



**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 37th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 31 October 2000

Mardi 31 octobre 2000

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
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Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 31 October 2000

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 31 octobre 2000

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): On September 28, I presented a private member's bill to revoke the \$925 head tax this government has imposed on international orphans. The Legislature spoke and it passed my bill and gave the Minister of Community and Social Services a clear message that in the eyes of this assembly the tax is unjustified and unacceptable.

The minister has tried to argue that the \$925 head tax is a fee for service. But where is the service? The tax is imposed only on adoptions that are finalized in foreign jurisdictions, and not on adoptions that are finalized in our jurisdiction, here in Ontario. In other words, the foreign jurisdictions are doing all the work and the Ontario government collects the fee for work that's done in a foreign jurisdiction. This is completely unjustified. In addition to that, the agencies that facilitate inter-country adoptions also pay annual licensing fees.

I ask the minister: where are all the costs coming from which he says they're incurring? They're simply not there. It's time for the minister to stand up and revoke this hideous head tax and explain to the people of this province that this was entirely a mistake. Do the right thing: revoke the tax.

THOMAS BAKER MEMORIAL JAMBOREE

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): This past Saturday, the first annual Thomas Baker Memorial Jamboree was held in my riding at the Elma Memorial Community Centre in Atwood. Thomas Baker suffered from respiratory problems all his life and died in 1995 at the age of 23. Thomas had always hoped that doctors could learn more about lung disease from his condition and that events could be held locally to raise money for research.

To help celebrate Thomas's life and raise funds for the Lung Association, Thomas's brother Larry decided to organize an annual event. This year's jamboree featured a silent auction, a raffle, a magic show, pony rides and music by children's entertainer Paul French. Other musicians performed, including western star Randy Satchell,

Megan Morrison, Bill Murray and the Moonlighters, and Jackie Lynn Baker.

Four hundred people attended the jamboree, and over \$750 was raised for the Huron-Perth Lung Association.

I applaud the efforts of Larry Baker for organizing this jamboree and for fulfilling his brother's dream of having a fun and music-filled event to raise money for research into lung disease. The success of this jamboree is also a tribute to the individuals and businesses in Perth County who helped make the event a great success.

Please join me in recognizing Larry Baker and others for their efforts in organizing the first annual Thomas Baker Memorial Jamboree in support of lung disease research.

2000 PARALYMPICS

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I rise today to congratulate the participants in the 2000 Paralympics, which were just completed in Sydney, Australia. This country won 96 medals, 38 of them gold. Fifty-two of the participants were from Ontario, and they won 33 medals, all this in spite of the barriers this province continues to put in their own personal lives.

The 2004 Olympics are to take place in Greece. Unfortunately, it appears the Paralympics can't be there because they are not barrier-free. Wouldn't it have been great if Toronto had been in a position to bid for the Paralympics then?

If the promise to pass the legislation had not been broken, we'd have been well on our way to having a barrier-free city. If Toronto is to win the 2008 Olympics bid, it is essential that Toronto be barrier-free—absolutely essential. And yet, the Ontarians with disabilities act has still not been passed. By enacting the legislation, this government had the opportunity to show the entire world that we are world leaders, that we treat our citizens in first-class, world style.

The Premier, by his inaction and broken promise, is preventing all the citizens in Ontario from benefiting from the gifts and the talents and the productivity of our Ontarians with disabilities.

Premier, you failed to pass the Ontarians with disabilities act in your first term, as promised. I call upon you now to pass this legislation in your last term.

TELETECH

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): As we close the month of October, our government closes the

end of Small Business Month. With that, I rise today to talk of a success story. On Thursday, October 26 of this year, I attended the opening of the new London TeleTech facility. TeleTech Holdings Inc, headquartered in Denver, Colorado, announced in April of this year that they would be locating their new call centre in the Galleria shopping mall in London. Last week, that announcement became a reality as I joined executive directors in the opening of its doors. TeleTech is a leading provider of customer interaction management solutions, and the London call centre joins 43 other facilities of its kind in the Americas, Europe and the Asian Pacific.

I assure you that it is with great enthusiasm that Londoners welcome this new facility. TeleTech replaces the vacant Eatons store and has become a permanent fixture in London's downtown core. Not only is the new TeleTech facility a wonderful addition to the downtown, but it has created 800 jobs.

I want to thank Tara Belanger, the first employee that TeleTech hired; Ron Charma, the London operations director; Joe Hawlick and John Kime, from the business development community in London; David Hall and John Dennis from Galleria London; members of city council, including Mayor Dianne Haskett; and Kevin Kavanah, director of operations for the Denver-based company.

Setting the conditions for business to prosper in this province is something that premier Mike Harris and our government have always done and will continue to do.

NICHOLAS BROCKZKOWSKI

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): It gives me great pleasure to share with members of the Legislature a good news story. On October 24, Nicholas Broczkowski was an honoured recipient of the 2000 Harry Jerome Scholarship Award sponsored by the Black Business and Professional Association. In a Toronto Star article the next day captioned "Jane-Finch Teen Never Gave Up," Nicholas Broczkowski used this analogy in describing growing up in the Jane and Finch community: "It's like one crab trying to climb up while the others in the bucket are trying to pull you down."

In receiving the Harry Jerome scholarship, we know that not only did he manage to escape the bucket, but that in doing so he certainly achieved great goals. Now that Nicholas is pursuing kinesiology studies at York University, he describes his biggest achievement as "being a good example for his younger sister to look up to."

I know all members of this House will support me in saying to Nicholas that not only is he an excellent role model for his sister but he is a great mentor for all the youth in the Jane and Finch community who are working hard to beat the odds and climb to success and the realization of their dreams.

Mr Speaker, please join me in extending sincere congratulations to Nicholas Broczkowski and to his mother, Yasmin Maharaj, for nurturing his dreams. Everyone in the Jane and Finch community is proud. You didn't let

the other crabs pull you back into the bucket. You chose to do what was right and you are now well on your way. One might say you are now king crab.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I want to speak against Bill 132, the private university legislation. We are about to get time allocation on that bill, which means we are not going to have the usual appropriate scrutiny on the bill. It is the so-called Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, the act that I say nobody wants.

Who wants it? Is it the students who want it? Is it the professors who want it? Is it the institutions that are clamouring for it? Is it the public that's driving this issue? No. It is the Conservative government driving it, the lobbyists for private universities, the barons from Bay Street who really want it and need it. No one else wants it.

And yet this government wants to talk to us about choice. Who is getting this choice? Who's going to get it except the people who can afford \$40,000 a year in tuition fees? Is that choice for the regular taxpayer in Ontario? It's not a choice for most of the people I represent or most of the people our party represents.

The government says it's going to create an extra 1,000, possibly 2,000 spaces, but we need 190,000 spaces by the end of the decade. This will hardly fill the hole. If you want to fill the hole, to build capacity, why don't we strengthen our public university system instead of giving it away to the barons from Bay Street?

Let's not sell our public education system and let's not commodify it so that someone can make money out of our education system. We've got to fight back and I'm urging you to do that.

1340

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): Last week the Liberal member from Windsor-St Clair, Dwight Duncan, stood in this chamber and accused me of grandstanding on criminal justice and sentencing issues. I was offended.

Since I came into this House, I have been a strong advocate for victims of crime, and in particular for the victims of Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo. It must never be forgotten that Paul Bernardo attained notoriety as the Scarborough rapist long before he and Karla Homolka murdered Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy. Since 1995 I have been trying, without success, to persuade the federal Liberal government to act so that the residents of my riding, several of whom became victims of Bernardo, can feel safe in their own community.

Last year I presented a petition to this House, a petition signed by 4,000 Scarborough residents, that called upon the federal government to act so that they could feel safe in their own community. So far the federal Liberal government has done nothing.

Late last year I wrote to John Cannis, my federal Liberal counterpart, asking him to take a stand. I asked him to eliminate the “discount” law. I asked him to eliminate the “faint hope” clause. I asked him to follow Ontario’s lead and start a national sex offender registry.

This is not grandstanding. I’m doing my job. When is the federal Liberal government going to do theirs, or is the leader of the Liberal opposition simply not up to the job?

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Our national health care system, of which Canadians are justifiably proud and which has ensured that the quality of health care one receives is based upon that person’s medical needs and not upon his or her financial resources, is under attack and in danger of being scrapped in favour of an American-style two-tier system where the rich are able to buy a place at the front of the line.

The proponents of the two-tier system like to characterize it as one which provides choice, but that choice is available only to the wealthiest in our society. We need only look south of the border to see a health care system where the services provided to people are dependent upon their ability to pay and where hundreds of thousands have lost their life savings to pay for essential medical care for their families.

Reform Alliance campaign co-chair Jason Kenney has let the cat out of the bag by advocating the kind of American-style privatization of health care he supported in Alberta when he told the Calgary Herald, “I do support the idea of private health care.”

A two-tier system would siphon off critical resources and permit top physicians and nurses to abandon the public system for the more financially lucrative private system. Too many Canadians of all political stripes have fought too hard to establish and maintain a public, non-profit, universal, portable, accessible and comprehensive health care system to lose it to those who advocate one level of service for the rich and one for the rest.

Premier Harris, who claims to be neutral in the federal election campaign, and who said he would criticize any party whose policies would hurt Ontarians, should denounce the abandonment of medicare by the Stockwell Day Alliance.

DIALYSIS

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): With thanks to the Minister of Health, I wish to inform the House that kidney dialysis patients in Waterloo-Wellington will soon have more services available to them closer to home.

Flowing from the minister’s recent announcement of new funding for dialysis services, I’m pleased to report that the Grand River Hospital in Kitchener will receive over \$2 million to buy 15 new machines that will treat 90

more patients each year. They will also receive \$400,000 a year in new operating funds.

The Grand River Hospital in Kitchener-Waterloo, working in collaboration with the Guelph General Hospital, provides dialysis services to my constituents in Wellesley township, Wilmot township, Woolwich township, the city of Kitchener and Wellington county, and so far they have treated 250 kidney patients this year.

For the most part, kidney dialysis patients require treatments just to stay alive, and over the past few years demand for this care has surged by 15% annually.

One type of care is hemodialysis which draws blood from the body and cleans it through an artificial kidney machine. It is very time-consuming, occurring three times a week for up to five hours a day, so having this service available closer to home makes a huge difference to the quality of life of these patients.

I would like to commend Mr Dennis Egan, president and CEO of the Grand River Hospital, and the dedicated medical and nursing staff, and the staff at the Guelph General Hospital for their compassionate and caring approach to providing kidney dialysis services to my constituents in Waterloo-Wellington.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): Mr Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding a deferral of this afternoon’s vote.

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

Hon Mr Klees: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 28(h), a deferral of this afternoon’s vote on government notice of motion 69 be permitted and that, notwithstanding any deferred vote, the order for second reading of Bill 132 be permitted to be called tomorrow at orders of the day.

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

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Yesterday in the House I asked for unanimous consent for second and third reading of Bill 107. I received enough phone calls that it prompts me to seek unanimous consent to have Bill 107, An Act to proclaim Firefighters’ Memorial Day, called for second and third reading.

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

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Bill 6, An Act to protect Children involved in Prostitution, has received first and second reading, as you know. It has been referred to committee. In light of some very disturbing news about children being sexually

exploited and abused, I would ask for unanimous consent to have third reading at this time.

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

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Yesterday I raised with the Attorney General the issue of the fact that neither members of this Legislature nor citizens of Ontario could get copies of the daily transcript of the public inquiry at Walkerton.

The Attorney General said he was going to get back to us on this issue. I'm asking unanimous consent for the Attorney General to inform us what is happening and what the government's policy is with respect to this issue.

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

Mr Hampton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I raised this issue under 1(b) of the standing orders, which refers to "respects the democratic rights of members ... to hold the government accountable for its policies."

Members of this Legislature debated and finally made what I believe was a unanimous decision for a full public inquiry into the events surrounding the Walkerton tragedy. We were told that it was to be a full public inquiry.

I read from the Public Inquiries Act, Section 4:

"All hearings on an inquiry are open to the public except where the commission conducting the inquiry is of the opinion that,

(a) matters involving public security may be disclosed at the hearing."

Then it lists a number of exceptions, none of which I think apply.

1350

My point of order is this: I don't think this can be called a full and open public inquiry if members of this Legislature and general members of the public cannot get a copy of the transcript and cannot see what issues are being raised and what evidence is being entered. I think this is a fundamental rule of democracy. I'm asking you, Speaker, to inquire into this and to rule on it.

The Speaker: I thank the member for the point of order. As he probably knows, it is not a point of order. However, the member will remember that yesterday the Attorney General said he would look into it. I'm sure the Attorney General will be able to give us an answer in question period or at some point in time.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: with the number of calls I've had to my constituency office, I would request unanimous consent for second and third readings of Bill 122, which is An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act—

Interjection: No.

Mr Gerretsen: Please, let me finish what I'm about to say—to increase the penalties for driving with a suspended licence. This is a very important act and needs to be passed as soon as possible.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

CHILD POVERTY

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question today is for the Premier. I hear you have experienced some kind of awakening with respect to the unmet needs of Ontario children and that you're going to be launching some program with great fanfare this Friday. You can understand why you are somewhat suspect, Premier, when it comes to your commitment to Ontario's children and doing everything you reasonably can to ensure they find opportunity here. You as Premier have a very special responsibility for over 300,000 children who are growing up in families that receive welfare. That puts you into a very special relationship with those over 300,000 children. If you really want to help kids get off to the best start in life, as you say you do, you need to make sure their mothers can afford to look after them.

You established welfare rates in Ontario back in 1995. Since that time, rents have gone up, the cost of food has gone up and the cost of clothing has gone up, as have many other things. So I ask you, Premier, will you do the right thing for our kids and build a cost-of-living adjustment into your social assistance payments?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Certainly one of the things we on this side of the House are very proud of is that there used to be 500,000 or 600,000 children dependent on welfare, and now there are only 300,000. One of the things we have the greatest regret about is that there are still 300,000, half as many as under the Liberals and the NDP, but nonetheless 300,000 too many.

The secret to this success has been mandatory workfare; it has been an innumerable number of training programs and education programs. At the same time, it has been maintaining the overall compensation somewhere 30% to 40% to 50% higher than all the other provinces. We accomplished that by reducing the government portion by some 21%, still 15% higher than the rest of the provinces on average, and at the same time increasing the portion that can be earned back with our assistance and the community's assistance. So overall there have been no reductions, providing people have been able-bodied—

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

Mr McGuinty: Premier, I guess I shouldn't be surprised by that answer. You just can't do it. You can't speak with sincerity or conviction or genuine interest in Ontario's children, particularly those who are growing up in poverty. You have a very special relationship with those 300,000 whose parents receive welfare. For the past five years their incomes have been fixed, whereas

their costs have been increasing, in many cases dramatically.

Let me give you a specific. If you are a single mother today in Ontario and you have two children, you receive \$1,288 a month. In Toronto your average rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$920; in many cases, it's \$200 more than that. That means you have left at the end of the month somewhere between \$150 and \$350 for food, clothing, school supplies and the like. Don't you think it makes sense, don't you think it's in the interests of our children, those 300,000 whose parents receive welfare, that we put in a COLA clause when it comes to their social assistance payment?

Hon Mr Harris: Let me respond as well to some of the information that I think perhaps is a fundamental belief of policies you brought in without COLA clauses to create dependence. Perhaps there was no worse offender than the Liberal government between 1985 and 1990, with an economy growing, and the numbers of people, the numbers of children dependent upon welfare increased dramatically. Perhaps history, when it looks back, will say that was the biggest failure of the Liberal administration from 1985 to 1990.

Nonetheless, when we inherited this disastrous mess of creating dependence among children and families, we took a different philosophy and a different approach, one of breaking dependence, one of the dignity of a job, one of the value of work.

The Speaker: Order. The Premier take his seat, please. Stop the clock. I see that some of the members have some score cards in here. Unfortunately, it is not the Olympics and they are props. Since it's not the Olympics, I would ask that the members not use them. I see they're on the desk. I'm sure all the members are honourable and won't put them up. I should warn members, if I do see them up, I will have to have the Sergeant-at-Arms to confiscate them, so I would ask all of the members' cooperation.

Sorry for the interruption, Premier.

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): On a point of order, Speaker: I wonder if you could be so kind as to give us an explanation as to why you ordered the clock to be stopped when in fact it was the Liberals—

The Speaker: I thank the chief government whip. You should know that I regulate the time in here, and when we do that it ensures your members get more questions on. In fact, yesterday we got down to 15 to 16 questions, and it is my intention to get all members. Sometimes the cabinet ministers may not want some of the questions, but it ensures that your backbenchers get the questions, just as the third party does as well. It's my intention to get as many questions on here and to not have a situation where we spend more time doing points of order. It is question period.

The Premier.

Hon Mr Harris: There clearly is a philosophical difference, one that tends to create dependence and another that tends to help give the dignity of a job. To date, our programs have got 240,492 children off of

welfare. This is one of the greatest success stories in welfare in North America.

We have of course provided a myriad of new programs: new nutrition programs for those children—

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

Mr McGuinty: If we ever needed any confirmation that when it comes to kids this Premier is not in any way, shape or form for opportunity for kids, he's all about photo opportunities for himself. That's what this affair on Friday is going to be. That's what the speech at the board of trade was all about.

I asked him about 300,000 children growing up in families on welfare, and he talked to me about dependence. Well, you're damn right children happen to be dependent, and there's nothing wrong whatsoever with us acknowledging that, admitting to it, and acting in a responsible way.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock, please. Order. I need to hear the question. Sorry for the interruption. Leader of the official opposition.

Mr McGuinty: Again, Premier, you have special responsibility for over 300,000 children who find themselves in families today in Ontario who are reliant on welfare. That's what I want you to speak to right now when I sit down. When you look at the big picture, 42% of the food bank users in Ontario happen to be children. When you look at our homeless population, the fastest growing segment is young families with children.

You tell us, you make fine speeches these days about the need to help children to get off to a healthy start in life. You say you're committed. You say you are genuine. You are maintaining that you are sincere. You want to go to the private sector now and enlist them in this cause. Well, it seems to me that you'd better put your money where your mouth is, Premier. If you want to get the private sector to buy into this, then I think, at minimum, what you should be saying is that you're going to provide a cost-of-living allowance increase to all of our families who find themselves on social assistance.

1400

Hon Mr Harris: Let me give you what we do on the government side. Here, for example, is the average of the other provinces for a sole-support parent with a child under 12: \$826. Ontario's cash portion is \$957; earn-back, \$275; winter clothing and back-to-school allowances, \$15; GST credit, \$42; provincial property and sales tax credit, \$31; child tax benefit, \$110, for a total of \$1,430. Average of the other provinces: \$826.

We are, in that case, over \$600 higher than the other provinces. On the other hand, we acknowledge that it's still not enough. That is why we are still looking for more programs and new ways to help people on welfare who are able-bodied to help themselves. Indeed the program we're going to launch on Friday—I gather you said this to my speech on October 5 to the board of trade: "The Premier delivered a very eloquent"—

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

PARENTAL LEAVE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): Premier, I'm not looking for eloquence in your speeches; I'm looking for the eloquence of action, which is nowhere to be found when it comes to your commitment to Ontario children.

I want to test you once again when it comes to your commitment to Ontario children and to making sure they get off to a healthy start. In particular, I want to talk to you about the nurturing you've talked about in the past that it is so important our newborns receive.

The federal government has changed the law so that parental leave is going to be extended now from 25 to 50 weeks. In Ontario we've got a law on the books that says you can't have more than 35 weeks of parental leave. This means that if somebody in Ontario were to try to avail themselves of the new opportunities through the federal law and stay home for 50 weeks because they're committed to being there for their child, they would not be able to do so after 35 weeks. I'm just wondering, on behalf of all those parents who are looking to you in this matter, since the federal changes take effect December 31 of this year, will you commit here and now to ensuring that Ontario law is changed before this House rises for the Christmas recess?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): Let me say I'm delighted to hear the leader of the official opposition and the Liberal Party talk about testing, because you voted against every measure we brought in to test our teachers, to test our kids, to bring tests so we can see where things are going. Even though he's now talking about testing me, at least the word "test" has passed his lips, and this is a great improvement. I think we're getting somewhere.

Second, the program from the federal government that you mention, which kicks in next year, is one we are taking a look at. It is most unfortunate that with a \$20-billion or \$30-billion EI surplus, the federal government didn't put one red cent behind this. They've got all this excess money in the EI account and all they could say was that you could stay home an extra 17 weeks without pay. Would that, if they were really serious, they would take a look at that massive EI—

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

Mr McGuinty: We'll try again, Premier, and see if you might answer this time. In the speech you delivered to the Toronto board of trade on October 5, one of the things you said was, "There are still young children who go to school every morning unprepared to learn. They are hungry for adequate nourishment." But apparently you're not prepared to do anything to help ensure that social assistance families are getting a bit more money.

It says as well, "They are hungry for the nurturing and guidance that they could receive in a happy home." There are a number of parents who would like to take the year off, the full 50 weeks off, to spend the time with their newborn. They can't do that in Ontario because of a law

that says you can only get up to 35 weeks. The federal government has extended it at their end to 50 weeks.

I just need a yes or no answer from you: do you intend to extend it here in Ontario so that parents can access 50 weeks of parental leave according to the law?

Hon Mr Harris: I did respond to the question. I said it is something we are looking at. It is something the federal government announced that they plan to have in effect next year. I also indicated, when I was asked this by the media this morning, that we are getting lots of requests for lots of programs, lots of money and lots of new initiatives, and obviously we are trying to prioritize those before we come in with any new programs we may be able to fund.

If this is your absolute, number one, top priority, I appreciate getting that advice, and it is something we will take a look at. By the same token, all the federal government, which controls employment insurance with a massive surplus, did as say, "Others, you do this and we'll do it for our portion for the 17 weeks without pay"—

The Speaker: Order. The Premier's time is up. Final supplementary?

Mr McGuinty: Premier, I don't understand your hesitation on this matter. It's very simple, it's very direct and it doesn't cost the province any money. It's simply a matter of saying to Ontario parents who are trying to make plans for the coming year whether or not they will be able to stay home for 50 weeks.

You said in your speeches that you're committed to making sure that kids get a healthy start in life. You said you want to make sure they have the necessary nurturing, particularly in the home. So I'm asking you again, Premier, what stands in the way of your telling us here and now that you intend to go along with this federal initiative? Why is it that you cannot live up to your mouthed commitments to children? Why can't you just stand up and say, "Yes, this is in the interests of Ontario children; yes, this in the interests of Ontario parents"?

Hon Mr Harris: I appreciate that one day you're for this, the next day for that, and you'll have 50 different individual top priorities. That's the Ontario Liberal way: "One for all, all for one. We're for everything. Got a good program? We're for you." That's why we ended up with a massive deficit. That's why we ended up with a government trying to be all things to all people.

Rather than immediately parallel a federal program—by the way, many women's groups in particular have said it is a disgrace they didn't back it up with some of that EI surplus if they really were committed. Certainly today many women do work out periods of time longer than 35 weeks, some even longer than a year. But you want me today to commit to ordering that the top priority for women who are going to have children is that we order their employers, without pay, without the federal EI money, for 50 weeks. I'd actually like to consult with them first.

1410

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is to the Premier. Why does the Premier continue to block attempts to uncover the truth about the killing of Dudley George?

I asked the human rights commissioner whether your failure to call a public inquiry into this matter violates the Human Rights Code. Chief Commissioner Keith Norton's answer to me is that there is an arguable case. What's stopping him from beginning an investigation is that he doesn't have the power to compel you to give evidence or to produce the documents.

Premier, would you do the right thing? Would you give the human rights commissioner the power in this case to require production of the documents and to compel oral evidence?

Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier): No.

Mr Hampton: I find the Premier's answer interesting and contradictory, because not four years ago—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Stop the clock. Order. Sorry for the interruption. Leader of the third party.

Mr Hampton: Speaker, not four years ago the then Minister of Health was accused of releasing confidential health information, and you stood in this Legislature and said the Information and Privacy Commissioner ought to be granted the powers to force the production of documents and to compel civil servants to give evidence. That was over the confidentiality of health records. This is in regard to the death of a person, the death of an aboriginal man. The human rights commissioner is saying there is an arguable case that your government is in breach of the Human Rights Code, but he lacks the same powers the privacy commissioner lacked.

So I'm asking you, Premier, to do, in respect to the human rights commissioner, what you did with the privacy commissioner. We're dealing with a serious issue, the death of a man, and I'm asking you to give the human rights commissioner the power to compel the production of evidence. Will you do that?

The Speaker: Stop the clock. The Minister of Energy on a point of order.

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): Speaker, just to clarify for the honourable member, I was never accused of anything. It was a member of my staff—

The Speaker: It's not a point of order.

Final supplementary?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): Premier, the problem here is that you're inconsistent in your approach. On one hand you're prepared to give the privacy commissioner the ability to do the job; you've given the ability to subpoena. But when it comes to trying to find out what happened to somebody who was killed in this province, you're not prepared to be consistent and

you're not prepared to bring justice to the George family. I'm going to put it to you very straight, Premier, and I tell you I'm very offended by the laughter from your caucus when this issue is raised. At the end of the day, a person died and you're stymieing the process to find what happened.

Very simply, Premier, I ask you, why is it that you're inconsistent, that on one hand you're prepared to give the powers of subpoena to the privacy commissioner, but once the human rights commissioner says they don't have the power to do that, you're unwilling to do it? Why?

Hon Mr Harris: Let me be very clear: my caucus was laughing at your leader—justifiably, I might add. That is what they were laughing at: the inconsistency of your leader, the silliness of your leader and the silly allegations you're making about one of our members and a minister of the crown—actually something despicable, I would say. But nonetheless, since you support your leader in all these actions, that's what we were laughing at.

Secondly, the full production of documents can be complied with in many ways: first of all, the courts. Secondly, nobody said no to an inquiry following the cases that are there. Thirdly, all the documents are being produced and they're all being advanced without the human rights commissioner and without an inquiry. They are being advanced at the request of the courts as a matter of a civil lawsuit. So there is no need to extend further powers to have some other body do exactly what we are already doing and complying with. That's why you're so silly.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is also for the Premier—and I say there is nothing silly about a man dying and us wanting to get to the bottom of what happened.

Premier, I want to ask you about the daily problems in emergency rooms in our hospitals, and I want to ask you to become involved because we get conflicting information from the Minister of Health. Last week I asked her to do the right thing and reopen the Wellesley Hospital emergency room. She said that 23,000 more people would be seen in the new St Michael's emergency ward to make up for the closure. But yesterday she admitted to reporters that there is no increase in capacity, that her information was incorrect.

Premier, yesterday 80% of the hospitals in the greater Toronto area were turning away ambulances, just like last Wednesday and last Thursday and the week before. Your minister refuses to acknowledge that there's a problem here. There's a big problem here, and it's going to get worse in the flu season. Will you get involved and ensure this crisis doesn't develop any more than it has already?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I think the leader of the third party is fully aware of the fact that we have identified this as an issue of concern. In fact, it is an issue of concern to all

governments coast to coast in Canada. Every year in the last number of years, whether you're in British Columbia or in Quebec or elsewhere, there have been tremendous pressures in emergency rooms, and I believe each and every government is attempting to do everything possible, just as we are.

As the member knows, we are expanding the capacity in the emergency rooms. There are new emergency rooms under construction and being renovated. We are introducing this year, for the first time in all of North America, a free flu vaccine in order to reduce the number of people who will need to access emergency rooms.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary.

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): Minister, since February 1998 you've been promising, and I quote you in your press releases, "immediate steps" to correct this problem, this crisis. Last August you said you were going to build on the "success" of your 10-point plan in Toronto. What success, Minister? Day after day after day we're seeing 80% of hospitals on redirect. The announcements you've made have panned out to be absolutely nothing in terms of affecting the issue in our emergency rooms, and the root cause of it is that you've closed hospital beds.

You were wrong on your issue of capacity. You were wrong when you said to me in this House day after day that the problem was because there is an increase in patients. You have the numbers. You know that the number of patients is flatlined. You continue to provide incorrect information, and the problem continues to get worse.

Why should we believe anything you say? What are you going to do to make sure lives aren't at risk in emergency rooms of the GTA?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Our government is very committed, as I know are all governments across Canada, to improving and relieving the emergency room pressure. Unfortunately, the member has not recognized the tremendous steps that have been taken since 1998, when we set up the emergency room task force to identify what needed to be done.

I will tell you that all of the measures that have been undertaken have been done in consultation with and on the advice of our hospitals, our ambulance sector and our health care professionals such as our doctors and nurses. I'm also very pleased to say that those within the system have indicated that there are improvements. There is better coordination, and great strides have been taken.

That doesn't, of course, take into consideration the fact that the population continues to grow and age, but I can assure the member that as we continue to build new long-term-care beds, expand—

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

SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I have a question for the Minister of Education. Minister, we

have here a letter that you have apparently written to the school boards and some other education entities in Ontario. In it, you seem to be finally admitting that there might be a problem with extracurricular. It's 56 days into the school year. Last March you cancelled extracurricular activities with your Bill 74. All over the province there are these difficulties. You have written a letter and you have asked the boards to tell you whether there are any extracurricular problems.

Minister, you've got your head partly out of the sand. What I want to know on behalf of Ontario students today is, will you admit that your actions are primarily responsible for cancelling extracurricular activities and that you will start today to do something positive—not the negative hammer that you told parents you would be using, but something positive—to solve the problem, to actually fix the problem and put these back in the schools? Will you tell us today that you will finally get around to doing that?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education): Mr Speaker, you will forgive me if my jaw is on the desk. There "might" be a problem with extracurricular? Where has the honourable member been? There has been a problem with extracurricular activities where teachers have been choosing to withdraw these activities as a work-to-rule, denying students opportunities that can open abilities for them to learn better, that can open up jobs, that can open up scholarships in post-secondary institutions.

The reason we are taking, have taken and will continue to take the steps we are is because there has been a problem with extracurricular. Parents and students are quite right to be very frustrated about that. I have encouraged them to continue to express their views. We are going to make sure that in those schools where this is still a problem, steps are taken—

1420

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Stop the clock. The member for Windsor West, I noticed, came in a little late. I warned everybody not to use that prop. She may have missed the warning.

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): I won't do that any more.

The Speaker: I appreciate that.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Just so you know, the next time I see one, you're thrown out. For those who may not be here—

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Durham, come to order.

For somebody who may not be here and comes in, too bad. The next time I see it, you're going to be asked to leave and you're going to be named. I tried to be nice and now everybody's kidding around. It was funny in the beginning. It's no longer funny. I feel like a grade 1 teacher trying to capture contraband in here. Our time's up. Let's get on with the question. The next time I see the signs in here, you're going to be named.

Sorry for the interruption, Minister.

Hon Frank Klees (Minister without Portfolio): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Cabinet ministers have a schedule that they attempt to keep. Once again—

The Speaker: That's not a point of order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Take your seat, chief government whip.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Member for Essex, come to order. It's his last warning.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, his last warning. Hopefully the table's keeping track of all these names. I'm losing track very quickly. Quite frankly, if we hadn't had two points of order, the cabinet ministers might have been out of here a lot more quickly.

The Minister of Education.

Hon Mrs Ecker: We said very clearly to those individuals in some of the unions who continue to use this as a tactic to protest, to try and make points in whatever fight they might have with the school board and the province, that this was not appropriate, that we were going to take steps, if it was not resolved, to resolve this. I think it's important before we take further steps that I seek the advice of and consult with our education partners, and we are taking that step.

Mr Kennedy: We can understand why the government wanted an interruption, because, alleluia, finally the Minister of Education understands there's a problem in the schools, which she has stood here time after time and denied.

Minister, the students of the province are asking you to come clean and clean up your mess. They know you're responsible. Ainsley Head, a grade 11 student at Kingston Collegiate, says, "Teachers do not have the time to supervise groups like the drama club because of the extra time they're having to spend teaching classes." Students, such as the Toronto District School Board's super council, say that the changes your government introduced were sudden and severe and affected the quality of their education in a negative way.

Minister, you've got your head partly out of the sand. You keep saying thousands of teachers are doing extracurricular. Tens of thousands of teachers can't do extracurricular because of you. Will you let teachers go back to doing extracurricular activities? Will you back off from the changes that took them away from Ontario students?

Hon Mrs Ecker: I would like to ask the honourable member, when there were students in this province who were being denied scholarships, when there were teachers in this province who against the advice of their union were going out and doing extracurricular activities and were being harassed by other teachers, being harassed by union representatives, where was the honourable member's concern for that teacher who had the courage to do what the students needed—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Minister of Education, please take her seat. Member for Kingston and the Islands, it's the last warning for him as well.

Minister of Education, sorry for the interruption.

Hon Mrs Ecker: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Where was the honourable member when those things were happening to students and teachers in this province?

He says, "Change things." What change would he like to ask for, that we back off on the new curriculum, that we stop standardized testing, that we stop the teacher testing program, that we say our teachers should not be the same kind of standard—

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough): My question is for the Minister of Health. Recently, Maple Leaf goaltender Curtis Joseph had an urgent MRI for his groin injury. Sports celebrities continually jump the queue with non-life-threatening injuries while seriously ill citizens are put on hold, such as cancer patients who wait two or three months for their appointments.

Can you please explain why Curtis Joseph had an urgent MRI for his groin injury? Can you please tell this House if there is a two-tier system developing in Ontario's health care?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): There is definitely not a two-tier system developing. As far as the individual who supposedly had access to an urgent MRI, I can only say that in 1992, the NDP government passed a regulation allowing for third-party usage of MRIs. Apparently this violates neither the Canada Health Act nor the Health Insurance Act. I suspect that's what explains his use of the MRI.

Mr Stewart: I'm pleased that that type of information can get out and we can know all the facts. What is this government doing to ensure that indeed we don't have a two-tier health care system?

Hon Mrs Witmer: We have increased the number of MRIs in this province quite dramatically since 1995. In 1995 there were only 12 MRIs. We are now moving toward tripling the number to 37. I'm very pleased to say that we are now developing a plan to further expand beyond the 37 MRIs in order to ensure that people in this province have access. As the member knows, one of the new MRIs is going to be up and operating in his community of Peterborough.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. You'll recall that two years ago your government amended the Environmental Protection Act and the Ontario Water Resources Act to institute administrative penalties which would allow your ministry to levy a fine against a company which is not complying with the mandatory reporting and record-keeping procedures which are required by law.

Your colleague and former environment minister Norm Sterling said at the time this bill was debated in the House that these penalties were “needed to bring our province in line with other jurisdictions and to deter and punish polluters and protect our environment.” Remember, this was two years ago, in 1998.

Will you kindly inform the House of the total number of administrative penalties that have been applied and the amount of the administrative penalties that have been collected under that 1998 legislation passed with so much fanfare.

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of the Environment): I want to say to the member for St Catharines that the ministry is committed to maintaining and enforcing Ontario’s environmental laws. Our enforcement activities are consistent with our priorities of protecting the natural environment and human health. The Ministry of the Environment has a wide variety of enforcement tools for use by ministry staff to ensure compliance. These include such measures as inspection, investigation, prosecution and the issuance of tickets and control orders.

A strong enforcement effort is the foundation of the provincial program, providing a deterrent effect which motivates compliance and provides fairness in the marketplace to ensure that non-compliant facilities do not gain an unfair competitive advantage over others.

1430

Mr Bradley: I’ll help the minister out. The answer to the question is zero, none, zilch. You passed the bill in 1998—lots of fanfare, lots of tough talk. You had a provision for administrative penalties. Since 1998 you have applied none of those administrative penalties—no charges. You have collected zero in fines, despite the fanfare.

Minister, how can you possibly be taken seriously when you bring in this so-called new toughest legislation in the country when two years ago you passed a bill in this House and you have not yet prosecuted one person or collected one penny in fines? And why have you removed that particular provision from your present bill that is before the House for consideration?

Hon Mr Newman: The member opposite raises the question of the toughest environmental penalties bill. I’m glad he raises that issue because what this does is increase the maximum fine for a first-time offender in this province, should the bill be passed, from \$100,000 to \$4 million per day. It increases the maximum fine for a first conviction for a corporation from \$1 million per day to \$6 million per day. For subsequent corporate polluters, the penalty goes from a maximum of \$2 million per day to \$10 million per day.

The bill also deals with administrative monetary penalties. I think the section the member opposite is talking about deals with directors and officers of corporations. In fact, what we want to do is ensure that those penalties fall under the regulation and the legislation rather than under administrative monetary penalties.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): My question is to the minister responsible for children. As you know, our Premier has shown tremendous leadership as a champion for early child development. I know that Ontario’s Early Years Study is receiving a great deal of attention, not just across the province but across the country and internationally as well. What’s even more exciting is that Ontario is putting the advice and recommendations of the study into action with the early years action plan.

Minister, I know one component of this plan is demonstration projects in five communities, one of which happens to be in London. Can you tell me what the projects are doing to help Ontario’s children get the best start in life?

Hon Margaret Marland (Minister without Portfolio [Children]): Ontario’s early years action plan really began with the foresight of one individual, our Premier. When Premier Harris commissioned the Early Years Study, he did something remarkable for all Ontario’s children by helping us understand the critically important role we all play in helping our children grow, develop and succeed.

As the study recommended, we have commissioned demonstration projects in five diverse regions of the province to test different approaches to support early child development and parenting. These projects are acting as practical examples of how we can build early child development and parenting centres throughout the province, and the voluntary, charitable and business sectors together will support Ontario’s children and families.

Mr Mazzilli: I know that one of the jobs of these demonstration projects is to raise public awareness of the importance of the early years in shaping our children’s future. I understand that the projects are bringing partners together from the community to support this initiative. Minister, have the demonstration projects been successful in bringing the community together to support these initiatives?

Hon Mrs Marland: I am pleased to report that communities are rallying behind the demonstration projects, providing volunteer help, financial and in-kind contributions. For example, in the member’s community of London, neighbourhood advisory committees are offering support and guidance. Local businesses and charities, including London Life, Beaver Foods and the Kiwanis Club, have made financial contributions. Additionally, a network of 21 neighbourhood early child development and parenting support centres has already been developed in London. The hands-on experience will be extremely valuable to other communities across the province as they move forward to develop their own local supports for children and families in their area.

I would like to commend everyone who has been involved to date, and encourage all Ontarians to get involved to help our children get the best possible start in life.

KING'S HEALTH CENTRE

Ms Frances Lankin (Beaches-East York): My question is to the Minister of Health. I want to return to the issue of King's Health Centre.

Police are now saying that there could be over \$100 million in fraud. Yesterday after question period you acknowledged that there is a concern that OHIP fraud might be involved. We're hearing of other allegations of wrongdoing. We have heard that King's Health Centre was making deals with corporations to allow that company's employees to jump the queue to see physicians for OHIP-billed services. If that's the case, it's extra-billing and it's a violation, a contravention of the Canada Health Act.

Minister, if we've been hearing this, surely you've heard about it. You're responsible for the regulation of this clinic. Can you tell us what your investigations have revealed?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As you know, the government takes the issue of OHIP fraud very seriously. In fact, that was why we did set up a very dedicated fraud program unit, and I'm very pleased to say that that unit in the province of Ontario is staffed by 20 OPP officers who do nothing but conduct investigations into allegations of health system fraud. In fact, we are the only province in Canada to contract police officers dedicated to health fraud investigations.

As far as the King's Health Centre is concerned, the Metropolitan Toronto Police Service is investigating allegations of fraud in regard to the operation of the King's Health Centre. I am aware that the OPP health fraud investigation unit that we have has assigned an officer to work with the Toronto squad to deal with the matter in an effort to determine if OHIP in any way has been a victim.

Ms Lankin: But Minister, I was asking you about queue-jumping and about alleged contraventions of the Canada Health Act. That's not something that the OHIP fraud squad will be looking into.

Quite frankly, the whole raison d'être of the King's Health Centre is to profit from the Ontario health insurance plan. It's about fast-tracking wealthy patients to provide a deluxe service that they could pay for.

It was your shining example of entrepreneurial health care. I want to know how you could allow a clinic to come into this province ready to bilk the public of millions of dollars and not be watching the store. There are allegations of \$100 million of fraud, investor fraud and OHIP fraud. There are allegations of contravention of the Canada Health Act.

I want to know when this clinic was last inspected, and I want to know what steps you took to ensure that they weren't facilitating queue-jumping for wealthy Ontarians at the cost of the rest of us.

Hon Mrs Witmer: Again, I would indicate to the member that the allegations of fraud are taken very seriously and there is an investigation ongoing. Any

further comment would be totally inappropriate at this point in time.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, it has to do with the continuing crisis of medical care in the Toronto region that you have created.

I stood on December 21 of last year and asked you a question with respect to the then pending closure of Wellesley Central Hospital. I suggested then that a moratorium would be appropriate. Almost 10 months later, the NDP is actually on to that issue.

Instead of having a moratorium on the closing of the Wellesley and the elimination of medical services, you declared war on medical services. You moved forward not only to close that hospital but also to declare in a scrum that it was a mystery to you as to why this problem was occurring.

Madam Minister, before you make this problem even worse, will you stand in your place today and say that the closing, on March 31 of this coming year, of Women's College will be put on hold until such time as confidence is restored in the system in the Toronto region?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Well, I'll say one thing. The federal government today is spending \$1 billion less than they were in 1994-95.

Interjections.

Hon Mrs Witmer: If the members aren't interested in listening to the answer, that's OK.

Interjections.

1440

Mr Smitherman: We've seen an incredible occurrence in this Legislature, the loss of confidence in that minister, not only by the public but by her cabinet colleagues. Yesterday we saw the phenomenon of all of them, between questions, feeding her answers. We've seen wonky numbers coming from her. We've seen her declare a mystery in the crisis. Watching that minister work is like watching a car accident in slow motion.

Minister, members of your government are tripping over themselves to try and help prop you up, and confidence is in decline in the Toronto region. Why do you continue to reject good advice that's out there? Over 13,000 people last year visited Women's College Hospital for emergency medical services. Given the crisis that is clearly ensuing, will you stand in your place today and call for a moratorium on the closing of Women's College Hospital until it's demonstrated that we don't have a crisis in ER services in Toronto?

Hon Mrs Witmer: The behaviour of this individual is a little surprising. But again, maybe I should remind the member that in the past five years it would have been very helpful if they had asked the federal government to restore the \$1 billion they took away from our province.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister of Health take her seat. Member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, I

warned you, you can't yell. I'm afraid I'm going to have to name you and ask George Smitherman to leave for the day.

Mr Smitherman was escorted from the chamber.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It's really interesting to hear this comment, especially when I heard the Minister of Health announce last Friday \$481-million additional funding in the province of Ontario.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services today.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Member take his seat. Stop the clock. Order. The member has the floor. Member for Simcoe North.

Mr Dunlop: My question today is for the Minister of Correctional Services. I was disturbed by the article in today's Toronto Sun. It's called "Jailhouse Rocks," and it's with respect to inmates at the Vanier Centre for Women in Brampton enjoying a Halloween party on Saturday, October 28. The reporter alleges these offenders "whooped it up at a two-hour Halloween party" while correctional workers were paid overtime to supervise this weekend-behind-bars bash. This is beginning to sound like Club Fed in Joliet, Quebec. Minister, can you confirm these allegations?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): I thank the member for the question. I must say to him that his response to this particular issue was the same as mine, and I think it's the same as other law-abiding taxpayers in this province. I was totally outraged when I read this morning that this had happened in one of our correctional facilities at Vanier. I asked staff to look into the matter, and they've told me that this particular situation has been going on for some 20 years in this province. Frankly, that doesn't matter. That doesn't make it any better, and that doesn't make it right. We believe corrections in Ontario should be a place where people don't want to go. Jails should be places where people don't want to go, and so I have instructed that those programs and that program in particular be immediately cancelled.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Sampson: I hear from the opposition that they agree with that position, and I welcome their support as we try to make—

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

Mr Dunlop: Thank you, Minister, for that response. It's comforting to know you find this occurrence just as appalling as I do.

You mentioned that this Halloween bash has been happening for the last 25 years. Will you put a stop to this once and for all, unlike the previous governments before us?

Hon Mr Sampson: Yes, I can confirm we have put a stop to this. I can also confirm that it's an indication of

what I've been saying for a number of months now, and that is the system in Ontario corrections needs to be reformed and modified. Of course the members opposite have numerous times been saying, and I think the leader of the official opposition has said that corrections in Ontario is a model for other jurisdictions to follow. I now gather they don't believe it's a model to follow. I only say to the members opposite, it's very difficult to follow your position on law and order. Certainly it would be helpful for me, and I know it would be helpful for the rest of Ontarians, if you could put your policy position down on paper and stick with it for longer than five minutes. That would be helpful for all of us to follow where you are on this particular issue.

I think we've been quite clear. We stand for victims, we stand for a tough and effective correctional system in the province, and we intend to implement—

The Speaker: The minister's time is up.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Earlier this month you were widely reported to have announced the long-awaited expansion of Highway 401 through Carnage Alley. This announcement was welcomed by every community in southwestern Ontario, from London all the way to Windsor, where residents must drive on a narrow, congested highway of death. Dozens of media reports cheered your announcement, but then your staff went into denial mode. The Tory spin machine was busy correcting the wrong impression you gave the trade corridors conference.

Minister, those extra lanes are needed now. Carnage Alley is about to turn into Garbage Alley. Almost 200,000 additional trucks will travel 401 annually. You must take immediate action. It will take five years to build the extra lanes. We cannot wait until 2011. Your projections don't take into account the garbage trucks nor the increased truck traffic created by the booming North American economy.

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): You're absolutely shameful.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Member, take a seat. Minister of Labour, this is his last warning.

Sorry for the interruption.

Mr Hoy: Your projections do not take into account the trucks that will be hauling garbage nor the increased truck traffic created by North America's booming economy. When will you recognize that public safety is at stake and build these extra lanes?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): Quite frankly, to the honourable member, I would say we've always known that your caucus has extremely flawed research, but this tops it all. In reference to the conference that you're speaking about, they took time out the next day to debate the fact—how can you believe the press when the report was so egregiously wrong? With respect to your local newspaper, the editorial had a story

about the incorrect information while they printed a retraction on page 16. So find out what they're doing.

Mr Hoy: I would suggest to the minister, why don't you ever just say what you do mean?

The people in southwestern Ontario don't care about your ill-founded projections. They care about public safety. They are afraid to drive the highway today. The extra lanes are needed now. My leader, Dalton McGuinty, recognized the critical problems on Carnage Alley. He has called for photo radar on Carnage Alley. He wants the money from photo radar to be used for more police. Two coroners' inquests investigating the horrific deaths have also called for photo radar. Will you take immediate action to implement photo radar to protect the public who must drive on this particular highway?

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat.

I'm sorry, member for York West, I did see that. You can't continue to do that. I asked the member not to do it. I saw it. I'm naming the member for York West. I'd ask you to leave, please. Stop the clock.

Mr Sergio was escorted from the chamber.

The Speaker: I believe the member was wrapping up.

Mr Hoy: Thank you, Speaker. Two coroners' inquests investigating the horrific deaths have also called for photo radar. Will you take immediate action to implement photo radar to protect the public who must use this killer highway?

Hon Mr Turnbull: I would say that our government has spent more money on our highways than any government in history. This compares very favourably with the federal government, which is spending how much on Ontario's highways this year? Nothing. How much are they spending on Ontario's highways next year? Nothing. And yet they take more than \$2 billion a year out of Ontario in gasoline taxes.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Minister, take a seat. Now we'll just let the clock wind down. There are five minutes left. If you want to fool around, we'll just let the clock wind down and nobody will get another question.

Thank you very much. The Minister of Transportation.

Hon Mr Turnbull: Indeed, aggressive driving is the most serious danger, and that is why we're addressing it through a whole series of measures. We know that tailgating, rapid lane changing, driving under the influence of alcohol and not buckling seat belts are very serious problems which are not addressed by photo radar. We believe in increasing the police presence. This is why we have done this, and we're having good effect, because Ontario roads—

The Speaker: The minister's time is up.

1450

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is also directed to the Minister of Transportation, now that he's warmed up. My question relates to a recent trip to la belle province. I drove along Highway 20 from Rivière-

du-Loup to the Ontario border. That stretch of highway through Quebec is extremely well maintained, with the grass well cut. Actually, it looks much like a parkway. But upon entering Ontario and driving west on the 401, I noticed a lot of weeds, long grass and unsightly brush along the shoulders of the road. The comparatively shabby look of Ontario's major highway gives the impression that our province is a poor cousin in the federation.

Minister, whether we like it or not, many of us judge a book by its cover. Therefore, when and how do you plan to improve the appearance of our provincial highways?

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): I think the honourable member raises a very important point. Following years and years of underfunding by the two previous governments—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister, take a seat. The Minister of Transportation.

Hon Mr Turnbull:—we had to rationalize the use of mowing. Indeed, we still do it for safety reasons, for infrastructure preservation and for noxious weed control. I'm delighted to say we have reduced the use of herbicides by 85%.

The adopt-a-highway program has been very successful. Its components are collecting litter, transplanting shrubs, trees and wildflowers—

The Speaker: The minister's time is up.

Mr Galt: Thank you for that response, Minister. I did miss one thing: did you say "noxious weeds" or "noxious Liberals"?

I appreciate that this government has worked to improve our provincial highways since the lost decade, but I'm sure you'll recall that during that decade in which there was no investment—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock. Government members, come to order, please. I know it's fun-loving and done with humour, but it is too noisy.

The member for Northumberland.

Mr Galt: I'm sure you'll recall the decade in which there was no investment in our highways, meaning the initial cause of the deterioration of our highway system. How much have you been investing recently in our highway system, and what are your future plans?

Hon Mr Turnbull: We have a record \$1-billion budget for highways this year. Just in the GTA, for example, we're investing \$200 million this year. We announced a \$75-million extension of Highway 417 in eastern Ontario. These are indicative of our commitment to infrastructure.

Do we need to do more with respect to weeds? I think we do. But our first priority was to restore the roads the two previous governments let go.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY POLICE OFFICERS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Solicitor General. The Solicitor

General will know it is a fundamental principle of most western democracies that the military, the judiciary and the police should remain politically neutral, that because of the power they have to put people in jail and to take away people's freedom, they should not express preference for any political parties or for any political candidates.

We are told by sources within your government that you intend to change, behind closed doors, one part of that, that you intend to give the police the capacity to engage in partisan politics, that you intend to do it without any consultation with the public or any democratic debate. Would you confirm for us today, Solicitor General, that that is not the case, that you would never consider doing something like that without, first, a democratic debate and full consultation with the public of Ontario?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Solicitor General): First of all, let me put some context here. As you know, the city of Toronto Police Services Board had several opinions, which they forwarded to our ministry. We're examining and reviewing those opinions right now.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: I hear some chirping over there. I might remind the member, here's a press release from October 3, 1991: "Solicitor General Allan Pilkey"—remember that name? You were around the cabinet table at the time—"announced today a Police Services Act regulation which defines permissible political activities for Ontario municipal police officers. He said the regulation strikes a balance of the rights of all Ontarians to receive the same high degree of impartiality and politically neutral policing services while guaranteeing the individual rights of police officers as members of the community."

Interjection.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: You're spouting off right now about police officers being involved with elections. Sir, your member from Niagara Centre was endorsed by the Niagara police services. That's a bit of hypocrisy on your behalf.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Before we begin petitions, pursuant to standing order 37(a), the member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer given by the Minister of Health on Thursday concerning St Michael's emergency department. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

PETITIONS

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This petition is to the Ontario Legislature and deals with the ongoing

discrimination against northerners. They're demanding that the Harris government eliminate the health care apartheid.

"Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

"Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

"Whereas a recently released Oracle research poll confirms that 92% of Ontarians support equal health travel funding;

"Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province; and

"Whereas we support the efforts of OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Loughheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario."

Of course I am in complete agreement with this petition. I affix my signature to this 2,345-name petition.

REGISTRATION OF VINTAGE CARS

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): Mr Speaker, yesterday you may have noticed an antique car display on the front lawn. It was thanks to the vintage and restoration people, and they have sent a petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are many Ontarians who have a passion for perfection in the restoration of vintage vehicles; and

"Whereas unlike many other jurisdictions, Ontario vintage automobile enthusiasts are unable to register their vehicles using the original year of manufacture licence plates; and

"Whereas Durham MPP John R. O'Toole and former MPP John Parker have worked together to recognize the desire of vintage car collectors to register their vehicles using vintage plates; and

"Whereas the Honourable Donald Turnbull as Minister of Transportation has the power to change the existing regulation"—in fact he's here today;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: to pass Bill 99 or to amend the Highway Traffic Act" to allow licence plates of the year of manufacture "to be used on vintage automobiles."

I'm pleased to support and sign this petition.

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NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT SUPPLEMENT

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I have a petition here from AWARE, the Action on Women's Addictions—Research and Education organization in Kingston. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario claws back the national child benefit supplement from families on social assistance,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop its discriminatory practice and return the national child benefit supplement directly to its rightful recipient—the family on social assistance.”

I have signed it as I am in total agreement with it, and I am handing it to Cameron, our page.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I have a petition signed by a number of people from my riding. It reads as follows:

“Petition to the Ontario Legislature

“Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

“Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

“Whereas a recently released Oracle research poll confirms that 92% of Ontarians support equal health travel funding;

“Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province; and

“Whereas we support the efforts of the newly formed OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Loughheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario,” who, I might add, was fired by Mike Harris, “Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario.”

I sign that petition.

RAMSEY INDUSTRIAL ROAD

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ramsey Industrial Road from Sultan to Highway 144 is used by thousands of people annually;

“Whereas the Ramsey Industrial Road is a treacherous gravel road;

“Whereas thousands of people must use this road to travel for business, medical and personal reasons;

“Whereas the economic development of the area is strangled by the lack of a paved highway;

“Whereas the communities of Manitouwadge, White River, Hornepayne, Dubreuilville and Wawa all support the efforts made by Chapleau mayor Earle J. Freeborn to have this road upgraded;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario government to immediately approve the paving and upgrading of the Ramsey Industrial Road to a provincial highway.”

I am pleased to affix my signature.

FRAIS DE TRANSPORT
AUX FINS MÉDICALES

M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-Baie James): I have here another petition, this time from the community of Hearst, that reads

“Petition to the Ontario Legislature”:

« Les gens du nord exigent que le gouvernement Harris mette fin », en matière des soins de santé, à l'apartheid qui est en place ;

« Attendu que, d'une part, le programme de subventions accordées aux résidents du nord de l'Ontario pour frais de transport à des fins médicales offre un remboursement partiel au taux de 30,4 cents par kilomètre », à sens unique seulement, « à l'intention des personnes atteintes de cancer, et que, d'autre part, la politique de déplacement pour les gens du sud de l'Ontario rembourse en entier les coûts de transport, de repas, et d'hébergement ;

« Attendu qu'une tumeur cancéreuse ne connaît aucune politique de transport pour les soins de santé ni de région géographique ;

« Attendu qu'un sondage de recherche Oracle publié récemment confirme que 92 % des Ontariens appuient un financement égal de transport à des fins médicales ;

« Attendu que les résidents du nord de l'Ontario paient le même montant d'impôts et ont droit au même accès aux soins de santé, ainsi qu'à tous les services du gouvernement et à tous les droits de personne inhérents que les autres résidents de la province ;

« En conséquence, il est résolu que les soussignés exigent que le gouvernement Mike Harris propose immédiatement de financer en entier les frais de transport à l'intention des résidents du nord de l'Ontario atteints de cancer et mette fin à l'apartheid qui existe présentement dans la province de l'Ontario en matière de soins de santé. »

Je soussigne cette pétition.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the activity of farming is being severely threatened and restricted by urban sprawl and infrastructure construction in the GTA;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to provide protection of the class 1 to 3 farmland and the business of agriculture and provide a competitive environment conducive to the business of agriculture.”

I affix my signature, as I am in complete agreement.

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario has introduced Bill 112, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act;

“Whereas the McMichael Canadian Art Collection has grown and evolved into one of Canada’s best-loved and most important art gallery collections of Canadian art;

“Whereas the passage of Bill 112 would:

“constitute a breach of trust made with hundreds of other donors to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection;

“vest too much power in the hands of the founders, who have been more than compensated for their generosity;

“diminish the authority and responsibility of the board of trustees;

“limit the focus of the art collection and hamper the gallery’s ability to raise private funds, thereby increasing its dependency on the taxpayers; and

“significantly reduce its capacity and strength as an educational resource;

“Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Ontario Legislature to withdraw Bill 112.”

I affix my signature to this.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My petition is to the Ontario Legislature.

“Northerners demand Harris government eliminate health care apartheid.

“Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

“Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

“Whereas a recently released Oracle research poll confirms that 92% of Ontarians support equal health travel funding;

“Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to

health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province; and

“Whereas we support the efforts of the newly formed OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Lougheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario.”

I very happily sign my name to this petition.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): I have some more of those 60,000 petitions that were gathered last week in relation to the discriminatory treatment of northerners under the northern health travel grant. This is a petition to the Ontario Legislature.

“Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

“Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

“Whereas a recently released Oracle research poll confirms that 92% of Ontarians support equal health travel funding;

“Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province; and

“Whereas we support the efforts of the newly formed OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Lougheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario.”

We’ll keep on reading these till we win this battle. I’m happy to sign my name to the petition.

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition regarding this government’s ongoing discrimination against northern cancer patients. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the northern health travel grant offers a reimbursement of partial travel costs at a rate of 30.4 cents per kilometre one way for northerners forced to travel for cancer care while travel policy for southerners who travel for cancer care features full reimbursement costs for travel, meals and accommodation;

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“Whereas a cancer tumour knows no health travel policy or geographic location;

"Whereas northern Ontario residents pay the same amount of taxes and are entitled to the same access to health care and all government services and inherent civil rights as residents living elsewhere in the province;

"Whereas we support the efforts of the newly formed OSECC (Ontarians Seeking Equal Cancer Care), founded by Gerry Lougheed Jr, former chair of Cancer Care Ontario, Northeast Region, to correct this injustice against northerners travelling for cancer treatment;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to fund full travel expenses for northern Ontario cancer patients and eliminate the health care apartheid which exists presently in the province of Ontario."

This is signed by a number of residents in my riding. I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to it, and I'd like to thank Gerry Lougheed Jr for all his efforts.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a number of petitions to the Legislative Assembly. Most of these appear to be signed by people in Nairn Centre.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Espanola area services a population of 12,000 people and government statistics project a growth in population of people over the age of 75 to reach an estimated 336 by the year 2003;

"Whereas the long-term formula for the distribution of long-term-care beds would indicate a need for between 59 and 76 beds by the year 2003;

"Whereas just 30 long-term-care beds exist in the Espanola area with the result that a lengthy waiting list already exists and people are being placed in long-term-care facilities far distant from their home communities;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario government to immediately approve a proposal by the Espanola General Hospital, supported by the Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin and Sudbury district health units for an additional 34 long-term-care beds in Espanola."

I'm pleased to affix my signature to these petitions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 132, An Act to enact the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000, repeal the Degree Granting Act and change the title of and make amendments to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities Act—

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): On a point of order, Speaker: If this minister is going to be a party to shutting down democracy in this place, the least the government can do is provide quorum.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Tony Martin): Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: —when Bill 132 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered to the standing committee on general government; and

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

That the standing committee on general government shall be authorized to meet for three days of public hearings and an additional day for clause-by-clause consideration; and

That the committee be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment on the final day until completion of clause-by-clause consideration; and

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

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following the completion of clause-by-clause consideration, and not later than December 5, 2000. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the date provided, the bill shall be deemed to have been passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House;

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

That, when the order for third reading is called, the remainder of the sessional day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, the debate time being divided equally among the three caucuses, after which the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment;

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

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

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Would the minister confirm that the government is moving closure on this most important bill that’s in front of the House?

The Acting Speaker: That’s not a point of order. Mrs Cunningham.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: I would like to take this opportunity to move time allocation for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000. This legislation is too important to Ontario students to be delayed unnecessarily. The three days of public debate this bill would receive in committee, plus a day devoted to a detailed, clause-by-clause examination of the bill, would come on top of an already extensive stakeholder consultation process.

Before this bill was introduced, my parliamentary assistant, Tina Molinari, the member for Thornhill, and I held consultations with stakeholders throughout the spring and summer to get their best advice on how to make these policy decisions work for students. In addition to these face-to-face consultations, we encouraged everyone with a particular interest to submit in writing to our office their ideas and recommendations on the best way to implement this new degree-granting policy.

We met one-on-one with groups and individuals who had specific interests or concerns that they wished to discuss. We held eight roundtable discussions around the province, meeting with over 150 individuals representing public universities and colleges, academics, private vocational schools, student groups, labour, businesses and various other associations. More than 400 copies of our consultation paper, *Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians*, were mailed to stakeholders, and the paper was also posted on the ministry’s Web site so that everyone with an interest in our education system could participate. I’m pleased to say that we received more than 50 submissions from interested participants.

The consultation process was very constructive. We gained, first-hand, valuable insights, from the knowledge and expertise of those who participated, on a wide range of topics including the composition of the quality assessment board; academic and institutional standards, to maintain the quality of our degree programs; the structure of applied degrees; and student protection measures. The structure of applied degrees of course will meet the needs of our young people—what kind of programs they need—and what the needs of industry and business could be. Protection is basically to keep our young people from being in any stage of financial loss—very important for our students to protect them under any circumstances with regard to private universities or otherwise.

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Much of what we heard is reflected in the bill. If passed by the Legislature, this bill would essentially do two things: it would make amendments to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities Act, and would replace the

Degree Granting Act with the new Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000.

The new Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act is enabling legislation. It will establish the Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board. This board will establish rigorous standards to maintain and enhance quality of programs available to our students here in Ontario. Only after a full assessment will the board make recommendations to the minister based on the quality of the program and the institution’s ability to provide it. It is this process that would also make it possible for Ontario’s colleges of applied arts and technology to grant applied degrees, and would allow for the expansion of more private post-secondary institutions in Ontario.

Ontario’s students, their parents, business groups and our colleges have been asking for these changes. The world around us is changing, and students’ needs are changing as well with it.

It is our job to give Ontario students a full range of choices for high-quality education and training that they will need throughout their lives to reach their full potential, and to give them those choices as soon as possible. That’s why we are seeking time allocation for this legislation.

In addition to feedback received through the more formal consultation process, we have also heard from individuals and groups, including students, who have strongly urged us to have these new degree opportunities in place as soon as possible.

During the debate in this Legislative Assembly, I have listened carefully to my colleagues, both within the government and in the opposition parties. There hasn’t been a question or a concern that we haven’t taken into consideration as we drafted this legislation. We did respond to the concerns we heard, and I would be pleased at any time to answer the concerns of my colleagues in this Legislative Assembly, including those of my critics, as of course we have attempted to do over the last few months.

For instance, the president of Seneca College, Stephen Quinlan, was quoted in the *Toronto Star* as saying, “The ability to award an applied degree is one more tool that helps college graduates, our province and our nation succeed and excel in a global economy.” I also enjoyed very much the quote of Niagara College president Dan Patterson. He basically says, “We’re ecstatic. I am very pleased with this opportunity. It is a significant and courageous move on the part of the province. This type of new applied degree will send a significant message to new industries that the college recognizes their technological needs and that a new style of graduate is available, one who will quickly succeed in the workforce. It’s not intended to duplicate what universities are doing but to recognize the importance of new areas that require new credentials.” Well said and definitely long overdue.

In representing the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, Howard Rundle, president of Fanshawe College, said: “This significant and visionary action by government recognizes the quality of

Ontario college programming, the needs of Ontario students and the job market. Applied degrees will give students greater choice in the knowledge economy.”

The Toronto Board of Trade wrote to tell us, “This decision will provide college students with the type of training and recognition that will ensure their success in the labour market. As employers, we are excited about the ability of these applied degree programs to meet the needs of the marketplace in terms of both practical application and theoretical knowledge.” That same group, speaking on private universities, said they “can foster a competitive environment and raise the quality of post-secondary education for Ontario students. Through enhanced choices, opportunities and expanded enrolment, our university system can become more responsive to student demands and create programs that reflect the needs of the economy.”

Many students wrote to us, and one especially from Carleton recently e-mailed us to say that “private education will reinvigorate education in Ontario” and to encourage us on our path.

Many of our public university presidents have also recognized that private degree-granting institutions will fill a need. Lakehead University President Fred Gilbert said in the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal, “These kinds of institutions cater to the needs of people who are working and do not have access to publicly funded universities.”

Paul Davenport, the chair of the Council of Ontario Universities and president of the University of Western Ontario, stated, “The introduction of some small niche-based private universities”—and I think that’s what they’ll be; they’ll be very specific—“will not be seen as a substitute by most parents and students for institutions like Western, Queen’s or Toronto. I personally can live with that.”

Our public post-secondary system is our priority. Our public post-secondary institutions welcome competition; they welcome change; they embrace it. It is in fact in the best interests of our students.

Bernard Shapiro, the president of McGill University, and, I should remind my colleagues in this House, I believe the deputy minister of either post-secondary education or education and training in the Liberal government of this province, and also deputy minister from the University of Western Ontario, where he was a dean of education, stated, “There’s going to be a greater and greater demand for post-secondary education at all kinds of levels, whether we’re talking about formal degree programs or informal seminar programs or two-day programs or 10-year programs. I don’t think that there’s any possibility that current institutions can respond to that entire demand even if they wished to. I think that the more options that are available in education the better.”

These are renowned educators throughout this country. They have been presidents of public universities and they welcome the competition. They know there is great demand for post-secondary education of all kinds at all levels, no matter where people live, no matter how old

they are, and lifelong learning is exactly what this province should embrace.

Today’s students need the choices this bill would give them. With the increasing demand for lifelong learning, a growing segment of our student population is not of the traditional college or university age. They’re not the 18- to 24-year-olds the majority of our students are as they attend our post-secondary education institutions. Many are mature students, already in the workforce and perhaps with a family, who are looking for the specialized instruction they need to move ahead in their careers.

Some students need programs that are not offered by their local university, but it would be very difficult to leave their jobs and families to move to another part of the province. They need degree programs that are available at times and places that are convenient for them. And let’s not forget our college students whose outstanding achievements have not been recognized with a degree credential that they need for employment.

This government is committed to ensuring that all of Ontario’s students have the full range of quality educational choices they need, where and when they want them, to succeed in their life goals. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000, would assist us in achieving that goal and would get us closer to our vision of post-secondary education in Ontario.

It is a vision that includes for our students: accessible, high-quality programs for all willing and qualified Ontario students, no matter where they live: flexible, evenings, summers, short condensed courses, and the list goes on.

Expanding the system through the largest post-secondary infrastructure expansion in more than 30 years—our commitment to public education: SuperBuild, \$1.8 billion to plan for the next generation of young people over the next few years; 59 brand new buildings out there to in fact receive some 73,000 spaces. I will admit that we are looking, along with our colleges and universities, to come up with the operating dollars to support those students when they’re there.

Responding to the changing needs of Ontarians by increasing the number of high-tech graduates while preserving our rich liberal arts tradition, and, as well, increasing the number of teachers and doctors we graduate.

Promoting collaboration among colleges and universities to better meet student needs: with SuperBuild we created partnerships with our colleges and universities, I think something like 10 or 12, where the colleges and universities are working together, collaborating, in the best interests of our students.

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Providing students with the information they need to make informed decisions about their education: we are interested in results. Right now published on the college and university Web sites, students who are trying to make choices for years to come can find out the graduation rates of institutions, and by courses. They can find out employment rates. They can find out employer satisfaction rates, and the list goes on.

Informed choices, lots of choices and fostering this competitive spirit within the system will improve and maintain the quality of both our public and private systems.

Through this vision, and the other elements of our comprehensive plan for post-secondary renewal, we have taken long-needed action to strengthen and grow our publicly funded post-secondary education system. We have added spaces to meet increased demand, we are promoting high-quality programs and research, and we are helping students better manage the cost of their education.

We are proposing to reshape our post-secondary education system for today's realities, realities such as a need for continual skills upgrading and the proliferation of on-line courses, to name just a few. We need to move ahead quickly on this, and that is why we are requesting time allocation.

If passed, this legislation would promote the relevance, flexibility and innovation in our post-secondary system that will ensure it is responsive to the changing needs of all our learners. In doing so, it will help to ensure Ontario's continued prosperity and the future prosperity of our students, as they want to contribute to their families and the quality of life in their own communities.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I'm pleased to join the debate on a motion that's designed to cut off the debate, and to say how sorry we are in the Liberal caucus that there won't be an opportunity for the public to participate further in it.

I carry around with me a book called *Here's Where You Should Be—Doing Business*. It's a government document produced by the Harris government about why you should come to Ontario. I just want to tell the people of Ontario that systematically the Harris government is dismantling the things that have made Ontario strong over the years and the things that are in the government's own book about why you should locate here in Ontario.

The bill behind this closure motion is another one of them. It is the Americanization of our university system. It's bringing into Ontario the US practices. Obviously there's nothing inherently evil about the United States, but I submit that we have here in Ontario and here in Canada a unique country and that rather than imitating the US, we should be preserving everything that's great about Ontario. This bill is simply another step toward adopting United States practices and undermining the things that in my opinion have made Ontario strong.

And it's not just me. I want to quote from the government's own documents some of the things they say about Ontario. They say that Ontario is one of North America's most peaceful and secure communities—and this is important—and our remarkable health care system and education system are publicly financed and open to everyone. This bill is designed to create private universities, profit-making of course, that will have tuition fees that will be available to the best-off in our province. It is

dividing our society rather than investing in our public institutions.

This is an Ontario government document. This is the educational system that Mike Harris has decided needs to be radically changed. This is the purpose of this bill, to bring in private universities to essentially make a substantive change in our education system. Here's what the government document said: "According to the 1999 World Competitiveness Yearbook, business leaders ranked Canada's educational system ahead of Japan and the United States in terms of meeting the needs of a competitive economy." So the government is saying, "Come to Ontario because we do things differently than the United States. We have a better system here than the United States. We have an educational system available to all, publicly financed."

Yet in this bill we're heading in the opposite direction. To me what has been absolutely fundamental about Ontario and, dare I say, Canada, has been that regardless of the circumstances you are born into, you have a full opportunity in this society to be and to do whatever you want. It hasn't depended on the size of your family's wealth, but on your own activity, your own willingness to work. But here we go, moving now toward a system where your future will depend on the size of the wallet of your parents.

Why would we ignore the proof that the government publishes itself? It points out, "Ontario's workers are well educated and well trained: 60% of the 1998 workforce have attended university or college; 20% graduated from university; 30% earned diplomas." We have a unique situation here in Ontario and we're about ready to throw it out. The government has decided that it's going to head in another direction.

I point out, by the way, that it's not just in the educational area. This document points out the low crime rates in Ontario. The homicide rates are a fraction of what they are in the US states, and the robbery rates are too. The reason I raise this is because I understand it is fashionable today to look for simple solutions to dealing with crime, but I will guarantee that if we ignore the reasons why we have a substantially lower crime rate in Ontario, we do it at our own peril.

In my opinion it is because we have made certain that young people in this province and in this country saw their future ahead of them. They realized that regardless of their economic circumstances, they had a chance to go on to university or college; they simply had to work. We as a society invested. We had a debate earlier today, you will recall, in question period, around my leader, Dalton McGuinty, calling on the government to, at the very least, after five years of young people who rely on social assistance—the majority of people who are on social assistance in Ontario are children, but there has been no change in the rate for five years.

We are sowing the seeds of our own problems if we don't understand why crime rates in Ontario are dramatically lower than in the US and make sure we maintain the programs that have allowed that to happen. Let's take

nothing away from the need to cut the crime rates, to make sure we have sufficient officers to do all those things, but I guarantee that the moves we're making right now are going to result, down the road, in significant problems for us.

What are we dealing with here? It is a rush to adopt US practices in a society I've been proud to say is different from the US. There's nothing wrong with the United States, and all of us have good friends down there and all of those sorts of things, but we are different, and we are different for good reasons and we should maintain that.

It was ironic in the extreme, I might add, that this document gives a definition of "Ontario." I'm sure most Ontarians know where the word "Ontario" comes from. This document points out it means "beautiful, sparkling, shining water." It's ironic, having dealt with the Walkerton situation, that we have dramatically diminished Ontario's reputation for that.

I say to all of us, here is a government document that points out why you should invest in Ontario. At the cornerstone are two things: our quality health care system, publicly funded and available to all, and our quality education system, publicly funded and available to all.

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All of us are proud to be Ontarians, but we are, step by step, adopting the practices of our neighbours to the south when we have the model right here in our own back yard that we should be following. We shouldn't be heading to a university system where, if you've got the money, you're going to get into law school; if you've got the money, you're going to be a doctor; if you don't have the money, you can't aspire to that.

I want to say to ourselves and certainly to the public that this document is instructive. It points out the reasons why Ontario is unique, and here we are, step by step, moving to undermine and destroy that. We heard some discussion today on the Kings' Health Centre where we were having two-tiered health care. We have the Walkerton situation, where we've decided to invest substantially less on the environment that we did five or 10 years ago and we're reaping the challenges there.

Now we're heading to private, for-profit universities when, in my judgment, we have a model that says, "Why don't we take the same energy and the same enthusiasm and the same resources and help our existing universities flourish and thrive?" We've got the government's own proof before us. Surely that should be enough for us.

So you can understand why we in the Liberal caucus and Dalton McGuinty object to the closure motion and object fundamentally to the bill behind it.

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Statute Law Amendment Act, 2000, is an important milestone for our college students. It represents the culmination of years of dedicated commitment to a vision set out in the 1960s. At that time the government of the day set out a clear vision for change. From that vision, a whole new era of educational opportunities opened up for our students.

Expanding on the strong academic traditions of our universities, the government launched Ontario on a bold new experiment in learning through the creation of colleges of applied arts and technology, a system designed to prepare students for the demands of the contemporary workplace. There is no question that what began as a bold experiment has matured into a highly sophisticated network of learning institutions with strong ties to the local economy.

The Ontario Jobs and Investment Board recognized that colleges, with their links to industry, are well positioned to offer advanced training in emerging areas. Its report, *The Road Map to Prosperity*, called for a strengthening of those linkages and a greater degree of specialization of college programs to support regional economic prosperity. We agree with that report and believe that we, as a government, have a role to play in supporting that specialization and regional economic growth.

The legislation would establish the new Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000, which would make it possible for Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology to grant applied degrees. This is a change applauded by college presidents around the province. One college president commented, "This type of new applied degree will send a significant message to the industries that the college recognizes their technological needs and that a new style of graduate is available, one that will quickly succeed in the workforce."

It is time we sent that message out, it is time we made that graduate available and it is time to give our students that opportunity. That is why the government has taken the initiative to move this legislation ahead without unnecessary delay.

I had the privilege of chairing part of the consultation process on this bill for the government. The overriding theme of those consultations emphasized the needs of the students, and specifically how this legislation would enhance student choice, flexibility, opportunity and protection. In all we met with over 150 individuals during the consultation process and distributed over 400 copies of the consultation document *Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians*.

The ability of colleges to grant applied degrees to students is an integral part of this legislation that should not be delayed. In the debate last night, even the member from St Catharines agreed that the applied degree is a place we should be moving toward. This is in direct response to requests we have received both individually from colleges and through the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario.

As I mentioned, colleges were established to provide programs that would prepare students for the workplace of the late 1960s. While the system has continued to evolve with its original mandate, the challenges facing us today require more than incremental change in diploma programs; they call for a new set of choices designed for today's reality, one that reflects the innovative programs developed by colleges and the real needs of students.

Colleges have seen this coming, and they have urged us and previous governments for a number of years to permit them to grant applied degrees. They see the value for both students and communities of advanced training beyond the diploma credential in specialized college programs that would differ in structure and content from university programs. We believe that by allowing colleges to grant applied degrees we are providing students with the wider range of choices they require. This would both reflect and encourage enhanced quality of the specialized programs that can be offered at our colleges.

Under this legislation, colleges would be permitted to offer applied degrees in areas where there is a demonstrated employer demand for degree-level applied education and training, and where current diploma programs are not fully meeting the emerging needs. It is important to note, however, that this is an expansion of the college system. Its primary role will continue to focus on their efforts in providing high-quality certificate and diploma programming in programs of one to three years' duration.

We believe this establishes a level playing field in Ontario for our students, our colleges and our communities. It brings our system into line with the type of innovative programs offered at the college level in neighbouring jurisdictions such as Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and in Michigan and other US states. But more importantly, it helps our students better pursue their goals.

Applied degrees would allow them to achieve in one program the right balance of academic and applied skills they need to get the jobs they want, and they could get that education right here at home.

For too long, we have stood on the sidelines while the entry level skills in the job market have become increasingly sophisticated. For too long, we have put the onus on our students to take the time to acquire both a university degree and a college diploma in order to pursue their goals. For too long, we have watched as our students and their families have been asked to take on the extra costs of getting an applied degree in other jurisdictions.

Finally, with this legislation, we are taking action on behalf of our students and our communities. We have asked our students to wait for far too long. It is time to put in place a post-secondary system that provides them with the full range of choices they need to reach their full potential.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The member for Essex.

1550

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): Essex, the tomato capital of Canada.

As I said last week when I spoke to a motion on closure, I didn't like it then, and I don't like it now. I came to this place, elected in 1993, naively thinking that I would have a full opportunity to debate any issue that came before the Legislature. But we find now, for the 15th time—and it seems to be a closure motion a week—that we're again debating a motion that will choke off

debate. I ask the same question today as I've asked before. I don't know what the government is afraid of. Why can't we have an opportunity to speak out, all of us who want that opportunity, to speak to an issue?

I sat here last night until the Legislature closed at 9:30. I was scheduled to speak on this bill at that time and time ran out last night. I hoped I would get the opportunity to speak today to the bill. But instead, I'm going to have to take what little time I have and speak to a motion of closure, a motion that chokes off debate.

I was thinking for a moment this afternoon during question period, when I was warned by the Speaker because of my outrage at what I thought was a move of arrogance, that this too is arrogance. The government is saying, "We've heard enough from the elected representatives and we now want to close off that debate."

I remind the government backbenchers that not only does it take away our right to speak to a bill, it also takes away your right if you might have wanted to have that opportunity and if the government hasn't given you the standard sheet by which to speak to the bill.

You don't hear the government members speaking to the motion that's on the floor, and I know the bill is related to it. But you don't hear them speaking to the motion that's on the floor to close debate. They're speaking to the bill, and that's their right and I might get to this in a moment or two. But when I referred to that time earlier this afternoon, when there was that show of arrogance, it was the member for Oak Ridges, the government whip, who got up on a point of order and had the audacity to say, "You know, ministers are busy people and they want to get out of here." That's another move of arrogance. For the government whip to suggest that it isn't in fact the responsibility of ministers to be in here for at least an hour a day to answer questions from the opposition goes to the basis of this bill as well: "We really don't have time to listen to you. We don't have time to answer your questions. You're irrelevant and we want to just simply get out of here." To me, that's part of the problem of what we're dealing with today.

In fact, the minister and others have spoken to this bill, and they're mainly talking today about the ability that it will give colleges to grant applied degrees. I'll read to you from my Queen's Park Report of October 25. I said in that, "The latest in the privatization blitzkrieg is the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, tabled on October 19th. It will allow colleges to grant applied degrees, which currently are only available from universities (colleges award diplomas instead). This, I believe, is a good thing."

But we know in the language of Parliament what that is: it's a hostage. My colleague from Scarborough-Agincourt was talking about this earlier today. That's what's called a hostage in the bill. In other words, we support it, and there may be other parts of the bill that we support, and we're given the choice to either vote in favour of the bill to release the hostage or we have to decide that we oppose the bill because there's too much in it that we can't support. I'm afraid that's the way it is with Bill 132.

I want it on the record and I want it clearly known—and I sent it out to all our local newspapers and media in my riding—that we support the part that allows colleges to give applied degrees.

But you know, the day that this bill was introduced I went to my laptop and I got on the Internet. I was able to find a Web site where I can get a university degree, I can get a master's diploma or I can get a PhD. This comes from the United States. It's based on life experience. You don't have to attend classes. You don't have to have any tests. You don't have to write any exams. They'll give you that degree within days.

I'm saying to myself, "Isn't this something I should be concerned about, if in fact there are universities that try to come into Ontario that maybe won't give you a degree simply because you order the piece of paper, but it may be to some degree less challenging than our own universities that we have in the province today?"

I raised another point in my Queen's Park Report that I would like to read to you. I hope, either through further debate or perhaps at committee, that the minister is able to clarify this for me. But this act actually withdraws a couple of acts that exist at the present time. That is an act that is in place now that allows universities to grant degrees and replaces it with this act.

What I've asked is this, and perhaps it can be clarified for me later. I've suggested, "Another very important concern is that private universities and colleges will not have to be accredited in Ontario"—albeit there is a board that will review them—"they need only be accredited in the jurisdiction in which they are based. An institution from any region with lower education standards than ours"—that's the case—could easily set up shop here. We pride ourselves on the quality of our graduates because we have an excellent post-secondary system. Private universities could undermine this reputation."

I say with all sincerity, I hope that there's no ambiguity there, that the previous act that made it very clear that there was a rigorous accreditation system in place has not been weakened and that a private university or college coming from the US will only have to be accredited in their jurisdiction.

I think this rush toward private universities is perhaps choice, what the government is saying it is, and I'll give them credit. It obviously would give a choice because a student can go to another college or university, a private one, but I think the rush toward that has been brought on by two things.

I don't think this government is prepared at all for the double cohort, that is, when grade 13 has been eliminated and those students who have come up through the four-year system, a much larger number of students, will be hitting the university and college scene at a time when I don't believe this government has provided the support to colleges and universities to be able to accept that.

The second is that they've taken some \$400 million out of university funding, and that has created a funding crisis for universities. I suspect that the government isn't prepared to make that up, and that one of the alternatives is to invite someone else in to help with that problem.

I've raised a couple of questions today. I hope that through the rest of the debate, either on the motion or on the bill itself, government members will help us better understand what their real motives are.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It is once again a pleasure to rise this afternoon to take part in the time allocation motion on Bill 132, the Post-secondary Choice and Excellence Act. I've listened very carefully for almost three days to the debate on this bill and I'm now convinced more than ever that our government is definitely on the right track.

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As a government that has initiated 166 tax cuts since they came to power, which has resulted in a revenue increase of \$11 billion to the province, we have proven that tax cuts create jobs. As we move toward 800,000 net new jobs created since Mike Harris became the Premier, we have to thank private sector operators and the private sector for their commitment in making Ontario a better place to live, to work and to create employment.

The economic climate created in the province of Ontario has resulted in record revenues for our federal government; in fact, huge surpluses. The government in this province has created almost 50% of the jobs in our nation, with approximately one third of the population, and an unemployment rate of just around 5.5%. The economic climate created here in Ontario has allowed our private sector partners to invest in jobs in our province and to assist in growing our economy.

Over the last few days and all through the session, what do we hear from the members opposite? Almost a hatred for someone who wishes to make a profit. I hear the words "devils" and "demons" and "barons." I cannot believe the comments made about the private sector in this House: almost a love for public sector monopolies, and a complete failure to recognize that competition is healthy in a democratic society. I don't think it can be a democracy without competition. Over and over again we've heard the use of rhetoric, scare tactics and fear-mongering to discredit worthy private sector investment.

In Bill 132, we are encouraging competition and choice for the students in our province. If over 7,500 students are studying outside of Ontario, we must use every available resource to make sure that post-secondary institutions are built to accommodate these students right here in the province. The use of private sector institutions will help us ensure that this happens.

I understand the frustration from the members opposite. Here we have a Liberal caucus that voted against every tax cut in the last Parliament. However, when they campaigned in the last election, they refused to say to the public in Ontario that as a government they would actually reinstate the tax cuts. The frustration continued when they grudgingly voted to support the taxpayer protection legislation in the fall of 1999. Can you imagine the added frustration when their federal cousins, who are in the fight of their lives, are now trying to copy the likes of Mike Harris and Ralph Klein and are now promising tax cuts—

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): They're the new Liberals.

Mr Dunlop: The new Liberals. But a promise made in Ottawa is not a promise kept in Ottawa. Mike Harris has gained the support of Ontarians because of our phrase "Promises made, promises kept." We saw the federal Liberal promises in the election of 1993. Does anybody remember the promise to eliminate the GST? Of course. They let Canadians down by not following through on their promises. We knew that would never happen. The GST was put in there for a reason. That was to eliminate the deficit. That's what Brian Mulroney did. The Liberals tried to cut it out, and of course they reneged on their promise. By not eliminating the GST, they have been able to establish the HRDC slush fund. We have watched with interest this money being wasted across this nation. As Mr Stockwell Day said just yesterday, Liberals and the words 'tax cut' is an oxymoron.

I'm concerned about the federal announcements. They didn't keep their promise on the GST. Are Canadians to believe that the federal government will now let us down on tax cuts if they are elected? Further to that, after cutting health care funding to the provinces, how can we actually really believe that the federal Liberals will partially restore health care funding? Promises made, promises not kept in Ottawa.

I would also like to point out that Ontario has a long tradition of private universities. Today all are publicly funded, but it has not always been that way. As we said last night, many began as church-related institutions: the Anglican at the University of Toronto; the Baptist at McMaster University; the Roman Catholic at the University of Windsor. Gradually all became public as tax money was needed to fund expansion after the Second World War. Ontario's last private university, Waterloo Lutheran University in Waterloo, switched to public financing in 1974, changing its name to Wilfrid Laurier University.

If there is no demand for private colleges and universities, then they will not be able to compete and will no longer exist. If there is demand, then public universities will have to modify their programs to meet the demands of industry and the public, which to me is a necessity. We want to ensure that the new post-secondary programs are the best. To ensure the quality of new post-secondary programs, the act would enshrine the law in the Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board.

We have asked our students to wait far too long. It is time to put in place a secondary system that provides them with the full range of choices they need to reach their full potential. This bill will do that and more. I support the motion for time allocation.

Mr Gerretsen: First, I found it very regrettable, of course, that the last member spent all of his time attacking the opposition, attacking the federal Liberals, and it has nothing to do with the basic essence of this bill, which is to allow new private sector universities to be established in Ontario.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): What is he hiding?

Mr Gerretsen: Yes, what is he hiding? That's what we'd like to know. What are they really hiding?

I'll tell you what they're hiding. I'm taking a look at section 13 of the act. Section 13 of the act deals with the regulations the minister can pass under this bill, and it lists about 25 different kinds of regulations. In other words, the entire real method of bringing this into being is going to be done by regulation rather than after full debate in this House.

One of those regulations states, and I just want you to listen to this, that the Lieutenant Governor in Council—basically cabinet—may make regulations providing for the distribution and apportionment of money appropriated and raised by the Legislature for university, college and other post-secondary educational purposes. What that means is that at any time in the future, any government, and certainly this government, could, on a moment's notice, by way of regulation, start funding these so-called private universities.

So there's absolutely no guarantee that public money will not go into the establishment of private universities, and this at a time when the universities out there are crying for money. They have been cut back, as you and I know, by over \$400 million in operating money, from the levels that they were at back in 1995. There have been cost-of-living increases, there have been inflationary increases since that period of time, but not only are they not at the level of funding in 1995, they have been cut back collectively \$400 million per year.

Now they are coming into this House and they're saying, "Well, we want to provide the people, the students out there, choice." It is not about choice; it is about the underfunding of a publicly funded education system. That's what this is all about.

What's very interesting is that the government—I always like using the government's own propaganda, because that way the people of Ontario and the people in the House will know that this isn't just me speaking here but it's actually the government's own words. Here's where you should be doing business, they say: Ontario. This is a publication, and I know we can't use props in the House, but it's a very glossy publication that goes all over the world trying to attract investment into this province.

Mr Agostino: What do they say in there?

Mr Gerretsen: What do they say in there? They talk about Ontario's rigorous education and training system, the way it exists right now. Just listen to the glowing terms in which they talk about our publicly funded post-secondary education system.

"Ontario's high-quality education and training system drives the development of the province's workforce. The system, disciplined and dedicated to excellence"—that's our public system, our public college and university system—"is the product of a modern, accessible partnership among government, academia and private industry, and their research institutions.

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“Canadians place top priority on first-class education and its fundamental consequences for competitiveness in the contemporary global economy.

“Canada spent 7% of its gross domestic product on education in 1995. That was more than the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Italy or the United Kingdom.” I could go on and on.

“Ontario’s system of 17 universities is one of the most highly developed and accomplished anywhere, with significant faculty, library and R&D resources....

“McMaster and Toronto have been ranked independently as among the 10 universities in North America for computer, electrical, and mechanical engineering.” It goes on and on.

They are lauding our public system as being the main reason Ontario is so competitive in our global economy. So you would say, if they’re lauding that, why are they taking money out of that system? When every other jurisdiction in North America has been putting more money into education over the last five years, why have they been cutting it back over those five years? And why does the whole question of setting up private universities that are going to take more money out of the public system even come up at this point in time? There’s no reason for it.

What we should be concerned about is making sure our publicly funded health care system and our publicly funded education system at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels are the best in the world. You do not do that by allowing the setting up of private institutions that will be funnelling, by way of regulations and otherwise, money out of the public system. As the minister has already so openly stated here, obviously students who go to that system will be eligible for OSAP loans. That money will not be available to students who go into our public system. If there is more money to be shared among more individuals for more different institutions, whether they’re public or private, obviously there isn’t going to be as much money available for just the publicly funded institutions the way they exist right now.

So I say to the government, you’re totally on the wrong track. Why don’t you, as a first priority, make sure you live up to your own commitments that you talk about in your own document and put the money back into the publicly funded system we have? Give the universities and colleges back the \$400 million in operating money that you’ve taken from them on an annual basis.

The minister will say, “We have made some capital funding announcements to take care of the double cohort that is going to go through our system in another two to three years”—three years, I guess. I know, for example, that in the Kingston area Queen’s University has received up to \$40 million for a new chemistry building, and \$16 million for an expansion of St Lawrence College—capital monies—and we are grateful for that. We are grateful that some of the people’s money is coming back to the jurisdictions where a lot of the money came from in the first place in tax revenue etc.

But what it hasn’t answered at all is, what about the operating money that is required to ensure there are student spaces and teaching staff available for the double cohort that is going through the system in two to three years? We’re talking about an additional, I believe, 80,000 students. There have been absolutely no guarantees given by the minister. I frequently get asked questions by both my university and my community college as to what is going to happen.

When you take into account as well the tremendous feelings of anxiety and frustration that have built up within those students who will be part of the double cohort, those students who will be graduating out of grades 12 and 13 in the year 2003, you can well understand that what we need to do is ensure that the publicly funded system that has worked so well in this province over the last 40 years, that you laud in your own public documentation that you send across the world, in which you claim Ontario is number one and which makes us competitive around the world—why don’t you put the money there first? That should be our top priority. The people out there are not interested in private institutions when we don’t know what the standards are going to be, when we don’t know whether they have to meet the standards of our present-day universities and colleges but may very well only have to meet the standards of the places where those private universities were originally chartered. There are just too many unanswered questions there.

I say to the government, as I wind up the few minutes I have to speak on this bill, shame on you for time-allocating a bill like this. I know it has become almost a common and customary thing to invoke closure. This subject, this topic of privatizing our university and college system is simply too important for closure to take place. I say on behalf of all those students who are in the system now or are coming into the system, like our pages, five, six or seven years from now, on behalf of all of them I say, “Government, spend your money to upgrade the publicly funded system. You’ve taken \$400 million per year out. Put the money back in. And once we’ve really got the top-notch system, then maybe we can discuss some of the other issues you’ve got out there.” That’s the only way we can ensure the students of tomorrow will indeed have the resources available within themselves to be competitive in the new world.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Sadly, again I stand to speak to a time allocation motion. As a member who was elected on June 3, 1999, I really thought that as a voice for the people of my part of Ontario I would have a reasonable opportunity to speak on their behalf and make points on behalf of the people of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, as well as the perspective of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal Party. Here we are again addressing another time allocation motion on a matter of great importance to the people of Ontario. We are talking about an act that deals with providing post-secondary training opportunities for students.

I am extremely disappointed that the Minister of Colleges and Universities did not see fit to bring forward legislation that would better enable the agencies that provide post-secondary education to be better prepared for the double cohort that is going to arrive in the year 2003-04. I attended, with my colleague from Kingston and the Islands, an excellent meeting that was held in the city of Kingston, where many concerned parents, students and educators have come together. They have highlighted important issues around the needs there will be in the post-secondary system when the double cohort arrives, and the very serious question and doubt that this government in fact has a plan to adequately address the large numbers that are going to arrive on the post-secondary school scene. Yet the minister has been conspicuously silent on all the preparations that are being made to deal with this very important issue. One has to question if allowing private businesses to set up and perhaps provide some of that space for those who might be able to afford a private university education is part of the solution.

A point I want to make as well, on behalf of my constituents, is that this bill does nothing to support affordable post-secondary education. I think all of us in this House recognize the importance, in fact the necessity—for our children to be successful as members of society it is imperative that they have a good education, and imperative, if they are going to work at a meaningful job where they get a living wage and benefits provided, that they would have some kind of post-secondary training. This bill does absolutely nothing to provide students in this province with opportunities for more affordable education.

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I am really quite surprised and disappointed when I hear the member for Simcoe North say to the members of this House that we on the Liberal side of the House, Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party of Ontario, have an aversion to people making a profit. Well, that's wrong. But you know what? We have a real problem when this government sets up business to profit on the backs of students, on the backs of people who don't yet have a job but are training to have a job. We are taxing their families. This member from Simcoe North who brags about their tax cuts is supporting legislation that will continue to tax families who have students in post-secondary institutions. I am so disappointed, so very disappointed, with the lack of opportunity that this legislation provides for students.

I want to talk about that part of the bill that is going to enable colleges to grant applied degrees. Certainly that is a notion that notionally this party can support while continuing to be concerned about the lack of clarity in the bill. The legislation specifies that the minister, by regulation, can allow a college to operate as a university and grant degrees without limitation. That may be a good thing and it may not be. The problem I have is that there is a lack of clarity with respect to this particular part of the legislation, and really I think it leaves too much

power in the hands of the minister to make decisions of this import.

When we hear about the quality of post-secondary education and what this government is doing to enhance it, I have to say that I would argue that any piece of legislation that gives this kind of power to a minister in terms of deciding whether a program or a college should be qualified as a degree program gives me cause for some concern.

There was a statement made by, I believe, the member for Simcoe North, who indicated that this legislation would enhance quality through competition, that we are now looking to enhance quality in education through competition. This from the government that cut, that damaged the quality of post-secondary education by pulling back \$400 million from colleges and universities. They weren't too worried about the quality of education when they pulled that \$400 million away from colleges and universities, and now you suggest to this House, "We're going to bring in legislation that's going to increase competition and that's going to improve the quality."

I would suggest that you might better look to improving the quality of post-secondary education by enhancing the funding. We are the richest province in Canada and we should be ashamed that, with that credential, we rank 9th out of 10 in our supports for post-secondary students. That's how cheap you are. With all the money you would say we have as a result of your policies, you support our children ninth out of 10 in Canada—not a record I would be boasting about.

Now you suggest that the best way to improve quality is by introducing competition, absolutely abdicating your responsibility as a government to ensure quality post-secondary education. This is a gamble you're taking, and you're taking it with the lives of our children. I cannot support any action that will do that.

My husband and I have four children, and we've worked very hard to ensure that they have the very best opportunities available to them. So I am compelled today to stand before you and say that introducing the opportunity for private universities to operate in this province has not helped my husband and I, nor our children nor members of my constituency, to be better able to provide that post-secondary education.

For those people who are of significant means it is an option, but it's not an option for all students. When you talk about providing choices, let's talk about all the students in Ontario, not just the students of parents who have money. To stand in this House and suggest that you're doing something wonderful for the students in Ontario is a most selective way to present it. In fact, you are presenting opportunities for students of means.

There's enough in this legislation that gives me cause for question and concern, and I have to say that I would not be able to support it as it has been presented—sadly. There certainly are components that I think are very worthy of consideration. I think there are college programs that should be qualified as degree programs. It

would be a benefit for the students of Ontario to be able to access that, but otherwise I'm not able to support this legislation.

Mr Christopherson: I'm pleased to join in whatever little debate we have left on this issue. Of course the matter before us specifically is the matter of shutting down debate on this important bill, but under our rules one also has the right to speak to the bill itself, and given the limited time, we have to take every opportunity we can get.

First of all, as to the whole notion of the fact that we've got a time allocation motion in front of us right now, certainly anyone who is, or who has been, involved in education in a professional way or as a student would understand very directly and immediately the revolutionary nature of what's before us.

It takes a little time for the message to get through. Especially with municipal elections and a federal election underway, and the bombardment of advertising and massive information everyone gets, it takes a while for the information about the implications of a particular bill to get through to the average citizen, which of course is what the government counts on when they ram these things through so quickly. They count on the fact that people will not fully grasp all of it, so that they say, "I think I recall hearing something about that. What's that all about?" By the time a lot of Ontarians get to that stage in their thinking about this issue, hey, it's history, it's law, it's over. I've seen that happen over and over again, with virtually every piece of major legislation this government has brought in.

Introducing private universities into our post-secondary education is nothing short of revolutionary, but for a lot of us it's a negative revolution. This government likes to say that because something's not perfect, the fact that they've taken any action is good. In the vast majority of cases the opposite is true. Yes, something needs to be done, but not what you're doing; in fact, the opposite of what you're doing.

If nothing else, the government ought to respect the people of Ontario. The Mike Harris cabinet ought to respect the people of Ontario and allow democracy to run its course. Instead we've got government run amok. We have had three sessional days, which means maybe two hours or three hours maximum each day, on this bill. There are only 103 members left, after you slashed the number of seats in the House, but that still leaves very little time for anyone in this House to adequately address these issues. Never mind the public, the members have not had their opportunity, and what you're doing to the public is absolutely insulting.

After we're finished today this goes to committee. There will be three days of committee, but likely days that are held when the House is sitting so they are only part days. If we don't finish question period until around 3:30 or a quarter to 4, then the committee meets from 3:30 or a quarter to 4 until 6. That's a day. Under different rules, this government—magically—creates two days out of one. But in this case, one day is less than three

hours. We get that for three days, and I guarantee you that will be so rushed and so hurried that people will not have an opportunity to adequately research and pull together the kind of presentation they would like, whether it's to be in person or written and submitted. Three days. By law, by order of this House, by passage of this motion today, that cannot change.

1630

Then one day of clause-by-clause, which is a further insult to the members of this place, because we know at the end of the day the government is going to give absolutely no credence to opposition members' amendments. In many cases, our experience in clause-by-clause when they're rushed for one day is that the amendments often don't even get to be placed, let alone debated. They're deemed to have been placed, deemed to have been passed once the allocated hour has been reached.

Then it comes back for one more day of debate for third reading. A day, again, in this case means maybe two and a half or three hours, and then that's it. Then the revolution, quite frankly, is over. Private universities then will be a reality in this province. Now, you'd think, as under the existing law, that the government would have to bring in a bill creating a law that designates a university. That's what the law is right now: it must be an act of this Legislature to create a university—for good reasons, given the standards, the qualifications, everything that needs to be met. That's why that high standard is there.

After this bill is law, a private university can be created at the stroke of a pen. At the stroke of a pen the Minister of Education, like that, can create a private university. What are the implications of that? We won't really know, because there's not enough time to debate it, there's not enough time to research it, there's not enough time to let the public have a full airing of all the issues, which of course is exactly what the government is counting on.

You know what? It will barely register, if it does, in the media, not because the media doesn't care but because it's really not news. This government uses time allocation motions so frequently and has such limited debate—on Bill 74 what did we have, Rosie? A day and a half?

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): A day and a half.

Mr Christopherson: A day and a half on Bill 74, which at this point has significant implications when you take a look at what's happening in our school boards and the negotiations with the teachers in my own community of Hamilton. This government cannot escape the fact that Bill 74 and its direction and its new rules has a major play in why 40,000 students, kids, aren't in school right now. A day and a half. So the media are not going to take it as newsworthy that there are only three days to debate this newest chapter in the revolution. That's a shame, because what it does do is make this place less and less relevant. That's a shame. Democracy loses when that happens. This is the people's place. Between ramming

things through in a hurry, taking things out of legislation, where they have to be debated here with the cameras and the media and the public availability to be here, so much has now been pushed into the cabinet room, which is private, that this place becomes more and more meaningless all the time. That truly is a shame.

However, having said that, because quite frankly they're going to win the vote, we know that, I want to move on to a couple of things that I want to put on the record, and then our critic, my friend from Trinity-Spadina, will conclude in rotation the balance of the time we have for debate. But there are a few things I want to put on the record very clearly, particularly since the two post-secondary education institutions in Hamilton are in my riding, Mohawk College and McMaster University, two highly regarded, world-renowned institutions that I'm very proud to have in my riding and to have in our community. But I know the struggle they've been facing in terms of funding cuts.

If we stand back and take a look at the context for this change, this is a government that says they care about post-secondary education, but of course they say they care about everything. It doesn't matter what they say; what matters is what they do. What have they done in terms of university funding? They've cut \$400 million a year from universities. Cumulatively, it's \$1.4 billion. So the first step in this government's grand vision of post-secondary education is to cut funding by hundreds of millions of dollars. That's step one; that's the old Tory thinking, "Do more with less," which of course, if you extend that brilliant thinking, means that if they eliminated all funding, we'd have a perfect university system—absurd, but no more absurd than what you're doing and the process you're using and what you've done to universities to date.

It has been pointed out, and it needs to be said again and again and again, that we are right now in Canada ninth out of 10 in terms of funding for post-secondary education; in North America, 59th out of 60. We used to be at the top of the list. We were if not the best, one of the best, and now we're 59th out of 60 in North America. Yet they say they care about the young people of Ontario? Yes, you care about them if they're rich, because that's who's going to benefit from all this, just like most of the things you do.

We have the proud distinction of having the highest student-to-faculty ratio in Canada. That hurts the quality of education, but this is the context of what they've done: cut funding, increased student-to-faculty ratios and, thirdly, tuition fees have increased 60% under this government. That's the third piece of this. They come in and again talk, talk, talk about caring about universities and colleges and talk, talk, talk about caring about our young people's future. Talk, talk, talk. What's the action? Cut the funding by hundreds of millions of dollars, have the highest student-to-faculty ratio in the country and tuition fees that are 60% higher than they were when you first took office. The average student now has a debt of \$25,000. That's not the way it was just a few years ago.

Now your talk, talk, talk is that you're going to bring in private universities and that's going to make things better somehow. Oh yes, you want to make sure people have a choice. Obviously they're looking for something, because the university system is no longer serving the needs of so many Ontarians that you know there's a pent-up demand, and just like Klein in his step-by-step process to two levels of health care, private and public, the two-tier health care system in Alberta, you want to start the slow, steady march. Anybody who thinks it's going to stop at universities ought to give their head a shake. How long before we see it in our secondary school system, our elementary school system? Whether it's charter systems, whether it's vouchers, whatever it is, this is the tip of the iceberg. This is where we're heading.

The government will say, "It's going to be private so that people have an option, and it's not going to cost the taxpayer anything." That's not true. It is going to cost the taxpayers. First of all, all students will be eligible for OSAP, which happens to be public money, taxpayer money.

Second, let's take a look at the closest example to us: south of the border, in the United States right now, 30% of all revenue for private universities is either directly or indirectly coming out of the pockets of taxpayers. What on earth makes people in this place, on that side of the House, think there's some new law of physics that says that's not going to happen here? Of course it is. Bit by bit, not initially—well, except for the case of OSAP and a number of other tax credits which may be in place. But make no mistake, as the years go by there will be further enticements, further shoring up. There's no way our system can be maintained that much differently from what the American experience has been with private universities.

1640

Talking about the future, I know we've had assurances from the Minister of Colleges and Universities that there's no problem in terms of NAFTA or the WTO, nothing to worry about. Well, there are those who would beg to differ, and it's not just a nice, interesting, stimulating debating point. The implications of whether or not NAFTA and WTO apply are huge. Under NAFTA, it is on the line to the extent that a publicly provided service like a university, if it's made available on a private, commercial basis, then the government must either eliminate public support for one or provide it for both. Given that I wouldn't expect even this government to announce one day that they're going to shut down all the public sector universities in Ontario, a ruling like that means we're on the hook to provide these new private universities with every cent of investment that we now make in public universities.

Is that the way NAFTA would rule? I don't know, but neither does the government. There are experts, in the initial days of hearing about this—and that's why it's so absurd and obscene that you're ending debate so quickly. In the initial days, there seems to be opinion on both sides. Some will say no. Others are saying, "Yes, there

could be a challenge under NAFTA and, yes, we could lose that fight, and if we lose it, there are the implications: shut down the public sector or provide the private sector with exactly the same amount of money that we now invest in our public sector universities." Put that in front of the people of Ontario and ask them if they're interested.

WTO is even scarier, if you can imagine it. Under WTO, once you privatize a public service, and the public service, I would say parenthetically, has been protected by virtue of a special exemption because it was already in place—a grandparenting clause, if you will—but once you make the step out, you can't go back. There's no putting the genie back in the bottle. No government down the road, based on an election platform of "This hasn't worked for us, people of Ontario, so we need to change and go back to our exclusively publicly funded university system"—even if a party were elected with a majority government with the mandate to return to where we are right now as I speak, it would be in violation of international law. Once gone, gone forever.

Why aren't the minister and the cabinet and the Premier concerned enough, at the very least, to give this further airing before we risk so much? We risk everything in terms of the finances and our future ability for us as a people, as a provincial society, to decide to choose. You like to use the word "choose." Maybe the people of Ontario would choose, upon reflection, to say no. But there's no time to do that. Everything's just going to whiz right through, and if you're not ready and lucky enough to get one of those berths in those three days, you don't even get heard—not that they're planning to listen anyway, but you don't even get heard.

I want to put on the record the comments of the president of the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations, Professor Henry Jacek, who happens to be a professor at McMaster University in my hometown of Hamilton, but in this quote he's acting in his capacity as president of the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations. Here's what Professor Jacek says:

"The problem today is that NAFTA demands national treatment for American for-profit firms. The NAFTA allows a US corporation to sue the provincial government if any change in public policy is believed to adversely affect"—get this—"anticipated profits by a US corporation. This availability of tort action by US for-profit corporations against federal, provincial and municipal governments was not foreseen by the Canadian NAFTA negotiators. This unanticipated nasty effect of the NAFTA has been called by *The Economist*—a magazine I'm sure every Tory goes to bed with every night and snuggles underneath their pillow—'the sting of the tail of NAFTA.' My only question: does the present government hope for this sting in the future? Given the present government's hostility to the public and non-profit institutions in Ontario, I fear the answer is 'yes.'"

These are profound notions of what could happen, and I'm willing to bet that people who know a lot more about this than me have other concerns that are equally worthy

of debate, consideration and review. That is why we're here. But that can't happen if we don't have the time to do it. We've got about a dozen pages here today. I don't know how closely they're listening to these debates. Not much I suppose, given their age. But the fact of the matter is that an important part of their future is being debated right now. Isn't it worth it? Isn't their future important enough, our children's future? Isn't it important enough to at least take the time to look at this?

But then that's not the style of this government, is it? Once you've decided what you want to do, you just go right ahead and do it. It doesn't matter what anybody else has to say. You ram it through this place as quickly as possible with little or no public hearings, no opportunity for public opposition to mount.

That's what it's all about at the end of the day. This is so big and the implications are so serious that it really does go beyond who we are as partisan members and speaks to our responsibility to our young people and to the future of our province and, yes, the future of our country. I don't think that's over the top. We're talking about our university system and who gets to go to university and who doesn't, who gets to have a really good future and who doesn't.

That's worth at least a little bit of consideration. That's not asking too much. But to this government, that is asking too much. So with that, I again condemn this government for shutting down debate on something so important, so complex, that deserves time, deserves consideration. I further condemn them for their direction because I don't see where this is helpful to the majority of the people I represent in Hamilton West, and I believe that applies to probably just about every other community across Ontario. It's another play to take care of the only people you care about: those who already have, and everyone else be damned.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak, Speaker.

1650

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

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I thought you were going to share it with your colleague, but I presume that's not the case.

Here we are again. What we have today is a short-circuiting of the democratic process and closure, limiting people in expressing themselves in this democratic society. This government has consistently been so undemocratic in their approach. It is appalling, it is insulting, it is degrading in a society like this to muzzle those who have been elected to our Parliament to speak by not allowing them to speak. Furthermore, not only are they muzzling elected individuals, but also the citizens of this province, who like to express their concerns about legislation that is so important to them in every respect—to their children, to the economy and to the institutions themselves and how they are to be governed.

What happens when we have legislation like this? What really happens is that we have bad legislation and bad regulations. What we have thereafter is other govern-

ments coming in to amend the legislation at a cost to the citizens of this province—a cost financially and a cost to this democratic process that many people have fought for for years so as to have a say in this society.

They sit there and they've been given direction on how to vote and what to do. I know that many members here today, as they sit and look at me, are very concerned that their leader has told them to fall into this rigid aspect of democracy.

Hon David Turnbull (Minister of Transportation): What a lot of drivel.

Mr Curling: The Minister of Transportation calls it drivel. I know that is the exact way he feels about the citizens of this province: "They are drivel, they should be ignored, citizens should be ignored. As a matter of fact, we have power. We are too busy to do our job." That's what the House leader said today: "Too busy to do our job. As a matter of fact, let's get on with it so we can get out of here into our limousines without dealing with the real issues of concern: democracy."

The fact is, good legislation—there is far too much bad legislation on the books. The fact is that as he gabbles over there with all the insults he wants, that does not stop the expression of the citizens. I hope they have not reached the stage where they will cancel elections in the future.

Let me get to the bill, although he tried to distract me from the fact that here is a bill that is so important. When we talked to the minister at the time she gave her report—I want to read from her speech: "For some time now, students, parents and employers have asked the Ontario government to allow greater flexibility in the educational opportunities available to students so that they can acquire the marketable skills they need to prosper in today's world."

Sure, I'm convinced they were asking her tremendously about their need to have better options and better facilities and what have you. They have been asking for more flexibility in the way they can learn in the present institutions we have. Of course we have problems in institutions, which this government has underfunded. They have taken \$400 million out of the budget of post-secondary institutions and said they should operate, and legally put \$200 million back and said, "Aren't we nice? We have been funding these institutions."

Who suffers? The students who are going there are suffering. When we look at it, they have increased—they stood here last time and I heard the minister saying that tuition fees have gone up under the NDP and have gone up under the Liberals. There has been a 60% increase since this government has come to power, but they forgot to say that. Students are burdened with high tuition fees. They are burdened too with the fact that they are more in debt than at any other time in history. Many times they average about \$25,000 indebtedness when they finish their first degree.

What has happened? By underfunding these institutions, they have created a crisis in the situation and then said, "How are we going to solve it? We should bring

private institutions in so they can have more options." It's a Hobson's choice. They have no choice at all. The fact is that they are not yet clear about the courses they will be offering.

When I asked the minister about transferability—I hope there's time, because there's such limited time in which to put one's case forward, and many people to be heard. When the minister was asked about the kinds of courses that these private institutions will be offering, and what if they go under, the response, I understand, was that they could transfer to another institution.

I had to emphasize earlier on in a previous speech that I have seen universities, I have seen colleges offering the same course at night and then when the students try to transfer into day courses, they were not accepted—in the same university. And here we are now talking about transferability from one university to another. I'm not quite sure if those students are protected.

So beware of all this great entrepreneurial aspect of education which I heard the member from Peterborough mention the other day, that education is not a right, it's a privilege. He's so consistent with his conservative view; he's trying to make sure education is for the privileged. Education should be a right for all.

But I'm not at all surprised by these right-wing Conservatives who feel very much that there are losers and winners in our society and we should only emphasize the winners, we should put our money where the winners are and pick the winners too. Sometimes they don't understand what winners and losers are. The fact is that many times the losers they have picked have cost them more in society and have cost our society far more than what we should be dealing with today.

I am extremely concerned that the cut-off to this debate has jeopardized many expressions, many concerns in our society, many concerns of the university: "If you're proceeding with the legislation, make sure that certain aspects of it are protected. Make sure that certain aspects are dealt with." You will never hear that because the attitude of this government from its inception has been to say, "I know what is right and that's it. I will tell you when to speak, how to speak and how long you should speak, because we are the democratic process, we are the dictators."

What surprises me, in a way, when I meet these gentlemen and ladies outside is that they're honourable people. They really are concerned. But what I'm confused about is when they are told by their leaders to bark this way and that way, they yap and yap like that and they sing from the same hymn book without any expression of the intelligent people they show themselves to be outside. Their constituencies are annoyed with them, annoyed with fact that they've cut off their expression in our democratic society. Closure is one of the most dictatorial aspects of any democratic society.

I hope that when the people of this province get an opportunity to look them straight in the eye and say, "That's the way you've handled our trust. That's the way, when we want good legislation on our education, you

handled it, without even speaking to me about it.” They should deal with them in a manner that we all know is so well dealt with.

I remember a fellow called Mulroney, you may recall. He had one of the largest pluralities in this country and, my golly, when the people of this country finished with him, his caucus could be held in a phone booth, it was so small. They sent a clear message about the arrogance of parliamentarians, the arrogance of politicians.

The arrogance of this government is so clear itself, so clear in the way that they make legislation without listening to the people. There is no consultation, or they speak to two or three people they have selected and say, “We have consulted.” They consulted before, then made legislation. And then what they say to the people is not what is on there. I would never say that these people would have lied about what they have heard about, but I would say to myself that it doesn’t reflect accurately, as a matter of fact, completely what the people want.

This Bill 132 again is consistent, as I said, with the way this government has behaved. It’s extremely unfortunate that they would not get the opportunity to listen to the Ontario Federation of Students who, as a matter of fact, chose our leader as one who listens to students and is on the side of students. As Dalton McGuinty said very well, he’s guilty of being on the side of the students. And I’m guilty of being on the side of the students. I would have really loved to have supported this legislation. I can’t support this kind of legislation because I can’t support that aspect of it and the way they are doing this in the most dictatorial way, the manner of shutting down people’s voices, shutting the citizens out of the democratic process. It continues to be a sad day in Ontario.

1700

Mr Marchese: Here we are. I have another opportunity. We are on live again. It’s 5 o’clock. We are dealing with time allocation on this bill called the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act. Time allocation—what does it mean? It means that we are about to dispose of this bill herewith; it means it’s gone in a very short while. It treats you, taxpayers of Ontario, as if you were insomniacs. It treats you as if you have no life. It treats you as if you are not critical human beings at all. It carries on as if life outside of this Legislature does not exist. You are, for all intents and purposes for this government, insomniacs.

You can’t allow yourselves to be treated so irrelevantly. How could you allow this government to treat you, taxpayers, with such disrespect? My goodness, you would think the issue of respect that comes from the Reform-Alliance federally would flow down like good manna from the mountain to this provincial government and would infect them somehow with the same quality of respect that he obliges the rest of the world to abide by. Good heavens, why doesn’t that respect flow down to you people? Aren’t you part of the same crowd? And is not one of your ministers the head minister of Mr Day’s campaign? Surely he would respect you, the taxpayers of Ontario, and give you a greater and better opportunity to get to know what this bill is all about. How can they

advocate respect at one level and disrespect at the other? What does it all mean? It means you can’t trust this government, nor can you trust the party of M. Day up there in Ottawa.

I am doing what Laurel Seabold asked me to do: I’m going to read a quote in terms of her concerns around this. She wrote this e-mail to me: “I am a 20-year-old student. I don’t live in your riding but I believe you still represent me because you are the education critic. Since the Legislature is back in session”—she wrote a while ago—“I’m writing to you humbly to request that the NDP address the issue of private universities in Ontario as soon as possible. I know you addressed this issue last spring and I strongly appreciated that. But all indications are that the government has not changed its position and wants to implement American for-profit universities in this province as soon as possible.” She knew it was coming. “The government is putting the interests of foreign corporations ahead of the Ontario students who they are supposed to be representing. I believe you need to tell them again in no uncertain terms that this is extremely wrong and that private universities will not help most students and will in fact hurt many of us.”

And she’s right—a 20-year-old student watching this parliamentary channel, urging New Democrats to fight this government and to fight them over the issue of the introduction of private universities. She understands that private universities will do nothing for the quality of our post-secondary education system, will do nothing for her or her equals, will do nothing but add to and protect the interests of your barons from Bay Street.

You are but instruments of your corporate clientele—poor instruments of your corporate clientele—because you do not seem to have your own will to stand up to them and say, “No, our quality of education at the post-secondary level is the best we’ve got and we’re going to improve it.” You just don’t have it in your ideological framework to change direction. So when the corporate elite and the barons of Bay Street come calling, there you are serving the interests of those corporate lobbyists, ready and willing to offer you a couple of thousand dollars so that you could serve them over and over again. You’re not serving the public with this bill; you’re serving investment bankers, corporate lobbyists, the corporate clientele who are your friends. These are the people you’re serving, because I tell you quite frankly, when you speak about choice, there is no choice for ordinary Ontarians.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): There’s more choice.

Mr Marchese: More choice, says the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale. He says the bill offers more choice. I tried to exfoliate this bad onion as best I could. I thought I did that last night; I’ll try it again. Member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale—you’ve got a whole lot of people to represent up there—how is it that you’re offering more choice?

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: I’m going to help you out; just a second. I’ve got 20 minutes.

The Deputy Speaker: The debate would work far better through the Chair.

Mr Marchese: Thank you, Speaker. I'll try to continue to address you as often as I possibly can while at the same time speaking to the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale, because this member says, "Oh, no, this bill offers more choice." I said to you yesterday, good taxpayers from Bramalea, from wherever you are in Ontario, this does not offer choice. Choice is within the public system, not within the private system. Choice is not for you, private taxpayers who are earning a modest, \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000, even \$70,000. That's not a choice for you, to send your children to a private university. Why, I say to the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale? Because when you have got to pay \$40,000 a year in tuition fees, that means it's exclusionary. It means it excludes 99% of the population from accessing it. Why? Because it costs too much. It's too much.

Surely he, as a thinking human being—and I'm assuming that they are thinking human beings—would have followed this argument and concluded, logically—because it's a plausible point that I make—that if you've got to pay \$40,000 a year in tuition fees, that means most of his riding is excluded. Wouldn't you agree with that, Speaker? There's no comment from the Speaker, because he's a neutral Chair.

But you, taxpayers, I'm sure those of you who are watching would understand that if you have to dish out \$40,000, it means that you don't have a choice. Isn't that true, M. Joe Tascona, that you don't have a choice? I'm sure your kids can't afford to go to a private university. I'm convinced of it, because quite frankly even with your own salary—\$78,000, and parliamentary assistants get \$11,000 more, meaning it's about \$90,000—even with that salary, I don't believe that you can send your son or daughter to that private university you're about to set up. Yes or no? Speaker, through you, he's not nodding.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: His children what?

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Through the Speaker. You're the only member I've recognized.

Mr Marchese: I'm the only one he recognizes, and he's right. I am the only one to recognize, because the arguments I make are more than plausible, even to ordinary folks—not "even"; especially to ordinary folks who are watching this parliamentary channel. I am convinced that most of you people, as members, can't afford to send your kids to this private school. I know that. So why would you be offering such a choice to the wealthiest?

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: Through you, Speaker, I'm just trying to listen to what the members are saying, because I like participatory democracy; I do. It's important. I like it in this place as I like it outside of this place. We're shutting everybody out. It has nothing to do with choice. It has nothing to do with excellence. Our public education system at the post-secondary level, according to the words of the Premier and others, is one of the best in the

world. How do you make it better by making it exclusionary?

1710

Mr Dunlop: Competition.

Mr Marchese: Competition, my foot. There is no competition. We are offering competition. Our university system is as competitive as anybody in the world. It is competitive with itself. Is the member from Simcoe North saying competition means that our public system should be able to or can compete with a private university where tuition fees are \$40,000 a year? What kind of competition are we talking about?

The most important point, because their title speaks to this, is choice. What choice do we have? Where is the diversity? There is none. We are dealing with one community only, and that is the wealthiest community. That's the community they're serving. They want to be able to give the wealthiest the choice they want. They want to be able to create a university that's private and is a private club for the barons of Bay Street.

If only they could just put back some of the money they have stolen away from our public system and given away to corporate tax cuts and individual income tax cuts. They've stolen money from our public institutions: \$400 million and more. They took that money to give to corporate tax cuts and have eroded the quality of our education system. As a result of that, we have to rely on what? We have to rely on donations. In 1992, donations were \$286 million. In 1997-98, they're \$502 million. We are relying on the private sector to give us money, and there are strings attached when we give money. When we get money from the private sector, there are strings attached. Nothing comes from the wealthy who give to universities that is without strings. There are corporate strings that come with that money, but it has more than doubled in the last five or six years.

Tuition fees in 1982 were \$834 million, which amounts to 25% of total university education. In 1997, it amounts to \$1.255 billion, which is 35% of total revenues. What does that mean? What does it mean to you, taxpayer? What it means to me is that my daughter is paying more in tuition fees than she did three, four or five years ago. My other daughter, who will be going into university, will be paying more than we ever did in the past. We are relying on individual students to work harder and longer than ever before to be able to pay for their education. Why? Because this government has stolen money from our public system to give it away to corporate tax cuts and individual income tax cuts. I say stolen because that's what it is. They are trampling on our public systems and thereby creating a climate for the creation of a private university which they call—

Hon Mr Turnbull: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to seek your guidance. Is "stolen" now a parliamentary word?

The Deputy Speaker: If it causes you some discomfort, I think the member could find a better one.

Mr Marchese: Of course it causes him discomfort. Any word would cause him and his government dis-

comfort. He would want to use the most euphemistic of words. They have taken away \$400 million or they have given less by \$400 million. It is a euphemism for stealing money from the public sector. Of course it causes them discomfort. Will he deny that money was taken from the university? Of course he will deny it, as the minister of post-secondary education does and did, as the Premier does: money siphoned out, sucked away from the public system for corporate tax cuts.

It is insidious. It is obscene. The taxpayers of Ontario know it. Government support declined from \$2.269 billion to \$1.785 billion. It is a drop from 67% to 50% from New Democratic days to Conservative days. There's less money flowing to the system. These people aren't even charitable any more. They're not in the old Davis regime. Poor M. Davis finds himself utterly alone as a Conservative of the past. He doesn't recognize these people. The poor man is ashamed of this political party because it's not reflective at all in terms of the history and the legacy they left for 40 years.

We have an increase in our student population. We will have 190,000 more students by the end of this decade. We need capacity for such a number of students and we don't have it and are not building for it. We are not preparing our structural framework to be able to handle the 190,000 students who will come into our post-secondary education system by the end of this decade. What is this government doing? In a good economy, when they have the money to build, we're not getting the support. We need to expand our capacity to be able to deal with future pressure, yet because of the unprecedented reductions of support by this government, we can't meet the demand. We will not meet the demand when the double cohort comes into place in three years' time. We're not building the structures for it.

So they say, "Ha, it's because of these pressures that we're allowing private universities to enter Ontario." I'm saying to you, if you want to be able to deal with a capacity problem, with an influx of new students, build so our students can fit into our public institutions. But they don't want to do that. They want to give an opportunity to the lobbyists from the US, like Phoenix, to come in here and do the damage they've done in the US. We are allowing the commodification of our education system. It's becoming a commodity now. If you've got money, you can come in and make money out of our education system. Do you understand, taxpayers, what we're dealing with here? This isn't just a simple matter of allowing a private for-profit university and everything is OK. No, it's not like that at all. Once these people are in, they're in for good.

Most of you don't know that the World Trade Organization is an organization that represents 120 or so countries. These are the people who meet somewhere, but not in our parts—in Geneva—and make decisions around world trade for the rest of us. If you, good taxpayer, believe that we are independent as a province and as a country, you are wrong. We have given up our control ever since the North American free trade agreement was

introduced at the federal level, when Mulroney wanted the North American free trade agreement to come in with a promise of prosperity to no end, and since then we had a serious recession in the early 1990s. I thought the Liberals were going to be there to tear up that agreement, but when Chrétien got in there, with Sergio Marchi, man oh man, they became the biggest boosterisms of the North American free trade agreement that I have ever seen. We are alone. There's nobody, no one, at the federal level defending you. You are not electing enough New Democrats to speak for you when it comes to those issues.

The World Trade Organization is functioning on its own with the sanction of the Canadian government, which permits and allows them to do their dirty deeds as they relate to trade. It's a charter for the corporate sector. They are establishing a charter for themselves in order to protect their corporate greed and their corporate interests. That's what the World Trade Organization is all about. It's a frightening organization which attempts to radically restructure the role of government worldwide, subjecting an ever greater degree of governmental decision-making to the World Trade Organization's oversight and interference. We are no longer independent as a government.

To top it all, these negotiations are aimed at expanding the general agreement on trade in services, which they call GATT. No longer is this agreement, like the North American free trade agreement, confined to cross-border trade, but in truth is in many domestic policy areas, including the environment, culture, natural resources, health care, education and social services. Nothing is excluded from their purview. It is no longer trade we're dealing with. We're dealing with services. They are on the table, and these discussions, as they relate to the general agreement on trade and services, are to end in a couple of years, in two years. By that time, everything is on the table, and the Canadian government says even services like education ought to be on the table.

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We're giving it all away. We're losing control. We're losing control over our policy initiatives, over our policy efforts. We are, good people of Ontario, being influenced by the corporate sector in a way that we have never seen. We're dealing with corporate power and its interests that have nothing by way of an ethical culture. Corporate power and money, the barons of Bay Street, are not bound by any ethical culture. They don't worry about who's affected by their decisions, and if there's poverty in this country and if there's poverty in some other countries, it's irrelevant for them, because their motive is to make the pecunia that they want to make. It's all about money. It's not about the public good. It's about corporate good, not the public good. That's what we're debating. We are debating the public good of our public institutions in our post-secondary education versus the private goal of private greed, of private universities whose interest it is to make money.

I said to you last night that our tuition fees here are approximately \$20,000 in the general arts program. Do

you know how many of your children, our children, are working out there in the social service sector making minimum wage, \$7 an hour, some \$8, some \$9 if they're lucky, working anywhere from 10 to 20 to 30 hours a week to make some money to pay for some of the essential things they need, including trying to put some money aside for their tuition fees? Do you know, general taxpayer, that as they work to make those extra dollars, their education is being affected?

Mr Gilchrist is always in the way of the good public watching this program. Mr Gilchrist, you've got to get out of the way there. You're blocking the camera. Speaker, ask Mr Gilchrist to sit down, please.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: No, it's that one right there. Get out of the way, please. Steve, you're blocking the camera. Speaker, tell him to get out of the way.

I did not want, good people of Ontario, to be blocked from you, from view. I think you have a right to see me, not the head of M. Gilchrist.

I worry about the corporate lobbyists that dominate the debate over public policy. They are the ones who dominate this debate. They are winning the battle of ideas. These are the people with the money, and these politicians, these Conservatives here and the Liberals federally, are the instruments of that corporate agenda, and they dominate the public debate. They have all the major newspapers sell their ideas. That's why tax cuts continue to dominate those newspapers, even though the public said, "Corporate and income tax cuts are not on our agenda." These Tories, the Liberals federally and the corporate lobbyists say, "Tax cuts are the most important thing to us." They dominate public policy.

That's why I urge you union members out there that if you want to do a favour to, not New Democrats, but Ontarians, you need to devote a few of the dollars you have to help create a national newspaper, not for the purposes of advancing unions but for the purposes of offering a critical review, a critical alternative to the kinds of newspapers we see day in and day out. We need an alternative to the National Post and the Globe and Mail that goes national from one wing to the other. We need a newspaper like that because, unless we have it, we can't compete. Our European counterparts, the left parties, have newspapers that speak to the public. It would give you the opportunity to pick one newspaper and say, "Aha, here's a different view. Now I can read something that reflects me or at least challenges the dominant view that is put forth by the Globe and Mail and the National Post and the Toronto Sun here in Toronto."

We need that. We need union support to be able to kick that off the ground, because we don't have wealthy individuals who are willing to put up the money to put together a national newspaper to put a different alternative to the Canadian public.

That's why I appeal to you, ordinary citizens, I appeal to union members, I appeal to union leaders, to put together the money it takes so that we can have, finally, a

national alternative paper that will at least challenge the ideology of this government and the ideology of the federal Liberal government. We desperately need that, otherwise we can't compete; otherwise we are on our own. Otherwise you leave the job to New Democrats to be the conscience of governments and the conscience of the people. I tell you we're getting tired. It's not enough. We are not enough to be able to hold the fort. Some of us are going to get tired and many will retire eventually, and if we are not there to put pressure on this provincial government and the federal Liberal government, you have no one. There's no one left.

I appeal to you to fight against the introduction of private universities whose job it is to protect the interests of the barons of Bay Street and their children, but not your interests as a taxpayer. I appeal to you to call this government and tell them to desist, and for that you need to be actively involved. There's no other way.

Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I rise today to support the motion for time allocation for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities statute law amendment act, 2000.

This legislation marks the first time in almost 35 years that a government is responding directly to the needs of not only students but all Ontarians by proposing to give them the full range of flexible choices in post-secondary programming that have become commonplace in competing jurisdictions. Students have waited long enough for the choices this legislation would offer them. Let's not make them wait any longer.

This legislation is about preparing our students for the increasingly complex world into which they will graduate and giving them the tools they will need to succeed. We need to move forward to refocus our post-secondary system so that Ontarians have opportunities throughout their lives to gain the skills and expertise they need to reach their full potential. This is true not only for recent high school graduates going on to colleges and universities, but increasingly Ontarians of all ages, many with full-time jobs, also need learning opportunities, available times and places that are convenient for them. This legislation recognizes those realities and would ensure that our post-secondary system is centred on the student.

If passed by the Legislature, this act would allow for the expansion of student choices to include (1) applied degrees at our community colleges, and (2) the expansion of private degree-granting universities in Ontario. I certainly want to focus on the first part, which is applied degrees at our community colleges.

In my riding of Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, Georgian College is an outstanding institution. Its student enrolment has increased dramatically. It has campuses throughout not only my riding of Simcoe county but also in the district of Muskoka and over into Dufferin county. Also, it's been involved in a number of degree-granting approaches with respect to nursing and teaching and it has foreign campuses in terms of providing its students with opportunities to learn overseas. It has a number of

institutes that are recognized across North America: the automotive institute and the aircraft institute, just to name a few.

I'm very proud to say that Georgian College, which has been blessed by a number of support mechanisms—for example, IBM with respect to their computer training programs that have been invested in Georgian College—is certainly a leading campus, not only in my area but I think throughout Ontario.

Our system here in Ontario has failed to keep pace with innovations in other jurisdictions both nationally and internationally. At the college level, colleges in Alberta have been offering applied degrees since 1995. Universities and colleges in BC and Nova Scotia offer a range, including degrees, diplomas and certificates. Michigan and other states have moved forward with associate degree programs that are two-year programs which prepare students for entry-level positions or offer credit recognition for university transfer.

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There are two broad categories of associate degrees: academic and applied associate. What does that mean for our students? It means they either have to look elsewhere for the balance of academic and applied skills that these programs offer or they have to remain in school longer to earn both a college diploma and a university degree.

At the university level, many US states and Canadian provinces allow private universities to operate side by side with an extremely healthy system of high-quality public universities, including British Columbia, Alberta and New Brunswick. This bill reflects substantial input from stakeholders. They have given us their best advice on how to give Ontario students the choices they want.

As you have heard, even with time allocation there will still be three days of hearings and a clause-by-clause examination of the bill. Why should we make our students wait? Why are we denying them the choices that it appears other jurisdictions have? Our students are able to make informed choices about the type of education program that is best suited to meet their goals. Now it is up to us to give them a wider range of educational experiences from which to choose.

Here in Ontario, we are proud of our publicly funded institutions. We believe they can build on their strong traditions and will continue to be the centrepiece of our post-secondary education system. But more importantly, we believe our students have the right to choose the education that best suits their needs.

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): It's a pleasure to speak on Bill 132. This bill is really about having a lot of choice. It's about having options so that students can obtain an education. It's really about addressing lifelong learning. It's about responding to today's needs and today's students' needs. It's about having a choice whether you attend a public or private college or university, and it's about having information from those institutions about their particular success rate. It also defines the Post-secondary Education Quality Assessment Board.

As I sit in the House and listen to the debate, especially coming from across the House, it sort of reminds me of a scenario where the Liberals would go out and cut a whole forest of redwood trees and then mount the stumps and speak about conservation. It's hard to follow where they're coming from and why.

In my opinion, this legislation is long overdue. It gives options to students and caters to their particular needs, and particularly it supports our adult students. As a matter of fact, my wife is taking political science at the University of Toronto and enjoying it thoroughly. She retired three years ago and maybe, just maybe, she'll find out what I and some of the other members in this House do here. That's another example of an adult student going back to school. We need to provide that kind of flexibility for those students. This is an example of lifelong learning and the kind of flexibility that's needed. Historically, it has been very difficult for mature students to go back to school. It's bad enough to have students the age of your children competing with you, let alone not have the kind of flexibility there for you to be able to take advantage of it.

There are tremendous changes in how we obtain our education. I was intrigued to hear the president of Loyalist College in Belleville describe how he had a professor who taught a course from Scotland, who never came to Belleville. He talked to a group of students across Canada and as far south as Florida, who never came to Belleville. They got the course on the Internet and they graduated, no one ever coming to that campus. This is distance education. There's so much that can be done through the Internet.

We have to upgrade our legislation to recognize the changes that have occurred in the universities. Certainly having a monopoly going away back to the 1960s is a long term for universities, and this is certainly upgrading it. It's facilitating this lifelong opportunity for more choice, and it's accelerating the opportunity for students with this changing job market. We have a tremendous number of people who have more than one degree, which is indeed very, very necessary in today's job market.

What we've been observing, and I've heard it many times, is that somebody gets a university degree, and then what happens? They have to go to a community college to obtain the skills to sell themselves in the market. As a matter of fact, I have a young person in my office who got a degree in political science and then it was necessary for him to go to a community college in communications and then, lo and behold, we found him and he came to my office a year ago last summer. He's now permanently with me here in Toronto. That's just another example, but over and over again we get these university degrees, and then we need to get the practical aspect to go out into the labour force and be marketable.

It's this kind of collaboration that's so important between universities and community colleges, to be able to move into the 21st century. It also provides the opportunity for private universities to be present in the province, private colleges as well. These institutions are able

to focus on the needs, have smaller classes and look after the students in a very different way. Through this bill, universities and colleges will be able to respond faster to the new technological era that we're into, and students will become more marketable.

Just to give you some examples of how things have changed: from the time photography was first discovered until it was commercially on the market was 112 years; for the telephone it was 56 years; for the radio it was 35 years; for radar it was 15 years; for TV it was some 12 years; for the atomic bomb, unfortunately, it was six years; and for transistors it was five years. But as an example now, if you develop some computer software, from the time it's invented until it's produced, packaged, marketed and becomes obsolete, can all happen within a period of one year. That's how our markets are changing, particularly in the area of technology, and we have to have the universities and colleges there to be able to handle those kinds of changes. We recognize how quickly things can become obsolete, and we're looking to improve the quality of our educational institutions. We want to ensure that the large publicly funded educational institutions have the ability to be able to catch up with the private sector.

Interjection.

Mr Galt: We have a few others who are kind of keen to get on the record here.

I just wanted to point out a couple of institutions like the DeVry Institute and the Toronto School of Business. Some of what they have been doing demonstrates that there is a gap out there in our post-secondary education system, and certainly they are thriving and providing a very marketable skill.

As we look at what's going on out there, there is no question that we need to have the information for the people who want to go into our secondary institutions: what is there out there for them; do they have the information that they need; what kind of job rates, what kind of graduation rates are really going on in the particular institution that they're looking at going into? It's only fair that they have that information. The OSAP default rate, the graduation rate and the employment rate in particular give them the kind of choice that is desperately needed when they enter into the decision-making process of going to a certain institution.

In conclusion, this legislation is about having an education system in Ontario that's absolutely second to none in the world. It's a post-secondary education where there's more choice about where you can go to an institution and what you may wish to study. It's about lifelong learning, and certainly that's a changing process from what we had many years ago. We'll continue to encourage various financial assistance programs such as the access to opportunities program and the Aiming for the Top scholarship in addition to OSAP. Students will indeed reap the benefits of an education system that allows increased flexibility and choice.

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I can enthusiastically support this bill that's been put forward giving options for education, lifelong learning,

responding to today's needs, providing a choice, whether it's to attend a public or private university or college, providing information on the success of those universities and colleges, and also recognizing having an assessment board that's going to properly look after the quality of education in the province of Ontario for our post-secondary students.

Mr Gilchrist: I'm happy to add a few thoughts and I guess close off debate this afternoon on a very important bill that will lay the foundation for a very necessary evolution in post-secondary education in the province of Ontario.

I'd like to restrict my comments to some of the financial issues that have been raised by the members opposite. It's a shame that we don't have other things to talk about here in response, but again, in their zeal to complain about the fact that this is a time allocation motion and in effect have their fourth day of debate, their fourth day to give input on this bill, there was not one substantive suggestion on how we could improve this bill. There was not one constructive criticism. Instead, we heard nothing but rhetoric, we heard nothing but the same old, same old when it comes to the misinformation and disinformation about what is actually happening in the province.

To hear from the NDP members opposite or even from the Liberal members that there has somehow been a lack of commitment from our government to post-secondary education is utterly fraudulent. The reality is the last year of the NDP mandate they spent \$2.9 billion. This year, we're spending \$3.2 billion. I find it ironic, as we sit here talking about educational issues, that something like that is lost to the members opposite. It's \$300 million more.

More to the point, last year, with the commitment of \$1 billion under the SuperBuild Growth Fund, specifically to post-secondary initiatives, the total spending went to an astronomical level: \$4.6 billion was spent on post-secondary education alone in the province of Ontario. No government before us has come anywhere close to that record. The suggestion that somehow we're not maintaining the standards and keeping up with the other provinces is also completely untrue. In Ontario the average post-secondary student is getting \$147 more in government support than the Canadian average.

I mentioned we've spent more than any government previously. The fact of the matter is we're spending it more wisely as well. In the past, far too often the funds were just transferred without any particular vision, without any particular direction. But we have challenged the research sector, we have challenged science and technology departments. We have dramatically increased the number of spaces in those programs that are likely to be the best contributors to the future growth of our economy and the economy of North America. We have made commitments to the community colleges and to the universities that speak to a visionary approach to post-secondary education. We cannot be stuck in the 1950s and 1960s. We must look at the technologies; we must look at the jobs of the 21st century. I believe our min-

isters have done a very good job of doing that when they allocated the funds.

Also lost in the discussion here is the fact that last year we contributed \$250 million in the Ontario innovation fund. This year it's growing to \$500 million. We have the Premier's Research Excellence Awards, where we're going out and actually saying, in some cases for the first time in some of these colleges, "Congratulations for the extraordinary work you're doing. Congratulations for the research innovations. Congratulations for the technological breakthroughs that are occurring in our colleges and universities." People are being congratulated and they're being financially rewarded for that success.

The reality is that in an objective third party analysis—the Maclean's survey—once again this year Ontario had three of the top five medical and doctoral universities and three of the top five comprehensive universities. I would remind you, at 60% of the best universities, we have one third of the country's population. In other words, we are scoring twice as well as you would expect based on population.

The savings that we have achieved by encouraging universities to find efficiencies in their general administration and their program delivery have been more than offset by these other grants, by these other very specific and targeted funds. That's the tip of the iceberg. The bottom line is that our government is going to spend even more money in years to come on these areas, but more to the point, we believe it is appropriate to open up the post-secondary level to competition. It is staggering to me, when I hear members like the member for Kingston and the Islands belittle this bill and suggest it's inappropriate, yet the university in his riding, my alma matter, Queen's University, was the very first to have an MBA program totally removed from any government support. It is a privatized program and it occurred with the support of the opposition parties and in their term. The bottom line is it has been copied by many other universities across Ontario and, as you are well aware, it is oversubscribed every year. To those who suggest that that has encouraged an elitism or restricted access, let me suggest to you that right next door to us, at the University of Toronto, you can take an executive MBA at something over \$25,000 a year if you want to fast-track, or you can continue to pay about \$4,000 a year for the regular two-year MBA program. The fact of the matter is it's just as accessible to get a baccalaureate or a master's or doctoral degree in the province of Ontario.

What we're doing will encourage even greater access. I haven't heard anybody on the opposite side suggest that Harvard or Yale or any of the other great American private institutions are not worthy of the fame and the recognition they have earned. But somehow the suggestion is if they were located on Ontario soil, it would besmirch our post-secondary system, it would somehow beggar it. The systems can not only exist together, it will make for a better and more qualified, more comprehensive post-secondary system in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The time allocated for debate is completed.

Mrs Cunningham has moved government notice of motion number 69. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Pursuant to standing order 37, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been put. The member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given yesterday, I believe, by the Minister of Health. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter and the minister or parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): In fact I tabled my dissatisfaction with an answer given by the Minister of Health last Thursday afternoon. I would ask that the House remember that that was the afternoon on which the Minister of Health had made an announcement describing the new, renovated, expanded St Michael's Hospital emergency room. This expansion, of course, was to compensate for the fact that the minister had just earlier shut down the Wellesley Hospital's emergency room. Our concern was that when the Wellesley Hospital was shut down, we would lose another emergency room, we would lose capacity to deal with emergency patients at a time when our emergency rooms are already in a crisis.

The minister was obviously concerned about the same issue, because a press release makes a point of saying that the new St Michael's Hospital emergency department will accommodate 60,000 visits a year, 23,000 visits more than the old facility at St Michael's and the Wellesley Hospital combined. If that were in fact the case, then our concerns would certainly be alleviated, because if it was going to have 23,000 more visits than the two sites combined, we wouldn't have as many concerns, perhaps, about the closure of the Wellesley Hospital site.

Before the afternoon was out, we were able to determine that in fact these figures simply could not be correct because the Wellesley emergency department was actually accommodating 33,000 visits per year prior to its closure just on that site alone. The combined number of visits between the Wellesley site and the St Michael's site last year was 64,000 visits. So we knew that this press release had to be wrong. You couldn't have 60,000 visits total and claim it was 23,000 visits more than the two sites combined when the two sites combined had been seeing 64,000 patients per year.

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I asked that question with verified facts. The minister continued to respond that this press release that said it

was 23,000 more visits was in fact accurate. On Monday, yesterday, my leader asked the same question. The minister continued to stand by the press release.

It wasn't until after the legislative session was over and our opportunity to ask questions in a public forum had ended that the media were able to elicit from the minister a correct figure. The minister, in the hallway, said, "Well, it's a case of the 23,000 refers to the anticipated number of patients that might have been seen at Wellesley this year. As you know, over the past number of years the number of"—da da da da da.

She's asked, "Does that mean there won't be 23,000 more patients that will be seen at St Mike's?"

"That's right," said the minister. "There will be 23,000 additional patients, but they are the patients that normally have been seen at the Wellesley site this year."

In fact, we still have concerns about errors because we know that the Wellesley site last year saw 33,000 people. So even the 23,000 addition to the St Michael's site is not going to cover what was lost at Wellesley.

I guess my frustration is that we would continue to get inaccurate information provided by the Ministry of Health and that this is not the first time we've seen this.

Why does it matter? It matters because this kind of information, which is not based on accurate figures, is being presented in order to camouflage the reality of what's going on in our emergency departments, in order to avoid dealing with the reality. Our emergency departments have a higher incidence of critical care bypass, redirect, telling ambulances there's no room for them in that emergency department than has ever been seen before. It is, in the first five months of 2000, higher than at any previous time. Our ambulance response times are increasing.

The minister made an announcement about the funding that was going to go into emergency rooms just last month and she talked about the fact that this new, additional program, an alternate payment plan, was going to be one of the solutions to the emergency room crisis. What she didn't acknowledge was that hospitals would each have to come up with \$90,000 out of their global budget in order to access those funds. We've seen just recently a \$2.5-billion error.

My concern is, really, that when the minister makes statements to the public in press releases, those statements should be accurate. They should not be a way of camouflaging what is really going on. It shouldn't be a way of trying to hide from the public and trying to reassure the public that things are getting better, that things are going to be better, that the government's acting, when in fact they are presenting the public with information that is not factual.

I think the Ministry of Health has shown that it follows its government's own lead, because they are more concerned about public relations statements than they are about responding to real concerns. They're more concerned about spin than they are about accuracy. They're more concerned about camouflage than openness. We need openness.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Response?

Mr Bob Wood (London West): The transfer of the Wellesley site emergency department to the newly expanded and renovated emergency department at St Michael's Hospital, Bond Street site, on October 1, 2000, provides enhanced facilities and improved access to emergency services in the downtown core. According to St Michael's Hospital, the newly expanded emergency department has a capacity of 47 stretchers. The new emergency department expects 65,000 visits this year. The new emergency department will be able to accommodate the approximately 23,000 people who would have used the old emergency department at the Wellesley site.

This relocation of emergency services was done in accordance with the directions of the Health Services Restructuring Commission. The cost of the project was \$6.4 million. The government's share was \$4.5 million; the hospital raised the remaining share.

It is the ministry's understanding that the relocation of the Wellesley site emergency department went smoothly, with no incidents. Any patients arriving at the Wellesley site emergency department after October 1, 2000, are being redirected appropriately to St Michael's Hospital, the Bond Street site. Patient volumes, including ambulance visits, at the Bond Street site emergency department have increased with the transfer of the Wellesley site emergency department.

The ministry continues to work closely with St Michael's Hospital and other stakeholders to ensure that emergency department services are fully available and that the community's needs are met. St Michael's Hospital has allocated 35 additional acute beds and \$3.85 million in annual operating funds under the government's emergency services strategy. In addition, the minister recognized the need for four additional ICU beds to provide backup to the medical units and the emergency department. The government will provide \$1.6 million in operating funds annually to support four additional ICU beds. The funding provided to St Michael's Hospital is part of the government's emergency services strategy. Under this plan, \$46.5 million is being provided for 543 additional permanent beds in Toronto and 210 transitional beds in the GTA area until permanent growth beds are implemented.

Also, \$16.8 million is being provided to expand key elements of the 10-point plan from last December across the province. This includes 450 flex beds to be operational for four months to help address pressures in the emergency department, along with 100 additional discharge planners and six regional ER co-ordinators. A \$38-million flu vaccination program is being offered to the entire population to help Ontarians avoid getting the flu.

A new plan that will help to ensure around-the-clock access to doctors and emergency rooms at 55 of Ontario's largest hospitals was recently announced. This builds upon funding arrangements that were first made available to small hospitals in July 1999 and to mid-sized

hospitals in December 1999. All of the 143 hospitals in Ontario with an emergency room can now access this new program.

As part of the government's recent \$471-million investment to support hospital services in Ontario, St Michael's Hospital received \$6,790,626. This \$471-million investment brings hospital funding to \$8.1 billion for 2000-01, the most money ever invested in hospitals in the province's history. The government has now increased hospital funding by more than \$660 million

this year. In June the government announced a total of \$168 million of new funding for all hospitals and followed that in October with \$22 million for hospitals that provide dialysis services.

The Deputy Speaker: There being no further matters before the House, this House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1757.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston
Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers
Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller
Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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

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

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

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

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