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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 20 June 2000

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mardi 20 juin 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

Tuesday 20 June 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 20 juin 2000

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS
ACT, 2000

LOI DE 2000 SUR LES GÉOSCIENTIFIQUES
PROFESSIONNELS

Mr Ouellette, on behalf of Mr Hudak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 86, An Act to establish the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario / Loi visant à établir l'Ordre des géoscientifiques professionnels de l'Ontario.

Mr Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): Mr Speaker, is it possible to share my time with myself?

Interjection.

Mr Ouellette: It was an attempt.

Before we get into that, though, I have to say to Josh and Garrett, don't worry; I won't be home tonight but I will be home to read to you tomorrow night. Josh, I do have the card here that you wrote out for me; thanks. You be good for Mom.

I rise to speak in support of the bill to establish the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario as the governing body for professional geoscientists. I am proud to have had the opportunity to play a role in bringing it to this House and honoured to have worked with a large number of geoscientists, engineers, prospectors, investment and mineral industry personnel and other stakeholders who have made such valuable contributions to the public consultation process which preceded the introduction of this bill.

This bill seeks, first of all, to address the recommendations of the Mining Standards Task Force that was established by the Ontario Securities Commission and the Toronto Stock Exchange following the Bre-X scandal. The key objectives of the bill are to bring Ontario into line with other Canadian provinces in moving to a system of licensing for its geoscientists; to restore public and investor confidence in the province's mining investment environment; to assist the province's mining industry by reinforcing Ontario's reputation as a safe and attractive place for mining investment; and to meet the commitment made to Ontario's geoscientists that the government would help them establish a self-regulating organization

that would enhance their professional standing in mining and environmental geoscience.

To achieve this end, the bill proposes to establish the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario as the governing body for professional geoscientists. The objects of the association include regulating the practice of geoscience, governing its members, establishing standards of knowledge and skills among members, developing and maintaining standards of qualification, practice and professional ethics and promoting mobility of its membership.

Membership in the association will give geoscientists the right to practise professional geoscience that concerns safeguarding the welfare of the public and life, health or property, including the natural environment. The bill also gives us the opportunity to highlight the important role played by geoscientists in the environmental field.

The geoscience practitioners in Ontario dealing with and addressing matters related to environmental geoscience are a diverse group of professionals. They comprise, but are not limited to, hydrogeologists, geochemists, terrain and coastal geomorphologists, geophysicists and exploration and economic geologists. These professional geoscientists provide services to the public, government and business in several areas.

It is apparent from the diverse activities of professional geoscientists that they are involved in many activities affecting public safety and the environment. Geoscientists also work across the spectrum of Ontario's economy, including consulting firms, construction firms, environmental departments in industry, mining companies, oil and gas firms and municipalities as well as provincial and federal government departments.

The mineral exploration and mining sectors are major drivers of the Ontario economy. Mining exploration, development and production alone accounted for more than \$5.4 billion in economic activity in Ontario in 1999. More than 17,000 Ontarians are employed by the industry, averaging a salary of more than \$60,000 a year. Another 65,000 people are indirectly employed as a result of the activity in these sectors.

In terms of mining activity, Ontario ranks second in the world in terms of nickel and cobalt production and third in the world in platinum production. There are over 100 consulting firms in Ontario employing geoscientists and providing geoscience advice and reports to industry, government and the public. It is estimated that approximately 45% of Ontario geoscientists work in or from the mining sector, 35% work in the environmental sector and

20% are employed by various levels of government or in education. The number of geoscientists in Ontario, estimated to be between 3,000 and 4,000, is equivalent to or greater than the memberships of the joint geoscientists/engineers associations of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and the Northwest Territories.

Geoscience is a very significant discipline in the province. For several years, the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario has been asking the Ontario government to implement a self-regulatory body governing professional geoscience standards and practices. Minister Hudak made a commitment to work with the province's geoscience community to this end and to help the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario consult with people affected by this initiative. The Professional Geoscientists Act is a result of that collaboration and consultation.

The proposed draft legislation was unveiled March 7 at the Mining Millennium 2000 convention in Toronto, where it attracted significant favourable attention from the mining community. This announcement was followed by a consultation period lasting until April 20. The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines posted the text of the proposed draft legislation on the environmental registry and on the MNDM Web site. I conducted public information sessions in Toronto, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Kirkland Lake, and accepted submissions by mail, e-mail and fax. We encouraged widespread comments on the proposed draft legislation by mailing copies to more than 100 key stakeholder groups, faxing notices of the sessions to any group that might have an interest in the proposed draft legislation and holding information sessions in conjunction with major regional mining industry events. The information sessions drew numerous participants, and a further 75 written submissions were received.

Concerns expressed were generally technical in nature, dealing with the specific provisions of the proposed draft legislation. The proposed draft legislation also received statements of support from the Toronto Stock Exchange, the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario and the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario. This process has shown that the proposed legislation is welcome and supported by key stakeholder groups. I am pleased to note too that, to my knowledge, the proposed legislation has the support of all parties in the House.

With the passage of this bill, Ontario geoscientists will be able to demonstrate their professional qualifications and status to other jurisdictions, regulators and users of geoscience services outside of Ontario. Ontario geoscientists will be able to meet the requirements under consideration by securities regulators for "qualified persons" for the purpose of reviewing and approving all mineral exploration results intended for public release. In addition, this legislation will protect the public against unskilled and unethical actions.

It recognizes that Ontario is Canada's largest geoscientist community and seeks to enhance Ontario's repu-

tation as a centre of excellence for geoscience, exploration and mining.

Our proposed legislation would reinforce the government's message that Ontario is open for business, that Ontario is ready and able to compete successfully in the global market as the mine financing capital of the world. It enhances Ontario's international competitiveness by showcasing the province's excellence in geoscience while supporting the development and professionalism of the geoscience community.

This proposed legislation provides support for Ontario's geoscientists and geoscience-based companies to compete in international markets. This legislation builds on a wide number of initiatives our government has introduced in support of the minerals sector since 1995. This government is supporting the industry at every stage of the mining process, from prospecting and developing to mine closures and rehabilitation. The minister recently announced that the Ontario government would commit up to \$4 million over three years to support the establishment of a new prospectors' association that will work with the private sector to support grassroots mining exploration in Ontario. The funding is being provided through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. This funding demonstrates that the province understands the importance of maintaining prospecting activity at an appropriate level in Ontario so we continue to find new mineral targets that can lead to the discovery of tomorrow's mines.

A month ago, the Minister of Finance tabled a provincial budget, the second consecutive balanced one. That surely is worth its weight in gold to the mining industry. The measures announced provided a huge boost for the mining sector by significantly reducing taxes and increasing incentives for mining in Ontario.

The budget cut the mining tax rate in half, from 20% to 10%, over five years. It provides a 10-year holiday for new remote mines. In addition, after the proposed holiday, the profits from the operation of the remote mine would be taxed at a preferred rate of 5%. That's good news for the people in the north, where jobs are surely needed. The budget further proposes increasing tax incentives to investors in mineral exploration through flow-through shares.

To encourage mineral exploration in Ontario, the province proposes to provide a new flow-through share incentive by offering eligible individual shareholders a bonus deduction of 30% in addition to the 100% currently available in respect of eligible corporate exploration expenses. The bonus deduction would be limited to eligible exploration expenses incurred at the grassroots level.

I echo the words of the minister, who told this House that the proposed legislation supports economic growth and job creation. It tells the world that Ontario is ready and able to participate successfully in global markets, and that Ontario will continue to be regarded as the mine financing capital of the world.

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): Mr Speaker, off the top I'd just inform you that I am sharing my time with the member for Sudbury and the member for Thunder Bay-Superior North.

Just to relieve any kind of concern the parliamentary assistant has, we have indicated before, both by letter and in this Legislature, that the Liberal Party will be supporting this particular initiative.

Bill 86 is the result of quite a bit of work done by not just the Ontario government—and I commend the staff of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, particularly the people in the mines section, and the parliamentary assistant, who was good enough to supply us with the briefing to bring us up to speed on this bill. Essentially this bill is about investment. It is about bringing investment dollars into Ontario. So we don't get too carried away, we should recognize that we are not the first province to do this and that Alberta, for example, has done this—I'm not exactly sure of the time frame, but some time ago.

It has come about partially as a result of some unfortunate investment activities in the world market, so to speak. Some people have referred to the Bre-X problem. I am not certain this really does much to deal with the Bre-X situation, seeing as when there's that kind of money involved, you can get any professional to say anything, I suspect. But it is surely important that we have a degree of professionalism and a degree of accountability that can be trusted by the investment community when they are looking at surveys, at validating the prospectus of various junior mining companies, and the seniors, because by doing that, we create the capital flow that provides for exploration, that provides for jobs—good jobs, by the way—that accrue to mining in Ontario.

We would know that most mining in Ontario takes place in northern Ontario, but certainly not all mining. Some time ago, as a matter of fact I believe it would be about 12 years ago, I was on a select committee chaired by my friend Floyd Laughren, the former member from Nickel Belt, and we toured mines throughout Ontario. During that period, we were in mines in southern Ontario. I think altogether we were underground at 12 different sites and were at, I believe, 14 mine sites altogether, where we just toured mills at the other couple. That speaks to how important the mining sector is. Whether it happens to be a salt mine in Windsor or Goderich, or a gypsum mine just south of here or wherever, it creates good jobs for Ontarians.

1900

It's important that the investment community knows that when the core sample comes in and the geologists and the chemists say there's gold in that core sample, there really is gold in that core sample. That is what I suspect this bill is very much about. It's supported by the Ontario Securities Commission; it is supported by the Toronto Stock Exchange; it is supported by those people in financial circles who want to see that when a prospectus comes out on a company, they're not salting the sample, so to speak. That's incredibly important.

I want to praise the good work of the geoscientists in Ontario. For those who don't know, those are basically geologists and chemists. There may be some other scientists involved, but most of them would be geologists or pure chemists. In that group you'll find many specialties, but you will find that about 66% of those folks are not involved in mining whatsoever. They are the environmental people in this province, people we want to know we can rely on, and therefore professional standards and accountability standards are very important to people across Ontario. When we're talking about groundwater, these people would be among the leaders in looking at groundwater samples. That's incredibly important, particularly in the context in which the Legislature speaks today when we think of places like Walkerton and places all across this great province that need to know that the water is pure. I suspect these are the people who are in many of the labs that check these samples.

Having said that, I'm wondering, and I think all members should wonder about how we're encouraging mining in Ontario today. Mining in Ontario today is a very capital-intensive business, but it's also one that relies a great deal on energy. Our mines, like our sawmills and like our pulp mills, consume huge amounts of electrical energy. We're told, and we know, that Ontario Hydro, Hydro One—as my colleague from Renfrew says, "Hydro Won"—is about to raise the electrical bills of these mines, sawmills, pulp mills and paper mills in Ontario by about 20%. I don't think tax incentives will cut it. You don't pay tax unless you make some money. Many of these businesses will be out of money—or out of business. They won't have money. They can't pay their bills.

In a constituency like mine where we have mines, sawmills and pulp and paper mills, we could be spelling disaster by increasing by 20% a fixed cost the company will be able to do virtually nothing about. I don't think that is good for the resource sector of Ontario and it is certainly not good for the job prospects of my constituents or, as a matter of fact, for anybody in Ontario, to see these companies go out of business.

We know that the Ministry of Mines itself has cut back on the number of staff they have by about a third since this government took office. You would know, Mr Speaker, that without the competent staff on the ground, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines is often unable to assist companies and individuals who are attempting to get into business, trying to make a living. They used to be of more assistance than they are today. Again we hear "self-regulation," we hear "a change in regulations," but often that's code for just abdicating our responsibilities. That is, unfortunately, what has been happening.

When we look at the government's record on northern development, what do we know? We know that unemployment rates in northern Ontario are far higher than they are in the rest of the province. A couple of weeks ago we had a real estate group that was coming around visiting members, and I happened to see people from my

own constituency, some people from Sudbury, and some people from Sault Ste Marie. What are we finding? In all those markets housing prices have dropped. Why have they dropped? They've dropped because of an outflow of population. They've dropped because people can't find good jobs in those communities. It's one of the great indicators of what really is going on in northern Ontario. You cannot find housing prices going up anywhere. I'm sure my colleagues would tell me that it's true in Thunder Bay also, in Timmins, in North Bay.

Why is that? Because we have decided, in our wisdom, to centralize all power in Toronto, to bring the civil service to Toronto, to take it from places like the Ministry of Northern Development in Sudbury and bring, if you can imagine, the Deputy Minister of Northern Development from northern Ontario and put him in southern Ontario. That makes a lot of sense. And of course the staff of the ministry followed, or many of them. When that happened, some of the stabilization that a former government had initiated in terms of, not employing more civil servants, but employing the same number but locating them around the province rather than believing that Toronto is the only place you could work and breathe in this province—that provided some stability through the northern part of the province and particularly in the cities.

We've done the same thing as we've gutted MNR. About 40% of their employees are gone. If you talk to people in Blind River, we know that most of the folks in natural resources there are gone. We know that the natural resources people in Espanola have been downsized. There are some left, but most of them are gone. The same could be said for Chapleau, the same could be said for Wawa, the same could be said anywhere—pick a community in northern Ontario.

The small communities I represent—I represent 86,000 square kilometres but only 78,000 people. Sometimes I think I maybe have more moose than people. I'm not sure; we'll have to count. But I do know that the small communities of northern Ontario are severely impacted by taking out the few government jobs that existed, whether they be with natural resources, northern development, the OPP. Maybe they were a schoolteacher. We're losing I don't know how many of our schoolteachers across the riding, but over time we've lost 10%, 15%, 20% of our schoolteachers. That's a real problem to this constituency. It destabilizes the smaller economies across all of the North Shore.

While this present bill may bring some additional investment, or at least hold stable our ability to compete for capital in this province, certainly it is not making up for a government that has totally abdicated its responsibilities for northern Ontario.

For example, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines at one time not so long ago believed that small northern communities deserved and should have air service. That was something that was fundamental. It was not invented by Liberals. It wasn't invented by New Democrats. If anybody could take credit, it would prob-

ably be a Conservative government that decided that norOntair would provide service across northern Ontario. I looked today. We have lost, in my constituency alone—so far two airports have no service that once did, that being Elliot Lake and Gore Bay. We know that Chapleau and Wawa and Manitowadge are all having difficulty maintaining their air service, and I'm not certain how long they will be able to last. If you're a business traveller, a miner, an investor who wants to look at a particular site, you will have great difficulty in finding public transportation to the communities I represent, and that is a huge problem.

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It's time for government to say that the northern remote—relatively remote, anyway; some of them are pretty remote—communities need to have the same access or at least some access to air service. For example, I represent Manitowadge. That is a four-hour drive no matter where you drive from. If you fly into Thunder Bay, it's four hours to Manitowadge. If you fly into Sault Ste Marie, you're really doing well to do it in four hours. So there needs to be some responsibility taken on the other side to believe that northerners deserve to have those services.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):
How about those health travel grants?

Mr Brown: I'm happy that the member for Kingston and the Islands has raised again in this Legislature the issue of northern health travel grants. As you would know, Mr Speaker, and members of the House, I've been reading petitions on a daily basis. My constituents have felt very strongly about this issue. They have signed petitions in Hornepayne, they have signed petitions in Manitowadge, they have signed petitions in Gore Bay, they have signed petitions in Little Current, Espanola, Elliot Lake, Blind River—the list goes on of the communities I serve. They cannot understand why if you go north to receive your treatment, your expenses are all covered; if you come south, you get a mileage allowance. That is incredible, it is grossly unfair, and my constituents believe it. They believe that it's not just for cancer care. They believe it is necessary that this province, if it cannot provide those services close to home, must make sure it's accessible to people. To make sure those services are accessible to people, for many folks that means we are going to have to help them with their travel expenses. We do it for southerners who need cancer care. We need to do it for northerners who need care in southern Ontario for various procedures.

Right now the battle is about cancer. It's the easiest one to demonstrate because the differential is so grossly apparent to all who would see it. Particularly in Hornepayne I've heard a tremendous amount about this issue. The people at the legion in Hornepayne worked very hard to make sure we had a large number of people who have signed the petitions.

The second thing I want to talk about when we talk about keeping people in the north is that many of our communities are demographically very old. It makes

sense. If you're dragging the young people out of them, you will have older people left. Demographically, whether you look at Manitoulin Island, at the great retirement community of Elliot Lake or at the communities all down the North Shore, the numbers are all demographically old. That means we need long-term-care beds. Mr Speaker, I know that you as a northerner would be particularly interested to know that Espanola was just denied long-term-care beds. They asked for 34 beds, and we got a letter back from the minister—I lobbied the minister. I received a letter back from the minister, and she said—you will find this pretty hard to believe—that Espanola General Hospital did not rank among the highest proposals in the district of Algoma. That's what she said. Everybody knows—maybe not everybody, because apparently the Minister of Health didn't know—that Espanola is in the district of Sudbury, always has been. Maybe she had a map out. I think back in about 1900 it was part of Algoma, but in the last century it has always been in Sudbury. They compared it in the wrong district.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): That's unbelievable.

Mr Brown: My friend says its unbelievable, and I agree.

The minister said, "I'll fix the letter so it says Sudbury." I said: "I don't want you to fix the letter. I want the 34 beds." The problem, even in that allocation, is that the ministry did not see fit to allocate one single bed in the district of Sudbury-Manitoulin to the rural area. In other words, all the beds allocated were in the city of Sudbury—none, zero, nada, out in the district of Manitoulin or in the district of Sudbury itself. And there are lots of folks out there. The waiting list at Espanola General is far longer than the number of beds they have now.

I'm telling you, we have a government that I think believes the north is a colony. They treat us as a colony. Every once in a while they pay a little bit of attention here or there, but frankly, they don't even know where we live. Perhaps it would be good for many of the government members, and obviously the Minister of Health, to come on a little tour with me and to jaunt around. I was going to take the Minister of Education a while ago. Maybe we'll get a carload and we can drive through just my part of the northeast, just the 86,000 square kilometres I try to represent.

Mr Gerretsen: You said 86,000 square kilometres?

Mr Brown: Yes. It's 1,000 kilometres and then roughly about the distance from Windsor to Quebec City. It's a reasonable day's drive, to say the least.

We support the government on this particular initiative. It's an initiative that Alberta dealt with some time ago. It will help the northern economy. It will help the geoscientists. It will help the chemists. It will help the geologists and other sciences directly related. In saying we support this, there is much over there to do, and I suspect I'll need to give you another list.

Mr Gravelle: I'm glad to have a few moments this evening to speak about Bill 86, the Professional Geo-

scientists Act. Like my colleagues, I'm very much in support of this bill. It really is something that needs to happen, and I think it will make a positive difference.

My colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin made very clear some of the values of the legislation. One thing he didn't mention, but I'm sure he would have, was that it certainly has the support of investors, the geoscientist community and the investment community, including the Toronto Stock Exchange and the Ontario Securities Commission, but I think also some environmentalists actually have got some support for this legislation. Of course many of them have concerns about mining and its effects on the environment, but they've also expressed some support for this, and I think that's worth noting.

It's hoped and expected that this legislation will increase transparency and coherency throughout the profession, and therefore I think it creates the potential for sound environmental practices. That's an important point to make and I'm glad to be in support of this legislation as well.

I also want to use the time I have this evening as an opportunity to discuss some of the issues that affect northern Ontario. This legislation will have an impact, and we think a positive impact, but there are so many other issues that I hope the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and all the other ministers will become conscious of perhaps not quite doing the job the way it needs to be done. We've got some real concerns. Also, because we're nearing the end of the spring session and we may not have an opportunity to talk about a lot of the issues, I want to have a chance to bring some of those up this evening because time is running out and I haven't had that opportunity in this session.

There are a number of issues. My colleague made reference to the northern health travel grant. It is something that certainly every northern member, and I think all our caucus now, understands we really need to have some absolute changes in. It's become very clear in this Legislature and certainly throughout the province that the practice now in place of southern Ontario cancer patients being given full funding to come to the north while those patients in northern Ontario who are suffering from cancer and other illnesses are limited to simply a mileage allowance is really, truly discriminatory.

It has been our contention for some time, Mr Speaker, and I know you share some of those concerns, that indeed there needs to be a vast improvement and very large change in the northern health travel grant itself. It was brought into place by the Liberal government in 1987, with strong support from the New Democrats. That program was put in place because the services weren't in place for northerners in terms of medical care and they needed to travel outside their communities, often to Toronto, to get care. But that travel grant program has not changed one bit since then. In fact, it's gone backwards in terms of helping people with their extraordinary costs.

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Every one of us in the north has had example upon example of people who have come before us in some very tragic circumstances and told the story of what they've had to do and the money they've had to spend to care for their loved ones or themselves. We have been on a campaign for a very long time to try to get the minister to recognize that this is unfair. I have so many examples within my own riding. For example, if you live in Marathon, Ontario, and you need to get to Toronto for medical care, very frequently what you will do is travel to Thunder Bay, which is 300 kilometres west, and you will fly down to Toronto. That's the way to get there if you're not able to drive down to Toronto. But you'll only be given the mileage allowance, small as it is, from Marathon to Toronto. In other words, you're punished for living in Marathon. You're only given the mileage allowance from Marathon east to Toronto. The fact is that even though it's very clear that most people have to travel by this method—Marathon to Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay in the air—they're not able to receive the benefit for that. We need that kind of flexibility put into the northern health travel grant program. We expect that people, regardless of what their illness is, need to be properly looked after financially if they're not able to receive the care in their own community.

My colleagues and I have been reading petitions virtually every day in this Legislature—I don't think that's remotely an exaggeration—since the fall, asking for the minister to look at it. She has said that indeed she will review that. My colleague from Sudbury was speaking in the Legislature today about the inequitable treatment of cancer patients. This is something that has to be fixed. It just absolutely has to be fixed. It's extraordinarily wrong and discriminatory.

But the entire plan needs to be changed. The minister has said she'll review it. She said she'll have that review done by the end of June. I want to hold her to her word. We worked very hard. She turned us down several times when we asked for a review. I also want to hope that she wouldn't play games with us, that she wouldn't say she'll do a review, that indeed she was absolutely serious about this review bringing about some real changes. I've asked her those questions. I wrote her a letter and said those things.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): Did she respond?

Mr Gravelle: She hasn't responded back to me yet. I wrote her a letter and said, "Minister, please confirm that this is a serious review," with a number of qualifications in it: "Will people be able to recommend that changes be put forward? Will they be able to recommend financial changes to the program?" She has not responded, which gives me some concern, but I'm going to hold her to her word, which is that it's a serious review of the program. That's an issue that's very important.

Another issue that's incredibly important to people in my riding is a restructuring process that's going on right now affecting the communities of Beardmore, Geraldton, Longlac and Nakina, and many unorganized communities

including Jellicoe and Caramat. Speaker, I know you understand that riding, but not everybody in the Legislature does. There's a massive mileage difference between these communities. The Minister of Municipal Affairs wants to turn that into one community, one municipality called Greenstone. This is a very contentious issue. There are some people in those communities who do want this to go forward. I have objected to it from the very beginning. It is so extraordinarily wrong to have a community of that size. If you placed it on a map of southern Ontario, you'd be looking at a municipality that stretches from Barrie to North Bay. That's a large municipality. It wouldn't even be considered down here. It's wrong.

So you have Beardmore. Then you have another 80 kilometres to Geraldton, and then you have another 60 kilometres to Nakina and another 40 kilometres to Longlac. These are all communities that have done extremely well on their own and they're fighting back into prosperity with some extraordinary stories. This amalgamation was put in place because the ministry said it would save money. It has now become absolutely crystal clear that there will be no savings at all for the municipalities.

Mr Bartolucci: They're going to go ahead with it?

Mr Gravelle: They're insisting on going ahead with it. I hope I get an opportunity in the Legislature—I think I will tomorrow—to at least go to the minister and propose to him that he really relook at this. There are legal cases involving this. There's extraordinary division within these communities. These communities that have worked so well together for years are now having a very difficult time working together because of the argument over whether or not this is going to take place. I'll tell you, it's not going to save money. Even the proponents of the amalgamation acknowledge the \$1 million in savings isn't there. The minister should acknowledge that, because that's why he says it should go forward, and ironically enough, the new municipal council of Greenstone, if it does go forward, will actually cost more to the taxpayers than the four municipalities combined cost right now, the reason being they're recommending higher salaries for the mayor and the councillors, but also the travel expenses will be extraordinary.

I really do hope the minister will relook at this. There are going to be challenges before the Supreme Court. There are going to be so many situations where the minister should literally have a stay on the proceedings until the Supreme Court rules, and I can tell you that the municipalities of Beardmore, Nakina and Longlac are asking for that. This is something that should not be in place. The identity of those communities will be lost. They're quite prepared to have a new restructuring commission come forward and do a different restructuring that may meet the goals of the ministry, but unfortunately at this stage the minister doesn't seem to want to cooperate or talk to them about that.

That's a huge issue, a highly sensitive one, and I won't pretend for a second that it isn't causing me some concern too, because not everybody agrees with my position

on it, but I will say that from the very beginning of this process back in 1996, and long before I was even the official member of this riding, I objected to it, because I see the government using it as an opportunity to download more services on to municipalities; in fact, I think that's exactly why they're doing it, so that they can download more roads on to our communities, more services on to the communities, and I think those who think this will profit them are sadly mistaken. I feel very strongly about that.

Another issue which was referred to as well by my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin is the whole issue of long-term-care beds. I can tell you that in the Thunder Bay district, which is a huge district, the minister allocated 196 new long-term-care beds over eight years. She announced this two years ago. The waiting list was 400 at the time, so the actual number being allocated was incredibly short of the number that was needed. The 196 have now been allocated, all to Thunder Bay, and for the community of Thunder Bay this is good news, but it saddens me that in the riding that I represent in the region, from Nipigon to Marathon and Nipigon up to Longlac and Nakina, there are no long-term-care beds. Nipigon General Hospital very much tried to get at least six long-term-care beds and was turned down. I think that's unfortunate. I hope the minister will look at that, because it doesn't seem fair that you have no new long-term-care beds available in the region.

That ties into another issue that I want to make reference to, and that is the one of Birchwood Terrace in Terrace Bay, which used to be a beautiful home for the aged. Kimberly-Clark, the forest products company which is the major employer in Terrace Bay and just a great corporate citizen in that community, gave this beautiful building which was originally theirs to the province in 1974. It's a gorgeous place, a good size, overlooking Lake Superior, just beautiful, overlooking McCausland Hospital. They gave this to the province for \$1 so it could be used as a home for the aged.

As we began the process of downsizing the homes-for-the-aged situation in the Thunder Bay district, Birchwood Terrace closed, no longer a home for the aged. No longer could people in Terrace Bay and Schreiber have a place to go. But the community rose to the occasion and said: "We're going to take Birchwood Terrace and we're going to turn it into a seniors' residence. We're going to turn it into a special health care centre." They very much wanted to do that, and I think it's a tremendous idea. The McCausland Hospital was quite prepared to move forward with this. The only problem was, the province wanted to sell it at market value. Here's a province that received—

Interjection.

Mr Gravelle: Absolutely true. Here is a province that received this from Kimberly-Clark in 1974, and I got the plaque and I showed it in the House, for \$1, just for legal purposes—it was free—and the province said, "You can have it, but it's going to cost you market value."

This is something we've been battling for some time. Here's a community and a region—we're talking Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Rossport. People deserve to be able to stay in their community. It's a beautiful part of my riding. They were insisting on selling it back at market value. I will say now, after a long story, the municipality and the hospital said: "Okay, we'll do it, we want it so badly. We want to get it."

Now there are further problems in terms of asbestos in the building, and we're battling to make sure that is looked after—by the Ontario Realty Corp, may I say—before they actually take on the building. That's a big issue, an important one, and one that is of a great deal of concern to me.

I certainly could go on all evening, but I know the member for Sudbury wouldn't like that, so I'll try to speed through a few other points here before I give up my time.

There's a new corporation which the member for Sudbury will know about, called the Northern Ontario Marketing Corp, which is this large body which has been designated as the agency that's going to coordinate all the tourism marketing across the province. I've got some real concerns with this corporation, although in principle it sounds like it could be a pretty good concept.

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What happened last week was that they unveiled the map of northern Ontario which is used for tourism purposes. There are lots of them; there are 300,000 of them. It costs a fair amount of money to do. The map comes out, and I appreciate it's not a road map, but what do they do? They leave Schreiber off the map; they leave Red Rock off the map; they leave Beardmore off the map. It's astonishing to me. Then there's Ouimet Canyon, which is one of the truly great tourism treasures of this province. I'll tell anybody they should go and see it. It's 45 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay, on the way to Nipigon; a gorgeous thing, not on the map. The communities of Schreiber, Red Rock and Beardmore—that upsets me as their provincial member, but I'll tell you, the communities weren't happy with that. So they truly need to correct that.

In that sort of tourism vein, I was speaking this afternoon to Levina Collins. She's a remarkable woman who has done some extraordinary things in Nipigon over the years, a great volunteer, and has worked with the Nipigon hospital and is probably more active than ever now. She's involved with the Nipigon economic development and tourism office trying to revitalize tourism in that area. She indicated to me that they are desperately trying to, first of all, get some money so the snowmobile club in Nipigon can build the infrastructure and the trails that are needed. So I'm hoping we can continue to persuade the minister and the ministry that we need some real funding for precise infrastructure in those areas.

But she also made reference to the issue of rest stops and signage. I'll tell you, Speaker, and again I think you'll relate to it, the whole issue of signage is one that I have been on about. In my previous life, before I was a

provincial member, I was the coordinator of what were called northern development councils, put together by René Fontaine, the former Minister of Northern Affairs and Mines, who was the creator of the northern Ontario heritage fund. He put together these councils which were an advisory board reporting directly to the minister, Mr Fontaine, and I was the coordinator of them.

We would go around the north and have these groups. Every community had a representative. It was a great thing. I've always told the Minister of Northern Development and Mines today, "Bring the northern development councils back." They're a great way to get grassroots information back from the people and to get really good advice from northerners.

Anyway, the issue that was frequently most prominent was the issue of signage and the poor signage in the north. When I was talking to Levina Collins earlier, she was saying that she has written to the Ministry of Transportation in Thunder Bay, asking them to help with some signage on the way into Nipigon, because the tourism office which they now have, and they are keeping it open 12 months of the year, which is pretty remarkable, is not well signed at all. I've always thought the ministry could do a much better job and the province could do a much better job on signage. One tends to compare it to the United States, which isn't fair, but they seem to do such a superior job in terms of alerting people to things, including rest stop areas. We need more rest stop areas. When I was on my transportation tour this past couple of months and I went into a lot of the communities in my riding, the whole issue of more rest stops and more attractive rest stops came up.

As much as these perhaps don't seem like earth-shaking issues, they mean a lot to people. In the case of the Nipigon economic development and tourism office, they need some help. They're doing this almost totally with volunteers. Nipigon is basically 100 kilometres from Thunder Bay; it's at the crossroads of Highways 11 and 17, the crossroads almost literally in the middle of this great country of ours. They need some support and some help. So I hope the Minister of Transportation and his people in Thunder Bay will work with Ms Collins and her board and the volunteers who are working so hard to try to make that happen.

One other issue I will quickly get to—and there are so many others; road construction in northwestern Ontario and some other issues as well. I'd love to talk about road maintenance and privatization. Perhaps I'll have a chance at another time, maybe tomorrow afternoon when there's some legislation being brought forward related to mandatory branding of vehicles. But there is one other one I will quickly get to, and that is the fact that many municipalities in northwestern Ontario and in my riding, of course, have their volunteer fire departments and their emergency vehicles, their fire trucks, and they do a remarkable job. I think we all know that. What's important to understand is that frequently when there are accidents or occurrences on the highway outside their own boundaries, they go out there and help them. They

go outside their own municipalities to deliver the service. This is something that I think—I hope—the province appreciates. It's certainly something the federal government does, because they have helped contribute to the buying of their equipment. But the province so far has not agreed to help with the capital replacement of these vehicles, and I think that's something we need to work on very closely. Certainly the towns of Marathon and Schreiber have been working with me on this a great deal. They've been trying to get the ministry and the province to put some support into the capital replacement of these emergency vehicles. It has to happen. I very much want to see that they do that. To be fair, the minister has written and suggested that they get a joint meeting together with the federal and provincial government people and have all kinds of other discussions, but it sounds like they are not really prepared to put forward money. They should. That's something I want to continue to work towards.

I will wrap up. I know my colleague from Sudbury has lots to say as well. In essence, to sum up, I am in support of Bill 86 and am grateful that I've had the opportunity to make some other remarks related to my constituency tonight.

Mr Bartolucci: I am happy to be able to share some time with the members for Algoma-Manitoulin and Thunder Bay-Superior North. They've covered a variety of northern issues. For the next little while I'm going to try to concentrate a little bit on Bill 86, because I believe it has some profound implications with regard to the environment and with regard to the financial services sector as well.

We all remember the Bre-X scandal. We know that Bill 86, the Professional Geoscientists Act, is very important as it evolves to ensure that another Bre-X scandal cannot happen and that safeguards are in place. I think it's important from that perspective.

I also think it's important because the bill is going to allow for a self-regulating association, equipped with all the necessary tools to restrict its membership, to sanction abuses and to deal with its own. The geoscientists, and some of them are in the audience tonight, deserve that.

The College of Teachers, though, is an example of how this government sometimes has a tendency—I don't want to say to "screw up" because that's not proper—to mess up what sounds like something good. There's no question that those of us who are in the House know there is a protest going on outside; we can hear it. It's a protest made up of parents, students, trustees, teachers and principals who are concerned about Bill 74. I would suggest to the geoscientists who are in the room: Be very careful what this government says to you with regard to your college. We'll call it a college, because everyone in this province understands the College of Teachers. They also understand that it is not controlled by teachers. You want to make sure you have in fact a self-regulating organization. You should demand that of the government and ensure that it happens.

I know the geoscientists agree with this legislation. The reason, in part, that I'm speaking in support of it is because I am convinced the geoscientists out there have read it carefully and understand the implications of this government. Be careful, though, because you're going to be allowed to make regulations to govern your association, but so will the government. You can ask many people in Ontario, many associations in Ontario, with regard to the legislation this government has passed in the past, how they have come back to haunt them with their regulations.

The association will be composed of a council, as you know. I want to refer for the next few minutes to another council the government established, and that's called Cancer Care Ontario. Cancer Care Ontario works through eight Cancer Care Ontario regional outlets, very similar to what's going to happen with the geoscientists. I want to tell the geoscientists in the gallery tonight that Cancer Care Ontario's regionalization sounded like an excellent idea; in fact, was an excellent idea. But let me tell you, don't disagree with the main body, with the government, because if you disagree with the government—for example, I want to highlight the case of Gerry Lougheed Jr, who was the chair of Cancer Care Ontario, northeast region. He spoke out against the government, against a government policy that clearly discriminates between cancer patients who have to travel from the north to the south, as opposed to cancer patients who have to travel from the south to other areas, whether that be in the United States, Thunder Bay or Sudbury. He spoke out because he's a passionate advocate for equal cancer care for all cancer victims. My friends the geoscientists who are here this evening, he was not reappointed. He was fired. He was fired because he dared to speak out against a government that had a health care policy that was clearly discriminatory.

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So I would caution the geoscientists, be prepared, have the resolve to assess the issues that you believe are right and to fight for them in the face of a government that will try to beat you up if you disagree with them. But I know some geoscientists in Sudbury, and I'm telling you, they're very concerned with the policies of this government. They're very concerned with the policies of this government with regard to health care and with regard to the treatment of cancer patients. They tried to silence the voice of Gerry Lougheed, but they cannot silence the cause for which Gerry Lougheed fights. Yesterday a remarkable event took place down here. There was a press conference with Gerry Lougheed Jr, with a cancer victim from the Sudbury region—from Capreol, where Ms Martel is from—and with the husband of a cancer patient, René Boucher. They gave compelling arguments to this government on why they should right the wrong.

I want you as geoscientists to understand that you will have to make those compelling arguments too, when you see the government is trying to tamper with the legislation that you're going to agree with. Have the resolve and have the commitment to want to stand up, to stand

up, to be counted and to convince the government that in fact they're wrong when they try to tamper with your legislation.

Those three participants at the news conference did that yesterday. They established a new committee. The committee is called Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care, OSECC—it's a great acronym. These people are committed to seeking justice in this health care apartheid policy that must go because it clearly discriminates against northerners.

This bill, Bill 86, has a great deal to do with northern Ontario. Our resource-based economy depends on good geoscientists. I guess this bill is important, but so is a fair and equitable cancer program important. That's why Gerry Lougheed Jr, Janice Skinner and René Boucher established the OSECC committee. This committee isn't fooling around. They already have a 1-800 number. It's 1-800-461-0159. If you're interested in joining, you dial this toll-free number and join up. You can phone any time of the day. It's a 1-800 number. We want to hear, OSECC wants to hear, from people all across this province who believe that there should be equitable and fair treatment for all cancer patients.

I hope the geoscientists who are in the room tonight don't have to do what Gerry Lougheed is doing. I hope this government will treat geoscientists and their cause equally. They didn't do that with cancer patients in the north. They didn't do that with cancer patients in Ontario. That's why we have to establish the OSECC committee.

They're not fooling around. They've already got T-shirts. I can't show the T-shirt, because it's out of order, but I can read from it. The T-shirt says: "Cancer tumours don't know the meaning of 're-referral.'" Northern cancer patients know there should be fair and equal travel funding. At the bottom there's the acronym AMEN. You might want to know what AMEN means. This AMEN program was done by the same person who is heading up the OSECC committee. I'll tell you, he is going to be as successful with the OSECC plan as he was when it came to equal funding for Catholic education. He headed up the provincial student revolt, if you will, the provincial voice for Catholic students who believe there must be equal funding now.

The government has picked a very formidable opponent in Gerry Lougheed Jr. He is without a doubt the most knowledgeable volunteer on cancer issues in the entire province of Ontario, committed to the cause of treatment because of a personal experience where he almost lost his mother and when he had to travel from Sudbury to Toronto. I believe that you, the geoscientists from northern Ontario, may have to do the same thing. You may have to travel the full length of this province to fight for what you believe in, to ensure that your cause is guarded and is protected, as Gerry Lougheed Jr is doing in the establishment of the OSECC committee. It is an issue that is extremely important for all people in Ontario.

I hope the geoscientists don't have to conduct a poll, like Gerry Lougheed Jr and the OSECC committee had to, to try to convince this government that their policies

are wrong. I'm going to tell the geoscientists in the audience—because you may have to do it—they commissioned Oracle Research to conduct a poll across the province of Ontario, 500 respondents from all areas, and the results were amazing: 92% of the people across Ontario said there should be equal treatment for all cancer patients, regardless of where their home address is. I hope the geoscientists don't have to do that. I hope the geoscientists don't have to be put through the absolute embarrassment that northern Ontario has been put through by this government with their health care apartheid.

So I truly hope that this legislation, Bill 86, will meet your needs, that the government will not place regulations that are cumbersome and burdensome to you. Be aware of that. Be prepared that you may have to fight to ensure that Bill 86 meets your needs. Cancer Care Ontario Regional-Northeast is prepared to fight. There are members still remaining on that board—we don't know for how long—who are prepared to ask this government for answers to resolutions passed at their meeting last Friday that said, "Full explanation as to the reasons why the chair of the CCOR Northeast, the vice-chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Gerry Lougheed, wasn't reappointed."

There are so many other issues that I would like to spend some time on, but I know my colleague Mr Ramsay wanted an opportunity to say a few words, so I just want to repeat, if you're interested in joining OSECC, the 1-800 number is 1-800-461-0159. They're waiting for your phone call. The cause is right. We must convince this government, as the AMEN group convinced the government with equal funding, that their policy is wrong, their policy with regard to cancer patients is wrong, and that we collectively will make this government change its discriminatory policies.

I wish the geoscientists in the audience well. I hope the legislation meets your expectations, and, please, like Gerry Lougheed, don't be afraid to challenge this government when it doesn't meet your expectations.

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Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane): I very much appreciate the member for Sudbury, Mr Bartolucci, giving some of his time up to me tonight. I actually had planned a very different speech tonight, to talk about many of the same concerns that the member for Sudbury has been working hard on, as I am, with the unequal treatment of cancer care in this province and the assistance that the government gives to patients in northern Ontario versus those in the south who have to travel out of their regions for cancer care.

As you know, events turn very quickly in this business, and a very innocuous government member's question, from Thornhill, actually, this afternoon to the Minister of the Environment I think is going to light a firestorm in northern Ontario, especially in my part of the world, and also in the city of Toronto tomorrow. The minister said that if the city of Toronto wishes to extend the life of the Keele Valley landfill beyond 2002, when it

initially felt it would be in a position to complete that dump and close it, with the brand new proposal that they came out with Monday this Harris government would now get back into the business of municipal waste and pass legislation forbidding the city of Toronto to extend the life of that dump.

This is with the city of Toronto-owned dump in Vaughan, which has a certificate of approval to accept a certain quantity, so many millions of tonnes more garbage. What they want to do is just extend the length of time of that dump; not put any more garbage in than they have been licensed to, but to extend the time so that Toronto can embrace a 21st century solution for garbage disposal, get into some of the wet-dry separation diversion programs that are very progressive and that other progressive cities in North America are getting into. Guelph is one of the leaders in North America in that; then for residual waste, what's left at the end of all these diversion programs, to get into some of these new high-tech solutions to getting rid of that so that we never again would have to put residual waste into the ground, with the resulting contamination of groundwater as has happened in every landfill that exists today.

It's really ironic that the same people who have engineered the Adams mine proposal south of Kirkland Lake are the very same people who engineered North Bay—two years ago, a brand new state-of-the-art landfill and, lo and behold, it's leaking like a sieve. It's leaking much faster than anybody believed. The communities around North Bay in the Premier's riding are very upset about that. Toronto wants to find a good solution for that, and they've been working very hard and they're looking at trying to buy some time because maybe they haven't made some progressive decisions in the past and they realize they've got to really find a good, permanent, high-tech solution for this that's environmentally sustainable.

For this government to state today—and that's going to be in an article in the Globe and Mail tomorrow morning—that it is going to block the city of Toronto's plan to extend the life of Keele Valley, not to extend the tonnage that goes in there but to extend it chronologically for a few more years, and interfere with that municipal process when Mike Harris killed a bill from the previous government to say that it's a municipal issue—they have let Toronto go this far, but now the city of Toronto is not choosing Mike Harris's best friend's proposal so this best friend will get rich. The biggest patronage program you'd ever want to see in this province is the Adams mine, because it's Mike Harris's friends, it's Tories all the way through this, with a whole consortium of companies, and they're now going to step into this.

I am absolutely flabbergasted with the about-face of this government, that they're going to step in and overrule Toronto in managing its own dump within its certificate of approval because they don't want the garbage to go for a few more years in the 905 region, in Thornhill and Vaughan, because of the power of Al Palladini in this government and the other people in the 905 areas north of Toronto, and he's going to interfere with this.

I hope Toronto gets their hackles up on this. They're thinking of separating anyway. If there was ever a cause they've given to Toronto, this may be it. There are a hundred quotes of Harris saying: "Garbage is a municipal issue. We're going to scrap the process the former Liberal government brought in and that the NDP government legislated. We'll let the municipalities decide." They're that close to the decision now, and this government as of today has said—and it's in the *Globe and Mail* tomorrow—"We're jumping into this and we're going to forbid Toronto to extend the life of that dump," just so the garbage comes to my riding and benefits Mike Harris's best friend, whose name is Mr Gordon McGuinty, from North Bay. They have been golfing buddies for years and years. It's a scheme to make that guy rich. I'll tell you, we're going to stop that effing garbage; we're going to be stopping it. My folks, the farmers, were on the tracks last week, and I'll be with them. That garbage ain't coming to my riding.

Mr Ouellette: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In light of the agreement, I thought it would be appropriate to mention that this evening in the gallery with us we have Bill Pearson, who is the president of the AGO, as well as John Bowlby, who is the vice-president of the AGO, to hear the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): There being no questions and comments, further debate?

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): It's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate tonight on Bill 86. I want to first of all, in terms of starting out the debate, thank the two members from the association who are here this evening who have taken time out of their busy schedules to come and see how we operate. I'm not sure if you're impressed or not so far. I guess I'll wait till after to ask you that question.

I also want to thank two people who aren't here but who in the last couple of days actually did contact me to express their support for the bill and provided some useful information. They are Deborah McCombe, who works for the Ontario Securities Commission, and Maureen Jensen, who is the director of mining services at the Toronto Stock Exchange. I should say that I had the pleasure of working with Maureen Jensen when I was Minister of Mines. She was very capable then and is very capable now. I appreciate that the two of them took some time to call me and express their support and gave me some reasons why they thought it should be supported and also provided some information that I did not have.

As we deal with the bill tonight, we are dealing with a bill that will in fact establish the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario. I think it's worth our while to look a little bit at the history of how we got to where we are today, because some could argue that it has been a very long and protracted debate to get where we are today, even though for the most part it has only been since March that there has actually been a concrete bill to discuss. In fact, in the last 10 years, the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario has been internally debating the notion of licensing and the establishment of a self-

regulating body and there has been a great deal of consultation within the organization about the move to the same.

At the same time that debate was going on within the association, dialogue was also occurring with the professional engineers of Ontario, because for a time the two organizations worked together on licensing and were looking at becoming part of a joint group for that. In fact it was in 1997 that I first met with representatives from both groups, who provided us at the time with some principles with respect to draft legislation that they wanted to work on together.

Clearly a number of things have happened since that time that led us to a point where the geoscientists themselves decided to take on the licensing issue on their own as an organization. But through that process they have continued certainly to have discussions and seminars with the Association of Prospectors and Developers and a number of sessions and consultations with mining and environmental professionals, particularly people involved in earth sciences.

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In 1998, Len Wood, our colleague from Cochrane North, met with the geoscientists to review the draft that led us to where we are today. Many of the principles were outlined in the draft that he was shown about a year ago at this time. I think the change really came in March when the Minister of Northern Development and Mines actually introduced a draft bill to create an independent Professional Geoscientists Act in Canada. The other jurisdictions that have this act have a combination whereby geoscientists and professional engineers are governed together under a specific piece of legislation. Ontario is the only jurisdiction where the geoscientists themselves will have an independent, separate piece of legislation which governs them by themselves.

After that draft bill was introduced by the minister at a mining conference in this city, some serious consultation occurred around the province so that people could have their say. In fact, the draft bill was looked at in Toronto, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Kirkland Lake. There were meetings in all of those communities—twice in Toronto, as a matter of fact—so that people could come have a look at it, have input, have discussions. The draft bill was also posted on the environmental registry around April 6 so that people could have access to it via the Internet and make their comments back to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

The ministry told us in a briefing we had earlier this spring that in fact they received about 100 pieces of input, mostly from the professionals themselves, and that, by and large, there was wide and quite broad support for this legislation. We recognize that, and of course this is one of the reasons we are supportive of the bill. If the bill is passed, and it will be, because we have given our support to the minister as well, then Ontario would join other provinces like Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories in terms of having a self-regulated, licensed profession

where matters of discipline, educational criteria etc, are all set out in a specific piece of legislation.

I should at this point recognize that Inco, Falconbridge and the Toronto Stock Exchange have all made or have agreed to make financial contributions to allow the association to develop. It's worth our while to thank those two mining companies, both of which operate in my community, and the TSE as well for recognizing the importance of this initiative and for providing some of the financial support which will be required in the early years in particular as the association gets underway. As I took a look at that draft business plan, it certainly does foresee in the early stages operating more in a deficit position until members can join and fees can be raised etc. I think the contributions that will be made by the mining companies and the TSE will help to resolve some of that initial debt issue.

The bill in essence establishes a professional body to govern the practice of geoscience in Ontario. It's worth looking at the definitions that we would use commonly with respect to this practice and then the definitions that will appear in the bill so that people understand who is being regulated under Bill 86.

Geoscientists are those who normally or primarily work in the fields of geology, geophysics, geochemistry and environmental geosciences. For the purposes of the bill, a geoscientist is defined as someone who "performs an activity that requires the knowledge, understanding and application of the principles of geoscience and that concerns the safeguarding of the welfare of the public or the safeguarding of life, health or property including the natural environment."

The bill creates an association, which will be called the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario, as the governing body for professional geoscientists. There are a number of objectives of the association that are outlined in the bill that I think are worth reiterating here this evening so that the public can understand what the association will do. The following are the objects of the association:

"1. To regulate the practice of professional geoscience.

"2. To govern its members and certificate holders in accordance with this act and the regulations and bylaws" that flow from the bill.

"3. To establish, maintain and develop standards of knowledge and skill among its members and certificate holders.

"4. To establish, maintain and develop standards of qualification and standards of practice for the practice of professional geoscience.

"5. To establish, maintain and develop standards of professional ethics among its members and certificate holders.

"6. To promote public awareness of the role of the association.

"7. To promote the mobility and transferability of membership in comparable associations in other jurisdictions.

"8. To exercise such other powers as may be conferred, and to perform such other duties as may be imposed, under this or any other act.

"9. To undertake such other activities relating to the practice of professional geoscience as the council considers appropriate."

Under the act, the association is also given powers to do the following things. It may "establish a joint practice board with any professional body it considers appropriate to assist it in developing and maintaining a professional relationship with that body," and "make reciprocal arrangements with other bodies governing professional geoscientists in other jurisdictions providing for,

"(i) the recognition by the association of the qualifications for practising professional geoscience in those jurisdictions as qualifications for practising in Ontario, and

"(ii) the recognition by those bodies of the qualifications for practising professional geoscience in Ontario as qualifications for practising in those jurisdictions."

That will allow others who want to practise in other jurisdictions to do so and to ensure that the qualifications can be met and they will be allowed to carry out their work not only in Ontario but nationally and internationally.

There are a number of powers that are granted to the association as a result of this particular piece of legislation. That, I suspect, would be powers that other self-regulating bodies also have. We'll be dealing tomorrow with a bill that will regulate professional foresters in Ontario, and I suspect, because I haven't had a chance to read that legislation yet, that many of the powers that are provided in this bill and conferred upon the association would be powers that would also be provided to the professional foresters. These include powers of the association to establish committees. We know that under the bill three would be established: a registration committee, complaints committee, and discipline committee. The association is given the power to make its own bylaws to govern its activities as an organization.

The association will determine the eligibility for membership in the association, and that includes the educational requirements that will be necessary for someone to attain membership in the association. In all likelihood, that would include at least a four-year bachelor of life sciences and also a number of years of actual practical work experience. For those who are worried they don't have that kind of qualification now, the bill anticipates there will be provisions made for grandfathering people who have worked in the field for some long time but may not have the bachelor of arts itself that would be needed probably over the next two years.

They will establish the discipline of members and be allowed to investigate complaints made by the public with respect to conduct of members and will determine what the discipline of those members will be, particularly how registration of members would be revoked and how registration of members could be suspended, depending upon the severity of the conduct that the complainant

raises in terms of improper conduct. Again, they will determine by regulation what constitutes professional misconduct, what constitutes qualifying work experience, what will be contained in the public register that will be established by the registrar, the circumstances under which an individual might not be eligible to be a member etc.

There are a number of terms and conditions that will be set, a number of qualifications and criteria that will be established, I suspect, over the next two years as the association moves to become full-fledged in terms of assuming its responsibility.

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The minister, as well, has a number of powers. They include reviewing the activities of the council, asking the council to undertake activities and advising the council re the implementation of the act and regulations. I saw the Minister of Natural Resources here earlier and I will make this point at this time. The powers that are provided under this bill are the same as the powers that are provided under the land surveyors act, which is another association that is self-regulating in the province. The reason I raise that is because it's an important provision to be provided. One hopes that it is rarely used, if at all, but it is important that the provision to review the activity of the council be included.

I say that because we have run into a situation with respect to a number of land surveyors who have come to see me and have come to see the minister and have made some very serious allegations with respect to the operation of the association of land surveyors in Ontario; serious enough, I think, to warrant the minister actually calling for a review or implementing a review of the association, either to confirm the allegations and to undertake some changes at the association if that's warranted or to exonerate those who have been implicated by showing that perhaps the allegations were not as strong or were not as true as people would have them believe. I have talked to the minister and his staff with respect to that serious situation and encouraged him to have a review to get this thing dealt with as soon as possible.

Again, it's not something that you want to see used. You hope an association can adequately, effectively and appropriately govern itself. But when there are allegations, questions and concerns being raised about how it's being run, if it is effectively representing its members, then you do need to have another mechanism for accountability—in this case, ministerial—to allow someone from government to intervene. So I say to the geoscientists who are here, we hope it's never used, but it's an important protection to have, if for nothing else but to convince the public and members themselves that there is somebody else, some other body, that one can apply to in order to try and seek remedies and in order to get concerns aired, investigated and, if they exist, hopefully resolved positively.

There is a need for this legislation. The parliamentary assistant has talked about it, but I want to reinforce a couple of points that he made. First of all, the legislation

is important to safeguard the public interest and to make sure the public perceives clearly that their public interest will be met and will be protected.

It's worth pointing out that geoscientists are involved in a number of very important areas that do have a fairly significant impact on people. For example, geoscientists are involved in the designing of mines, in the underground workings of mines, in the identification of mining hazards, and in the development of groundwater resources. Each of those developments, if I can call them that, could have a very significant impact on the population, and could have a very significant negative impact on the population, depending on how work is undertaken.

What the self-regulation—the licensing issue, the development of a professional body with codes of conduct, codes of ethics, disciplinary measures and measures for public complaint—does, I hope, is assure people that we are dealing with experts, whether they be experts hired by municipalities to look at groundwater issues or whether they be experts involved in initial development of a mining property, that we are dealing with professionals, with people who have very clear educational qualifications, very clear work in the field for a number of years, and that in that regard, as much as possible, their safety will be protected. I think that's particularly important in light of some recent happenings in the province. I'll leave that there. But I think it's particularly important that this profession be able to prove as clearly and concisely as it can to people that their dealings are above-board, that their association is represented by highly competent, highly capable individuals who have the public interest at heart.

Secondly, the bill is very much necessary to ensure that geoscientists who come from Ontario can work in other jurisdictions, particularly those where licensed geoscientists are already in place. I mentioned earlier that when the bill is passed, we will join at least five other jurisdictions—and in another jurisdiction work is underway for self-regulation—where there are licensed geoscientists, where there is a requirement to be licensed in order to work, and where Ontarians have been effectively shut out of those marketplaces because that has not been a condition to work in this province. We have not had a system where people have had to be licensed as a matter of course to carry out their activities, to do work, so it's been very difficult for them to be able to work and to compete either nationally or internationally.

The bill will respond to that because our requirement here to be licensed, and then the work that the association will do to work with other jurisdictions, should give an open, easy and wide access to our own professionals to be able to work in other jurisdictions. Of course, we hope there will be lots of work in this province for them to do, but having said that, I recognize that they have quite incredible expertise. There is a great deal of movement from time to time of these professionals, and hopefully Ontario doing its part will allow people to become more mobile and transfer their skills to other jurisdictions as well.

Thirdly, and this is probably one of the most important points, the need to license responds directly to some recommendations that were contained in the Mining Standards Task Force report, which was called *Setting New Standards* and which was published earlier this year or very late last fall. This is specifically important in the section of the task force report on “qualified persons,” and it becomes imperative, it becomes obligatory under that, to actually ensure that licensing takes place in the province.

The second thing that was happening at the same time as the Mining Standards Task Force was making its recommendations was that the Canadian Securities Administrators were also looking at a regulatory review of disclosure requirements for mining issuers. Again, qualifications of mining issuers was part and parcel of the new instrument they were developing, and again, the need to be licensed was part and parcel of that. So the licensing issue responds to two of those recommendations.

I thought the task force work was quite important and was very well done. I wanted to spend just a bit of time talking about why the task force is making the recommendations it is with respect to qualified persons and why it is imperative that geoscientists be licensed in this province in order to comply with those particular recommendations.

The task force itself was established in April 1997 by the Toronto Stock Exchange and the Ontario Securities Commission. It was established to examine the need to set standards for mineral exploration and mining companies on how efficient exploration programs should be carried out and the results disclosed. Because it was happening in the wake of Bre-X, clearly the guiding principle of the task force was to increase investor confidence in the Canadian securities market and also to try to reinforce Canada’s leadership in the global mining industry by trying to make it clear to people that there was going to be increased investor protection after Bre-X.

The task force took upon itself quite a broad mandate and investigated a number of things, which included the commissioning of a survey of mineral exploration and mining companies, and the commissioning of a report on the technical issues from a technical consulting firm. They invited submissions on the issues before the task force and received submissions from about 120 organizations during the course of their work. They invited presentations from representatives of the mining, assaying and securities industries, consultants, professional associations and internationally recognized authorities on the mining industry. Also, given their own work—because the task force represented a broad section of all of those communities—they provided themselves first-hand experience as to some of the changes they felt were necessary to increase investor protection and investor desire to continue to be involved in supporting mining stocks and mining exploration.

The task force, in carrying out its work, came to the conclusion that: “Public mineral exploration and mining

companies ... have a duty and ... obligation to report on their activities to the capital markets, their shareholders and the investing public. The integrity of any data produced and reported on is only as good as the planning and execution of exploration or mining programs and the practices followed by mining companies. Since it is important that investors be informed of technical and operational issues, they are entitled to a summary of relevant information contained in technical reports. As a majority of investors do not have the knowledge to judge the quality of such technical reports, it is also important that they”—the investors—“be able to rely on the accuracy of data reported by a company.”

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It was with this in mind that the task force reviewed what was in place with respect to regulatory standards, reporting and disclosure. As a result of that review, the task force made a number of recommendations focusing on “qualified person.” The qualified person concept was: Who would be responsible for undertaking a number of things with respect to disclosure, with respect to reporting, with respect to looking at development programs, mining operations etc? What would their qualifications be? How could we ensure that they would be the people who would sign off on the technical reports both at the Toronto Stock Exchange and with respect to other work that they are obligated to do?

They made a number of recommendations that all lead back in many ways to the need to have geoscientists licensed in the province of Ontario.

First, they recommended that a qualified person would be responsible for:

“(a) all scientific and technical matters relating to the design, implementation and assessment of a mineral exploration or development program or a mining operation, including the procedures and practices followed, using industry standards;

“(b) the estimation and classification of resources and reserves; and

“(c) the review, approval and, where required, certification of all scientific and technical reports and disclosure for public and regulatory purposes relating to a mineral exploration or development program.”

Second, they recommended “that a qualified person be defined as an individual who is an engineer or geoscientist with at least five years’ experience in mineral exploration, mine development, operations or project assessment including experience relevant to the subject matter of the project or report, and is a member in good standing of a recognized professional association.”

Third, “We recommend that the securities regulatory authorities recognize self-regulating professional associations of geoscientists and/or engineers that meet acceptable standards for their members to act as qualified persons.”

Fourth, and this is where they impact most appropriately in Ontario: “We recommend that geoscientists be included in the professions regulated by the provincial and territorial engineering associations or, alternatively,

that enabling legislation be enacted providing for self-regulation by provincial associations of geoscientists. In this connection, the task force strongly supports the expeditious adoption of enabling legislation in Ontario to provide self-regulating professional status for the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario.”

They made another recommendation, that Ontario geoscientists join the Association of Geoscientists of Ontario as soon as possible.

There was a great deal of supporting documentation for why the task force made the recommendations it did with respect to “qualified person,” but I think the important point flowing directly from the recommendations is the need to address this issue in this province and to do it now.

One of the most important reasons for moving forward, outside of the fact that so many years have been spent by the association discussing this issue internally and feeling there was a need to do this, is that there is an urgent need now, which comes from the mining task force, that says these things need to be done: You need to be licensed, and you need to be licensed as soon as possible because licensed geoscientists are going to be required to deal with the technical disclosure, with the technical reports that are presented to the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The second reason this needs to be done right away is that there has also been a change in the standards of disclosure for exploration, development and mining. This comes from changes that have been made by the Canadian Securities Administrators. That’s the body that deals with the security commissions of all the provinces. Those include guidelines on what you have to do if you have mining property, but they also provide the criteria that are needed by the authors of any of those technical reports.

Clearly the change that has now been made by the Canadian Securities Administrators is that those people who are the authors of those technical reports also have to be licensed geoscientists. So there is a second, most compelling reason why we have to move on this legislation now in Ontario, and that is to meet all the requirements by the Canadian Securities Administrators under what is called National Instrument 43-101.

We have a situation where for the matter of trying to boost public confidence, to deal with public concerns about development, to deal with very strict requirements that are coming down the pipe from the securities commission and the TSE, we need to be in a position now where we ensure that the licensing of geoscientists in Ontario takes place.

One other issue I want to deal with has to do with whether doing this would solve another Bre-X. I remember that at the briefing the opposition critics had with the parliamentary assistant there was some speculation—you were there, Mr Speaker, you remember—that if we moved to license geoscientists in the province, if they had their own organization, code of conduct, ethics, discipline etc, you could avoid a Bre-X scandal from ever

happening again. I thought that was kind of bizarre and I just couldn’t believe it could be true, because Bre-X was out-and-out fraud.

So I had some concerns, some doubts and I thought there would be one person who could give me some advice about whether what the government proposed to do would stop another Bre-X. The person I called was a former mines minister in this province, an individual who worked for 20 years in a lab at Geco in Manitouwadge. I called our former colleague Gilles Pouliot at his estate in Orford, Quebec, and ran this by him. I called him last week and said: “Gilles, the government proposes to regulate geoscientists and the government says that in doing so we can avoid a Bre-X scandal. I’m calling to ask you what you think, because of your wealth of expertise.” After he stopped laughing, he said to me that of course doing this had nothing to do with stopping Bre-X or another Bre-X or any other kind of fraud, whether it involved the Toronto Stock Exchange or the Vancouver Stock Exchange or any other. He said very clearly, “I’ve made a lot of mistakes in my life but I never made that mistake,” meaning he never invested in Bre-X in the first place.

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): I wouldn’t count on that one.

Ms Martel: No, I believe him on that one.

Of course, what happened with Bre-X, which I think needs to be spoken about here again tonight, was that there was a whole number of scenarios with Bre-X where fraud was the intent from the beginning. We had a property in Indonesia where the core was drilled and the core was split and some of it was stored and then the ore that was crushed, along the way of being transported to the lab, got salted. By the time it hit the lab the amount of gold that was there was good, was wonderful. The other half of the core that should have been set aside for other people to examine mysteriously got lost or burned; I’m not sure exactly what happened to it.

Certainly some of the records that should have been in place to deal with what happened also got burned mysteriously. A number of things just rolled on and on that the licensing of geoscientists in Ontario could never have prevented and frankly would never have prevented under those circumstances. If people want to get themselves involved in fraud, they will find the ways and means to do that. It won’t necessarily happen in Canada. Even though Bre-X was listed on the TSE, the fraud really took place in Indonesia where it seems no one—I guess some people were looking at it; whether they were being accountable for it is a whole other question. It would probably be false of the government to try and put forward a case, when this bill is passed, that somehow we could deal with everything that went on with respect to Bre-X by making this move.

It was interesting that in the report from the Mining Standards Task Force they addressed this issue and said very clearly:

“While regulation can address disclosure problems by refinement to the requirements of the disclosure regime,

regulation cannot entirely prevent fraud. Fraud by its nature contravenes the regulatory regime and violates criminal law. It's worth noting that fraud is not peculiar to the securities industry, and within the securities industry it is not peculiar to mining companies either."

The task force itself made the point that while their work started after Bre-X and was put in place to try and deal with investor confidence, even they recognized that the many other recommendations in the task force that I didn't deal with tonight, but certainly not the recommendation to license geoscientists, wouldn't really have anything to do to stop the kind of situation we saw with Bre-X.

I've talked about my colleague from Lake Nipigon, who wanted to be sure I would raise his name here this evening; I'll send him the Hansard.

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): What's that name again?

Ms Martel: Gilles Pouliot, on his estate in Orford, Quebec, in retirement. Don't we wish we could all be there?

Let me say that we support what the government is doing here. Of course we will be supporting it. I trust that the association, which probably thought that a lot of work had already been done, will now discover that much more work now needs to be done as they go about their business in the next two years, I believe it is, to set it all up. I wish the members well in their endeavours, because I suspect it will take quite a bit of work to develop the educational standards, to develop the standards to be qualified, to develop the code of conduct and the ethics,

and the disciplinary measures and what would constitute a need for discipline etc. All of those things will take some time to develop and we wish them well in their endeavour.

We hope that at the end of the day this bill will go forward in a way that will increase public confidence in the TSE, will allow geoscientists to work not only in Ontario but in other jurisdictions in a much freer way than they have to date, and finally will give the public some confidence that the people who are doing work for them, whether it be in mining or earth sciences with respect to water etc, will be people who are highly qualified, highly capable and very intent on doing a good job, knowing full well that if they don't, they could forfeit their licence and lose their work.

We support the bill and wish the association all the very best as they start to implement it once the bill is passed.

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

Mr Ouellette has moved second reading of Bill 86. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

Hon Chris Hodgson (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I move adjournment of the House.

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

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 2033.

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