

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

MISSING CHILDREN

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): Next Thursday, May 25, is National Missing Children's Day in Canada. As the Ontario Legislature will be in recess for constituency week at that time, I rise today to speak about this important day of awareness, remembrance and action.

Why is it that when a child goes missing, suddenly, as though out of nowhere, there are thousands of volunteers ready to assist the local police forces by going door to door, making phone calls, searching fields and forests—in short, doing whatever has to be done? It is because nothing strikes horror in the heart of any community more than to hear of yet another missing child. We instantly start thinking, "What if?" All of us in this chamber today know those "What if?" questions which will fill our hearts and our throats with a lump of emotion and propel us into thinking, "Is there anything we can do?"

That is why we have organizations like Missing Children Society of Canada, Child Find Ontario, and Save the Children-Canada, who are committed to finding these children and who never give up on them. That is why, as members of this House, we too must never give up our search for ways to prevent the tragedy of even one missing child.

Ontario's children are our shared responsibility, and these missing children are clearly a non-partisan priority for each and every one of us in this place. It is horrifying to realize that each year in this country, according to Save the Children Canada, the RCMP lists over 50,000 children between the ages of birth and 18 years as missing.

Approximately 48,000 of these children are runaways. Children who run away are often leaving homes where they have experienced abuse, neglect or severe parental discord. Frequently they move from one environment where they are at risk into another where they are sexually exploited, a heinous crime which violates and damages that child forever.

Good early child development and parenting are critical to the health and well-being of families. That is why it is so important that we continue to support early intervention and prevention initiatives that help to protect our

children and resolve the issues that may lead to a child running away from home.

To find out how we can do more to support young children and their families, Premier Harris commissioned the Early Years Study. In response to this groundbreaking study, our government has established five demonstration projects to test different community-based approaches to early child development and parenting supports.

We have also created the early years task group to advise us on key elements and standards for a province-wide early years program. Later this year, I will launch the early years challenge fund, which will support early child development and parenting programs in our communities by providing up to \$30 million a year to match contributions in those communities from business, charitable and voluntary sectors.

These steps are merely the beginning. Our government is committed to extending early child development and parenting opportunities to young children and their families across Ontario.

Other critical early intervention measures include the screening of all Ontario's newborns through our Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, with follow-up intervention where needed. As well, we recently announced a \$5-million program to help teachers identify when children are at risk of neglect, or physical or emotional harm.

Our government has also made it a priority to build a strong child welfare system that protects children from abuse and neglect. Everyone in this House supported recent changes to the Child and Family Services Act which expanded the reasons for finding a child to be in need of protection. These changes will encourage earlier action to protect children at risk. As well, \$290 million in new funding for child protection over the past five years has helped the children's aid societies hire 790 more front-line workers, an increase of 34%.

Children also go missing as result of parental abduction. When children are abducted by a parent, they are torn from their homes, their friends and their communities. Sometimes they are told that the other parent is dead or does not want them any more, and many of these children continue to live on the run. Parental abduction accounts for more than 400 missing children.

Many children are abducted as a result of custodial problems. Supervised access sites help by allowing children to maintain contact with both parents. Our tripling of the Unified Family Court has expanded family mediation services to help families resolve their disputes in less adversarial ways. These courts also provide parent education sessions which help parents make informed decisions that are in the best interests of their children. In addition, we will make it an offence for anyone other than custodial parents, school staff, registered visitors and students to be on school property between 8 am and 5 pm.

1400

Then there are those children who are abducted by strangers. It is hard to imagine a more horrific experience for a child. The best way to prevent child abduction is to make our communities safe. That is why we have provided funding for 1,000 new police officers in our communities. Our police demonstrate the highest quality of professionalism, expertise and sensitivity when working on cases involving missing children.

We have also cracked down on pornographers, sex offenders and predators. Ontario established Christopher's Law, Canada's first sex offenders registry, to maintain a registry of sex offenders and help protect children from the risk of abduction for the purposes of sexual exploitation, assault and rape. We continue in our efforts to expand a sex offenders registry nationally.

In collaboration with Save the Children-Canada, we have committed \$2 million annually for four years to develop and implement local strategies to address the problem of children involved in the sex trade and to rescue youth from the streets.

Let me stress that whatever the circumstances surrounding a missing child, the child's emotional and physical health may be at risk and their lives in danger. The devastating impact on these children and their families and friends can last a lifetime.

In closing, I would like to commend those who are dedicated to the well-being of children, organizations like Save the Children-Canada, the Missing Children Society of Canada, Child Find Ontario and their many dedicated volunteers.

I would also like to recognize companies that are helping to protect and locate missing children. For example, Rogers Cable includes information and photos of missing children with their customers' statements. Hilton Canada works with the Missing Children's Network to help create greater awareness of issues relating to child abduction in Canada and around the world.

It is a horrifying fact that there are over 50,000 missing children in Canada today. Today, in honour of National Missing Children's Day, let us all pledge our continued commitment to our children so that they can enjoy safe and secure lives.

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): On behalf of my Liberal colleagues, I stand in full support of the efforts that are put forward by numerous and dedicated volunteers who continue their work in support of National Missing Children's Day, which is recognized both in the United States and Canada.

For those who may not know, on May 25, 1979, six-year-old Etan Patz kissed his mother goodbye and started off to catch the school bus waiting just two blocks from his New York City home. His mother, Julia, stood and waited as her son playfully made his way down the first block. In those few minutes it would have taken Etan to walk the remaining block, he disappeared.

There are thousands of horrifying stories just like this one across North America of children who seemingly vanish without a trace. For the families of these children,

the years can go by without any answers. Parents are filled with emptiness and pain, which remain constant companions of worry and hope.

The passage of time can cause these tragic events to become distant in our minds. However, we must not forget our missing children, and that is why May 25 is a day of renewed hope, a day to remember. This issue is a tragic experience, and probably the greatest fear most parents have is worrying about a child who goes missing or a child who disappears.

In Canada, unfortunately, this is not an uncommon occurrence, for according to the Missing Children Society of Canada, thousands of children are reported missing every year. These children are often runaway or have been abducted by a parent or have been taken by strangers. According to the RCMP, in 1999 alone in the missing children's registry over 48,000 cases of runaways, 398 cases of parental abduction, 52 cases of stranger abduction and 10,000 cases of unknown disappearances were reported.

All children who are reported missing are at risk, and it is our responsibility as adults to find them as quickly as possible and keep them from potential harm. Through voluntary organizations such as the Missing Children Society of Canada, Child Find Ontario, Operation Go Home and numerous others, in co-operation with police, the media and the general public, most cases are solved and most are solved quickly. Much of this success is due to the efforts to increase public awareness. This is commendable, and as the Liberal children's issues critic, I urge that these efforts be continued.

May is the Green Ribbon of Hope Month, which is designated to draw awareness to the issue of missing children in Canada. This concept was originated by the students and faculty of Holy Cross Secondary School in St Catharines, following the tragic abduction and murder of Kristen French. This symbolic ribbon is a testament to Kristen's memory and to other children who are missing. Keeping the memories alive and doing everything possible to bring our children home through increased public awareness is of course commendable. This Legislature's recognition of the National Missing Children's Day and the Green Ribbon of Hope Month are indeed only a small contribution to this effort.

As quoted from Child Find, "Green is the colour of hope. It symbolizes our light in the darkness and is a symbol of hope for the safe return of all missing children."

The minister read rather speedily her list of achievements of this government. I would point to her that there are two bills that have to do with children. One of these bills has been introduced, one is at committee and one is waiting to be referred. One is a private member's bill put forward by my good friend and colleague Mr Bartolucci, from Sudbury, An Act to protect Children involved in Prostitution, Bill 6. The other one is An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require a driver's licence to be suspended if a motor vehicle is used when purchasing sexual services from a

child, Bill 32. I would suggest that the minister, being the advocate for children, with the rest of the other ministers might want to take these under her wing and help promote them as well.

I would also suggest to the minister that there are two areas of particular concern to children: One is the cuts to education and special education, and the other one is the important necessity of supporting children with mental illness, which is crying out, because there is a long list of children waiting for those services.

On this day I join with others to acknowledge the good work of many to help keep children safe and, if they have gone astray, to help find them and bring them home again.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before we begin, the member for Ottawa Centre may want to ask for unanimous consent to wear the green ribbon as well.

Mr Patten: Mr Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to wear the Green Ribbon of Hope in memory of Kristen French and in memory of National Missing Children's Day.

The Speaker: Unanimous consent? Agreed.

1410

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Minister, we support any efforts you might make to help with the problem of missing children in Ontario. There is indeed nothing more horrifying to all of us than the knowledge that a child has gone missing in our communities. If the minister had chosen to stick to that subject, so would I. But when it comes to taking time today to brag about the government's record and what it has done for children in our province, your statement includes some profoundly misguided statements.

The rate of child poverty in Ontario is greater now than it ever has been, and in fact it is growing faster in Ontario than in any other province.

You talk about the steps you have taken on Fraser Mustard's Early Years Study, but your own government did nothing to advance early years education or child care in the budget you just put forward this month. Most public health units don't have enough money or staff to even implement the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program. That is the reality.

Child care advocates agree: The Conservative budget has failed the children of our province. The budget did not create a single child care space.

Despite this government's claim to the contrary, it isn't spending a single new penny on early years education in this budget. The \$30 million the minister keeps announcing over and over again that they say they will spend on early years programming is actually a re-announcement of an old idea. They announced that spending in last year's budget and brought it back up in this year's budget to make it look like the Conservatives are doing something when they are actually doing nothing. They don't even plan to spend that \$30 million this year. They're waiting until the early years task group reports back in May next year.

Despite this government's claims to the contrary, it isn't spending a single new penny on child care in this budget. It is packaging the Ontario child care supplement for working families as child care, but that has nothing to do with child care. The supplement will give single parents about \$210 as a working supplement. The child care supplement is mostly funded by federal money and is actually clawed back from social assistance recipients to go to poor working families. This increase is needed but will only go towards single parents. It has nothing to do with regulated child care, and it isn't an adequate enough sum to buy child care. But it allows the government to claim once again it is spending more money than ever before. Clearly, somebody has to sit down with you, Minister, and explain what real, safe, regulated child care is all about.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care is calling on this government to put its money where its mouth is and invest in a child care model like the one outlined in the Fraser Mustard Early Years Study, a program which would cost \$4 billion.

Minister, if we can find \$4 billion to \$5 billion for corporate tax cuts and for the rich, why can't we find the \$4 billion to start investing and supporting the children, who are, after all, the future of our province?

The minister brags once again about money for 1,000 new police. That again is a reannouncement of a reannouncement, and most of that money has actually gone to hire police to replace those who have retired. We still have fewer cops per capita on the streets today than we had in 1994 when the NDP was in government. That is the reality. You've used that money to replace retiring officers.

On behalf of the NDP caucus, I want to congratulate Child Find and all the other organizations and groups out there that work so hard on behalf of heartbroken parents who lose their children for all kinds of reasons. I'm glad to say that I believe about 90% of children who go missing are found. But the agony the parents, families and communities suffer when children go missing, and particularly those children who are never found—we are glad those groups are out there, working very hard on behalf of our communities and all of us to try to find these children and bring them back safely into their communities.

There's still a lot of work to be done, and anything the government does to improve our ability to keep our children safe and to bring them back should they go missing is to be congratulated. But I wish she hadn't even brought up the other issues today, because in bringing them up she actually begged for a response to put the record clear on what this government is really doing to the children's agenda in this province.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My first question today is for the Minister of the Environment. We believe that anybody who sets out to pollute our lakes and rivers should be pursued and prosecuted to the full extent of the law. From the numbers we have just recently seen, apparently you don't believe that.

In 1998 there were over 3,300 illegal discharges of hazardous chemical waste into our province's lakes and rivers. In 1997 there were 2,200, and in 1996 there were roughly 1,000. Despite the explosion of environmental crime, only one of 167 polluters has been prosecuted for their crime. There are only 167 polluters all told. We know who they are, we know where they are and we know exactly what they have done. My question to you is: Why are you so soft on environmental crime?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): I am concerned when I hear numbers like I hear from the member opposite today. But I am equally concerned when the numbers aren't put into some sort of perspective, and I think that is what's missing here. It's important that we do put them into perspective, because the numbers that were brought forward today are simply raw data. They don't differentiate between minor or major periods of non-compliance. They don't differentiate between a 0.001% and a 300% exceedence over a limit. They don't talk about the nature of the exceedence. They also fail to recognize that there are 23,000 manufacturers and over 5,000 municipalities in the province that were in that. They don't take into account the effect that nature has; what effect an act of nature such as the storm we had on Friday can have on a sewage treatment plant in the province.

Mr McGuinty: This has to be a first. We have a Minister of the Environment standing up and blaming Mother Nature for pollution in Ontario. This is unprecedented.

The numbers are irrefutable. We have industrial polluters polluting at will today in Ontario, and you couldn't care less. Two thirds of our polluters are repeat offenders. In fact, 16 of them have violated our environmental laws in each of the last five years.

It seems to me that you talk the talk about getting tough on people. You spare no expense and no energy getting tough on squeegee kids, welfare moms and making sure you slap liens on people living in poverty in very modest homes. There is no obstacle whatsoever in terms of your cracking down there. But when it comes to industrial pollution in Ontario, you are soft on environmental crime. I ask you one more time: Why are you so soft on environmental crime?

Hon Mr Newman: Judging from the Leader of the Opposition's question, he simply doesn't understand the situation. That's the problem.

In 1998, we brought forward higher standards for the organic chemical sector, the inorganic chemical sector, the hydroelectric sector and the iron and steel sector. That's part of the reason for the numbers.

What the member also fails to recognize is the fact of adjustments to new equipment and faulty equipment as well—the factors they play on exceedences in the limits—and the fact that human error can also play a role in that.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, if you want to talk about the facts, then let's look at the facts. Since Mike Harris took office, the environment budget has been slashed by over 40% and you let go one third of the staff. In this last budget, at a time when money is simply pouring into Ontario because of the American economy, you cut the environment budget once more, by 9%. Those are the facts.

There is nobody on that side of the House who is prepared to champion the environment in Ontario. What you are doing is paving the way for polluters in Ontario. I call it aiding and abetting pollution in Ontario. You're not cracking down on our polluters. We know who they are, we know where they are and we know exactly what they're doing. You've cracked down on everything else, but once more I ask you: Why is it that when it comes to your industrial polluter friends, you're prepared to look the other way and not crack down on their criminal activities?

Hon Mr Newman: I call what the member opposite is doing fearmongering. That's what he's doing here today in the House. He wants to talk about the environment budget. Does he want me to continue to spend \$6 million on the Y2K problem? It's been solved; come out of your cave. There's \$2 million that was for one-time relocation costs. There's been \$1 million in salary awards, other programs that were brought forward and expedited. Did he not want us to do that? I don't know what the member opposite wants.

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ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Minister, in January of this year—in fact, January 28—the ORC sold the last parcel of undeveloped land on Bay Street. On January 6 you put out your new rules, guidelines and procedures to clean up what's been happening over at the ORC. But when we look at the details of this sale, it appears that you broke your own rules. This sale was not put up for competition, there was no marketing study and there were no professional brokers involved. According to your guidelines, the only way that kind of sale can proceed is if the Chair of Management Board—that's you—considers it to be in the crown's best interests to proceed in that way.

Minister, can you tell the Ontario public, here and now: Why was it in the crown's best interests to sell this

land secretly, with no competition for the sale, no marketing study and no professional brokers?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I think the article itself answers that question, but I do want to remind this House that serious questions are being asked about past transactions, and that's why the independent audit process is so important. The ORC board is accountable for their decisions. The audit process that this government has undertaken is an appropriate process to get the answers to the questions that are being asked. The independent auditors are reviewing past transactions going back 15 years and will make decisions on whether they need to review this particular transaction. I understand that the purchaser in this case will go through that review as well.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, you didn't answer the question. I'll ask you again. You have put in place, effective January 6, new rules and regulations that specifically provide that you can't sell government land any more unless you put it up for competition, unless there is a professional broker involved. That didn't happen in this case. Industry experts are telling us that the price was worth at least three times more. It sold for one third less than what it could have been sold for. A smaller property two doors down sold for three times more per square foot.

I bet there are dozens of people in Ontario who would have liked to be involved in this purchase, who would have liked to be able to put in a bid for the land. These are your guidelines. You put them in effective January 6. This sale closed on January 28. I'm asking you one more time: Why did you not respect your own rules and guidelines?

Hon Mr Hodgson: The Leader of the Opposition should know, or clearly knows, that there's a difference between when a transaction closes and when the transaction is entered into. These guidelines are for marketing properties that are owned by the taxpayers in this province. Going forward, these new procedures are to make the process more accountable, more transparent, more open.

The questions that are being asked about past transactions will be dealt with in the proper process. The auditors are looking at it, and they will give us a report back.

Mr McGuinty: I'm going to be putting the question to you once more, Minister, because you refuse to answer it. For six long and painful months now we've been listening to your excuses. You've been very quick to talk about your new guidelines and your new regulations and how you're doing everything you can to clean up the mess over at the ORC. You've told us that it hasn't been your fault, that it's been employees at the ORC or the ORC board, or apparently even a ministerial predecessor.

I'm going to ask you one more time. This is a specific instance where land was sold in breach of your own guidelines. The only way that could happen is if you said, "This is an exception and I believe this is in the public interest"—it's in our interest, here, the people of

Ontario—"to sell this land in this way," in breach of the usual rules and for this price which experts tell us is grossly under value. Once more, Minister, did you approve this deal or did you not approve this deal, and why did you act in breach of your own guidelines?

Hon Mr Hodgson: These allegations of wrongdoing we take very seriously and that's why we've asked for an independent audit, which your party agreed with, to bring in an independent audit to review all the sales transactions dating back to 1985. That's why we fully support the ongoing investigation by the police, who are working closely with the independent outside auditors.

The fact is that the ORC is an independent corporation which will be accountable. They have an independent board of directors, which went through the approval process of this House and was unanimously endorsed by your party as well, and this process will get to the bottom of this issue. They will answer those questions and any other outstanding issues.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Health, and it's about her government's secret deal with the doctors at the Ontario Medical Association. Two weeks ago, we forced you to admit that you had reached a deal with the Ontario Medical Association. You tried to deny that. When we revealed your deal with the OMA, it became obvious that you'd backed down on primary care reform, because your deal does nothing to ensure that more patients in Ontario will have access to doctors, nurse practitioners and nurses.

Now we learn that the very doctors, nurse practitioners and nurses who are on the front line of primary health care reform are not going to get the same increase in income that other doctors are going to get. In fact, instead of creating incentives for primary care reform, your deal is actually creating a financial disincentive.

Minister, why are you penalizing the very doctors, the very health care workers, who are on the front line of primary health care reform in this province? And will you confirm that you're now scrambling to get the negotiators back to the table to take care of the error, the mistake that you've made?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I'm not sure what the leader of the third party is speaking about, but I can tell you that the agreement that was reached between the Ontario Medical Association and ourselves is the most significant step forward in recent years. It provides for the single largest transition in medical services in this province since the introduction of OHIP in 1971, and it will accelerate the move from a fee-for-service system to alternative funding systems, which will pave the way to better patient care, more holistic care, in the years to come through the expansion of primary care reform. It was something that maybe you thought about but were unable to accomplish. We are prepared to work co-operatively with the

physicians and all other health care providers to improve patient access to—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary.

Mr Hampton: Minister, you need to read your own agreement, because while it provides 2%-a-year increases for doctors who are not practising in primary care reform, it is absolutely silent on income increases for doctors who are practising primary health care reform, and that's the problem. You forgot all about them, the very people who are on the front lines. Your agreement doesn't move forward on primary care reform at all. If anything, it opens the gates further to more privatization, because it provides for a further \$50 million delisting in OHIP insured services. That means you've delisted \$100 million in OHIP services since you've been here. That means privatization. That means people will have to pay out of their own pockets for health care services that used to be provided under OHIP.

Minister, before you go any further, will you do the right thing? Will you hold public hearings on your agreement with the OMA so that the citizens of Ontario will learn exactly what it is next you plan to privatize in our health care system?

1430

Hon Mrs Witmer: I know the leader of the third party loves to talk about privatization. He's probably quite upset that they were not able to achieve the type of primary care reform initiative that we've been able to do. In fact, we did it collaboratively with our health care partners.

I would simply say to him that this is an agreement which does permit physicians, for the first time in the history of this province, to move away from fee-for-service to alternative payment levels. It allows for people to start working collaboratively throughout the province on primary care reform initiatives and allows for all health professionals to start to provide the services that are needed to people in this province.

As for any comments about the modernization of the schedule, the modernization of the schedule has gone on for years and years under your government, and we are doing it now in a way that it is collaborative with the medical profession. As we add new procedures, we need to make sure that people get the best service, the best—

The Speaker: Final supplementary.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): These delisting decisions are going to affect every single Ontarian. Ontarians have sent you a clear message. They don't want American-style, private, for-profit health care. They want you to consult them about what's going on. But your legacy is going to be delisting \$100 million. Before you continue pointing fingers as you're so wont to do, compare that to \$10 million in delisting before you came to power—\$100 million that people are now going to have to pay out of their own pockets. That is privatization.

You talk about modernization. I love this word. When did ultrasound for pregnancies become outdated? When did checking bone density become outdated? Are we now

going to hear that hearing tests and basic rehab services are becoming outdated? Modernization—bunk.

Minister, it's clear from the federal Liberals' weak-kneed response to Ralph Klein that they're not going to save medicare, and you're complicit with this backdoor privatization. Bring this out into the open. No more talks behind closed doors about what will be delisted and what people will have to pay for. Hold public hearings. Consult the people. Will you do that?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Here we go once again with the scaremongering of this member in the House. The member knows full well that there has been no elimination of ultrasound. There has been no elimination of the bone density testing. What has been undertaken in consultation with the physicians is a discussion of the services that are medically necessary. We will continue to add new services for people in this province as new services become available. At the same time, we need to take a look at the services as they are medically required by people in this province.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Acting Premier and it concerns your stealth consultations on private universities. We understand that today you're beginning your consultations. But they're strange consultations indeed, because the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations hasn't been invited, the Ontario Federation of Students hasn't been invited and university workers in general haven't been invited. The only people who seem to know anything about it are the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance. And they've been told that if they don't keep their mouths shut they'll be uninited.

Minister, this is about the education system that our people need. It's about how public dollars are going to be spent by private American universities, which have a horrible record in the United States. Don't you think that the students of Ontario, the faculty of Ontario, indeed the people of Ontario, should know about these consultations and should be invited to take part in these consultations?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): These consultations are just beginning, but it's no secret that the government is committed to finding ways of delivering high-quality, post-secondary education that meets the needs of Ontario students. Students need more opportunities, not fewer. I think you would agree with that. We must ensure that the post-secondary system provides them with the full range of choices that they require in today's rapidly changing world. Students will not have to leave for specialized or more flexible programs offered in other jurisdictions.

I might just add that these private universities would be fully funded by private money, with no support from the Ontario taxpayers, and will fill a niche providing services where there is high demand in areas that are not currently being served. Many US states and four Canadian provinces allow this right now. British

Columbia, Alberta, New Brunswick and Manitoba have allowed this, but no private institutions have set up shop there yet. So four other provinces allow this.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): To the same minister, I don't know what happened to that proud tradition of answering questions, but our leader said that the government issued a discussion paper and would conduct consultations, and that they're secret and nobody knows about them. If these meetings are happening, we don't know about them, and nobody knows about them. What we're asking is, let us in.

Minister, your government wants to bring in the University of Phoenix to open a private university in Ontario. These people have the dishonourable distinction of getting a \$6-million fine for ripping off the US taxpayer. You're looking to do here in Ontario with post-secondary education what Ralph Klein is doing to Alberta's health care system with Bill 11. It's the same thing. Your private university scheme could cost us our entire public post-secondary education system if there is a NAFTA challenge by American companies. You need to bring this wheeling and dealing out of the backroom and into the light of public scrutiny. If you are so proud of your public pronouncements on private universities, why do you skulk away so cowardly from public consultation?

Hon Mr Hodgson: Minister Cunningham is undertaking the consultations. Tonight she's in St Catharines. Her parliamentary assistant is also undertaking consultations. We want to discuss this idea, which takes place in four other provinces—three have programs up and running. It offers students more choice, not less, to improve our post-secondary experience in this province and keep those jobs and specialists here. It's all out in the open, and we're just beginning that consultation. We want to take our time and get it right, like other provinces have done.

ONTARIO REALTY CORP

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): I return to the Chair of Management Board, and I want to return to the same question I asked you earlier. On January 28 this year, you sold a property, the last parcel of undeveloped land on Bay Street, for \$2 million. Experts tell us it is worth \$6 million. We also discovered that it was not placed on the open market. There was no competition for the sale of this land. Your own rules and regulations specifically provide as follows: "Properties offered for sale must be placed on the open market, except where the Chair of Management Board"—that's you—"considers it to be in the crown's best interest to sell property to a specific party."

Minister, were you involved in this sale? Did you at any time direct, in keeping with the exception laid out in your own rules and regulations, that the property not be put out for public tender?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I think the Leader of the Opposition has answered his own question. The policies are for properties that will be offered for sale in this province. They came into effect in January, and they are an improvement over past practices. I commend the Ontario Realty Corp board of directors for coming up with these policies, which will improve how government does its business.

The property you are referring to closed at that time. It was probably offered for sale at some point before then. The audit process that is in place will review this file, along with others dating back 15 years, to determine whether the taxpayer was well served. It's in our interest to make sure the Ontario Realty Corp conducts its business in an open, fair and transparent manner to ensure that taxpayers get full value.

1440

Mr McGuinty: You can spare us the ritualistic messages. I just want you to get to the specific point I am raising. Were you involved in any way with this sale? The only way this sale could have proceeded, in keeping with your rules and regulations, was if you personally implicated yourself in this matter. This sale was not conducted in keeping with the rules and regulations. It was supposed to be put out for public tender. It wasn't. It was reserved for a specific party. According to your rules and regulations, that can't happen unless the minister himself becomes involved. I ask you one more time: Were you involved in this sale?

Hon Mr Hodgson: If the member will read the rules, I think he will realize that the policies the ORC put in place are for the benefit of the taxpayers of this province. They clearly talk about properties that will be marketed in an open, fair and transparent—unless there's a government policy which talks about tenant purchases or buybacks, like we have in some agricultural places in this province, or places where there have been leasehold improvements and there has been an understanding with the tenant who has been there for a long time.

In regard to this particular one, I'm not sure. The ORC will be accountable for this, that that applied when they went out and marketed this property and entered into the purchase-and-sale agreement. I know you quote the closing date, but the new policies are for properties coming on line in response to making it operate to the benefit of the taxpayers. The audit process will get to the bottom of all these questions, and that's the proper process to be followed.

CHILD PROSTITUTION

Mrs Brenda Elliott (Guelph-Wellington): My question is for the Minister responsible for children. Last week during private members' business, the topic of preventing child prostitution was discussed. This is a very serious problem, and it's horrifying to consider the effects of children entangled in the sex trade. They are clearly the victims of the worst possible exploitation.

Minister, what action is being taken in Ontario to directly help these children and to address this problem of child prostitution?

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): I agree with the member that this is a deplorable situation and one we all have a responsibility to resolve. When any child or young person is sexually exploited, it is a violation affecting that child forever.

We are committed to seeking a solution to this heinous crime. We have just put \$2 million annually for the next four years into developing and implementing programs to address this issue on a community level. We will work with Save the Children-Canada on this issue.

I want to thank the member for Sudbury for his concern about this tragic situation and his proposal in Bill 6, An Act to protect Children involved in Prostitution.

Mrs Elliott: My supplementary is very simple: What specific actions are we taking in Ontario to get these children off the streets?

Hon Mrs Marland: Various factors force children into this horrific situation. In Ontario these children become invisible, living in extremely controlled and dangerous environments.

Our government will establish a \$5-million prevention and intervention program that will help teachers identify children at risk of neglect, or physical or emotional harm. The government will also provide \$2 million to enhance programs targeting youth crimes and violence.

I know that everyone in this House is committed to stopping this horrendous situation, and I look forward to working with people across our province to eliminate this abuse of vulnerable children and youth.

DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Minister of Health. I believe that all Ontarians deserve reasonable access to quality health care, regardless of where they happen to live in our province. However, people living in northern Ontario are facing serious difficulty accessing health services in their communities. The Sudbury region alone now requires 50 to 60 physicians just to return to an acceptable level of health care services in the community.

On budget day, Minister, you will know that, notwithstanding the fact that revenue is pouring into this province, there will be no new medical school spaces and not a single new dollar to increase the number of our medical students.

Minister, the north is facing a critical shortage of doctors. I know it, you know it and the people living in the north know it. When will you stop the phantom announcements and deliver on a real strategy to address this very important issue?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): The opposition leader knows full well that we have identified this to be an issue of concern. It is an issue which we have moved forward to

address. In fact, we had Dr McKendry do the initial review of the situation regarding the supply and distribution of physicians in the province of Ontario. We have given all of the information to Dr Peter George, who is carrying forward with the work on the expert panel. In fact, we have done everything we can to get physicians into the north of this province.

If you take a look at the papers from the weekend, you'll see that the physicians in the north feel that the agreement we have just reached with the Ontario Medical Association goes a long way to helping us retain and recruit physicians. Furthermore, we have seen an increase of specialists in the north over the past few years. That is very significant news.

Mr McGuinty: Your government has been in power now since 1995. This issue has been pressing for at least the past five years. If you were genuinely committed to increasing the number of doctors graduating from our schools in Ontario, you would think that at a minimum you would have taken the steps necessary to ensure that we graduate more doctors and you would have put more spaces in effective this September. There is no commitment on your part to expand our medical schools in Ontario at the undergraduate level effective this September.

You have talked under, around and over this issue for years now as Minister of Health. I'll ask you one more time, Minister, when are you going to give some news to the people of northern Ontario that will convince them in a real way that you're on their side and that you're doing everything you can to increase medical school spaces effective this September?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Again, the Leader of the Opposition knows very well that we have been committed to improving the situation in the north, a situation which, I might add, has been ongoing for many years. We have actually seen an increase in specialists in the north since 1995. If you want to talk about what our government has done, we have recruited 138 specialists to northern Ontario. We have recruited 171 general practitioners to northern Ontario. We've seen a decrease in the number of physicians leaving this province thanks to the renewed economic viability of Ontario under the leadership of our government. We have added 15 additional post-graduate training positions to this province. We're recruiting Canadians back from the United States. We've added \$1.3 million to the international graduate program.

ONTARIO WHOLE FARM RELIEF

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. I've attended a host of farm meetings this winter—the Brant Federation of Agriculture, the Haldimand Federation of Agriculture, the Norfolk federation and a variety of commodity groups. At these meetings, one of the issues that came up consistently was the need for continued support for the whole farm relief

program. I will mention local farmers are very happy with your work to get Ontario farmers their fair share of safety net funding.

However, recently they've been concerned about rumours floating around about disaster relief. Farmers in my riding have heard from the opposition that your ministry refuses to implement changes that the federal government has made to the whole farm relief plan, allegedly holding up millions of dollars in additional federal aid. Farmers in my riding don't buy into these rumours, but they would like to hear from you on this issue. Could you please tell the House if these rumours are true?

Hon Ernie Hardeman (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I'd like to thank the member for Haldimand-Brant-Norfolk for the question. In a communication I received from the federal government just last Thursday, they indicated that the bilateral agreements necessary to implement the changes—incidentally, the changes that the opposition referred to last Thursday—have not yet received federal cabinet approval. Therefore, our government does not have the authority to issue the cheques yet.

More importantly, I was astounded by the communication from the federal government that told us that we should hold the federal portion of the payments to our farmers to 50%. Clearly, this is not us holding back the payment, it's the federal government. In fact, we have sent out \$10 million for 1999 to help our farmers who are not receiving any money from the federal government. This move by the federal government will reduce payments to Ontario's farmers by over \$2,000 each. I think all members of this House would agree this is not acceptable for Ontario farmers.

1450

Mr Barrett: Thank you for clearing that up. This action by the federal government is clearly not acceptable. It seems that the federal government's approach to disaster relief is beginning to turn into a bit of a disaster for Ontario's farmers. As a farm owner, I feel that's not good. We've heard some accusations from both federal and provincial Liberals that you personally are holding up millions of additional dollars in federal aid. There seems to be some confusion here. The Liberals again appear to be saying one thing and doing quite the opposite.

Minister, can you clarify this for Ontario farmers? They need to know that Ontario is doing its part to get disaster relief funding out the door.

Hon Mr Hardeman: Again I'd like to thank the honourable member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant for the question. Our government ran on a promise to meet our 40% share of all agriculture assistance programs, and we will live up to that promise. The federal ministry told us to withhold 50% of the federal payments. I'd like nothing more than to send out every penny of the federal aid to our farmers who are eligible, but it would seem that the unilateral changes made by the federal government will require more funding than they have allocated, and they are now withholding from our Ontario farmers

money to pay for these changes. These changes seem to apply more in other parts of Canada than they do in Ontario. In fact, the \$2,000 per farmer that Ontario farmers will not be getting will go elsewhere in Canada.

I can assure every member of this House and the member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant that we will be funding 40% of every 60-cent dollar we get from the federal government for Ontario's farmers.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): To the Minister of the Environment: Congratulations, you've just set a new record. A report released today shows that the number of waste water pollution violations skyrocketed from 1,000 in 1996 to 3,300 in 1998, and now, just like Ronald Reagan, you want to blame pollution on nature. Unbelievable.

We only know these facts because the privacy commission made you release the information, which under our government used to be routinely released, and even then you missed the deadline by five months. Why don't you just enforce the law? Will you admit today that the \$100 million cut from the Ministry of the Environment means that you just don't have enough money to enforce the law?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): I want to assure you that the government is indeed committed to setting and enforcing high-performance standards for dischargers of industrial and municipal waste water into Ontario's water systems. Yes, we are tough on polluters. In fact, we brought in tougher regulations in 1998. We also made campaign commitments last year to double the highest fines in Canada, from \$2 million to \$4 million, to bring in the toughest jail terms in all of Canada, all the way up to five years less a day in jail. We've also made a campaign commitment to bring forward a SWAT environmental team to audit industries and municipalities to ensure that they're in compliance.

Ms Churley: Let me get this straight. If I heard what you said correctly, you're saying you have the money and you have the resources to enforce the law. If that's the case, this is even worse than I thought. That means you're deliberately trying to help the polluters because you prefer to grant immunity from prosecution to your big business friends so that environmental protection won't be a problem for their blind pursuit of bigger profits. Is that why you kept the information secret? You don't want to hurt your polluting friends so you can save your business friends from public criticism when they use your immunity to pollute our water and make us sick. Is that what the Common Sense Revolution is really all about, and is that why you made people pay money to go to the privacy commissioner before you will even tell us the truth about what's going on there with the polluting of our water? Minister, tell the truth here today and let us know what you're really up to.

Hon Mr Newman: We now have a more stringent reporting structure within the Ministry of the Environment to work with industries outside of a formal legal process to achieve compliance. Companies and municipalities fully understand the reporting requirements. This program is referred to as the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement. It was brought in under the Liberal Party, when Jim Bradley was the environment minister. The NDP as well brought that forward. The question I have today is, why is it not good enough for this party in government today?

GOVERNMENT POLLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): To the Chair of Management Board: Everyone in this Legislature knows that the Harris Conservatives squandered over \$100 million on clearly self-serving, blatantly partisan government advertising before the last provincial election and that you continue to spend millions of taxpayers' dollars on partisan propaganda ads on television and radio and in print. What they may not know is that you are engaged in another abuse of public office; namely, polling at public expense, spending tax dollars on polls for the political use of your government and then keeping the results of the polls secret.

Will you admit that you are in fact, despite your promise to eliminate all unnecessary expenditures, spending thousands of dollars on polls and refusing to share the results with the public and all members of this Legislature, and will you agree to table immediately the detailed costs and results of all polls commissioned since the Harris government took office in 1995?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): To the member of the opposition, I think he has heard before and knows what the record is, that our government advertising in total dollars is probably less than when you were in power for the same point of time. That was in regard to your preamble.

In regard to your specific question around the polling or around other information that ministries may be gathering to make better decisions in the government, we would be under the guidelines of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and we would comply with that.

Mr Bradley: Mike Harris was the man who was going to avoid any frivolous spending. Yet while you have cut over 40% of the budget of the Ministry of the Environment and over one third of the staff has been turfed out at the Ministry of the Environment, you continue to squander thousands of dollars on public opinion polls while keeping the results secret, clearly giving your Conservative Party, whose coffers are overflowing with funds from grateful developers, a distinct and unfair advantage over opposition parties.

Will you now ask the Conservative Party of Ontario to reimburse taxpayers for the cost of these polls and, further, will you assure this House and the people of Ontario that you have not secretly provided the results of

these taxpayer-paid polls to Tom Long, the Mike Harris favourite for the leadership of the Reform-Alliance party of Canada?

Hon Mr Hodgson: As I mentioned before, ministers from time to time may gather information which will help in the decision-making process to make better decisions. That information and the release of that information is subject to the legislation that governs the release of information.

I don't know exactly what the member is referring to, unless he's trying to get a headline, because that name seems to be in the public as the person who can bring about change in this country and clean up the sad policies of the federal Liberal Parliament in Ottawa. Other than that, I don't know.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Education. You and I have the distinct pleasure of representing the riding of Durham, along with Attorney General Jim Flaherty, Management Board Chair Chris Hodgson and Jerry Ouellette.

You're well aware that our riding continues to grow at a rapid pace, this all achieved of course by cutting taxes, reducing red tape and having a strong economy. But a strong economy requires and puts a lot of pressure on the school system. As you know, with growing families moving to our area and prosperity as it continues to flourish, there's a great deal of pressure for new schools in our area.

Last week the Liberal member for Parkdale-High Park stated that there was no money being spent in your ministry on capital. I find this very surprising because, as you would know, I have attended many new school openings in Durham. Minister, with respect to the funding for new schools, what is your ministry doing to address rapid growth in Durham?

1500

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): I appreciate the opportunity to correct the record as it was described last week in the House. First of all, this ministry does indeed fund capital construction for schools across the province. There is well over \$2 billion that is going out there, contrary to what was stated last week.

Second, supporting school construction has very much been a problem that the two previous governments didn't deal with. As a matter of fact, it was in 1988 that the Liberal education minister, Chris Ward, was mobbed by students who were in portables and who wanted out. Again, several years later, in 1992, there were extensive reports in the Toronto Star about how the NDP had not managed to address the portables issue. Because of the way that we support school boards in school construction, we have had a 9% decrease in the number of portables in this province. We are finally, under our new funding, catching up to the growth in regions like Durham.

Mr O'Toole: Minister, I've got to thank you personally for the new funding model for our students. I congratulate also two of my constituents, Cindy Houston and Kelly Gainer, for their efforts in community leadership, bringing a new school to the Pinecrest community. I would also like to recognize Irv Harrell and Clare Aker, two Oshawa city councillors who have been very, very supportive of the growth and the new school placements in Durham.

My constituents are telling me they don't want their kids in portables any longer. How many new schools are being built in the Durham region and across the province, and what are you doing to move kids out of portables and into real classrooms?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Yes, the honourable member and myself and those very good community leaders he mentioned have had the privilege of attending many school openings in Durham region. It really is about time, after the last two governments had fallen down on this issue in Durham region.

Durham is very much a winner with the new school construction money. As I mentioned, there's been a 9% reduction in portables across the province. The two Durham boards have received approximately \$26 million in money that they can put forward for this. Across the province, something like 198 new schools will be done this year, 150 new additions and expansions. In Durham region this is going to mean 16 new projects or additions that will be open by September—badly needed, brand new schools for our students to learn the brand new curriculum with the excellent teachers that we have.

ENFORCEMENT OF JUDGMENTS

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): In the absence of the Premier, my question is for the Chair of Management Board. Minister, your government is collecting toll charges on behalf of a private corporation, the 407 ETR enterprise. At the same time in Ontario we have thousands of small Ontario firms, businesses, that can't collect money owed to them through the Small Claims Court. I'm asking you, on behalf of them, what will you do to help collect those monies that they cannot collect for themselves?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I believe the question refers to the 407. The Minister of Transportation would like to comment on that.

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): As I've mentioned on several occasions before, the unique aspect about the 407 tolling system is that it is totally electronic, the world's first. Ontario is leading the world in this technology. In order to be able to sell this type of technology, it is a requirement that you have plate denial if people do not pay their bills after the proper process of billing. The difference between credit cards and other bills is, other remedies can be taken through the courts. However, with a toll highway which is totally

electronic, it is totally impossible to deny access to the road.

Mr Sergio: Again to the Chair of Management Board, my question has got nothing to do with the 407 or the other minister. It has strictly to do with yourself. Minister, \$2,000 or \$3,000 or \$4,000 may mean the profit from two, three or four months of hard work for many small companies. For many small businesses, I would like to say to the minister that it may make the difference between their staying in business or folding.

Minister, small business people in Ontario have little recourse, and I think you know that. Small business people in Ontario are being penalized by our own legal system. Small Claims Court may deliver a favourable decision but will not request that the monies be deposited with the Small Claims Court. The option left to many small business people is too often a non-option. Small business people, owners, have to hire a lawyer to collect. I'm asking you, what will you do to help those small business people who can't collect money for themselves?

Hon Mr Turnbull: I'll refer this to the Attorney General.

Hon Jim Flaherty (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): As I understand the question, it relates to the enforcement of judgments in our civil courts of Ontario. If I can be responsive to that, whether one is in the Small Claims Court or in the other courts in Ontario with civil jurisdiction, the enforcement of judgments is up to those litigating, to the plaintiff if they're successful. They can use the sheriff's office. They can use the court process to do that. That's made available to them, with a cost to it, of course, which is added to their judgment costs. That's true in Small Claims Court. It's also true in the Superior Court of Ontario. It has always been so in Ontario and that is the way the system works.

With respect to the suggestion that one needs a lawyer to do that, that's not so. One can deal directly with the sheriff's office or with the Small Claims Court office in that regard. One does not need a lawyer to enforce a judgment in Ontario.

HIGH-TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

Mr Brian Coburn (Carleton-Gloucester): My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. As you probably know, in my riding of Carleton-Gloucester, in fact in the Ottawa area, for far too long people have depended on work in the federal government. In fact, at one time 60% of the residents of the Ottawa area worked for one level of government or another. But times have indeed changed, thanks to this government in 1995, and we've forged forward with Ontarians to encourage smaller and more efficient government. Fortunately, the high-tech sector has taken off in the Ottawa-Carleton area and the investment and confidence in the Ottawa region have developed thousands of jobs.

Minister, what is your ministry doing to encourage even more growth in the high-tech sector in the Ottawa-Carleton area, providing alternative lines of work as opposed to government?

Hon Al Palladini (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I'd like to thank the member for Carleton-Gloucester for the question. Certainly, he's absolutely right. The region of Ottawa-Carleton has become a centre for Canada's high-tech industry, and I'm happy to say that our ministry has been involved in many partnerships.

The Ottawa partnership program brings together the city, the region and the private sector. As a matter of fact, I will be meeting tomorrow with a delegation of business and economic development leaders to discuss the economic transformation of Ottawa to a high-tech centre. Our ministry has participated in commissioning a study on developing an economic strategy for Ottawa: What economic generators do we need to elevate the awareness of the high-tech industry that the Ottawa region is capable of competing on a global scale for high-tech investment and could indeed become the Silicon Valley of the north? Ontario is open to high-tech industries.

Mr Coburn: Thank you, Minister, for the initiative you're taking in Ottawa. I'd remind you that there is more to do, not only in the Ottawa area but across the province.

Due to the clustering of high-tech industries in the Ottawa-Carleton area, we have a shortage of skilled high-tech workers. What is your ministry doing to address this shortage of skilled high-tech workers?

Hon Mr Palladini: Our ministry field staff are definitely partnering. We recognize the importance, number one, of the shortages that we do have, but we're partnering with the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, looking at a number of solutions for the Ottawa technology cluster, human resource challenges that we have. Through the strategic skills initiative, we have been investing in programs to help workers obtain the skills needed in the high-tech sector. We have partnered with Vitesse (Re-Skilling) Canada to retrain professionals for jobs in the information technology and communications sectors. We have also partnered with Photonics Research Ontario to train people in the high-demand jobs in the photonic manufacturing and communications industries, which use photonic technology. These are just a few of the projects my ministry is involved with to help address the shortage of skilled people for the high-tech jobs in the Ottawa-Carleton area. But that is a provincial concern, and certainly we are going to continue to address it.

1510

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the acting Premier. Workers at the University of Toronto Press bookstore are trying to negotiate a first agreement with their employer. The workers

are currently paid \$7.25 an hour. A major issue is wages. Incredibly, the employer wants to lower their wage to the Ontario minimum wage of \$6.85 an hour. The workers reject the wage rollback and are going to vote this evening on whether to strike.

Acting Premier, you can do the right thing for those workers. You can announce today that you're going to support my private member's bill to increase the minimum wage from \$6.85 an hour to \$7.50. Will you do the right thing for the workers at the U of T Bookstore, and for low-paid workers across this province, and announce that you're going to raise the minimum wage?

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I know the Minister of Labour wants to answer this question.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): We in this government don't think it is proper public policy to initiate changes to the minimum wage standard based on one collective agreement that is being negotiated in the province. We think there has to be a broader context to a debate about the minimum wage than whether one specific negotiated settlement could be negotiated out.

If you want to talk about minimum wage in the context of the last five years, and that there hasn't been an increase, you're right. But if you examine the minimum wage structure in Ontario in the last 10 years, you will note that there has been a 37% increase in the minimum wage from 1990. A 37% increase over 10 years—and I readily admit that it was the NDP government that increased the minimum wage—is fairly significant. In fact, there are many sectors out there where a 37% increase was not had in the same 10-year period.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Stockwell: The argument you make is, are we competitive with the minimum wage standards we set? Yes, we are. The member for Hamilton West knows we are the third highest in Canada and competitive with other jurisdictions. Surely there's a broader public policy debate about minimum wage than one specific union negotiation taking place at this time.

Mr Hampton: Here is a government that increases the pay of the Premier's chief of staff by 30%, doubled and tripled the pay of the head of the workers' safety and insurance board, but when it comes to workers in this province, many of whom are working two, two and a half and three jobs at minimum wage, trying to make ends meet, they say no.

Minister, the minimum wage in Ontario now is less than the minimum wage in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas. If we had a minimum wage of \$7.50 an hour, it would be the equivalent of the American minimum wage now. The American increase in the minimum wage, which is over 30% over the last three years, has not resulted in a loss of jobs and has not resulted in inflation. In fact, the studies there indicate that it has increased the number of jobs, because low-paid workers spend all the money they get in the local community for things like food, shelter and clothing—the necessities of life.

You boast about an economic boom. How about sharing it with the hundreds of thousands of low-paid workers in this province who have had their wages frozen by you for five and a half years?

Hon Mr Stockwell: Let me say to the member opposite that we look at whether we're competitive with jurisdictions neighbouring this province. When we look at the province of Ontario compared with Canada, we rank third among all jurisdictions with respect to the minimum wage. That would indicate to me, as probably to most people in this province, that we are very competitive at the minimum wage level. It's not like we're sitting at the bottom or even in the middle; Ontario is near the top as far as minimum wage is concerned in respect to the rest of Canada.

Now let me say that the argument you make about people working one and two jobs may be true in some respects. There may be people out there working one and two jobs under this administration. But let's also be clear that they're working one or two jobs now under the Conservative government rather than not working at all under the NDP government. In my opinion, that's a definitive benefit.

PETITIONS

STUDDED TIRES

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with regard to the law banning the use of studded tires.

"Whereas personal safety on winter roadways would be greatly increased; and

"Whereas improved technology on studded tires has proven in other countries and provinces they will not damage the roadways; and

"Whereas studded tires are used in many northern countries and all other provinces in Canada; and

"Whereas studies have proven that studded tires outperform all-seasonal and winter tires in manoeuvrability and braking on ice and snow-packed roads; and

"Whereas studded tires can save lives;

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

"To rescind the law banning the use of studded tires in Ontario and pass Bill 57, which would allow the use of studded tires."

I affix my signature to this petition as I am in complete agreement with it.

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): "To the Legislature 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.”

This is signed by dozens of people from my community, and I affix my signature in support.

LORD'S PRAYER

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I am very pleased to present a petition to the Legislature.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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; and

“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;

“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.”

I affix my signature to this petition

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): The forced amalgamation of Greenstone, a huge community which will be in our northern Ontario riding of Thunder Bay-Superior North, is one that I hope the minister is reviewing seriously. I have a petition from the

township of Nakina, signed by almost all residents of the township. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the corporation of the township of Nakina is an incorporated municipality; and

“Whereas the corporation of the township of Nakina has continued to operate as a community in its own right since 1923; and

“Whereas amalgamation with other distant communities could prove to be detrimental to the individualistic lifestyle associated with living in the township of Nakina; and

“Whereas the economic justification for the creation of Greenstone no longer exists, and its creation may result in a loss of local services and an increased tax burden on the residents of Nakina; and

“Whereas the residents of the township of Nakina would like to continue to be the municipality known as the corporation of the township of Nakina;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the corporation of the township of Nakina continues to be a separate municipality in the province of Ontario.”

As I said, this is a petition signed by almost all residents of the township of Nakina and I'm pleased to add my name to those signatures.

1520

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I'm presenting a petition on behalf of the Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Dan Newman. Members would know that a minister of the crown is unable to submit petitions on behalf of his constituents, but with your permission Judith Patterson has submitted a petition here from southwest Scarborough 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 children with developmental disabilities at home, and who are still caring for their adult children; 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'm pleased to submit and sign this petition on behalf of Dan Newman.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Kinsmen/JS MacDonald school is slated for closure,

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

"To direct the Upper Canada District School Board to remove the notice of closure for the Kinsmen/JS MacDonald special school facility. Since 1963 the special education facility.

"Since 1963 the special education facility has adequately served the needs of those students requiring special education programs and services throughout Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh.

"Presently, the Kinsmen school meets the needs of 45 children ranging from minor learning disabilities, behavioural to more complex multi-challenges."

I've also signed the petition.

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I have a petition that's titled "Save our High Schools." It's signed by a number of people in the towns of Waterford, Simcoe, Wilsonville and Scotland.

"Whereas several area high schools have been threatened with closure; and

"Whereas the Grand Erie District School Board, the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board and Fanshawe College all have proposals to construct new school buildings in Simcoe; and

"Whereas many viable options and solutions have been proposed, publicly discussed, but not enacted;

"We, the undersigned, beseech the province of Ontario to take extraordinary steps to conduct an administrative audit and mediate a solution among the Grand Erie District School Board, the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board, Fanshawe College and other key stakeholders to provide a student-based approach, utilizing existing school board, and possibly municipal, infrastructure."

I think this is an excellent idea and hereby affix my signature to these petitions.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a health petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Canada's health care system is one of our greatest achievements as a country;

"Whereas health care in Ontario has deteriorated, with medical services being reduced and hospital budgets cut to the bone, resulting in lengthy delays in treatment, with sometimes fatal results;

"Whereas major changes in health care legislation by the Harris government have been made with no prior public consultation;

"Whereas residents of Prince Edward-Hastings are demanding that their voices be heard and their concerns addressed to ensure that future health care legislation meets their needs;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call on the Harris government to protect our valued health care system and to hold public hearings on Bills 23 and 173."

I am pleased to add my signature to this petition.

KARLA HOMOLKA

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): I finally get my chance: a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

"That the government of Ontario will:

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

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

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

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

I agree with it and I'll affix my name to it.

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 over \$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 fully 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 here in Ontario.”

It’s signed by a number of residents from Blenheim, including Dennis Makowetsky, and others from the city of Chatham, and I affix my name to it.

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant): I have petitions titled “Bring Back Haldimand and Norfolk Counties.”

“Whereas we, the undersigned, do not want a region-wide, single-tier supercity; and

“Whereas we support the two county model representing two single-tier cities (one each for Haldimand and Norfolk); and

“Whereas we believe this model will give us a government that is closer to the voters, providing the greatest degree of ‘accountability’ by our elected representatives; greatly reduce the number of politicians; greatly reduce taxes through the elimination of multiple administrations, services that are repeated six and seven times; and produce further cost savings through adjusted service delivery methods; and

“Whereas the tax revenue of the Nanticoke Industrial Centre is to be divided equitably (based on population) between each of the two new counties;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to bring back Norfolk and Haldimand counties.”

It’s signed by a number of people from St Williams, Turkey Point, Vanessa, La Salette and Wilsonville. I agree with these proposed models and affix my signature to this.

PRIX D’ESSENCE

GASOLINE PRICES

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): J’ai une pétition adressée à l’Assemblée de l’Ontario, to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

«Attendu que le prix des produits pétroliers a augmenté significativement dans les derniers six mois ;

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

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

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

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

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

I have added my signature.

HIGHWAY 407

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): I’m pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in Durham, if I may: Susan Larch, Roy Foresster and John Mutton, to name but three.

“To the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario exempted Highway 407 east from a public hearing and then passed the Highway 407 Act to further exempt the proposed highway extension from important provincial environmental laws, such as the Ontario Water Resources Act, the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act and the fill regulations of the Conservation Authorities Act; and

“Whereas heavy equipment is now being used to clear the eastern path of the highway, without any environmental regard, control or monitoring;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, as a matter of extreme urgency, to put in place such environmental monitoring procedures and controls as are necessary to prevent extreme degradation such as bulldozers working in stream beds, and numerous other environmentally destructive acts that have been witnessed since the 407 east extension was permitted to go ahead.”

I’m pleased to present this petition.

1530

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the province of Ontario exempted Highway 407 east from a public hearing and then passed the Highway 407 Act to further exempt the proposed highway extension from important provincial environmental laws, such as the Ontario Water Resources Act, the Lakes and

Rivers Improvement Act and the fill regulations of the Conservation Authorities Act; and

“Whereas heavy equipment is now being used to clear the eastern path of the highway, without any environmental guidelines, controls or monitoring;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislature of Ontario, as a matter of extreme urgency, to put in place such environmental monitoring procedures and controls as are necessary to prevent extreme degradation such as bulldozers working in stream beds, and numerous other environmentally destructive acts that have been witnessed since the 407 east extension was permitted to go ahead.”

I affix my signature to this petition as I'm in complete agreement with it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 72, An Act to pay a dividend to Ontario taxpayers, cut taxes, create jobs and implement the Budget, when Bill 72 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 to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; and

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

That, at 4:30 pm on the final day designated by the committee for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill and not later than June 8, 2000, 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 the completion of clause-by-clause consideration, and not later than June 12, 2000. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the date provided, the bill shall be deemed to have been passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House;

That upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, 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, the remainder of the sessional day 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 proceedings “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.

I just want to take two minutes to say that we in this House believe it is timely that we move forward now with this bill. It's historic in this province that we have brought down a budget that is, for the first time in 30 years, a truly balanced budget; the first time in 60 years that two consecutive years of balanced budgets have been brought forward.

It is historic for the people in this province that their government now is once again responsible and honours them as taxpayers that we are not spending more than we are bringing in, that in fact there are surpluses. This speaks well for the people of Ontario, for the future of this province, the fact that the budget is balanced, the fact that there is more money being allocated to the priorities of Ontarians, such as health care and education.

So as the debate continues in this House, we on this side are proud of our Minister of Finance, are proud of our cabinet and colleagues, who over the last number of years have committed to the people of this province that we will bring the financial affairs of this province into order. It has been done. There is yet much to do, but we look forward to carrying on with responsible government, responsible fiscal management in this province.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I'm pleased to join the debate and say, firstly just on the last comment before I get into some other ones, I love listening to my Conservative friends talk about fiscal responsibility. I always say to my business friends, and that used to be my background before I arrived here: “Take a look at the numbers. Don't listen to what they say; watch what they do.” That's my motto.

Anybody who cares to look at the finances of the province will find that Premier Harris has added \$24 billion of debt since he became Premier. He has added almost 25% to the debt of the province. The credit rating agencies, by the way, still give Mike Harris the same credit rating as they gave Bob Rae. I assume that's got to change sometime. They've been in office for five years.

We now have a balanced budget in Ontario, but I always say to my friends, yes, finally we're there, but seven other provinces got there well ahead of Ontario. The federal government got there two years ahead of Ontario. Quebec, by the way, which had a far worse deficit situation than Premier Harris when he became

Premier, beat Ontario to the balanced budget by, originally, two years—it looks like it's now one year. So yes, he's got across the finish line. As my leader said, it's been like watching a marathon race. We've had the medal presentations to the provinces that have balanced budgets. They've all gone home and left the stadium and Harris comes trotting in finally with a balanced budget. There are still some fans here to cheer, but he's added \$24 billion of debt to the province of Ontario. So thank goodness we now have reached the finish line and thank goodness he's finally balanced the budget.

But I want to talk to the Legislature about the closure motion. It is unfortunate that we have closure on this. Tax policy is an area that warrants substantial debate by all of us. What we have in the budget—for those in the province of Ontario who watch this—is about \$9 billion worth of tax cuts: about \$4 billion to the corporate sector in corporate tax reductions, about \$1.2 billion to tax reductions on capital gains and about \$3 billion in personal income tax. There is about \$400 million on retail sales tax.

1540

The reason I raise this issue is, if we believe, as the Liberal Party does, that we need to have a publicly funded, universally accessible health care system, are we sure that we can, through legislation now, be committing to \$9 billion worth of tax cuts? That's what we're being asked to do here. Bill 72, the bill that we have time allocation on now, makes commitments for the next five years.

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: Mr Wettlaufer should probably listen if he'd like to learn something. I find when you're yelling like that, you probably don't learn a lot. You might like to just listen—

Interjection.

Mr Phillips: There you go. He'll keep yelling, I guess, and I'll speak to the rest of the people who at least might choose to be aware of some of the things in their own budget.

Here's what the budget says about corporate income tax rates: We are deciding here in this province that we are going to have corporate tax rates substantially lower than our neighbouring jurisdictions—Michigan, Indiana, New York state.

Applause.

Mr Phillips: The members opposite clap. I will just say, is this really, from a tax policy point of view, the route we want to pursue? Are we now saying that taxes in Ontario have to be lower than in our neighbouring jurisdictions?

This is the first time I can recall a budget that doesn't point out the tax rates in Quebec or Manitoba, our neighbouring provinces. It's all about Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan—no provinces. It's all about our neighbouring states. It goes on here to point out proudly that when this tax cut is implemented, Ontario's combined federal-provincial corporate tax rate—this is what our corporate tax rates

are for businesses in Ontario—will be 10 percentage points lower than in neighbouring jurisdictions—not 10%, it's 10 percentage points—one third lower in Ontario than in neighbouring jurisdictions.

From a policy point of view we in Ontario, I gather, have decided we are going to compete with lower corporate tax rates than our neighbouring jurisdictions. I remind us that at the same time when we are attracting industry to Ontario, we say, "Come and locate here," because US manufacturers pay on average more than \$3,100 per employee for the kind of health care coverage provided by Canada's publicly supported system, whereas Ontario employers pay about \$540. So there's about a \$2,500 difference in cost per employee for health care here in Ontario versus the neighbouring jurisdictions. But from a policy point of view, we now have decided we are going to have lower corporate tax rates than our neighbouring states. So I say there's nothing magic about this. If we decide it's going to be lower corporate tax rates, unless someone can print money, it's going to be higher tax rates in some of the other areas.

That's where the policy debate should be taking place on Bill 72. Instead of imposing time allocation, we should be here in this Legislature making a decision: Are we going to attract business to Ontario with the dual promise of, "Come here and you'll get substantially lower health care costs," and "Come here and you'll get substantially lower tax rates"? I would say, by the way, that attracting business to Ontario on the basis of lower corporate tax rates is a challenge. If you want to compete on that basis, Michigan and New York state can race to the bottom very quickly.

For the first time that I can recall we now have said, "We are as a matter of policy embarked on a program of lower corporate tax rates." If that is the case and if we want to retain our health care system, where do we decide we're prepared to accept higher tax rates? We are today offering to cut taxes by \$4 billion to the corporate sector, a dramatic cut in taxes. We are offering to reduce the capital gains tax from 75% to 50%, a one-third cut in capital gains tax. Just that one move alone is going to represent \$1.2 billion less revenue.

The reason I raise these issues is that surely we should have a debate here in the Legislature, instead of imposing closure, instead of cutting off the debate, about how we have decided we are going to fund our health care system. I might add it's not just our health care system. The other cornerstone in how you do business in Ontario is our education system. This is what this document says: "Ontario is one of North America's most peaceful and secure communities, and our remarkable health care and education systems are publicly funded and open to everyone." So on the one hand we've decided we are going to pursue a tax policy of lower taxes in Ontario than in Illinois and New York, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota, our neighbouring states—not just lower, but 10 percentage points lower. Instead of 40 percentage points, it's 30 percentage points, combined federal and provincial. But we haven't asked ourselves, we haven't

debated, "All right, if we pursue that policy"—and by the way, this is a five-year commitment. It will go from 15.5% provincial corporate tax to 8%. We're heading down that way. The capital gains tax, which is mainly going to those who deal in the stock market, is going from 75% to 50%.

But we haven't said what we're prepared to do to make sure we can fund, on a long-term basis, our health care and education systems. We are beginning to see in this budget the stresses and strains in our education and health care systems. We see in the budget that we are now spending in Ontario \$300 million less in provincial support of colleges and universities than we did five years ago. I think we're the only jurisdiction in North America that has decided to do that, to spend less money. In our elementary and secondary schools the government said, "We're going to cut your education property taxes and we'll replace that with provincial funding." Well, they cut the taxes but they never replaced that with provincial funding for elementary and secondary. In our health care system we hear daily—the promises today in question period, for those who were watching—of the enormous problems we are facing with shortages of physicians.

So as we move to cut off debate on what I regard as one of the most crucial debates we will ever have, Ontario now, according to this budget, is the most export-oriented jurisdiction in the industrial world. Ten years ago exports were equivalent to about 29% of our gross domestic product. According to the budget, it's almost 55% today. We've gone from 29% exports, the equivalent of our gross domestic product, to 55%. I dare say the government is now fixated on taxation levels in our neighbouring jurisdictions, in the neighbouring states. In this budget, almost the entire rationale for reducing the corporate tax rates is to get it 10 percentage points lower than in the US states around our border.

My question is very simple: How, in the end, do we implement this tax policy and continue to ensure that we have adequate resources to fund what the government says, and what I believe, are two essential elements to our society, our health care system and our education system? Tragically, we are ending debate today when we really should be continuing that debate. I don't think there's anything more fundamental than how long-term we fund our health and our education systems in Ontario. A \$9-billion tax cut without answering that question I think is bad planning.

1550

Mr David Young (Willowdale): I appreciate having an opportunity to speak today about this time allocation motion. I have a lot to say, but let me start where the member for Scarborough-Agincourt left off, because he posed some important questions to this assembly. I want to respond. I want you to know that we on this side of the Legislature care deeply about health care, we care deeply about education, but we have a different philosophy than our friends on the other side who believe that taxing and

spending and taxing and spending is the way to go. Of course, that's the way they went between 1985 and 1995.

We, on the other hand, believe you need to have the dollars to support those very important social structures within our society. That's why we believe tax cuts do stimulate the economy. When we said that initially entering the 1995 campaign, there were many—including many members of the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party, but, to be fair, even many beyond—who thought, no, that can't work; that simply can't work. That won't grow the economy; that won't stimulate the economy.

The debate is over. It has worked. It has stimulated the economy. That's why we stand in this Legislature today proud to announce that not only is the budget balanced for 1999, but it is balanced for 2000. Of course, any of us who are younger than 50 years of age have not in our lifetime in this province ever experienced that before: back-to-back balanced budgets. In fact, what we have found are surpluses. I will talk about that in a moment, because that is very much unprecedented for this province: surpluses, and surpluses being returned to the taxpayer.

This legislation is aptly named the Taxpayer Dividend Act, and it goes on. But it's important to start there at the very beginning of its title because that has been the subject matter of a great deal of discussion throughout this province, the fact that this government has had the fortitude to stand and to say that we found that the taxpayers of this province were overtaxed last year. We have some of their money, we are in a position to return it to them, and we will do so. Every taxpayer in this province who filed for 1999 will receive up to \$200 back. They will receive a rebate.

From my discussions throughout this province, and I've had the privilege of travelling extensively over the past two weeks, I have had an opportunity to talk to a lot of average Ontarians who tell me without hesitation that what they intend to do with their \$200 is use it in a way that they believe and I believe is effective and efficient. They're going to buy new clothes for them or their children; they're going to pay down some of their debts; they're going to continue to stimulate the economy.

But this legislation isn't only about the taxpayer dividend. It's also about cutting corporate taxes. The member for Scarborough-Agincourt is quite right that that is a focus of this legislation. We've come forward and we've said very clearly that the corporate tax rates and the rates for small businesses are simply too high. We've heard that from representatives of business across this province, and in particular from representatives of small business.

When fully implemented, the tax cuts outlined in this budget will reduce the corporate tax rate to 8% in the manufacturing and processing field. That will be fully implemented in 2005, at which time this province, I say proudly, will have the lowest corporate tax rate in the country. I suggest that this will serve to be a magnet, a greater incentive for businesses to invest and expand

within this province, and we know the result of that from the experience we've had over the past five years. We know that expansion means more jobs, more people working, more people spending, more revenue coming in, and the supports available to allow us to have a health care system and an education system that we in Ontario expect and deserve.

I also want to talk about the fact that the small business tax rate in this province is being altered. The \$200,000 threshold for small businesses is being expanded to \$400,000. Remembering of course that that \$200,000 figure has been in place for almost two decades, it's time that we altered the legislation to reflect the fact that one can be a small business and yet have revenues of more than \$200,000.

The response that we have received from the public has been overwhelming and very, very supportive. We have heard from Judith Andrew, who is a spokesperson for small businesses across this province. She has said very clearly that we are heading in the right direction and that these changes will further stimulate the economy.

I may say that I'm very proud that within my own riding of Willowdale, the North York Chamber of Commerce president, who is not an individual who is afraid to criticize any level of government when appropriate, has come out in favour and is very supportive of these initiatives that we have brought forward in this budget.

In the time remaining, I'll have difficulty naming all of the incentives and initiatives that we have outlined in this act, but I do want to say that there are various aspects of this that in my consultations with the public have come up time and time again. Let me highlight those.

First and foremost, the personal income tax cuts: Yes, there are more personal income tax cuts. You will recall that during the last term this government cut the provincial share of personal income tax by 30%. We promised to do more. We have started down that road. This budget contains a further 5% cut for those in the lowest income category, and in the middle tax brackets a tax cut of over 7.4%.

Second, these amendments would increase the amount of the Ontario child care supplement for working families that is available to single parents. We've invited and challenged the federal government to match us in that regard.

Third, this bill would amend the Land Transfer Tax Act to permit the refund of land transfer tax payable on the purchase of newly constructed homes by a first-time buyer.

Fourth, this bill will cut the mining tax rate from 20% to 10% over the next five years. I had the privilege of being with the minister responsible for northern affairs this morning, and he related to me the elation that exists within many parts of northern Ontario about this initiative, about this incentive that will be in place.

The retail sales tax on vehicle insurance and on auto repairs and replacements under warranty will be eliminated.

As well, gifts to schools, universities and colleges will be exempted from retail sales tax.

These amendments have been well received. To share with you just a few comments, let me tell you what Joe Phillips in the Ottawa area had to say: "Overall, I'm quite pleased. Finally the government is starting to give back to the taxpayer. I think the middle class has been squeezed for a long time."

In the same region, Ottawa, Pat Crossman said as follows: "It'll be nice to knock a few bills down. We'll turn around and spend that money," meaning the rebate, "on something family-related."

To turn my attention, if I may, to the time allocation aspect of this discussion, let me say that it's time for action, not talk. I know some of the members opposite, in particular the members of the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party, will say in response that we should be discussing this bill ad nauseam, that we should go on and on. They'll rant and rave about how this government is not listening to the people. That has never been true of this government, and it is certainly not true on this occasion.

Let me remind you of the fact that our government participated, as did many of the members opposite, in extensive pre-budget consultations. The standing committee on finance and economic affairs met with hundreds of organizations and individuals across this province. The committee travelled to six cities. They met in every region of this great province. In particular, I know they heard interesting submissions in Timmins and that the member opposite from Timmins-James Bay was present during that session. They were in Kenora, which is the riding represented by the leader of the third party. They were in Chatham. I'm sure the member opposite from Chatham-Kent-Essex is appreciative of the fact that our government not only invited submissions from individuals and organizations throughout this province, but actually went out to those regions of this province to make it that much easier.

I would invite you, Mr Speaker, and I'd invite the members in this chamber and those watching on television to consider the contents of this budget in conjunction with those submissions. What you will find is that many of the recommendations that sprung from these consultations are contained in Bill 72. We listened. We listened to the public and the members opposite, and we studied very carefully the submissions made.

1600

Frankly, it's not surprising that we want to move forward, that we want to move on, that we want to continue to stimulate the economy of this province and improve the lot of individual Ontarians. What is surprising, though, is that in the Liberal recommendations that were submitted to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, there was absolutely no mention, not one reference, to deficit or debt reduction. That is surprising, particularly because we know the Liberals campaigned on those very issues in the last election. I listened with interest today, when the member for

Scarborough-Agincourt stood, and I wrote down his words because I wanted to get them right. He said: "Don't listen to what they say. Watch what they do." Well, the Liberals had a chance to do something. They had a chance to make submissions about issues they campaigned on, and they didn't. I doubt that anyone in this chamber—anyone in this province—will accuse the members opposite in the Liberal Party of substance abuse, because there is no substance there. They flipped and they flopped. The time for talk is over. The time to act is here. It's time to cut taxes. It's time to help small businesses. It's time to return to Ontario money that is their own through the tax rebate.

I will vote in favour of this initiative. I will vote in favour of more jobs and more tax cuts for this province. I will vote in favour of stimulating this economy.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): Let me start by saying that since the member for Scarborough-Agincourt was heckled earlier today with respect to the public debt situation in Ontario, by the government's own documents the public debt has gone up from \$90 billion in 1994-95 to \$114 billion today. That's on page 57 of the Ontario budget, clearly indicating that over the last five years the debt of this province has gone up by a further \$25 billion.

The other fact I always find very interesting is that we spend more money in this province on servicing that public debt than we do on all the community and social services the province provides. Again, looking at the government's own budget document, page 54, \$88.9 billion was spent on public debt interest last year, or is projected for this year, and \$7.5 billion was spent on community and social services. The interest on the public debt has risen rapidly, because these are the people who allowed the public debt of this province to increase by basically bringing in tax cuts when we were still running an annual deficit. It has already been stated that we are the last province to actually balance its budget.

The other point I would like to make to the last member who spoke, the parliamentary assistant, is that he should get his facts correct. He said quite clearly in this House just a few minutes ago that everyone who filed a tax return will get \$200 back. He knows as well as I do that he's incorrect in that. If you read this act, you have to pay Ontario tax before you get the \$200 back. There are many people in this province who filed tax returns and did not pay tax. They are not going to get \$200 back. So let's get our facts straight. Read your own bill, Mr Parliamentary Assistant. It clearly states that only people who actually paid tax get money back, not everybody who files a return.

Let me talk about one other issue that is closely related to this budget. The government has tried to put a very positive spin on this \$200 back to every taxpayer in Ontario who files a tax return. If they're so interested in paying off the public debt, why didn't they put it on the public debt? Better still, why didn't you put it into some of the badly needed services in this province.

We all remember the ads this government ran, and maybe is still running, against the federal government, basically saying to the people of Ontario: "Don't blame us for all the health care problems in this province. Blame the feds. They have, in effect, cut the amount in transfer payments to the province." But at the same time, they darned well knew—the cabinet knew, and the finance minister knew—that they had a surplus of \$5 billion last year.

So what were all those ads about? They weren't about the lack of money to put into our health care system in Ontario. They were purely about making a political statement that they felt they should get more money from the feds. That is what it was all about. I think it's dreadful, in a province where, as the Provincial Auditor indicated in his report last November, fewer than one in three patients gets treatment for cancer within the four-week prescribed period of time—32% of the people, according to his report—that we aren't putting more money into Cancer Care Ontario or into the research facilities and the researchers that are out there, so we can find a cure for this dreaded disease.

Many people I have spoken to over the last two or three weeks totally agree with me. They say, "Rather than giving me \$200 back, why aren't we spending the money to make sure our health care system is the way we want it to be in this province?" The government has been crying about the lack of funding, and they had this \$5 billion all along.

The minister one day got up in the House—and I have absolutely no doubt about the minister's good intentions—and she said: "We're actually doing something in the cancer care area. We've gone from a 32% response rate to a 35% response rate." Thirty-five percent of people get cancer treatment within the four-week prescribed period of time after they are diagnosed. Think of the trauma those individuals and those families have gone through, and we're not treating them. Yet we had enough money to put into the system to at least get the human resources, so we can boost up the cancer clinics across the province and start treatment earlier. Let's put more money into research, so we can get a cure for cancer earlier. That's where the money should have gone.

As I stated in the House last week, it's a well-known fact, and sort of a joke within political circles, that at one time we used to buy people's votes with mickeys around election time. What is this government doing now? They're trying to buy people's votes by sending them a \$200 cheque. I'm positive that this isn't going to be a one-time occurrence.

Think of the administrative cost involved in that. We're probably looking at \$3 million or \$4 million. If they really wanted to give it back, why didn't they at least save that money and change the tax tables for the last six months of the year, and paycheques could have been increased by that amount? It is all very cynical politics. You know it and I know it.

Let's look at some of the other priorities. If you play the stock market and get a stock option, the first

\$100,000 you make this year is tax-free. There will not be any tax charged on that. That is going to cost the taxpayers of this province \$645 million. Is that helping the average Ontarian? I don't think so. It's great for the people who play the stock market, but it certainly doesn't do anything for Ontario society.

What about the \$90-million cut in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing budget? It's right here on page 54 of their own document—it's not my party's propaganda. Last year the ministry spent \$1.7 billion, and it's going to \$1.6 billion, a cut of \$90 million. This basically means there is no money for the homeless, no money for housing. Both the federal and the provincial governments should get their act together and start putting some money back into direly needed social housing in this province.

How about the environment? Again, from their own document, page 54, what's been happening there? Look at the Ministry of the Environment. The budget has been cut from \$174 million to \$158 million, almost a 10% decrease. Yet what do we see today? We see today headlines in all the Toronto newspapers that say, "Water Pollution Violations Triple in Ontario", "Water Pollution Still on the Rise." The kind of answers we got today from the minister were just pathetic. Rather than saying, "Yes, we are going to enforce; yes, I'm going to go into cabinet and to fight for more funding, so we can get the enforcement officers so we can deal with the pollution problem that's out there," there was none of that. There's simply compliance to the polluters. It's great to say we're going to raise the fines, but raising the fines doesn't mean anything if you don't put the prosecution efforts into those areas.

I think government is all about fairness, and this government simply has not been fair with all of the taxpayers and all of the residents of the province. This is a great budget if you're well off or if you're playing the stock market, but it's an awful budget if you happen to be in the lower economic third of the population of the province.

1610

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I'm pleased to stand and debate the time allocation motion on Bill 72. I will admit that I will be supporting the time allocation motion and I will be supporting Bill 72 as well, the reason being of course—it's not central to my focus, but the taxpayer dividend is certainly a reason.

Let's look at the taxpayer dividend. Why, first of all, are we giving a taxpayer dividend? The critics and the opponents over there say, "Oh, well, mismanagement created this huge surplus and you're just giving the money back to the taxpayers." Let me explain something: Mismanagement doesn't create surpluses; mismanagement creates deficits. That's something the Liberals never understood, that's something the NDP never understood, and that's why we had deficit after deficit, which created so much more debt in this province that, as the member for Kingston and the Islands says, there's \$9 billion a year going out in interest payments. Of course

there's \$9 billion a year going out in interest payments. It's because of the debt that your two governments built.

There has not been one iota of increase in interest payments in the last five years. You didn't read the figures properly. You didn't read it. We have lower interest rates on the debt that we have now in the province, and as a result of those lower interest rates we pay less. That's the way it is in real life. The Liberals have trouble with that. I know that. That's how it goes.

One of the pages brought me some information here. Thank you. I'm not going to refer to it at the moment.

Ontarians have said over and over again since the dividend was announced in the budget, in Bill 72, "We want that \$200." In the news clippings every day the people are saying: "We want that \$200. It's our money." Of course it's their money. The Liberals seem to think it's their money and the NDP seems to think it's their money. It doesn't belong to government; it belongs to the taxpayers.

Yes, the taxpayers paid more than was anticipated last year, and that was because even in our wildest dreams, even in all the economic experts' wildest dreams, the estimates were for 3.8% growth in the GDP of this province for fiscal year 1999-2000. What happened? We had fiscal growth of 5.7% in the GDP. Just think about that. How did that relate to US growth? Because the US growth of course is the one that's always used by our opponents and our critics in saying, "Of course Ontario's growth is so good; look at how the US economy is doing." We far exceeded US growth. We far exceeded not only US growth, but all other provincial jurisdictions in Canada, which also, I might add, trade with the United States. If Ontario is doing so well because of the United States growth, then how come all the other provinces aren't doing so well?

We far outstripped Canada's GDP growth. We far outstripped the GDP growth of all the industrialized nations in the G7 countries. How is that possible? I would say that we exhibited foresight. We knew that if you would reduce taxes you would encourage growth. We knew that five years ago. We heard that from people—the people of Ontario, business people, the average taxpayer—in 1993 and 1994 when the Common Sense Revolution was being drafted. We had our people going around listening to the citizens of Ontario telling us what they wanted, what they knew could happen in this province, which at that time, as you will recall, was mired in a made-in-Canada recession.

We knew it was going to happen; it has happened. The argument is over. There is no debate any more. We have created an environment in which 701,000 net new jobs have been created since we were elected in 1995. Tax cuts create jobs; that we know. If people have jobs, they spend money and that grows the economy. We said that in 1994, we said it in 1995, we said it in 1996, and we keep saying it. And even though the facts are there for everyone to see, our critics and our opponents across the floor don't see that. They don't understand it.

The Liberals say we should spend money here or we should spend it there, or another place, and the NDP of course repeat it, like dogs following their master. Our government is not influenced by any lobby group. We are not going to have someone come and say, "Oh, we have to have money for this or that project." They may come, but we can't listen. Our responsibility is to manage the economy for the common good in the province of Ontario and, in turn, it just so happens that Ontario is the engine that drives the Canadian economy. What has happened? The Canadian economy has grown as well. So I'd say to Jean Chrétien, "Before you take too much credit for the growth in the Canadian economy, look at what has happened in Ontario, no thanks to you, sir."

We had a surplus of \$654 million in fiscal year 1999-2000. That surplus of \$654 million was in spite of increasing health care spending by more than \$1.4 billion. Since coming to power in 1995, our government has increased spending on health care—let me repeat that: We've increased spending in health care since 1995 by \$4.4 billion, on top of the \$1.7 billion cut by the federal Liberals, for a total increase in health care of \$6.1 billion.

I know the provincial Liberals will remember this. They certainly don't want me to remind them, but I will anyway. Do you remember the red book? In 1995 it said that the Liberals would spend \$17 billion a year on health care. Well, son of a gun, we will increase spending on health care by the end of next year to the \$22.7 billion that we had said in our Blueprint we would spend over the next four years. We will be two years ahead of schedule in spending that \$22.7 billion a year on health care. I wonder how the Liberals think their paltry \$17 billion would match up against \$22.7 billion being spent by us.

1620

Mr Gerretsen: That was 1995. Come on.

Mr Wettlaufer: Oh, you're saying that was 1995. Now you're saying you'd change it? That's not what you said in the red book.

Let's look at some of the items that were included in the Taxpayer Dividend Act. We are going to phase out—I take great pride in this because I suggested this to the finance minister a year ago—the provincial sales tax on automobile insurance premiums, which is presently at 5%. We're going to phase that out over a five-year period, 1% a year. Some of the critics say, "You should have cut gasoline taxes." Number one, we would not have any reason to believe that the oil companies wouldn't soak up that reduction. Number two, there's no evidence to indicate that that would have saved taxpayers more money.

As you're aware, Mr Speaker, because you are a former insurance broker like me, the PST on automobile insurance premiums represents a rather significant portion. I know for a fact from my experience, as you would, that the poor consumer of automobile insurance products was pretty upset when the NDP imposed that automobile premium PST. When the average consumer looks and sees a \$200 or \$300 PST on his automobile

insurance premium, he can get rather upset. So he's going to be rather thankful we've done that.

We've also extended the land transfer tax for first-time buyers of new homes. As you're aware, we introduced that two or three years ago and we are now making it permanent. When you consider the thousands and thousands of homes that are built—I believe this year 27,000 new homes are being built in Ontario—that's rather significant.

Another item is PST on warranty repairs and replacement. Imagine that someone who has an item repaired or replaced under warranty has to pay PST. That's thanks to the lack of foresight by the two previous governments. We're rectifying that. It makes a lot of sense to consumers in Ontario. They are going to have more money in their pockets and can spend it the way they want.

People investing in mutual funds and stocks—and I can just hear the hullabaloo on the other side now. They're saying, "How can you reduce capital gains taxes from two thirds to a half on these wealthy people?" Might I remind them that the wealthy are not the ones who are doing all the investing in mutual funds and capital gains today. They are the average middle-class Joes like you and me. They're hoping to put aside some money for their retirement.

There's another factor in this. There's also the young element, youthful persons who want to invest in the stock market because they aren't too confident about their ability to receive CPP down the road because, as we all know, the Canada pension plan is not actuarially sound. Even with the increased premiums that the federal government is charging, CPP is not actuarially sound. Young people know that. They're very concerned that they're not going to be able to collect that. They want to provide for their own pension, so they want to invest in the stock market and hopefully gain a little bit—capital gains, they call it. But you people—I'm referring to the Liberals and the NDP—want to tax away two thirds of the gain. Even 50% is plenty.

There's something else we have to look at here. Do you know that for years it has been accepted practice that companies, fledgling companies, R&D companies, would pay their employees a bonus in stock options? These people, the Liberals and NDP, believe we should tax those stock options the year they're received. Think about that. No money has been received. They've got a stock option but they think they should be taxed.

Interjection.

Mr Wettlaufer: The member for Kingston and the Islands is over there yammering away. I know what your position is. I understand that. They want to tax those stock options as if that was cash received.

We are saying the first \$100,000 of those stock options should not be taxed. If we keep on taxing that, then this encourages, this adds to, the brain drain in this province and in this country. These individuals who are so capable of doing fine research, the most intelligent of our university students and our college students, the most

intelligent of them, will go to the United States and work in Silicon Valley and they won't have to pay any tax on any of their stock options. Yes, they'll have to pay on the capital gains when they sell them, but that's OK then. I don't understand the thinking of the critics in our opposition across the floor.

It's like Jean Chrétien. Jean Chrétien said only a few months ago—

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): Who?

Mr Wettlaufer: Jean Chrétien, the Prime Minister of this country, said a few months ago when this was being discussed with him prior to the federal budget: "So you think we're paying too many taxes? Then you can always leave the country." Jean Chrétien said that.

We don't want the brightest of the bright leaving this country. We don't want the brightest of the bright leaving this province. We want them staying here providing future employment opportunities for the youth coming on in the next generation.

The member for Scarborough-Agincourt says we've added \$24 billion to the debt and then he says, "Can we afford another \$9.2 billion in tax cuts?" He is well known as the biggest naysayer in this House. Naysayer? Of course he is. What did he say for four years in the last Parliament? He said: "This government will never create 725,000 new jobs. Look at this. They've only created 100,000," or, "They've only created 200,000." He said this forever and ever.

Of course we knew there was economic lag. We knew all about that. He didn't know about economic lag, just like none of the Liberals know about economic lag, but it exists. What has happened? Before five years were up, we had created an environment in which 701,000 new jobs have been created in Ontario.

He says, "You're offering to cut corporate taxes and capital gains taxes." Yes, we are. Because we don't want the bright young people of today's universities and colleges leaving for parts unknown. We want them to stay here.

Small business: There are 7,500 small businesses in this province which will benefit from the concessions we're making, increasing the small business tax rate to \$400,000 income, from \$200,000, cutting their taxes from 8% to 4% over five years. Seventy-five hundred small businesses in Ontario will benefit, and those small businesses create 80% of the jobs in Ontario.

The case is closed. Tax cuts create jobs. Jobs create an enhancement to the economy. If the economy grows, we all benefit. We can then cut more taxes. We can increase spending in health care. We can increase spending in education. We can increase spending in children, and children are our future. I am very happy to support this bill.

1630

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I'm pleased to speak to this bill, although again I would express disappointment that so many important items before this Legislature have time limitation placed on

them. Evidently they don't hear from this side, because they don't even want us to speak.

Thinking of Bill 72, which is being time-limited, I'm pleased to see that the person who creates the humorous little titles is back, with "An Act to pay a dividend to Ontario taxpayers." I guess he was down in New Jersey for a while getting some new, fresh ideas to implement up here. I would note, though, that it says "An Act to pay a dividend to Ontario taxpayers." I don't think Ontario taxpayers have ever viewed the province as a corporation. I think it's fair to say for everyone that their desire would be that they pay the least taxes possible to provide the services they need. I would put emphasis on the services they need. Everyone likes the phrase "tax cutting," but we need to remember that the budget is really just the services that this province provides expressed in dollars. So when we say "tax cuts," we're also saying "service cuts." That shows up in every member's riding, no matter which side of the House they're on, on a daily basis.

Think of what these tax cuts have done to things in Ontario over the last five years. The environment: Everyone on the other side pays lip service to the environment, but we've now seen this new budget produce a total of 40% in cuts to the Ministry of the Environment. We have an issue that I think is of concern to everyone, which is the supply of water in this province. This government continues to grant water-taking permits while not knowing how much water is presently within the system. They grant water-taking permits without inspectors there to monitor. It is being self-monitored. That doesn't work in restaurant inspections; that doesn't work in meat inspections. Why would it work in water?

Disabilities: again, lip service to disabilities. We've seen an attempt to pass an act last session that turned out to be merely hollow. I, within my riding, have libraries that people who are disabled cannot have access to. This government will not fund the elevators to allow disabled people to visit their community library.

Hospitals we don't need to talk about at length; we need only read the letters to the editor, and each member needs only to think about the letters coming to their riding.

Home care: We're seeing hospitals discharge patients sooner than they have done in the past, sent home not necessarily to someone able to help them, perhaps to no one, yet home care is not able to fund the resources they need to support these people. What has been saved on the hospital closing end has not shown up anywhere in helping the patients.

Seniors, with their minute tax cuts, are experiencing drug delisting in a big way, in a very serious way. The \$200 will be a little bit to go towards paying the fees they are going to pay for that.

Transportation: With the size of our province, the economy of our province depends on transportation. What have we seen? We've seen a multi-tiered system of transportation come into place. If you have a lot of money, you can drive the 407. If you're driving the rest

of the highways, we're seeing a substantial reduction in them, and so much of the highway system that we were proud of in Ontario has gone to municipalities without the funds to match. Some day within the next five years, this province will face a crisis on the funding of bridge repairs. They are an item that cannot be ignored, and municipalities simply don't have the resources to do it.

The \$200, though: What a neat, cute idea, to use the public's own money to get re-elected. Of course it is greeted initially with enthusiasm. If you had someone in your home and you said to them, "Would you like some candy?" the natural response is, "Yes." But I think given a few minutes to think about it, they would say, "There are things that are better for me than that candy." In the cool, calm days following the announcement about the \$200 rebate, I believe there's now a sense that the government has a responsibility to do something meaningful with that money. For people who are on a waiting list to get into hospital, the \$200 will do nothing. The member for Kingston and the Islands referred to cancer treatment, where we have the unenviable record of going, over the life of this current government, from 32% to 35% of people getting care within the time they need. Even within that care, if you want cancer treatment in Ontario it helps a great deal if you live on a Greyhound bus line, to make it more convenient for you to go to the US to get that treatment. That's one of the conditions now for cancer treatment in so much of Ontario.

We hear about job creation, but I'm not sure what that means. Tom Long, an individual who spent some time with this party, says the economy's in the dumps in Ontario and in Canada. It's the worst it's ever been, and he has to be elected to save the province from continuing its downslide. Ernie Eves says things are absolutely wonderful in the province. I don't know what the truth is, but I know there are an awful lot of people enjoying some of those new jobs that are minimum wage jobs and a-few-hours-a-week jobs. They're looking for real jobs that pay them enough that they can support their families, not just a few hours a week. They need real jobs in Ontario, not part-time, minimum wage jobs.

I believe Bill 72 does not go anywhere in the direction it should to provide services to the people of this province.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I was rather entertained just listening to the most recent speaker and some of the comments the member from Prince Edward-Hastings made. In my opening remarks here I'd like to make a few comments.

He talked about water-taking permits. Obviously he's after headlines in the local paper again. He should check with the Ministry of the Environment and understand how responsibly that ministry has acted in the past on water-taking permits. Maybe if he understood the process it goes through, such as a 72-hour pump test that monitors surrounding wells for groundwater, he might not ask those kinds of questions in the future.

I was in the middle of his riding on Friday morning for two hours on CJBQ. Half the calls that came in were

compliments to the government on what we were doing. There was no criticism of the budget and there was no criticism on some of our changes to education. I'm sure he or some of his staff probably were tuned in listening. I even complimented the member from Prince Edward-Hastings. I managed to do it; I really did. I said some nice things about him on the radio.

He talks about \$200 to get re-elected. If it was an election year, I could understand where he was coming from. But \$200 and the election three years away? Who will remember in three years' time? It's being given back—and really not being given back; it's their money. It's theirs to keep, to invest or use as they see fit.

Then I was surprised—he talks about job creation. I think he sees the figures, Stats Canada from a Liberal government: 703,000 net new jobs. How much are you going to argue with that kind of thing?

I have about four or five minutes. I want to leave a few minutes for the member from London-Fanshawe. I'll just skip through and highlight some of the things in the speech that I wanted to talk about.

One is about the extensive consultations that this government has carried out. It's been referred to earlier, the tremendous consultation as it related to this particular bill. The standing committee on finance and economic affairs spent approximately 20 days, as I remember—I was Vice-Chair of that committee. We were across northern Ontario, western Ontario. We sat for many, many days here in Toronto—an extensive collection of information. Then I chaired the Task Force on Rural Economic Renewal. Again, we travelled the province: some 14 municipalities, 19 different meetings. That's the kind of consultation this government has been doing, collecting a tremendous amount of information to put into the budget. Certainly the kinds of things that we were hearing out there were: "The tax load is so tremendous, we just can't get ahead. We're just not going anywhere because of the tax load that's on us." The listening was very genuine, and we came back with some great information for our Minister of Finance.

Part of this bill and the budget is about ensuring that prosperity continues. The prosperity is here. Ontario is the engine that's driving Canada. It's the reason that Canada is doing well. It's the reason the feds managed to balance their budget, and it's the reason that many other provinces in this great nation of Canada are now having balanced budgets just because of the stimulation in the central part of Canada.

This budget is a very special milestone, having balanced two budgets in a row, and I find that just tremendously exciting.

1640

We're making strong investments in many areas, one in particular, benefits for children. There are a lot of areas where we're helping children in this particular bill. Single parents are gaining \$210 in benefits. Some 77,000 children will be better off because of this. There's some \$50 million that we're putting forward. We're challenging the feds to match it, for them to put their money

where their mouth is. That indeed would be something different for the federal Liberals. There's a tremendous, broad array of—

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I've just come from the committee hearings dealing with Bill 62 at this moment. As you know, the committee at this point is supposed to be dealing with the issue of clause-by-clause on the municipal referendum bill and the creation of the Moosonee Development Area Board.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Order. You'll recognize this debate is time-allocated. Perhaps it would be better to raise this during your party's time.

Mr Bisson: That's the reason I am up here.

The Acting Speaker: Just stop the clock then.

Mr Bisson: Mr Speaker, we're at a bit of a loss because we find ourselves in a situation where the bill in the House is time-allocated and the bill in the committee is time-allocated, and that's the issue that we need to deal with. What's happening is that the opposition parties are trying to bring in amendments to the bill in order to fix the problems that the government has created by the legislation, and the way they've written the time allocation motion, they're denying our ability as opposition members to be able to deal with our factual amendments to the bill. I'd like some assistance from the Speaker to allow us the time to at least debate those amendments within the committee, not just have them brought to a vote.

The Acting Speaker: As you're aware, the bill is at committee. The bill is under an order of this House. Those issues need to properly be dealt with at the committee.

Mr Bisson: On a point of privilege then, Mr Speaker—in 30 seconds or less: I find it very offensive and very difficult in this House that on every turn that the government introduces legislation, it is by time allocation, taking away from the democratic process the right of the opposition to do its job in order to make sure that these bills are properly committed. You can't do that with this kind of process.

The Acting Speaker: It may be a point of interest but it is not a point of privilege.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): On a point of order, Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: Stop the clock.

Mr Colle: —the problem is that we have no other place to go to express this concern, because it is time-allocated, and the bill before committee, by time allocation, has to be dealt with today. So who—

The Acting Speaker: You need to appeal to the Chair of the committee. That's the proper course here.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order. We are operating under an order of the House. The committee decides these issues.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I was in

that committee meeting and everybody agreed that day, so I don't understand what the objections are.

The Acting Speaker: Again, that's not a point of order.

Mr Colle: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This is quite an unusual situation. It's the inability of a member of the committee—

The Acting Speaker: We'll not discuss this any longer—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: That needs to be dealt with at the committee. The member for Northumberland.

Mr Galt: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I've lost two minutes of my time. I wonder if the clock could be set back.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I wanted to point out when I was so rudely interrupted were some of the investments that we're making: some \$7 million for children's eating disorders; some \$6 million for pre-school speech. Some \$10 million for domestic violence is added to that particular program. In education, some \$70 million for special education is added to the \$40 million already there.

There are exciting areas in rural Ontario, where some \$600 million is going into the OSTARD grant; eliminating the retail sales tax at source; some \$23 million to the bus operators; \$4 million for tuition to get physicians through to go into rural Ontario.

This bill is about ensuring prosperity for the future. I hear the opposition complaining "time allocation," but you know, if we didn't put forward a time allocation motion, nothing would ever get done in this particular House. I think it was very unfair of them to use all kinds of points of order to use up our time, a total of at least two minutes that were consumed by them just playing games here.

But I'll now sit down so that the member for London-Fanshawe will have a few minutes.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): It's a pleasure to speak on this time allocation motion, Bill 72, the Taxpayer Dividend Act. The reason this is time-allocated is because if it were not time-allocated, the Liberals would never cut taxes. There would never be a good time, because they just don't believe in cutting taxes.

This morning I was at the national science fair held in London. Some of the youngest and brightest from all of our ridings across the province, representing the province of Ontario nationally—these are young people whose scientific projects are amazing for their age. We have some young people certainly who are our future, but they need an environment in which they can prosper, an environment in which their inventions in the future will keep them not only in Ontario but in Canada with a tax structure that is very competitive.

That's what's happened in Ontario: A tax structure that is very competitive has brought new jobs—as we've heard, 703,000 new jobs. Approximately half a million people no longer have to collect welfare. These people

did not want to collect welfare. It was the system that just allowed for no hope and no opportunity. Today, people are enjoying and prospering because of that strong growth in the economy.

The thing that's very interesting is that the provincial Liberals talk about debt. The federal government has increased the national debt by over \$200 billion before they even balanced the books, and you know what? They didn't even cut taxes. They haven't even cut taxes. So obviously what we're doing in Ontario is proper.

One other thing: Not only do they not fund health care in our province—they're down to a 10% contribution—but our road infrastructure—the federal government takes gas taxes out of Ontario and gives back not even what, 20% of the old budget? Do you know that in Texas, 98% of the federal gas tax goes back to the state of Texas? They have \$3 billion a year spent on roads and infrastructure. It's common sense that if you want your economy to thrive and to be prosperous, you need a road system that can handle the traffic. But of course, no, the federal government takes the money out of Ontario and gives back none—none for health care, none for road infrastructure.

So what do they use it for? Let me tell you: a \$3-billion boondoggle, HRDC grants. You know where it all ends up? In the Prime Minister's riding, of course, and nowhere to the benefit of taxpayers in the province of Ontario.

I'm pleased as a member of this House to do the proper thing and return taxpayers at least \$200 of their own money.

1650

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): Once again, I was prepared to debate the budget and, once again, another bill is on the floor, another closure motion, another shutdown of debate.

What I wanted to do when I spoke to this budget was to find somewhere, in \$59 billion worth of operating expense in this province, that there might be \$28,000 or \$30,000 to get the Pelee Island ferry back in operation. The total operating budgets of agriculture, tourism and transportation together is about \$1.59 billion. If we were to take that \$28,000 or \$30,000 that we'd like to use to get our ferry back in operation to Pelee Island and help those people stranded out in the middle of Lake Erie, it would take 0.000026% of that budget.

But what happens? We ask the Minister of Transportation to assist, we get nothing. We ask the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to assist, and if you can absolutely believe this, part of his answer was, "They need to be able to get back and forth as best they can." Well, that's great leadership. We haven't even heard from the Minister of Tourism, and there are thousands of dollars a week being lost from tourism on Pelee Island because their season is only seven months long.

Let me read to you an e-mail that I received today. It says:

"Dear Mr Crozier,

"Keep up the great effort, ie, trying to get the Pelee Island ferry operating again. July last year, we received possession of a building on prime property on the west side of Pelee Island. My store is called Down the Lane Clothing Boutique. I expanded and did renovations over the winter and was looking for an exciting and prosperous new season. This strike is affecting me economically and I may lose everything. I still have bills to pay. How will I ever make up the loss? Please inform me as to what's happening. I have bills to pay and no more money coming. Thank you for listening to our plea on Pelee Island."

It says, "Tell me what's happening." Frankly, there's nothing happening. I asked a question of the Minister of Agriculture on Thursday, because there's a huge agricultural investment at stake on the island. What does the minister do? He says, "They should find their way back and forth as best they can," and he sloughs it off then to the Minister of Labour. He tried to cloud the issue by saying, "That's a federal issue." It's the standard rhetoric of the government to blame somebody else. It's not a federal issue. The feds have appointed a mediator. That's all they can do. But it's up to the Minister of Transportation to come to the fore, to show some leadership and to help avoid economic disaster on the island. They depend on this lifeline.

If a bridge had caved in on Highway 401 this past week, I wouldn't doubt the Minister of Transportation would be out there in his BobCat just shovelling dirt as quickly as he could. They even have alternative methods of getting around a disaster like that on the highway. But what does he do when the highway ends at the dock in Leamington or Kingsville? He says, "It's not my responsibility. I'm at arm's length from this. I can't do anything." It's his ministry that pays for it. It's his ministry that has a contract with Ontario Northland. It's his ministry that has a contract which, as far as I know, is cost-plus, so therefore it's his ministry that has to authorize these expenditures. When I say "as far as I know," we've tried to get the most recent cost figures from the island; we can't get those. We will be trying to get a copy of the contract. I suggest that we'll run into the same kinds of roadblocks.

In just a couple of weeks, I have a file that this is only a sample of. We've received hundreds of letters from people on both the mainland and the island: residents, businesses, businesses in the agricultural sector who are all pleading for help in this dispute. As I pointed out, if you look at the operating budgets of these ministries, the cost to settle this strike at this point is minuscule.

Two years ago, the rates on the transportation to Pelee Island increased some 35%. What these non-licensed dock and deckhand workers are asking for is 3% a year over two years. They're only 1.5% apart. Why won't Ontario Northland or the Minister of Tourism or the Minister of Agriculture say to the Minister of Transportation: "Look. We'll help you out. If these budgets are so strapped, we'll just help you out a little bit because we want to help those people on the island"?

This is the government that wants small business to flourish. They are small businesses on the island, and I would have hoped that somewhere in this budget they would walk the walk they are talking, that they would say to these small businesses and small farmers on the island, "Yes, we want to help you, and we understand that you are so close that we should get this strike settled, because your season has started." One of the holiday weekends is coming up this weekend. These are tourism dollars that once lost are gone. Folks who are travelling to Pelee Island—the birdwatchers during the month of May—are going to go back home and may never come back because of what has happened this year.

We have a small island in the middle of Lake Erie. A couple of years ago, when we were on our way to having it locally operated, financed and run, when we were well into the negotiations, after we had spent \$75,000 on the study, and a committee I chaired of the municipalities and interested parties said, "We're on our way to a solution," this government said, "No, we'll leave things the way they are." Well, things certainly are botched, Minister. Nobody is helping the people on the island. Ontario Northland isn't helping, the Minister of Transportation isn't helping, the Minister of Agriculture isn't helping, the Minister of Tourism isn't helping and the Minister of Labour surely didn't add anything the other day toward solving this problem. Get up, show leadership and let's get this thing settled.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Broadview-Greenwood): Once again I'm on my feet to speak to a time allocation motion.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Are you sharing the time with yourself?

Ms Churley: Yes, I'm sharing the time with myself today.

I understand there are some very angry opposition members from both the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party who came in here, not to take away members' time, but because they're furious that in committee at this very moment on Bill 62, the municipal bill, they were supposed to have an opportunity to at least ask questions about amendments that are coming forward. They are now denied the opportunity to discuss any of them. They're going to be rubber-stamped. The government should have learned by now. Remember the previous municipal bill, the one about property taxes? I believe they had to bring it back into this House nine times because they kept getting it wrong.

There is a role for opposition in this House. The government members don't know it all; we have different philosophies about different things. And furthermore they make mistakes. Committee hearings and committee processes are supposed to be there to give opposition and government members an opportunity to discuss a bill, make amendments and ask questions about those amendments. I expect that more will be heard about this tomorrow, because I understand the opposition is very angry and very upset about this, and for good reason.

Now here we are in the Legislature once again, debating another time allocation motion. It's a daily occurrence in this place; let's just rush everything through. Government members, one after the other, were on their hind legs today repeating the mantra, joyfully proclaiming, "The debate is over." How very arrogant and how very short-sighted and how very silly. Anybody with a brain in his or her head should know, and does know, if truth be told, that the volatile global economy means that the Ontario economy is almost totally dependent on a good economy in the US. Therefore, if things go wrong in the US, things are going to hit us here, as happened in the 1990s. Despite the mantra from the government members, every now and then even Ernie Eves, the finance minister, admits that it wasn't the NDP's fault that there was a recession. He might disagree on how we dealt with it—no problem with that; we have different ideas about how to deal with these things. The problem here is that you all know that the NDP didn't cause the recession.

1700

Mr Wettlaufer: The Liberals did?

Ms Churley: The Liberals didn't cause the recession. The recession would have come, believe it or not, even if you guys had been in power. I remember sitting there when the Minister of Labour was over here with his "Call the Police" sign. I had that, but I've lost it. I have to find it again. Others would stand up in this House day after day and ask us to spend money—they all had their pet causes—

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): Not me.

Ms Churley: Maybe not the Minister of Labour, but almost every one of his colleagues was in this House day after day begging the NDP to spend money, and then would get up and slam us for raising the deficit.

Interjection.

Ms Churley: The reality is—no, you guys are actually spending more money. You have the revenues coming in. They've got the revenues. They know that if a recession hits, God help them and God help the people of Ontario, especially the lower- and middle-income, with these guys in power. They are going to be in big trouble.

Sooner or later, unfortunately, there is going to be a recession, there absolutely is. It may not be for several years; let's hope it isn't. But God help us if it happens under this government's watch, because they have decided to claw back millions of dollars in revenues, to give it back mostly to the rich and the corporations in this province. This last budget was absolutely—

Interjections.

Ms Churley: There they go. They don't want to admit it. They're getting riled over there.

It was like the federal Liberal budget in Ottawa, actually, a carbon copy. As you know, the federal Liberal Prime Minister and finance minister congratulated the Tories on their budget and said they copied the Liberal budget in Ottawa and that the greatest compliment is to copy. Furthermore, Paul Martin indicated that he may in

fact do the \$200 mail-out. He liked that idea so much and wished they had thought of it first.

The reality of this budget is that somebody earning over \$330,000 in Ontario will get about \$10,000 out of the Conservative tax cut, but a family that is struggling with an income of \$30,000 will get about \$100 in the tax cut.

Hon Mr Stockwell: Where did you get those numbers?

Ms Churley: They're genuine numbers. Twenty-five per cent of all tax filers don't make—

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Boy, they're so arrogant. They really think they know it all. That's OK, I can handle it. There's something wrong with any numbers that come forward from anybody else but them.

Twenty-five per cent of all tax filers don't make enough money to pay taxes, because they refused to raise the minimum wage. Even though the rich in this province are benefitting from the boom we are in, they refuse to raise the minimum wage. So lower-income people, families that are struggling to survive, cannot participate in this booming economy we are in right now, thanks to the US. About 25% of people in Ontario won't get a cent back from the government.

What do we have here? Over \$1.3 billion in new tax giveaways this year and \$4 billion by the year 2004. This is on top of the previous tax cuts. This is a gift to corporate Ontario. Forty-two of this year's 67 tax cuts go to profitable corporations and businesses. Twenty-seven per cent of the new income tax breaks go to 5% of income earners, at a cost of \$733 million. So things Ontarians are naming as top priorities—health care, education and the environment—have taken a back seat to more tax cuts for the wealthy and for corporations.

Let's talk about health care for a second. For every dollar lost to tax cuts, the Liberals in Ottawa devoted just two cents for health care. But for every dollar lost to tax cuts, the Ontario Conservative budget devotes just a penny for health care. That's what this budget is all about, and that's what the members don't want the opposition to be talking about, which is why they have time allocated this today. Let's get it through the House.

The environment: Wasn't it incredibly shocking that when the government came forward with a balanced budget—they still have a debt and the same credit rating as the NDP, because they've been borrowing money all these years to give a tax cut to the wealthy before they pay down the deficit. The government members like to laugh, and they will again, but I'm going to tell the truth here. Had the NDP been re-elected, the deficit would have been gone years ago, because we would not have been borrowing money—

Interjections.

Ms Churley: See, they are laughing, but it's the truth. We would not have been borrowing money to give away to the rich people of Ontario. That was a priority of ours. In bad times, in recessionary times we chose—and I know the Tories disagree with this approach and

obviously so did many Ontarians, because we were booted out. Our approach was to try to keep people afloat, especially the most vulnerable in this province, during a very bad recession that hurt people extremely badly. That was our choice. We also chose to invest in the environment. It was shocking beyond words when this budget, in a robust economy, came forward and, guess what? I couldn't believe my eyes. They cut the environment again.

Mr Hastings: Not true.

Ms Churley: "Not true," Mr Hastings, the member from Etobicoke, yells out. It is true. Read your own budget. You cut it by another \$16 million. That is now a total of \$100 million gone from the Ministry of the Environment budget since the years 1994-95, when we were in government. Do you know what? I'm going to stand here and tell you that I'm proud that in recessionary times our government chose to invest in the environment and protect people's health and the environment in this province. These people have now cut \$100 million; that's 39% less than in 1994-95. They've laid off over 500 people and they also admitted, in an internal document of a couple of years ago, I believe it was February 1999—a delivery strategy they called it that directed MOE not to enforce dozens of environmental laws and regulations. That was before this cut. That was already there. So the government in this budget not only cut the environment but they actually are giving subsidies and expanding subsidies to things that are environmentally destructive.

They have put in new subsidies to the mining industry. These initiatives have been announced despite—you should listen to this—estimates that the Ontario taxpayer you seem to care so much about will be paying anywhere from \$300 million—a very conservative estimate—to \$3 billion for the remediation of abandoned mines in the province. You can't just hand out money to a polluting industry. We found out today from the report on water discharges that in the mining industry—some of them are the biggest culprits. They need the resources and the help to make sure that at the end of the day the taxpayers are not picking up the tab. Instead, they just get a subsidy with nothing in place—in fact a cut to the Ministry of the Environment—to make sure there's a fund available and it's not the taxpayers picking up the tab. We're talking here about \$300 million to \$3 billion. It's not going to hurt me, but it's going to hurt my daughter when the day comes that it has to be cleaned up, and it's going to hurt her little boy. This is an environmental deficit, a devastating deficit that we're leaving to our kids and our grandkids. That is the reality.

You gave money to car owners. Well, fine, but not one penny for public transportation. I believe we're the only jurisdiction in North America where the provincial level of government does not contribute some money to the operating budget of a large urban public transportation system. It is absolutely essential to try to avoid urban sprawl and to cut down on the use of private automobiles. We're coming to smog season again. We know, it's a given fact—the Minister of the Environment said it

himself—that at least 1,800 people a year die in Ontario as a result of smog. Not one red cent for public transportation, not one red cent to try to contribute to smog and air pollution reduction; just another cut to the Ministry of the Environment.

1710

Then we got a very interesting report today from the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, which we asked the minister about today. The minister blamed it on Mother Nature, which is just—I was so incredulous, but I'm glad he said that, because it put this government's commitment to environmental protection in perspective. A very serious report was released today. The only reason they were able to release it is that they had to go to the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the ministry had to be ordered to release this report. Under our government, the NDP, every year the state-of-the-environment report came out to the public. It was transparent. All the polluters were listed, prosecutions and fines; all of it was listed for the public to see.

Mr Hastings: By whom? The Sierra Club?

Ms Churley: No, by the government of Ontario, because it is the government of Ontario's duty to be transparent and let people know what's happening to the state of the environment in this province. This government stopped releasing that report. I wonder why? Well, we now know why. It's because they're trying to keep the state of the environment, their pitiful record on the environment, secret.

Let me tell you a little bit about this report that came out today. Even Tories should be concerned about this, because they breathe the air and they drink the water and their kids drink the water too. Let's see what the report's key findings are. We've got triple the number of violations of waste water discharge limits from 1997 to 1998, from 2,200 to over 3,300. There's an increase in the number of violating facilities from 154 in 1997 to 167 in 1998. Two thirds of facilities are repeat offenders. So much for your law-and-order agenda. Two thirds of these are repeat offenders, having violated pollution laws at least one other time between 1992 and 1998. Almost one half of the facilities on the 1997 list continued to violate water pollution rules in 1998. Sixteen facilities violated waste water pollution laws for five years running, and only one—this is the key number here.

The Minister of the Environment was grilled by the press outside today on this. It took him a long time to get to the point. In fact, he wouldn't say. He wouldn't admit the one prosecution, and the press was going after him and after him. Finally the press had to say, "Isn't it true, Minister, that there has been only one prosecution?" He said, "Yes, well, other things have happened, and nature again." I don't know if he brought that up, but he tried to soften the blow. The reality is that it's in black and white that there has been just one prosecution.

We know that under this government's watch, with yet again another cut to the Ministry of the Environment, our air is going to get worse, our water is getting dirtier—

Mr Hastings: Don't be such a pessimist.

Ms Churley: He's asking me not to be such a pessimist. I wish I didn't have to be, because I want to remind the member that I got into politics because of my interest in environmental protection. Before I ran for politics, I was involved in cleaning up my community. I had children in my community—and they should listen to this—who were poisoned by lead. We have a lead plant in the riding. Remember that, Mr Bradley, who was the Minister of the Environment for the Liberals. There were children being poisoned by lead for years and years—learning disabilities, terrible health problems. It took many years for any government to listen. Due to David Reville, who was a member here then, and a really active, persistent community group and the community health centre, we finally got the government to come into the community and conduct lead tests and blood tests. The impact on some of those children was devastating. It was in a low-income area of south Riverdale.

I got involved in the protection of the environment and the health of people in my riding before I ever ran for politics. I've personally seen the devastation that pollution can cause to our health.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: So when they jeer and laugh at me, I want to just say to them that pollution hits us all, not just New Democrats, not just Liberals, but it affects Tories too.

I want to speak for a few minutes about a couple of other issues. We had today the minister responsible for children stand up and supposedly have a discussion about Child Find Week here in Ontario. She spent, however, a good deal of her time talking about—very slowly, I should add—bragging about what they've done for children. I said earlier today, and I'll say it again, that the information the minister gave us is not correct. I corrected the record then and I'm going to do a bit of it again now, because they like to mouth the words about how important our children are to our future and how important it is to protect them.

They keep talking about this \$30 million that they're putting into early years programming as a result of the Fraser Mustard report. They announced that \$30 million last year; haven't spent it yet. They announced this \$30 million again in this budget; haven't spent it yet. In fact, they're going to spend it next year. I believe—yes, they're waiting until the early years task group reports back in May of next year. So this \$30 million keeps being announced and reannounced to make it appear that they're doing something about Early Years, and they're not.

Despite the government's claim to the contrary, it also isn't spending a single new penny on child care in this budget. Once again, let me correct the record on what's really going on here. It's packaging the Ontario child care supplement for working families as child care, but it's got nothing to do with child care. The supplement will give single parents about \$210 as a working supplement. That's not going to buy a lot of daycare. The child care supplement is mostly funded by federal

money. They don't like to admit that, but that is the reality. This Tory government is clawing back from the poorest people in our communities, from social assistance recipients, to go to poor working families. Poor working families should be supported and helped, but to claw back that money that will help the welfare mom who was cut by 23% to feed and house her child, to take it away from them, is nothing short of disgusting. It's unbelievable. This increase is needed, but it's only going to go towards single parents and it is not an adequate amount to help parents with child care.

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Boy, they're going again. They don't like the realities being pointed out there. These are the realities. These are the facts. If we can find \$4 billion to \$5 billion for tax cuts for the wealthy in this province and for corporations, why can't we find the \$4 billion that's required to support the children who are the future of our province?

I want to talk about the disabled in our communities. Five years ago or so, the Premier of this province, before he became Premier, promised the people of Ontario, those with disabilities, that he would bring in an Ontarians with Disabilities Act. He promised that before the last election—before the previous election. So we went through four years with Mr Harris at the helm of his government and they—well, they brought in a bogus Ontarians with Disabilities Act. It was such an embarrassment, they had to withdraw it.

Interjection.

Ms Churley: The ex-Minister of Community and Social Services wants to talk about the Ontario disability support plan. I'd love to talk about that. I just held a press conference a couple of weeks ago—didn't get a lot of press, but this is an opportunity, and it should have gotten a lot of press because we're talking about vulnerable people here who deserve the support of this government. Yes, they brought in the ODSP and, yes, our party supported it, but we warned the government at that time that we didn't want to see it being used as a way to cut funds from vulnerable people. We put in a warning, and what have they done? That's exactly what they're doing and that's what this press conference was about.

She wants to talk about the ODSP. I'll talk about the ODSP. I held a press conference with people—there are hundreds and thousands of people who have mental health problems who deserve and should get ODSP. Guess what's happening. The doctors have to fill in these long, complicated forms which the government keeps saying they're going to fix up to take away all the work it requires for the doctors to do this. They still haven't fixed these forms, but the doctors diligently assess their patients, fill in the form and recommend whether this person needs ODSP or not. Guess what the government's doing to save money. They are taking thousands of these people and they're scratching out the recommendation from the doctor who's giving the medical care and saying, "No, this person doesn't need ODSP." By now, guess what's happening. There's a waiting list of eight

months to a year for those people to appeal. What are they going to do—

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): It was two years under your government.

1720

Ms Churley: There was no ODSP under our government. You created that and then you messed it up, just like you did with the family support plan. That's what they did. The evidence is there. There are thousands of people waiting in line for up to a year for an appeal, and most of those people are going to get it. What are they going to do in the meantime?

A man who came to my press conference—and I did this press conference to expose what this government is doing under ODSP—has, I think, bone cancer. I can't quite remember; it might be leukemia. He's had it for a number of years. He's on very heavy drugs. He's been very depressed. He's having a very, very hard time coping. He is alone in the world, and his doctor—and I think everybody here would agree if you know his history—said that, yes, he needed ODSP. He needed the money. Some clerk, I guess, in the minister's office took a look and said: "No, he doesn't need it. Scratch it out." Now he's appealing. He can't work. He's supposed to be under workfare now, on the pitiful amount that the government gives to welfare recipients.

That's just one example. That's what's really happening out there with ODSP. So the minister wanted to talk about ODSP? Fine. Now it's on the record what's really happening. It was a good idea, but as we feared, the government decided at the end of the day to use it to save money off the backs of the most vulnerable people in our society to give tax cuts to the wealthy and corporations in this province. That's what they did.

Now back to the act that the government promised five years ago.

Hon Mr Stockwell: No, what you promised.

Ms Churley: The Minister of Labour wants to talk about what we promised. I'm going to tell you what we did. Let's get this on the record again.

Our government brought in the Employment Equity Act. Remember the Employment Equity Act? That's what people with disabilities were concentrating on at the time.

Hon Mr Stockwell: The quota act.

Ms Churley: They were not talking about an Ontarians with Disabilities Act at the time. If you speak to people with disabilities, they will tell you that their number one concern is employment. The Minister of Labour is talking about the quota law. They used that to their advantage in the election. I remember. It wasn't a quota law. If you don't have an even, level playing field, people with disabilities and others cannot even get their foot in the door. This is what the Employment Equity Act was all about—to give those people a chance to get their foot in the door. There are private sector companies out there now who decided to go ahead with the plan anyway because they thought it was a good idea and it was working for them—

Interjection.

Ms Churley: They are out there, Minister of Labour. They're out there still applying the features of the Employment Equity Act. Don't you think it's a good idea to create a level playing field so that people with disabilities, people of colour and others who can't even get their foot in the door at least have a level playing field and can go for that interview, can prove that they can do the job as well as anybody else? That's what our government concentrated on. That's what we brought in. This government went out there and scared the heck out of everybody talking about quota laws when that's not what it was at all. It was about creating a level playing field.

They threw that out and said, "Oh, but don't worry, because we're going to bring in an Ontarians with Disabilities Act." That's what they said. So people from the disability community said, "OK." They didn't like the fact it was thrown out, but they looked forward to this Ontarians with Disabilities Act because it promised a lot of things. The government refused to do it. Then they brought in a pitiful act that was a joke, and the people from the disability community said it was like a kick in the stomach, after the promise that was made and the work they put into it, to have a bill like that come forward as a serious attempt to keep a promise, so they had to withdraw it.

Now the latest minister is at it again. My understanding is she is out there consulting in secret and not consulting with the people she should be consulting with. Is there going to be another joke of a disabilities bill brought forward? We hope not.

Hon Mr Stockwell: This is pitiful.

Ms Churley: This is not pitiful. What you are doing to vulnerable people in this province to give tax cuts to the wealthy is what is pitiful. What I'm doing is putting on the record that the government is giving out big tax cuts on the backs of vulnerable people in this province.

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act is going to become very critical because without the Employment Equity Act—

Interjections.

Ms Churley: Boy, they're getting excited over there again, Mr Speaker. It's because they don't like to hear the truth. They get up on their hind legs and make all these pronouncements about the wonderful things they're doing to the most wealthy in our society. They don't want the opposition to point out the hole in their plan.

I would urge the government today, and we're disappointed that we didn't hear more about it in the budget, to bring forward this act.

What else do we have promises on here? We have promises on infrastructure funding. That's an interesting one, because the amount of money they're coming forward with is supposed to be spent clear across the province. They've paid lip service to the Fung report, which is very important to me and the people in my riding—the redevelopment of the waterfront in Toronto. I'm in favour of the Fung report. I have some problems

with some aspects of it, but this government won't even commit to any of the funding or moving forward. I'm not here to debate that right now, but I'm hoping that we will have a debate and discussion in this House about funding for Toronto's waterfront and who's going to pay for it, where the bucks are going to come from to do it. The commitment to the development of the waterfront is just lip service. Municipalities across the province are going to be fighting over that money. There isn't enough to go around and when you have huge projects like the development of the waterfront in Toronto, there needs to be more of a clear commitment about where the money's going to come from. Who's going to pay for it? What aspects of the recommendations does the government support? What don't they support? Where's the money going to come from? Are they going to help out or not? None of it's there. We had Mel Lastman, the mayor of Toronto, stand up once again and, frankly, scream at Mr Harris for letting down the city of Toronto once again. It's so true. I agree with Mel on some things, I don't agree with Mel on other things, but I certainly agree with Mel on his attack on Mike Harris and this government and the lack of funding for some of the critical areas in this city.

Let's talk about one of them: housing. We have homeless people in the city of Toronto. We have homeless people, of course, in other large urban centres as well. In fact, we hear there are homeless people everywhere now. It's growing under this government. Child poverty is getting worse in the province of Ontario. At the richest time in a long time, we have all these revenues coming in and child poverty is getting worse. There are more children in homeless shelters. There are more children at food banks. There are so many families who are one paycheque away from being homeless. The waiting list is so long now, there are thousands and thousands of people just in Toronto itself who are desperately waiting for affordable housing. Because the government took away meaningful rent control, the average rent in Toronto has skyrocketed so more and more people are nervous. They're having to choose between providing their children with food and paying the rent. Some of the parents are not eating at all. They have to make those kinds of choices.

What I'm describing here is the ugly side of these large tax cuts, the destructive side that the government doesn't want to hear about. Somebody's got to be talking about these things. Somebody's got to be pointing out time and time again and reminding the government that there are people being hurt as a result of their policies. I think the right thing to do is to remind the government that there are more children living in poverty and that there are more homeless people in the city of Toronto and throughout the province and that is fundamentally wrong, especially when we're rolling in money right now because of the US economy. This is not going to last forever.

The government says they don't want to provide housing, that the private sector will do it. We haven't

seen anything yet. We told them at the time that the private sector wouldn't supply affordable housing. There's nothing in it for them. They're going to develop condos. They're going to develop housing that's going to earn them back a good buck. The government knows this, yet they still continue to not invest in affordable housing.

1730

Now, they point out all the time, "That was a boondoggle and all this money was wasted." That isn't true, isn't a fact, but they like to point that out, and they take a few examples of areas where they believe money was misused and misspent. They don't talk about the thousands and thousands of units that were built in this province at cost recovery for a very good price. People are living in this housing now. They don't talk about that.

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): In communities.

Ms Churley: Yes, in our communities.

What they talk about is the boondoggle and make it sound like every single legitimate organization in our communities that is coming up with these plans and ideas to build affordable housing and building that housing—real people moving into that housing where they can live with dignity and bring their children up in a safe and secure environment. This government said no to that.

If they think that in the past—I don't agree with them; they only used a few examples—it wasn't done properly, then they can do it their way. There's no reason to stop building and supplying affordable housing. May I add that the federal government has backed out of providing social housing as well—the federal Liberals and the Ontario Tories. So there's nobody building affordable housing any more in the city of Toronto or across the province. That is fundamentally wrong.

I can't see a government, when they're rolling in money, when they've got all these funds coming in, all these revenues coming in, giving these billions of dollars to the wealthy and to corporations. Talk about corporate welfare. That phrase has got to come back again. That's what this government is doing. They get on their feet and they talk about all the people off welfare now and brag about that. They don't talk about the high poverty level and the homeless, people going without food, but they're giving away billions of dollars to wealthy people and corporations.

Let's talk about what taxes are, because we talk about taxpayers all the time now; we don't talk about citizens. We don't talk about why we pay taxes. We pay taxes for the collective good. That is why we pay them. We don't pay taxes to give billions of dollars away to wealthy people and to profitable corporations. We pay it for the public good. You can't take your \$200, if you're one of those who are going to get that \$200 in the mail—and I guess that depends on whether or not the federal government is going to pay for the mail-out, because that wasn't in the budget.

Mr Bradley: They'll send their cheque out too.

Ms Churley: Yes, they'll send their cheque out too, as the member for St Catharines says, because it's the populist thing to do.

But there are those who understand that they're not going to be able to take their \$200 and go out and buy a hospital, or they're not going to be able to take their \$200 and set up a daycare and hire all the workers. They're not going to be able to take their \$200 and clean up polluted water. They're not going to be able to take their \$200 and clean up our air. That's why we collectively pay taxes: for the benefit of all of us. That's what it's all about. This kind of politics I think appeals to the worst in us. Of course when some people hear they're going to get \$200 in the mail—"That's an extra \$200 in my pocket"—it appeals to the greed in us. I think we all have some of that; yes, even New Democrats. You hear you're going to get a tax cut, you're going to get a \$200 cheque in the mail and, yes, it appeals to our greed.

I believe that the role of government is to appeal to the better in us, to try to bring people together and communities together and talk about how we can use our tax dollars to the benefit of the whole community, not just for a few. I believe that we as citizens, if we have a government in place that appeals to the good in us, do want to make sure that the money is provided for health care, that the money is provided for education, that the money is provided for the environment, for the vulnerable in our society, for seniors and the disabled. If we don't do that, we get into a situation we're in now where pockets of our community are suffering, and there are some in my riding of Broadview-Greenwood. I see it on a daily basis and I think it's fundamentally and morally wrong.

When the government members say, "The NDP think they have the corner on compassion," I don't think that. I think that all of us are capable of being compassionate and being fair. It just takes leadership. It takes leadership to bring out the best in all of us, including the backbenchers and the cabinet members who sit in this government. But we're not getting that kind of leadership. We're getting the leadership that appeals to the worst in us.

The irony of it is, for low- and middle-income people—we get that \$200 or less, whatever it is, and all the tax rebates that have mainly benefited the rich, but middle- and some low-income people have received a few dollars—the irony is that for most people who get that, lower- and middle-income people, it goes in one pocket and it comes out the other pocket because of higher tuition fees, because of tons and tons of new user fees that don't get talked about. The member for St Catharines may bring it up when he speaks later. I don't know. I believe he's going to finish off the debate.

User fees, tuition fees: Now we hear that the government has made a deal with the doctors where there's going to be more delisting, so people are going to have to pay more for services they need. That's the kind of thing that is going on. It's all a sham, it's a shell game, except for the very wealthy who can take their money

and invest it and buy their Porsche or go on holidays. When poor people and middle-income people get that money, they are going to use more of it up in user fees than they are actually going to put in their pockets. That's the shell game that is being played here. But the government knows it's popular and that's why they're gloating over this budget, because they appeal to the worst in us.

I would like to see us come back, all members in this House, including Tories, those who aren't involved in the United Alternative or Reform Party or whatever it's called now, to being truly compassionate and stop referring to the citizens of this province all the time as taxpayers. We are bigger than that. We are better than that. We are more than taxpayers. We are there to pay our taxes to take care of the most vulnerable in our society, to keep our environment clean, to make sure we have adequate health care, adequate education. That is really where I would like to see the direction of this debate going.

The debate isn't over. When the Tory members stand up and say that the debate is over, they'd certainly like to think that, but it isn't over. Not only is there going to be another recession someday, which they're going to have to cope with, but in the meantime they're not talking about the people who have been cut and slashed and hurt by the numerous cuts to numerous programs across the board.

The government likes to brag about all the money it has put into health care, but out of the tax cuts only one cent for every dollar went back into health care. When you look through all the charts and figures that the government supplied—

Hon Mr Stockwell: Where's your source? It's phony.

Ms Churley: No, they're being phony about this. They're being phony because it actually works out to about \$49 million in total new expenditures on health care.

There are a lot of people these days talking about health determinants: What costs our health care the most? What makes people sick? There's a fellow in my riding, an associate professor named Dennis Raphael, who does incredible research on the difficulties, the gap between the rich and the poor, that if people don't have adequate housing and enough nutritional food to eat and the environment is unclean, all of those are health determinants. Those are the things that actually make us healthy. All the areas that are highlighted in a report that came out on I think April 8, 2000—experts in the field talked about determinants of health. The government tried to hide that report. Remember that? But my colleague Frances Lankin, our critic for health and a former health minister, got hold of that report and released it. The report was very clear that the government lost its way on health reform in this province. They have now caved in to the doctors, and they have chosen to cut environmental enforcement, scrap affordable housing, slash social assistance and get rid of meaningful rent control. So instead of focusing on illness prevention and

making our society as a whole better off in health care terms, we're actually making things worse. Those are important things to talk about when we have these discussions about the budget and where the money is going, because the reality is that the gap between the rich and poor is getting bigger and bigger, even in these great economic times.

I am glad I had an opportunity to put these thoughts on the record today.

1740

Mr Bradley: Thank you for the privilege of speaking for eight minutes on this thick piece of legislation. In the good old days, of course, we would be able to have a full and fulsome debate on matters of this kind. Today, routinely the government brings in motions which close off debate in the Legislature, and nobody seems to care except a few historians out there. I hope that Michael Bliss cares. I was reading one of his articles today about the future of the Conservative Party, and I do see him from time to time. But as an academic and a person close to the Harris government, I hope he would be advising them on bringing in routine motions to close debate on important issues of the day.

The budget, of course, contained something that was rather devastating, and we saw the results of it today. There was a very embarrassing press conference held by the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, which exposed what the government refused to reveal itself, because it was trying to keep this information private and quiet, and that is that there are all kinds of violators of the regulations and legislation of this province who are not being prosecuted and who are getting away free. That's because this government has a philosophy which says you must play footsy with polluters. You must cozy up to the same polluters who show up at Progressive Conservative fundraisers and pay a huge amount of money to speak to the minister and to other luminaries, limited as they may be, within the Harris regime. As a result, what we see is a wink and a nod from the polluters every time an environmental problem arises. I can understand why the government forced the Sierra Legal Defence Fund to use the freedom of information act to ferret out information that should be provided routinely to the public.

What we have to remember is that the information released this morning is only on the self-monitoring these polluters are doing. It is not on the exceptions, it is not on the spills, it is not on the accidents, it is not on the exceedences which take place. The ministry has been devastated by cuts. I heard this morning that now up to 45% of the operating budget of the Ministry of the Environment has been slashed while the government is mailing out cheques of \$200 to people in the province to curry favour with the electorate.

In addition to that, they have calculated that it's now 40% of the staff of the Ministry of the Environment. But remember that the Ministry of Natural Resources also has considerable influence on the environment and considerable responsibility, and we see these cuts. This is where we could have seen an investment in the future.

Rather than blowing millions of dollars on the self-serving advertising this government does, again apparently without criticism from at least my local chapter of citizens for responsible government and the Taxpayers Coalition, which used to be headed up by my good friend the former member for Lincoln, Frank Sheehan—no doubt Frank is having a meeting tonight to denounce both the huge expenditures on public polling, which this government keeps secret after it does the polling, and the huge amounts being spent on government advertising. I know that the taxpayers coalition, the citizens for responsible government and the National Citizens' Coalition are not simply fronts for the Conservative Party at the provincial level and for the Reform-Alliance party, whatever it is now called, at the federal level. I know that is not true, so they'll be ferreting out that kind of information.

We could have had a good investment. At one time former Conservative Premier Bill Davis received an award as the transportation person of the year. We could have given the same award to Mike Harris if he had invested even a penny in public transportation. That's been eliminated: no money going into public transportation now from this government. We're one of the few jurisdictions I can think of, perhaps the only jurisdiction in North America, where the provincial government does not invest in public transit. Everyone benefits from it, not just those who utilize public transit. I've advocated, of course, GO Transit being extended to St Catharines and to Niagara Falls. I notice the St Catharines Standard did not publish that when I said it in the Legislature, but I was glad to see that when one of the regional councillors opined that that should be the case, there was a story on it.

I should say that that is happening at this time, just as I should mention another item that did not get into the pages of the St Catharine Standard, and that is the Wine Content Act and the fact that farmers, the grape growers in our part of the province, and I think throughout the province, are being adversely impacted by the present provisions of the Wine Content Act which allow our wineries in Ontario to sell 75% foreign wine as part of their wine and call it Canadian wine. They're allowed to stock that on the shelves of the LCBO. I call upon the minister to change that, to make it more favourable—now that there's been that adjustment period, which I concede was needed—for our farmers, many of whom, in significant numbers, voted for the Conservative Party in the last election. I hope those who are calling my office now who did vote for the Conservative Party in the last election are now calling Conservative members of Parliament for the Niagara region as well to express their concern with the doing in of farmers in our area.

I know there's money in this budget for brand new airplanes. There are two brand new luxury aeroplanes, King aircraft, for the comfort and convenience of the Premier and members of the cabinet and a few backbenchers who make the right speeches in the House or who are very kind to the Premier and cabinet

ministers. That got virtually no coverage at all. I remember when Bill Davis tried to buy a new plane in the middle of a recession. In that case it was a Challenger, nicely appointed inside and, of course, a jet, which cost some \$16 million. They finally went through with that. In this case it was announced on a Thursday afternoon before the long weekend. I know the National Post, which is very interested in governments being very frugal, had a front-page story on it. It must have been killed by something because I didn't see that story. Somebody must have killed that story, because I'm sure there was a story written about the two new luxury aircraft for the comfort and convenience of Premier Harris and members of the cabinet that were purchased and announced late on a Thursday afternoon before the long Easter weekend.

I notice as well that we will be requiring for our cultural clubs a change in legislation. Actually, all this is required in the issuance of a memorandum. Our cultural clubs such as the Canadian Polish Society, the Ukrainian Black Sea Hall in St Catharines, Club Roma, the Slovak Hall, Club Heidelberg and many others throughout the province are adversely impacted by a one-sentence change in categorization. They are now categorized as commercial instead of residential. I call upon the government to reverse that, not to force municipalities to go through a song and dance, but for the government to do so.

I will be voting against this time allocation motion, which once again chokes off debate.

The Acting Speaker: This completes the time allocated for debate.

Mr Klees has moved government notice of motion number 48. 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 1750 to 1800.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will rise one at a time.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Baird, John R.	Hastings, John	Palladini, Al
Barrett, Toby	Hodgson, Chris	Runciman, Robert W.
Beaubien, Marcel	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Johns, Helen	Spina, Joseph
Clark, Brad	Johnson, Bert	Sterling, Norman W.
Clement, Tony	Kells, Morley	Stewart, R. Gary
Coburn, Brian	Klees, Frank	Stockwell, Chris
DeFaria, Carl	Marland, Margaret	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tilson, David
Ecker, Janet	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Elliott, Brenda	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Flaherty, Jim	Munro, Julia	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn	Wilson, Jim
Gilchrist, Steve	Newman, Dan	Wood, Bob
Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John	Young, David
Guzzo, Garry J.		

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

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 49; the nays are 21.

Nays

Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Bisson, Gilles	Dombrowsky, Leona	Lankin, Frances
Boutrogianni, Marie	Gerretsen, John	Marchese, Rosario
Boyer, Claudette	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Hoy, Pat	Patten, Richard
Churley, Marilyn	Kennedy, Gerard	Peters, Steve
Conway, Sean G.	Kormos, Peter	Sergio, Mario

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

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

The House adjourned at 1802.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

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

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

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Beaches-East York	Lankin, Frances (ND)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, minister responsible for seniors and women / ministre des Affaires civiles, de la Culture et des Loisirs, ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées et à la Condition féminine
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)		
Broadview-Greenwood	Churley, Marilyn (ND)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey	Murdoch, Bill (PC)		
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Tourism / ministre du Tourisme	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Carleton-Gloucester	Coburn, Brian (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)		
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)		
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, government House leader / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)		
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)		
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)		
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Brenda (PC)		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Hon / L'hon Margaret (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Children) / ministre sans portefeuille (Enfance)
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)		

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

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

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

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