



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 21 November 2001

Mercredi 21 novembre 2001

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Copies of Hansard

Information regarding purchase of copies of Hansard may be obtained from Publications Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, 50 Grosvenor Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. Phone 416-326-5310, 326-5311 or toll-free 1-800-668-9938.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Exemplaires du Journal

Pour des exemplaires, veuillez prendre contact avec Publications Ontario, Secrétariat du Conseil de gestion, 50 rue Grosvenor, Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1N8. Par téléphone : 416-326-5310, 326-5311, ou sans frais : 1-800-668-9938.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 21 November 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 21 novembre 2001

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRES

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): With Bill 130, the Community Care Access Corporations Act, 2001, the immediate impact on Ontario's 43 community care access centres will be that CCACs will need approval of the minister to: convey or purchase interest in property; enter into or amend any contract longer than one year; incur any financial liability or obligation longer than one year; make any payment to terminate an employment relationship, except as provided in a contract or collective agreement already in force; appoint any manager; or amend any bylaw. The approval of the minister may be in advance or retroactive. The minister can attach conditions and restrictions to any approval. The minister can demand documents, records and/or information on a deadline, and the penalty for not following the above can be a fine of \$25,000.

Community care access corporations and the board members and health caregivers who make them work provide vital services to our communities. These individuals are dedicated to service and work tirelessly to ensure that the ill and frail receive the care they need. They don't deserve to be treated with such disrespect. They don't deserve the implied and absolutely false accusation that they're not doing their jobs. They don't deserve a government that is more willing to sacrifice quality client care in order to further its political agendas and reward its friends. Bill 130 should be withdrawn.

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN AWARD

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I want to congratulate the Harbord Village Residents' Association on winning honourable mention in the city of Toronto's Architecture and Urban Design Awards in the category "Visions and Master Plans." Their project, College Street Creative Landscape for Making a Living, examines ways to revitalize the commercial streetscape between Bathurst Street and Spadina Avenue by making it more pedestrian-friendly.

I also want to congratulate Brown and Storey Architects, who developed the plan for the residents' association. James Brown and Kim Storey, partners in life as well as profession, are two extremely talented architects who live in my riding. This is not the first time they've been honoured for their contributions to making Toronto a better city. One of the jurors, architect Peter Ellis, said of their entry, "Some of the simplest urban designs are often the most effective. The College Street plan would go a long way to restore a pedestrian scale through properly scaled sidewalks, street furniture and trees, simple ingredients that go a long way to making our cities more livable."

This project illustrates the important role citizens play in making Toronto a better place to live. Once again, my congratulations to everyone involved in this project.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): Last week, I, along with the Minister of Health and more than 250 volunteers, staff and patients of the Rouge Valley Health System, celebrated the delivery of a new MRI. The addition of a new magnetic resonance imaging device is the latest investment into quality health care in my community and in fact all of the eastern GTA.

When we were elected in 1995, Scarborough residents did not have local access to an MRI. With this delivery, Scarborough residents have not one, but two MRIs they can now use.

Successive Liberal and NDP governments failed to provide the residents of my community with this important diagnostic tool. At the same time, the federal Liberals, with 101 members here in Ontario, continue to slash health care funding to Ontario and the Liberal MPPs opposite do nothing and say nothing.

Last Wednesday, the Minister of Health also rewarded the Rouge Valley Health System with a stand-alone angioplasty service, which will be serving the people of the eastern GTA by April 2002, the last step before full cardiac services.

This year alone, my community has benefited from the addition of a new breast cancer screening clinic, millions in additional health care funding, funds for improved medical equipment, the addition of hundreds of new long-term-care beds, the delivery of a new MRI, and a new stand-alone angioplasty clinic.

I want to thank not only the volunteers but also the staff of the Rouge Valley Health System, the nurses,

doctors, administrators and all those who helped make these investments possible by offering a professional, well-managed, first-rate health care experience.

CHILD CARE

Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): Today I'd like to address the leaked proposal for the Minister of Social Services to cut funding to child care. The planned cuts of \$200 million represents a little less than half the total child care budget. In Ottawa, as in many other locations across the province, the cuts will have a devastating effect on an already threadbare operation. In the Ottawa area, we currently have thousands of children on waiting lists.

Sonia Smee, a single parent from my riding, put it this way: "I wish the minister's question to his staff was a King Solomon's riddle. If we cut child care funding by 40%, which portion would you take away?"

Let there be no mistake. This province is already very far behind other jurisdictions in Canada, especially Quebec and British Columbia. This government gladly took \$114 million last year from the federal government as part of the social contract for early childhood development, and not one cent of it has found its way into the system. Yet this government has room to carry forward a \$2.2-billion tax cut.

Monday, the minister stated that this planned cut was "insignificant" and hadn't yet "reached his desk." The truth is, this government has no vision for child care whatsoever. Child care is desperately underfunded and there is no comprehensive plan in place, nor will there be before the next election.

This government has an embarrassing record of neglect in child care, and we look forward to the opportunity of correcting that after the next election.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURTS

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): I rise in the House today to address the important issue of domestic violence. Every day in Ontario, assault charges are being filed as a result of domestic disputes. Often, the victim is afraid of reporting the incident and must travel long distances if charges are pursued.

This is why I am pleased to see this government add the town of Cobourg to the list of 55 communities across Ontario which will receive a court specifically geared toward domestic violence. The new Cobourg court will be part of the domestic violence court program created in 1996 under our government. The program will offer a variety of coordinated services. Some of these include specialized investigations by the police to obtain evidence, prosecution of repeat offenders by specialized crown attorneys, and support services for victims through an assistance program for victims and witnesses.

It is indeed extremely important that effective steps are taken to protect these victims, whether it be through the domestic violence court program, the victim support

line, or through legal services. I expect the establishment of local domestic violence courts to further uphold the rights of these victims. My constituents of Northumberland look forward to the improved court services.

1340

SNOWMOBILING

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): As the first snow falls in many parts of Ontario and many Ontarians and tourists from across the world are getting ready to enjoy another season of fantastic snowmobiling on Ontario's many varied trails, it is once again time to remind Ontarians of another broken promise by the Harris government.

During public hearings and debate on Bill 101, an act dealing with the promotion of snowmobile sustainability and enforcement, the government made a commitment to Ontario's anglers and hunters that they would receive full exemption under the bill, allowing them to use snowmobiles along traditional use trails without the necessity of licensing.

When it became apparent last month that the government was about to renege on its commitment to the 450,000 licensed hunters and the over two million anglers in Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters requested in writing urgent meetings with the ministers of tourism and transportation and the Solicitor General, without success.

The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism stated on a number of occasions that there should be a degree of trust in government and that it would outline this exemption in regulations. He, on behalf of the government, during various meetings repeated the commitment to provide anglers and hunters across the province with an exemption. Regulation 185/01 does not include our anglers and hunters.

Tourism and its economic benefits have suffered enough in this province over the past two months. The government must truly do all it can to bolster and boost tourism and not hurt it any further. We demand that the government rectify the situation immediately. Time is of the essence; winter is on its way.

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): So don't tell a lie.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Member for Brampton Centre, I heard that. You're going to have to withdraw that remark.

Mr Spina: I withdraw the statement, Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you very much to the member. Sorry. We are now to members' statements again.

SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): It is my pleasure to rise and inform all members and the audience watching at home that tomorrow morning at 11 am, Bill 98, the South Asian Heritage Act, 2001, will come to the floor of this chamber for debate.

This is no ordinary bill. It is an opportunity for all members of the Ontario Legislature to come together, not as members of political parties but as members of this great chamber, so steeped in history and pride, to recognize the contributions of Ontario's South Asian community.

This bill is not simply my bill, but is a bill that all members of the Legislature should take pride in as we jointly proclaim May as South Asian Heritage Month and May 5 as South Asian Arrival Day. As we prepare to debate the bill tomorrow morning, I would like to inform the members of the House that this is the first such bill in Canada. Our actions and words tomorrow will lay the foundations for annual celebrations across our province for years to come.

From small communities and humble beginnings, Ontario's South Asian community has lived and worked in Ontario since the early part of the 20th century. Tomorrow morning, as Bill 98 comes to the floor, it would be very fitting for all members of the Legislature to rise and join with me in formally recognizing the contributions of Ontario's South Asian community.

EDUCATION TAX CREDIT

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I rise today to take note, for the public of Ontario, of the utter confusion on the government benches. We have had pronouncements, starting last spring, with the finance minister talking about private school tax credits as a good idea, and absolute silence from the education minister in doing anything to defend public education. Latterly, we've had opinions from the health minister, now also running for leader, from the former finance minister and from their various acolytes.

This is an example of how the governing party is tripping over its own ideology and is unfit to govern. As objectionable as it was to see the original position of putting public money into private schools, it's even more objectionable to see what happens when the ideology starts to unravel.

Would that any of the ministers so named, and the other people involved in this discussion and debate on the other side, would spend one tenth of that time on public education in the first place, the very job their constituents sent them here to do. They would spend the time on the lack of books that is happening in Wellington and on the large class sizes that have been made to happen this year in our high schools all around the province because this government couldn't ratchet itself down to do its job. There is the absolute horror of the special education funding process this government has put in place that has trapped the people in this province away from the services they need. They have put it instead into the requirements of a centralized government that has no real value on public education and what it accomplishes. There is the variety of useless initiatives this government would impose on schools and teachers and school boards, none of which are going to help our kids learn.

We wish that this government would put its focus where it belongs, on the needs of our students and not on their ideology, and that it would not put any public money into private schools.

GOVERNMENT PROCESS

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): Last week, during constituency week, I was given the opportunity to visit close to 10 schools in my riding of Thornhill. I'm proud to say that I was able to talk with close to 1,000 young Ontario students about the Ontario government and my role as an MPP. I visited with grade 4 and 5 students who were very excited to learn about the provincial government from someone with hands-on experience, as the subject is introduced in the Ontario curriculum in these grades.

It was a great opportunity to hear what some children in my riding thought about the government and what they knew about government in Ontario.

I would like to recognize at this time the great job that the teachers in Thornhill are doing, because I was very impressed with the way they were able to answer the questions I asked them. I also want to thank the children and teachers of Woodland public school, St Anthony, Toronto Waldorf School, Stornoway public school, Louis-Honoré Fréchette, Yorkhill public school, St Joseph the Worker, Brownridge public school and Ventura public school for having me as a guest last week.

I look forward to visiting the schools in the future, as I enjoyed speaking with the grades 4 and 5 as they learn about the Ontario curriculum. I certainly hope to be invited back.

VISITORS

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am sure you will want to recognize the 50-plus people from Hamilton East who have come out, led by Mrs Teresa Agostino, mother of Dominic Agostino.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): It's always a pleasure to see Mrs Agostino. I know she watches faithfully, and we're pleased to have her here today.

It is not a point of order, just like if I announced that my mother- and father-in-law were here it wouldn't be a point of order as well. But we're all, I'm sure, going to be on our best behaviour with all our families here today.

A point of order, the member for Windsor-St Clair.

MINISTER'S COMMENTS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I rise today on a point of order pursuant to standing order 13 and want to reference comments made in this House yesterday by the Solicitor General.

Responding to a question from my colleague from Sudbury, the Solicitor General said, and I quote from Hansard, referencing the police memorial, "This is the party, the Liberals, that spoke out against the expense --

they didn't want the expense of building a police memorial."

The Solicitor General then went on to say, and again I quote from Hansard, "I believe it was also the Liberal government, when they were in power, that refused to go to the funeral of a slain" police "officer."

It is my assertion, Mr Speaker, that both statements are factually wrong. The challenge, sir, and this is where I seek your guidance, is how to address a factual error of this nature. The rules do not allow me to accuse another member of this House of uttering a false or inaccurate statement. The rules do permit a member to rise and correct his or her own record. But to my knowledge, there is no mechanism available to any member whereby one member can ask that another member be held accountable for statements with respect to either the veracity or accuracy of statements made in this House.

With respect to the first comments, Mr Speaker, it should be pointed out that not only did the Liberal caucus of the day support the establishment of the police memorial; we in fact granted unanimous consent to allow the resolution that was presented to this House to be given without notice. We again voted unanimously in favour of that. The two members who were referenced in the minister's press release were in fact present in the House that day and in fact agreed to the unanimous consent.

It should be further noted that there was an article in a newspaper two months prior to that that did reference the total amounts to be spent on that memorial but did not oppose the memorial in any way, shape or form.

With respect to the second comment, Mr Speaker, there is no record that any government in the history of this province has refused, either deliberately or inadvertently, to attend the funeral of a slain police officer. No one we contacted who has a recollection of those days could recall such a situation.

Further, there is no reference in any media to the refusal of the government of the day to attend such a funeral. In fact, there were a number of funerals for both slain police officers and others who had died, not necessarily in the line of duty, that were in fact attended not only by members of the government of the day but by members of the opposition parties of the day.

In your deliberations, Mr Speaker, I would ask you to consider the findings of the public service committee of the British House of Commons resolution of 1995, that said, and I will keep it brief, "Ministers who knowingly mislead Parliament will be expected to offer their resignation to the Prime Minister; ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament, refusing to provide information" -- or accurately disclose such should cause their resignation.

Marleau and Montpetit also referenced the importance of ministers not making comments that are deliberately provocative so as not to upset the order or decorum of the House.

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: They laugh, but it's a serious matter.

I ask you, sir, to consider these and give us some guidance with how we might be able to, at a minimum, ask the minister if he would retract those comments in this House today.

1350

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I thank the member. Standing order 13(a) does talk about preserving order and decorum. I was not here, but sometimes when statements like that are made it is difficult for the Speaker of the day to control.

It isn't a point of order. However, having said that, we are all honourable members, and if the Solicitor General would like to withdraw, he certainly has the opportunity. I see the Solicitor General to comment on that.

Hon David Turnbull (Solicitor General): Mr Speaker, let me say that, with respect to yesterday's answer, it was never my intention to be partisan. I realize that it has come out as being partisan.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Turnbull: Perhaps you'll want to listen to the answer.

It was certainly my recollection that the police were concerned that the Solicitor General and the Premier of the day did not attend that funeral. I have in fact contacted, through one of my staff, the person who was the executive director of the OPPA at the time, who expressed his disappointment to the Deputy Solicitor General of the day that the attendance was not there. Perhaps I inadvertently said that he refused. In that respect I withdraw that, but I know that in fact they did not attend.

With respect to the police memorial, I have in fact the newspaper clipping here in which it says that both MPP Mike Colle and MPP David Caplan were critical of the amount of expenditures on the police memorial.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): That's not true.

Hon Mr Turnbull: This is in the newspapers. This is reported.

Let me say that I'm pleased that the Liberals are now onside, supportive of the police, but --

Interjections.

The Speaker: Solicitor General.

I thought he was going to do something --

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): You have the decency to withdraw it today. It's a dirty, cheap shot and you know it.

The Speaker: It makes it very difficult to keep order. I thought the Solicitor General was going to try to help the situation. It does make it very, very difficult.

I think everybody knows, in circumstances like this with the death of a police officer, there isn't anybody who would not attend. I know there are circumstances -- that might not be what happened. Regardless of all the parties involved, there isn't anybody who wouldn't have shown respect.

But it does make it difficult to remain and have decorum in here when people make statements like that. I

would ask all members to reflect on that and try to maintain some sort of semblance of order in here.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the 16th report of the standing committee on government agencies.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ARTHUR WISHART AMENDMENT ACT (FRANCHISE DISCLOSURE), 2001 / LOI DE 2001 MODIFIANT LA LOI ARTHUR WISHART SUR LA DIVULGATION RELATIVE AUX FRANCHISES

Mr Martin moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 138, An Act to amend the Arthur Wishart Act (Franchise Disclosure), 2000 / Projet de loi 138, Loi modifiant la Loi Arthur Wishart de 2000 sur la divulgation relative aux franchises.

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

The member for a short statement?

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): This bill will amend the current legislation to include regulations for fair dealings after the contract is signed. With the enactment of this bill, a franchisor could no longer refuse renewal of a franchise agreement without six months' written notice, fair compensation and the right of the franchisee to pursue a similar business in the same location. It would also protect a franchisee from unilateral termination of the contract before the expiry date without cause and proper written notice. The bill will also set out a fair process for mediation if the two parties cannot come to an agreement on their own.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION TAX CREDIT

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Minister of Education, who was here just a moment ago. Here she is.

Minister, you tell us now that you're going to be making further cuts to public education. Representatives

of the government are generally now telling us that we're into an economic downturn, that we're going to have a drop in revenues, and that necessitates further cuts to public education. At the same time, you're telling us that you're going to go ahead with your private school tax credit. You're going to pour millions of precious public dollars, the few public dollars that we have, into private schools.

Here's what the Toronto Sun had to say about that: "The Tories cannot cut so much as a blackboard eraser in the public system so long as they're paying for children in private schools." Madam Minister, how can you possibly be planning more cuts to public education at the same time that you're planning to spend millions on private schools?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I'm pleased to see the honourable member is now reading the Toronto Sun. First of all, our commitments to public education and health care in this province stand, as does our stand to be good fiscal managers of the money the taxpayers give us. We've made a commitment to balance our budget and we will indeed do that. We've made a commitment to have health and education as our priorities and we will indeed do that.

Mr McGuinty: There has been no evidence over the last six and a half painful years of any commitment on your part supporting a vibrant public education system. Today you will know that in cabinet you discussed attaching some kinds of strings to the private school tax credit. Strings won't work and you know it. Either you believe in sending public money to private schools or you don't. Unlike you and Ernie Eves, I don't and I won't. Public money for private schools can't be fixed by way of regulation and it can't be fixed by attaching some strings. It can only be fixed by repealing the entire mess, as we will.

Madam Minister, will you do what you know is the right thing in your heart of hearts, and repeal the private school tax credit?

Hon Mrs Ecker: I'm sorry I missed you sitting at the table at cabinet today, so I'm not quite sure how you would know what did or did not occur at a cabinet meeting.

First of all, this government has increased funding for public education from \$12.9 billion to \$13.8 billion above enrolment growth because we know it is a very important priority. We've also got more of that money in classrooms as opposed to being in administration -- again, a commitment we made, a commitment we delivered on.

On this side of the House, we also respect parental choice. We respect parental choice in the public system, we respect parental choice if they want to home-school their children and we respect parental choice if they're sending their children to independent schools. That remains the commitment of this government and we will indeed do what we said we would do.

Mr McGuinty: You can understand if we're finding it difficult to keep track of your commitments. Here's something I'm in full agreement with, a statement I'll just read back to you: "... extending funding to religious private schools would result in fragmentation of the education system in Ontario and undermine the goal of universal access to education." That was particularly well said. Do you know who said that? You said that. You were right then and you are wrong today.

Certifying private school teachers won't make this right. Mandating a private school curriculum won't make this right. The only thing that will make this right is a full, outright and absolute repeal of the private school tax credit.

Madam Minister, why don't you do what you know to be in your heart of hearts and that you committed to earlier on as the right thing to do? Why don't you repeal the private school tax credit?

1400

Hon Mrs Ecker: We understand that the Liberals say they respect parental choice. We understand that the Liberals say they think parents are important in the education of their children. But when they actually have to demonstrate it, when they actually have to go out and say, "Yes, parents, we do believe you have some ability to make decisions in the best interests of your children," they back off, they waffle, they don't support parental choice.

The only thing that is going to undermine public education in this province is the attitude and approach that the honourable members in the Liberal Party take to reduce standards, to not have higher standards in curriculum, to not have higher standards for teachers, to not have higher standards and help our students meet them. That is what this government is doing in public education. We will continue to do that, because this is about improved student learning in our public education system. I'm surprised they have so little faith in the ability of our public education system to meet those goals.

IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Attorney General, who is just heading to his seat. It is on the Premier's testimony today, behind closed doors, on the Ipperwash situation. You know that we strongly believe that a public inquiry is the proper approach. The government has refused to agree to that. The government has said that the civil case will serve many of the same purposes. It's critical that the public have a clear record of what transpires today and in the next few days behind closed doors. Will you provide, Attorney General, your assurance that the government will agree to make public the transcripts of the Premier's testimony today and the next few days?

Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): As the member may be aware and should be aware before he poses a question like this, there is no provision within the rules of civil

procedure to allow for those transcripts to be distributed to politicians simply because they have a desire to know certain information before a trial. In fact, if one considers the rules of civil procedure and considers the freedom of information and privacy legislation in this province, one will very quickly understand that it wouldn't be possible for the government to distribute that information even if we had the desire to do so, even if we had the desire to interfere with the fair and impartial judicial system, which we do not.

Mr Phillips: In the debate in the Legislature on May 14th, Attorney General, when we were debating whether or not the Legislature should approve a public inquiry, you argued strenuously against it. One of the reasons you argued against it was, and I quote here -- you were saying that the transcripts would be made public. You said, "Although the oral examinations for discovery are conducted behind closed doors, so to speak ... the transcripts from that proceeding from the court file can be and normally are accessible to the public." That's what you said when you argued against the public inquiry in favour of a civil case.

I say to you again, Minister, will you give your assurance that you will follow through on what you said on May 14th and that the transcripts from the proceedings today can be and will be made available and accessible to the public?

Hon Mr Young: It's very dangerous for people to dabble at this, as the member opposite is doing. Let's be very clear. Transcripts from examinations for discovery are generally used, and it is in the normal course that they are used, at trial. Either party can submit to the judge the transcript from an examination for discovery. They are transcripts of a pre-trial procedure where the parties are being examined. It goes on every day within the province of Ontario. It is good for Ontarians, it's good for all Ontarians, except when there is a political agenda, as is the case with the member opposite, except when the member opposite is far more interested in advancing his political agenda than he is in getting at the truth.

I, for one, have great confidence that the courts of this province are a perfect place to get at the truth. I, for one, have great confidence in the judicial system, and I know the defendants in this lawsuit are looking forward to having their day in court.

Mr Phillips: When we debated in the House whether we should have a public inquiry or not, you very clearly said the transcripts from the hearings, the discovery, would be made public. The public assumed that those transcripts would be made available as this process went along and we would know what went on behind closed doors. It's clear to all of us that the appropriate approach must be a public inquiry. Doing this behind closed doors, dragging it out for years, at the expense of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, fighting a family of modest means, is totally inappropriate. Attorney General, will you agree today to do the proper thing? Will you agree today to stop proceeding with this civil case and will you

agree to call a full public inquiry into the events around Ipperwash?

Hon Mr Young: The civil trial, the court case that's underway now, which is being overseen by an impartial, independent judge, is the same court case that is examining the same issues that would be reviewed at any public inquiry. What my friend opposite is suggesting, as best I can understand, is that we suspend that court case. The trial should never take place, in his opinion. Why? Well, I'm not sure why, but I, for one, look forward to the trial. I know the defendants look forward to the trial. If we were to suspend that civil proceeding now and call an inquiry, the only thing that would result is that my friends over there would wave a banner and suggest this is a great political victory. But we would be no closer to the truth; in fact, we'd be further away from it because we would be starting a whole new proceeding afresh, as opposed to simply completing the proceeding that is underway.

ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, your dirty deal to privatize Ontario Power Generation includes incredible increases in pay for the corporation's executives. You recruited Graham Brown to Ontario Power Generation from the United Kingdom, where he was paid \$1.8 million to leave his job at National Power. At Ontario Power Generation, Mr Brown, as chief operating officer, will receive salaries and bonuses of a million dollars a year. But what is really galling is that if Ontario Power Generation is not privatized by 2003, he will receive a million dollars just to leave his job, a million dollars to go out the door. Minister, do you approve of these million-dollar giveaways to the executive officers you've recruited to Ontario Power Generation?

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): We've recruited some of the best people from around the world to turn the old Ontario Hydro around and to put its successor company, Ontario Power Generation, on a firm business foundation. It has done exactly that.

Mr Brown's compensation package and his severance package, if that were to come to be, is consistent with the international community. You will find that studies were done by Ontario Power Generation before that compensation was set by the board. It was not set by the government. It was set by the board and the board members, and we have great confidence in that board. They are turning around that corporation. It has produced record profits and dividends for the people of Ontario. It's helping to pay down that massive \$38-billion debt that the NDP and Liberals left us.

Mr Hampton: Maybe you can explain this. When Mr Brown left National Power in the United Kingdom, he was told to get out the door, he was told to leave, not because he was successful but because the company was not achieving the results that had been set out, that in fact

there was a lack of direction in the corporation. Now you recruit him to Ontario Power Generation, you're going to pay him a million dollars in salaries and bonuses, and if the corporation isn't privatized by 2003, he gets another million dollars for doing nothing. It's not a severance package. He gets to say, "I want to leave now," and you have to pay him a million dollars. Is this what you call looking after the interests of Ontario taxpayers and ratepayers?

1410

Hon Mr Wilson: We were very delighted when Mr Brown agreed to accept employment with Ontario Power Generation. His compensation is certainly in line with anything on a worldwide comparable basis. He is serving the corporation very well, and I, for one, stand behind him and stand behind our board.

I would say that the NDP would have done well to have recruited someone like Mr Brown to help turn around the old Ontario Hydro. They chose not to. They chose to rack up debts. They chose to destroy our power plants to the point where I had to close 10 nuclear reactors, out of 20, when I came to this office four years ago. They left the corporation in disgrace. We have nothing to learn from you, Mr Hampton, or your party and the way they dealt with Ontario Hydro in the past.

Mr Hampton: Well, Minister, what we see from reading the Toronto Star and the Toronto Globe and Mail over the last few days is that what you have been doing at Ontario Power Generation is giving away the assets such that Bay Street advisers are telling people, "Buy shares in British Energy because they've taken the Ontario government for a ride. They've received assets, paying far-below-value prices."

But I want to get back to Mr Brown. It is a fact, it is recorded in the media in Great Britain, that he was told, "Leave. You are no longer welcome as the chief executive officer at National Power," and as severance they had to pay him some money. But you've gone out and recruited him for \$1 million a year, and he can choose to walk away in 2003 and you have to pay him \$1 million, even if it's by his choice. It's not severance.

So I ask you again, can you tell the ratepayers and the taxpayers of the province how this is a good deal? And are you going to call Ontario Power Generation on the carpet and ask them why they're giving away \$2 million, potentially, to someone who failed at his job in Great Britain?

Hon Mr Wilson: Again the honourable member does not know of what he speaks. The facts that he's presented to this House are not facts at all. Mr Brown was actively recruited from the National Grid corporation. We're lucky to have him. I stand behind him, and he's turned around this corporation. The NDP's big decision when they were in office, their multimillion-dollar man that they brought in, was Maurice Strong. His number one priority was to buy rainforest in Central America, not look after the people of Ontario, not turn Ontario Hydro around but to rack up the debt, rack it up to record levels and buy rainforest in Costa Rica. That's not something

Mr Brown's doing and it's not something this government's doing. There's nothing we can learn from you, Mr Hampton, I assure you. The people of Ontario heard from the NDP, and you left us a disgraceful corporation.

DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question to the Minister of Health regarding the international medical graduate assessment program. You've said that this program would recognize the abilities of international graduates who haven't been able to practise --

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We've had our fun but the ministers are having difficulty hearing the question. I know it was fun-loving and everybody was doing it in good humour and that, but we do need to now settle down. Some of the ministers are having trouble hearing the question. If the member could start over, the ministers will be able to hear. Sorry about that.

Ms Martel: This question is to the Minister of Health and it's regarding the international medical graduate assessment program. You've said that the program would allow international medical graduates to finally practise in Ontario, and you've also said that underserved areas would benefit because these physicians would practise on restricted licenses in our communities.

You've now received a letter from Dr Koka of Sudbury, who himself was an international medical graduate when he came to Sudbury 15 years ago. He says of the program, "I am totally disappointed to note that:

"(1) You have chosen only four specialties, and the worst shortage specialty, being psychiatry, is not even included.

"(2) You've included that physicians need to be in recent active clinical practice, within the last three years.

"(3) You are excluding people who are trained in the UK, Ireland, South Africa and Australia. These people are very well trained and meet the expectations of training equivalent to training in Canada.

"(4) You have added that the LMCC examination, part 1, be passed as a requirement before physicians can even be considered for the program.

"With all these conditions and with the fact that physicians are required to come and spend a six-month assessment without pay, I have serious doubts that anyone would be willing to go through this difficult process."

Minister, what do you have to say in response to these serious concerns?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I thank the honourable member for the question and indeed have discussed these personally with the physician who has been mentioned. I have indicated to him that he has raised some important issues with respect to the rollout of the foreign medical graduate program.

The fact of the matter is that we want to take this program step by step to make sure it is successful, and so we started with certain specialties and fields, with the

intention of expanding it in the future. When I explained this to the physician in question, based on my understanding of his reaction, he understood my position. He understood that you had to walk before you could run. We came to an agreement that his aspirations for the program were my aspirations for the program, and we'll get there in due course.

Ms Martel: If I might, I have spoken to Dr Koka within the last 48 hours. He is not reassured by your comments, and only one of your concerns, of the four that he mentioned, may have been addressed.

The fifth concern, and this is very important to those of us who represent underserved areas, is the following, and I quote again from his letter, which has gone to you: "I was under the impression that these physicians would be sponsored by underserved communities such as Sudbury and other places in Ontario and that, once sponsored, if the selected physicians went through the training assessment and subsequently were successful, then they would be granted a restricted licence to practise in the communities where they were sponsored. There is no such requirement under the current program."

Minister, you have a serious problem. Not only do you have a problem that indeed 40 applicants may not apply because of the four restrictions I have already talked to you about; in fact, even if they do, underserved areas may not benefit at all because there is no requirement for them to practise on a restricted licence in our communities.

If you want to help underserved areas, if you want to help international medical graduates practise in Ontario, what will you do to positively respond to the concerns of Dr Koka?

Hon Mr Clement: I'm sorry for the misunderstanding, but I can assure this House that indeed underserved areas and communities can sponsor physicians under this program. They can make them restricted to those particular communities. That's the whole intention of the program. This is an idea that was recommended by the expert panel that was struck by my predecessor. The idea is, starting with 40 and hopefully expanding from there, that we can have a maximum six-month expedited process and certification process for those foreign medical graduates to practise in our underserved areas. So the honourable member is incorrect when she says that is not a precursor or a precondition of the program. I can assure the honourable member that that is the case, and that is going to be the great success of the program.

TEACHER TESTING

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Minister of Education again.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Stop the clock. The minister is here. She may have just stepped out for a quick moment.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you, Speaker.

Minister, my question is about the growing rift in your cabinet over your education policies. I'm not talking

about your \$500-million private school tax credit -- we know that was very problematic -- and I'm not talking about Elizabeth Witmer's insightful comments about your incessant fighting with teachers. I must say, in passing, we may be getting more candour and truthfulness from the leadership candidates over the next four or five months regarding Mike Harris's policies than we've had during the past six years.

What I really want to talk about are Tony Clement's latest comments as they appear in the November 16 edition of the Queen's Journal. I want to read from that article in reference to Minister Clement. It says the following:

"He said teacher testing is an issue he's not completely prepared to support.

"[Teacher testing] is the most problematic'... said Clement, 'if it's a whole lot of effort for a little change, then it may not be worthwhile as an option.'"

I'm with Tony Clement on this issue. I don't think it's worthwhile. I'm just wondering if you, Madam Minister, are with Tony Clement on this issue.

1420

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): Actually, Tony Clement and I agree on many, many issues, including teacher testing, because on this side of the House we believe in accountability in the public education system. We believe in setting standards. We believe in measuring. We believe in student testing to make sure our students are learning what they need to learn. We believe in a comprehensive teacher testing program to make sure that all of our teachers are as up to date as possible. Good teachers out there aren't going to notice any change in the rules, because they're already out there doing it. We understand that teachers, just like doctors, nurses, dentists, airline pilots, real estate agents, insurance agents -- you name the profession or trade --

Interjection: MPPs?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Yes, MPPs. We have recertification every four years, whether we want it or not, and we don't get remediation. So accountability, performance appraisals, all of those things are not unique to the teaching profession. This government said we would put in place a program that would raise the standards in our schools. We are indeed delivering on that program. Everyone on this side of the House supports that program.

Mr McGuinty: If the minister is truly interested in government accountability, I would refer her to our democratic charter that we put out just a couple of weeks ago. That's what government accountability looks like.

In the interim, Madam Minister, I would suggest that you might want to get together with Tony Clement. I would recommend that you leave Ernie Eves out of the meeting and that you have a discussion about where you're going to go when it comes to teacher recertification. I want to make it clear, I'm with Tony Clement on this. I'm also with Liz Witmer, who is telling us that what this is really all about is an effort to begin a new fight with teachers.

Madam Minister, why don't you take good advice that's coming from people who are sitting right next to you: Mr Clement and Madam Witmer? Mr Clement says this is not the right way to go if you want to improve teacher accountability; Madam Witmer is telling us that this is really all about picking another fight with teachers. Why don't you just tell us that what this is really all about at heart is not improving teaching in Ontario; it's about picking another fight with teachers?

Hon Mrs Ecker: I'm glad the honourable member mentioned his democratic charter, which is all about Americanizing our Canadian parliamentary system. Take a look at the options he put forward.

Anyway, the honourable Liberal leader said that if he were elected, he would require teachers -- require teachers -- to do professional development. He would require that. That's interesting, because today he says he's against that. Here we go again. His party said they supported the Royal Commission on Learning, which said, "Let's have mandatory professional development and recertification." Today he is against recertification for teachers.

Why is it OK for our students to be tested, our physicians and nurses and doctors and airline pilots and police and all of those individuals who have to meet professional development requirements? How come it's OK for them to have to meet those standards and he doesn't think that our teachers are capable of meeting those standards? This side of the House believes they can, they will, they do that; they go the extra mile for our kids, and our parents would not expect anything less.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. It relates to the potentially devastating effect of the recent business failure of Canada 3000 on hundreds of small businesses in this province. I'm referring to the travel agencies and wholesalers registered with the Travel Industry Council of Ontario who, under section 13 of the Travel Industry Act, are liable to compensate consumers if end suppliers fail to provide the travel services they contracted for.

In September of last year, TICO pointed out the unfairness of this liability, as these businesses really have no control over the solvency of end suppliers. To address this concern, TICO proposed that the compensation fund should in fact cover end-supplier failure of airlines and cruise lines.

Minister, could you tell us if you agree with me and many members of this Legislature that that recommendation was in fact fair and reasonable, and can you tell us whether you're prepared to take their advice and implement this change?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services): Many members of the Legislature have asked me this question because there are many small travel agents across the province who are

presently suffering with regard to the failure of Canada 3000. As the member mentioned, last September, and actually during the summer, we had been talking to TICO about changing the law with regard to how the compensation fund is applied to a claim. Fortunately the Travel Industry Act allows the cabinet of Ontario to make a regulation to change that relationship so the customer can gain direct access to the compensation fund. I'm happy to report that this morning the cabinet passed a regulation to protect the travel agents and to allow the consumer direct access to the compensation fund.

Mr Klees: I'm pleased I gave the minister notice that I would be asking this question, which allowed you to take the initiative in anticipation of the question. In the interest of ensuring a more efficient processing of compensation claims, though, it has been suggested that consumers should be allowed to access the compensation fund directly in the event of end-supply failure. This change would protect not only consumers; it would also protect the registrants who may otherwise face the threat of bankruptcy or insolvency associated with the end-supply failure.

Specifically, I'm pleased you've taken the initiative to change the regulation to give access, but will this in fact allow consumers to make direct application to the fund to streamline that process?

Hon Mr Sterling: There will be a dual responsibility to refund what the consumer has paid for a ticket for Canada 3000 services. The travel agent will be responsible to pay back to the consumer that portion of the ticket or the tour for which the travel agent received compensation. In other words, if they received \$30 on a \$300 ticket, then the travel agent is responsible for that portion. This is the same model as they have in British Columbia. The remaining part, the \$270 in my example, would be compensated from the compensation fund, either directly to the customer or through the travel agent.

AIR QUALITY

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I had an opportunity earlier this week to hear the Minister of the Environment denouncing her colleagues for being very unfair to teachers in Ontario and wanting a much more moderate government. But I was reading what the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, had to say about coal-fired plants in Ontario. When he launched his campaign in Brampton, your Minister of Health said the following: "Why do we still have smog-producing coal-fired plants in Ontario and why are raw sewage and chemicals still being dumped into lakes?"

I know you're going to say, "He was Minister of the Environment. Why didn't he fix it up?" But let's put that aside. May I ask you the question the Minister of Health asked? Why do we still have these dirty coal-fired plants in Ontario and are you going to follow his recommendation and get rid of them?

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): Wait until Friday and find out.

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of the Environment): Maybe the member opposite does have the best response.

In order to address the issue related to the coal-burning plants in Ontario, the member knows that we have taken one very significant step already, and that is that we will be closing Lakeview as a coal-burning plant in 2005. We have also introduced some very significant standards regarding emissions for the other coal-burning plants as of 2007.

As the member also knows, we presently have an all-party committee taking a look at alternative forms of energy. I understand there was a presentation made to that committee today, and again that committee has an opportunity to take a look at the feasibility of doing a conversion of those coal-burning plants.

1430

Mr Bradley: I don't think that answer's going to satisfy the Minister of Health of this province; I really don't. I think it was too vague. It was moving all over the field. I think what he wants to know, I want to know and Jack Gibbons of the Ontario Clean Air Alliance wants to know is -- I know you're converting Lakeview and you're still not going to put the best possible equipment in there; I know you're still going to allow Atikokan, Thunder Bay, Lambton and Nanticoke to burn coal, Nanticoke being the largest source of pollution in all of Canada. But I want to ask on behalf of the Honourable Tony Clement, who doesn't have a chance in this House to ask these questions, are you now prepared to convert the coal-fired plants in Ontario to much cleaner gas and thereby have a major impact on the environment and the health of the people of Ontario? Do you agree with the Minister of Health or do you disagree with him?

Hon Mrs Witmer: Let me just, in response to the question from the member opposite, respond to Lakeview. As far as Lakeview is concerned, there's new technology being developed each and every day. I would hope that whoever assumes responsibility for Lakeview will put in the technology that obviously is the best technology and will improve environmental air emissions the most.

As far as what's being said regarding improving air quality in the province, I would agree that the committee that is presently taking a look at this issue would carefully examine what can be done in order to ensure that we do have the best air quality in the province.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Business Services, and it relates as well to the airline industry and the debacle of Canada 3000. What we'd like to know is, why has the provincial government been able to effect some travel protection for consumers in this whole area while

the federal Grit government has utterly failed to deal with this issue for the last 20 years?

Interjections.

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services): It may be of some amusement to the members opposite, but some people are not going to be compensated through our compensation fund because they have paid directly to the airline or have ordered their tickets for Canada 3000 over the Internet.

We have no jurisdiction over airlines. We have written to the Minister of Transport in Ottawa, Mr Collenette. Previous governments have written to Ministers of Transport --

Interjection.

Hon Mr Sterling: -- in the Mulroney government, in any federal government -- and they have offered no compensation plan for our consumers. They have jurisdiction in this area. They could provide compensation through a small insurance fund, something similar to what we offer here in Ontario, and I think it's long overdue.

Mr Hastings: For the edification of our Grit friends across the way, they may think this is a pretty funny issue, but I'd like them to answer why, in the case of one traveller I have, an 80-year-old grandmother who booked on Canada 3000 isn't going to get a penny back under this plan or any other provincial plan, because the federal Grits have failed utterly to provide significant leadership in this area. What kind of an answer am I going to give her regarding this, Minister?

Furthermore, what kind of significant leadership are you going to provide, working with the provinces, to get the feds to act on this issue, since they seem to be completely absent-minded with regard to Canada 3000 and the mess they've made of air monopoly?

Hon Mr Sterling: I know the member feels very strongly about this. Unfortunately, I cannot give him a good answer for his constituent. I feel very sorry for her. I did write to Mr Collenette about this particular problem. I intend to raise it with Mr Collenette at the next opportunity I have. It is time that the federal government took some action on this particular matter. Some other provinces don't have the kind of protection that we do in the province of Ontario with regard to ordering tickets through Ontario travel agents. In those other provinces, they could well be served by federal action in this area. They need protection. The federal government should act, and they should act now.

FRANCHISE BUSINESSES

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): My question is also for the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. Twenty-three Grand and Toy franchise owners across Ontario are facing ruin at the hands of a company that just doesn't care. Many of them and their families are here in the House today. They're looking to you for some help. Your legislation fails to stop Grand and Toy from ripping up contracts and locking the doors on these

people. Minister, you have laws to stop big corporations from doing that to their workers. Are you saying that a Conservative government doesn't want to protect small businesspersons? Minister, you promised to consider changes to the legislation if the facts showed it doesn't protect franchisees. Well, the facts have spoken: your law doesn't work. I introduced a bill today that will. Will you support it?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services): First of all, no one can rip up a contract and avoid the promises and the conditions of that contract. That's what our laws are about. My understanding is that this matter is before the courts. It is my hope that the Arthur Wishart law will help provide fair dealing as described in the Arthur Wishart Act. I understand from reading the statement of claim in their lawsuit that in fact they plead the Arthur Wishart Act as part of their statement of claim. It is my hope that, as a result of this legal case, we could find out how well the Arthur Wishart Act protects franchisees. As I have promised before, if it does not, then we will have to change the law.

Mr Martin: The courts aren't going to work for these people. How many people are you willing to sacrifice? You said you wanted to protect franchisees and we took you at your word. I believe that if you really understand what terrible things are happening to these hard-working people and you look at the changes we are calling for in the act, you will see that you can and should work with the NDP and bring changes in right now, immediately. Minister, the clock is ticking. Will you sit down, at least, and meet with me and the franchisees from Grand and Toy, hear their case and be open to working with us to bring real protection into our laws?

Hon Mr Sterling: I find it odd that it took a Conservative government after 1995, when there were other franchise laws in this country and on this continent, to bring in a law to protect franchisees, notwithstanding the fact that of course the NDP government was here from 1990 to 1995.

I feel very sorry for these franchisees. I will do everything in my power to help them. However, if there is a case underway, then as a member of cabinet I cannot interfere directly in that matter until that particular case has finished and been heard by the courts. That's what our courts are for.

I have not seen the member's bill and therefore I cannot say whether I would support it or not. I will look at it, and I will look at it in a positive sense and in a constructive way. I am always, and this government is always, looking for ways to have fair dealing between small business and other people who are involved with small business.

1440

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): My question is for the Minister of Health. The brand new Consumer Coalition for Access to Audiological Services

came to Queen's Park today. The coalition represents deaf adults, heard-of-hearing seniors and the families of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. They were here to tell you that three months after you made your cuts to hearing assessments, the results have been disastrous.

Bev Biderman was here. She now has to pay out of her own pocket to maintain the cochlear implant that allows her to hear and speak. She said your government clearly puts no value on hearing or speech. The parents of two-year-old Harrison Quesnel were here. They have spent \$300 on hearing services for their deaf son since the end of August and will have to spend \$500 or \$600 per year until their son is 16, just for assessments. That's in addition to what they will spend for hearing aids, ear moulds, batteries and other hearing accessories.

Minister, last night in this place we debated your government's disabilities act. I ask you today, why do you give lip service to a concern for those with disabilities but deny basic services to the deaf and the hard-of-hearing?

Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): I want to assure this House that nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, we still have insured services involving audiology, involving hearing tests and involving specialists who have access to OHIP. That has been the case for at least the last 30 years and it will be the case in the future as well.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, I admit you've caught me by surprise. Maybe you're not aware that you made some slight change to your OHIP schedule for audiology, today, hot off the presses, in view of the fact you're going to be in court on this matter on Monday. Unfortunately the changes you've made are minimal changes. Of the \$7.7 million you cut in audiology services to children and to seniors, you're maybe restoring \$2 million of that. You've done nothing to restore publicly funded hearing evaluations or re-evaluations, nothing for cochlear implants, nothing for the Bev Bidermans of Ontario.

I suggest to you that the only reason you've made this last-minute change today is because you are going to be in court on Monday. You're being taken to court by the Ontario Association for the Deaf, the Ontario Cochlear Implant Support Group, the Voice for Hearing Impaired Children, the Canadian Hearing Society, the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association and a number of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. I think Dr Nedzelski of Sunnybrook hospital sums up the position of all these groups and individuals when he says your cuts are reprehensible and unfair because people's hearing problems are compounded because of them.

Minister, why would you rather fight the deaf and the hard-of-hearing in court than deal with them fairly now?

Hon Mr Clement: I don't choose to deal with them in that way. I would certainly like to continue whatever dialogue -- it's difficult to have a dialogue when you are the defendant in a civil lawsuit, so it prevents me from having the discussion I would like to have with them.

The fact of the matter is that in the discussions that have taken place it became clear, as a result of statements by Liberals and by other opposition parties, that there was some uncertainty. We cleared up the uncertainty and there has been a lot more satisfaction when we did so. I can only reiterate to this House that hearing tests and evaluations and all of these other aspects of audiology and hearing are still covered under OHIP. They have been covered under OHIP for a number of years and they will continue to be so.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): My question is also for the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. This is in regard to the Canada 3000 airline failure and the potential impact on travel agents in Ontario who in good faith booked passengers on this airline. In answer to the member for Oak Ridges, you told us that the province is about to change its rules so that passengers are protected by the TICO compensation plan, but without the extreme risk to the agents that is present in the law today. With this change implemented, agents will want to know if this change will deal with the problems of today. In other words, will the change protect agents who face risks from the Canada 3000 failure or is it only effective for end-supplier failure in the future?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services): The Travel Industry Act allows the cabinet to pass a regulation that is set six months retrospectively, so basically the regulation will come into effect as of July 1 and therefore will cover the failure of Canada 3000. Also included in the changes was the increase of a maximum claim by an individual from \$3,500 to \$5,000. This is more important for those people who had ordered, through their travel agent, a tour package and not just an individual ticket. That had not been changed for the last 20 years; and it was thought by the cabinet of Ontario that some people would be caught by the maximum of \$3,500 being just too low at this time.

Mr Gill: The organization of the TICO fund is still confusing to some. Given our government's opposition to corporate welfare and given our government's reputation for fiscal responsibility, I know we would not support a bailout of otherwise failing travel agencies. With this in mind, can you explain to this House and my constituents and a number of concerned travel agents I met last week where the money comes from for the expanded protection in the compensation fund that you've discussed today?

Hon Mr Sterling: I guess we should understand, of course, that this compensation fund actually is funded by the travel agents themselves. For each \$1,000 worth of business, they pay a certain premium on that, as do the wholesalers in the travel industry. There's some \$23 million now in the compensation fund. That has been ac-

cumulated over the last 10 years, with some claims on that compensation fund. This is not taxpayers' dollars; this is the travel industry's dollars. It's an insurance fund which was put there to take care of these kinds of instances.

So that's why the cabinet felt today that it was only fair to those travel agents who had paid into it that when in fact an airline like Canada 3000 went down, the compensation fund should be up front and paying back. Therefore we are not going to see bankruptcy of a lot of the small travel agencies. I think this is a good day for small business in Ontario.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, I want to ask you about the conditions of our schools in the city of Hamilton. The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has looked at the state of their schools and they've assessed that they need at least \$27 million for repairs; \$17 million of that is what they classify as urgent, that is, leaky roofs and boiler systems that might not last through the winter. There are many older schools in the older part of the city, inner city schools, that are affected.

These are the same type of neighbourhoods where your funding formula has forced boards in Hamilton, in St Catharines, in other communities across Ontario, to shut schools down. And the schools that are remaining open are being punished by the lack of funding that you're giving.

Minister, we have situations in the city of Hamilton today where when it rains, teachers have to move the desks and move the kids because there's raining in the classroom. That's how bad some of these conditions are. Some of these boilers are not going to last through the winter. Do you believe it is acceptable in Ontario today under your watch for kids to be sitting in classrooms and when it's raining their desks have to be moved so that they don't get wet?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): As the honourable member knows, one of the reasons we changed how we fund education is because of the incredible neglect that there had been for school capital, school buildings out there. The funding formula has been in place for about three or four years now. The problems that we are attempting to address with our partners the school boards have been problems that have been deteriorating for many, many, many years.

That's one of the reasons we did the facilities survey. We went out and asked all of the boards, "What are the problems? What are the concerns that we have in the capital needs?" We're in the process right now of developing the best way to work with the boards to meet those capital needs across the province. But the responsibility remains, as it always has, with school boards to make good decisions about how to manage their stock, how to manage those school buildings, how to make the

very, very difficult decisions that when populations shift from one neighbourhood to another neighbourhood, they may well have to build a new school here or close a school there or alter their school buildings. That has always been the responsibility of school boards and will remain so. But we are working with our partners to try and address the capital needs they have.

1450

Mr Agostino: Just with the Hamilton board, the annual funding for capital projects has declined by \$8 million since you took over in 1995. So when you talk about improving the capital funding of the system itself from the point of view of repairs, their numbers don't show that. Clearly, Minister, your own survey that you made reference to said, "Through our school facilities survey, we know that there are many schools that are in substandard conditions." That is your own survey; you acknowledged that.

The reality is that strictly in the city of Hamilton, with one board, we need over \$10 million immediately to stop the leaky roofs. It is that simple. Some \$7 million is needed to hopefully keep the boilers working all winter. You can talk all you want about what you've done and your formula and everything else. The reality is that you have kids today sitting in classrooms with leaking roofs over their heads. That is not acceptable. How can you justify putting \$300 million into private schools in the province of Ontario when you have kids today in classrooms with leaky roofs and boilers that are not going to work throughout the winter?

Will you commit today to emergency funding for the school board in Hamilton to fix these roofs, fix these boilers, so these kids can at least have decent conditions and decent standards to learn over the winter months?

Hon Mrs Ecker: First of all, to the honourable member, who I know knows this but likes to put out this information just to confuse people, not one dollar has gone from the public education system to independent schools. I really think the record should show some accurate facts just once in a while in this House.

Secondly, the funding formula that we brought in, starting in 1998, was brought in to start addressing some of the problems that past governments had neglected. These problems did not occur overnight. I agree with the honourable member: we have schools in this province that need considerable capital work. Part of that is because they didn't get the capital work in years past that they should have got, so we're trying to catch up. That is an unfortunate state of affairs. We recognize the problem. We're doing the work to address the problem, and we will indeed, with our school board partners, address these issues across this province.

SKILLS TRAINING

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, yesterday the Conference Board of Canada released its 3rd Annual Innovation Report. This study compares

Canada with other countries with respect to education, literacy skills, as well as research and development. In many areas, the report praised our capacity to be innovative. The Conference Board highlighted research and development, as well as the percentage of the population who have engaged in post-secondary education. However, the study also criticizes Canada's level of skills training, suggesting that in many industries across our country, finding skilled workers is becoming more important and difficult to industry than securing financing. Minister, what is Ontario doing to ensure that we have the skilled workforce we need to be competitive in a global economy?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues): I was at Centennial College this morning, where they're opening a brand new building, in cooperation with two private sector partners -- \$38 million from our government and another \$10.5 million from Compaq and others. I will say that these young people are ready to get the right kind of skills training that we need to have and that the employers want them to have.

As we look at the demographics, the technological changes and attitudes, we have to do our job differently, and we must work with our students. In our high schools, we have strengthened the career-oriented programs so that the young people who want to go to work directly after graduation will have some experience while they're still in school. Our private sector partners, the employers who are giving them this opportunity, are extremely important to us.

Ontario Works: so many people who want jobs really do need training, and they are on Ontario Works. We're focusing on giving those opportunities to them. Our secondary school Job Connect program has a 90% success rate.

Mr O'Toole: Thank you for the answer to the first part of the question, Minister. I'm very confident that with your leadership in that ministry, you're very much aware of the importance of skills training in our economy. I'm also confident about our partnerships, whether it's Centennial, Durham College or OIT, the recent commitment you've made there.

But we have to start working together. There has to be a strategy for training programs. This involves working with partnerships, and that includes other levels of government. As the Conference Board report made very clear, the federal government should and must address this issue. Minister, what can the federal government contribute to strengthening skills training systems, not just in the province of Ontario but indeed taking the lead in all of Canada?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: One of the most important opportunities we have in Ontario right now is to work with the federal government and the federal government to work with Ontario to spend over \$600 million in training more appropriately. We have been discussing this training agreement with the federal government for

more than three years. Last May, we in fact did accept the offer from the federal government --

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): Sign the agreement.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: The member from Kingston should go to his federal MP and ask him why, when the federal government made the offer to us and we accepted it, they haven't agreed to sign with us.

This is extremely serious. I'm looking at Mr Sorbara now. Maybe, since he's new, he could take this message: Greg, we have received their offer, we have accepted it, and they won't sign on with us. It's very important for apprenticeship --

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

New question.

NORTHERN ONTARIO NEWS COVERAGE

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): Boy, that one should get an award for not being too brief.

I have a question directly to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. You will know that this Friday marks the last day that MCTV will be producing local newscasts out of communities like Sault Ste Marie, Timmins and North Bay. All the newscasts now will be put out of Sudbury, which means that all those communities affected are basically going to get lost in the shuffle. It's yet another example of how services are being drawn out of the larger communities and put into other communities, leaving us high and dry.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. Sorry to interrupt. The last question is continuing on. I would point out to all members that the member for Timmins-James Bay has the floor. Sorry for the interruption. There was some carrying on from the last question. The member may continue.

Mr Bisson: All right. I'll do it again, Speaker, because the minister obviously didn't hear with all the heckling.

I want to bring to the attention of the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, as he well knows, that this Friday is the last day that MCTV will be operating their newsrooms in Sault Ste Marie, Timmins and North Bay. You also know that the CRTC, in the discussions we've had with them, has said that clearly CTV, which runs these stations, is not living up to the spirit of the law when it comes to shutting down those particular stations. This means we are now going to be in a situation where we're losing again much-needed jobs in those communities, but more importantly, those communities are going to be losing a great part of their voice when it comes to being able to pull the communities together and being able to communicate.

Minister, you are our minister at the cabinet table of the province of Ontario. We're asking you a very simple question: are you prepared to go before the CRTC before

Friday and intervene on behalf of northerners, as the representative of Ontario at the Ontario cabinet table?

Hon Dan Newman (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): The member raises the issue of MCTV and the coverage it has across northern Ontario. He is correct that that decision will affect many people who work for MCTV. But I am told that MCTV will continue with its coverage of the north. There will be reporters in northern Ontario covering all the events that happen in the north. That will continue.

With respect to the CRTC, that is a federally regulated body. We are there with this MCTV issue.

PETITIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): It's now time for petitions. The member for St Catharines.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm glad that your mother-in-law and father-in-law are here today to watch you in action. You've been doing a very good job.

This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Harris government's rigid education funding formula is forcing neighbourhood school closures and has centralized control for education spending and decision-making at Queen's Park, and will not allow communities the flexibility to respond to local needs;

"Whereas chronic underfunding and an inflexible funding formula are strangling the system and students are suffering the consequences;

"Whereas there is evidence that large schools do not automatically translate into cost-effectiveness;

"Whereas smaller, neighbourhood schools have lower incidences of negative social behaviour, much greater and more varied student participation and extracurricular activities, higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates, and foster strong interpersonal relationships; and

"Whereas small neighbourhood schools in local communities, both rural and urban, serve as an important meeting area for neighbourhood organizations which help bring individuals together and strengthen neighbourhood ties and the current funding formula does not recognize community use of these schools,

"Be it resolved that the Harris government immediately reconfigure their unyielding funding formula to restore flexibility to local school boards and their communities which will allow neighbourhood schools in our province to remain open."

I affix my signature. I'm in complete agreement.

1500

LONDON HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

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

"Whereas the London Health Sciences Centre is a world-class academic health sciences centre serving people throughout southwestern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Health has forced the London Health Sciences Centre to find \$17 million in annual savings by 2005; and

"Whereas the London Health Sciences Centre has agreed to cut 18 programs in order to satisfy directions from the provincial Ministry of Health; and

"Whereas these cuts will put the health of the people of southwestern Ontario, and particularly the children, at risk; and

"Whereas these cuts will diminish the London Health Sciences Centre's standing as a regional health care resource; and

"Whereas these cuts will worsen the continuing physician shortages in the region;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand that the Mike Harris government take immediate action to ensure that these important health services are maintained so that the health and safety of people throughout southwestern Ontario are not put at risk."

I also sign this petition.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): I have a petition here from several people across Ontario dealing with the Saving for Our Children's Future Act, 2001, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas post-secondary education is very important to the development of young adults, to the betterment of society and the economic future of our province; and

"Whereas the continuing challenge and cost of education facing families in Ontario in the 21st century is ever increasing; and

"Whereas the cost of post-secondary education in Ontario requires a combination of government and individual financial support; and

"Whereas the tax credit proposed in Bill 4, Saving for Our Children's Future, 2001, will effectively and beneficially encourage families to save for their children's education; and

"Whereas the large majority of children and families with a registered education savings plan do not apply for OSAP -- Ontario Student Awards program -- thereby freeing millions of dollars for other OSAP students;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, hereby respectfully petition the Legislature of Ontario to act quickly to pass Bill 4, Saving for Our Children's Future, 2001, and

thereby extend the opportunity of post-secondary education to thousands of Ontario children and students.”

I proudly do affix my signature to several of these petitions.

LONDON HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the London Health Sciences Centre is a world-class academic health sciences centre serving people throughout southwestern Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Health has forced the London Health Sciences Centre to find \$17 million in annual savings by 2005; and

“Whereas the London Health Sciences Centre has agreed to cut 18 programs in order to satisfy directions from the Ministry of Health; and

“Whereas these cuts will put the health of the people of southwestern Ontario, particularly children and those with transplants, at risk; and

“Whereas these cuts will diminish the London Health Sciences Centre’s standing as a regional health care resource; and

“Whereas these cuts will worsen the continuing physician shortages in the region;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned,” over 500 individuals from southwestern Ontario, “petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government take immediate action to ensure these important health services are maintained so that the health and safety of people” from such places as Ilderton, Sarnia, St Thomas and London “are not put at risk.”

I’m in full support of the petition and have affixed my signature hereto.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): I’m very pleased once again to read a petition on behalf of my constituents in Durham.

“Whereas we, the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville, wish to continue to rent our apartments and are not interested in purchasing condominium units; and

“Whereas we, the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville, have invested considerable amounts of money in decorating, upgrading their apartments; and

“Whereas we, the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville, were of the understanding that this was a rental property, not a condominium;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to review this matter and request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing or any other relevant ministry investigate these concerns to ensure that the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville can continue to rent their apartments.”

I’m pleased to support this, as well as constituents like Wilma Paul and Carl Raby.

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that is entitled:

“Listen: Our Hearing is Important!

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total; and

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions; and

“Whereas the new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario; and

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario; and

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients” and others “and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

This petition is right on and I agree with it. I have signed my signature to it.

EDUCATION TAX CREDIT

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I have hundreds of names here on a petition, which reads:

“To the Ontario Legislature:

“Whereas the Harris government is planning to take funds that our public schools desperately need and funnel them to private schools through tax credits; and

“Whereas the government’s plan is to give parents a \$3,500 enticement to pull their kids out of public schools; and

“Whereas this initiative is in effect a voucher system and is the beginning of the end of quality public education in Ontario,

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call on all members of the Legislature to fight and defeat this attack on the choice parents most want: stability, co-operation and respect in clean, safe public schools.”

I will affix my signature because I agree with this petition.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the Criminal Code of Canada considers animal cruelty to be a property offence; and

“Whereas those who commit crimes against animals currently face light sentences upon conviction; and

“Whereas those who operate puppy mills should, upon conviction, face sentences that are appropriate for the torture and inhumane treatment they have inflicted on puppies under their so-called care;

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

“That the Ontario provincial government petition the federal government to move forward with amendments to the cruelty of animal provisions in the Criminal Code as soon as possible.”

I am pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):

A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total; and

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions; and

“Whereas the new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario; and

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario; and

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

I also add my signature.

1510

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I have more signatures on a petition which reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in Ontario, adopted adults are denied a right available to all non-adoptees, that is, the unrestricted right to identifying information concerning their family of origin;

“Whereas Canada has ratified standards of civil and human rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;

“Whereas these rights are denied to persons affected by the secrecy provisions in the adoption sections of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts of the province of Ontario;

“Whereas research in other jurisdictions has demonstrated that disclosure does not cause harm, that access

to such information is beneficial to adult adoptees, adoptive parents and birth parents, and that birth parents rarely requested or were promised anonymity;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to enact revision of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts to permit adult adoptees unrestricted access to full personal identifying birth information; permit birth parents, grandparents and siblings access to the adopted person’s amended birth certificate when the adopted person reaches age 18; permit adoptive parents unrestricted access to identifying birth information of their minor children; allow adopted persons and birth relatives to file a contact veto restricting contact by the searching party; replace mandatory reunion counselling with optional counselling.”

I will affix my signature because I support this petition.

CHILDREN’S MEDICAL SERVICES

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

“Whereas the recent events at the London Health Sciences Centre, where 18 programs have been lost due to funding shortages, and in particular, the Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario, cause us to be concerned that we may lose medical and surgical subspecialty pediatric services for ourselves and our children;

“Whereas southwestern Ontario is a vital region of the province of Ontario that requires urgent access to pediatric subspecialty services and to travel to other children’s health facilities in Ontario would result in serious personal hardship and risk to our children; further, that families would not be eligible for travel grants similar to those provided in northern communities;

“Whereas we have greatly benefited from the expertise in pediatric care provided by Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario over the years and we appreciate that we may not be apprised of all the reasons for these physician losses; however, our children deserve to continue to receive the pediatric subspecialty care from the London Health Sciences Centre and Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario that our region has depended on for decades;

“Whereas the loss of these services will result in great hardship to the families and seriously endanger the health of our children, we look to you as leaders to address this issue immediately and thoroughly. These times of great uncertainty about children’s access to health care is a significant stress to ourselves and our families;

“Therefore, we the undersigned petition the Legislature of Ontario to demand that our government respond immediately to restore these critical services to the citizens of southwestern Ontario.”

This petition is signed by a number of residents of Charing Cross, Stoney Point and Chatham, and I too sign this petition.

EDUCATION PEACE PLAN

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): This is in fact a very old petition, many of which were returned to me recently. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario students are experiencing a disruptive learning environment and currently do not have access to a full range of extracurricular activities;

"Whereas extracurricular activities are an essential part of a quality, well rounded education for our students;

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty has put forth the Students First Education Peace Plan as a positive, viable option in restoring goodwill and extracurricular activities for our students;

"Whereas the Ontario Liberal plan is a reasonable compromise creating benefits for all partners in Ontario's education system, particularly students,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario government to immediately adopt Dalton McGuinty's Students First Education Peace Plan to restore goodwill, quality education and extracurricular activities in our schools."

These residents of Don Valley East certainly know the benefit of a well rounded education. I support this and I have signed this petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 125, An Act to improve the identification, removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities and to make related amendments to other Acts, when Bill 125 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; and

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

That, the committee shall be authorized to conduct public hearings in Ottawa on Friday, November 30, in Windsor on Monday, December 3, in Toronto on Tuesday, December 4, in Toronto on Wednesday, December 5, in Thunder Bay on Thursday, December 6, and in Sudbury on Friday, December 7; and

That, the committee meet on Tuesday, December 11, 2001, for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill.

That, when meeting in Toronto, the standing committee on finance and economic affairs not meet during routine proceedings;

That, the committee be authorized to meet on December 11, 2001, until completion of clause-by-clause consideration.

That, pursuant to standing order 75(c), the Chair of the standing committee shall establish the deadline for the tabling of amendments or for filing them with the clerk of the committee;

That, at 4 pm on the day of 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 thereto;

Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That, the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following the completion of clause-by-clause consideration, and not later than December 12, 2001.

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; and

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

That, the order for the third reading may immediately be called; and

That, when the order for third reading is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, to be divided equally among all recognized parties, and at the end of that time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

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

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson): Mr Jackson has moved government notice of motion 93. Debate.

Hon Mr Jackson: As you know, we are nearing completion of our second reading date for the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Bill 125. This has been an historic exchange of views debating proposed legislation which is unique in all of Canada, a bill that would go further than any other in our nation in furthering the cause of persons with disabilities in our province. It is time to move on. The disability community has asked for this legislation. The 1.6 million persons in this province with disabilities are looking to their government to back up its words with actions and we are positioned to do just that.

1520

We have an opportunity within our grasp to bring into law one of the most comprehensive steps forward for persons with disabilities that has ever been implemented in our nation -- an Ontario law, made-in-Ontario legislation designed for Ontarians, produced by Ontarians, that will illustrate once more why we live in one of the greatest jurisdictions on earth. It is perhaps fitting that this was the province that brought in the first Human Rights Code in North America. It's perhaps why it's fitting that we're the province to bring in Canada's first disabilities legislation.

It is our government's goal to ensure that all Ontarians, regardless of their birthplace, their gender, their disability, their faith, their race, can participate and enjoy the rich experience that this province has to offer. We want Ontarians to feel a part of the community, to have a sense of pride and connection and strength, to be able to fully participate in the life of their community.

Bill 125 has not been produced without careful consideration. It is the result of careful consultation and thoughtful involvement by disabled persons all across this province. It is their dialogue, it is their suggestions that have found their way into this important legislation. It has been considered very carefully by this government -- it was pored over and thoroughly examined -- and we are still receiving input from many of the organizations and associations that deliver services directly to persons with disabilities in this province. This process, right from day one, has included input from persons with disabilities and from those who are charged in our society with looking after their needs and speaking up on their best interests and their welfare. Bill 125 does not just talk about persons with disabilities; it includes them as active participants like no other legislation that we can find. We want them to be inclusive in this legislation and not be exclusive of the legislation, which is what has happened in other jurisdictions around the world.

It is my firm belief that any policy or law will work much better when the very people it affects are directly involved and are working with it on a daily basis. Persons with disabilities understand the barriers that they are struggling with and confront on a daily basis. Their knowledge and their experience is the single most important contribution to our understanding of these necessary reforms. They become the province of Ontario's disability lens and they become the agents for change, helping to set the guidelines, the mandatory terms of reference and time frames for completion of accessibility plans to be implemented in a broad spectrum across our province.

Sadly, some opposition members would like this government to back off, to put this legislation on the back burner --

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Jackson: -- to hold another year of consultations and go well into the next year or even beyond. The Liberals, it must be noted, are the very ones who

introduced a resolution in 1998 through their member for Windsor-St Clair, demanding that the ODA be completed this year. I would say to the people of Ontario, I have yet to see what the Liberal Party is prepared to do, what they are prepared to commit to, what they are prepared to invest in, what legislation they are prepared to draft. We have received nothing from the Liberal Party except their constant complaining and their negativity.

But there have been some members of their own party who have been put on the record and made comments. During debate in this House, for example, we heard from their critic, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings, that this bill should be gutted, that it should be torn down and ripped up. He actually ripped it up in the House. The member for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot, in making his reference to persons with disabilities, says "I don't care what it costs, we should just spend all the money necessary." Have we heard once from the Liberal Party how they would finance the reforms? I heard the member for St Catharines reference the other day that this will amount to downloading and therefore the province should pay for all these costs. If that's the official position of the Liberal Party, that they are prepared to commit significant dollars, then they should come forward and say so. But we have not received a single commitment.

They say they'd like the Americans with Disabilities Act model, but clearly the members in the Liberal Party have not read the ADA, nor are they familiar with the fact that all buildings in the United States of three floors or less, or 3,000 square feet per floor, are exempt in this legislation. The amount of litigation that's forced through five different government agencies has embroiled what started out as good legislation into a litigious nightmare. Perhaps the opposition parties, led by lawyers, find that to be a perfectly sensible world that the disabilities community would be forced to negotiate through, but frankly, this government sees it entirely differently, and we are responding in the fashion in which the disability community has guided us.

We would like to see the opposition stop pointing fingers and come up with their concrete alternative and their proposal. Clearly, we have from the leader of the Liberal Party his commitment to Americanize our democratic process and change the electoral process, but he can't find five minutes to cobble together some recommendations on what his party's position in support for the disabilities community is. He's spent a lot of time studying the American models on electoral reform, but he has spent precious little time at all that we can see putting his mind around what he and his party would do for persons with disabilities.

I say to the members opposite, do the right thing. Give persons with disabilities the opportunity for full citizenship that they deserve. Give your support to Bill 125 and do your part, even at the amending stages in committee and public hearings, to help make Ontario a leader in Canada.

Dalton McGuinty said in October 2000 that his party had "one hell of an interest in making sure Ontarians with disabilities have every opportunity." If that in fact is the case, I'd like to know what it is. I've asked the critics, his own caucus members who participated in the public hearings the Liberal Party conducted, and we still cannot get from them what their policy would be in this province.

This government will hold further public hearings and take submissions, but we are asking the House to pass Bill 125 before the end of this year. Let's be very clear: consultations with the disabilities community and its advocates have been going on for years. On the one hand, this government is criticized for taking too long to introduce an Ontarians with Disabilities Act and, on the other, for trying to push it through too quickly.

I want to remind the members that if one were to go to the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee Web site, it still calls upon the government to complete this bill immediately. It even suggests that they're counting down the number of days: "Finally, there are now only four days until Friday, November 23, the deadline which the Ontario Legislature sets for a strong and effective ODA to be passed into law. It seems inevitable that the government will break its commitment to meet that deadline." This government will extend that three weeks and hold even more consultations, extending that date past November 23 so we will have this completed by mid-December.

Let's examine, for example, the lead-up to Bill 125, when we talked about this consultation process and the work that's been done to date. A discussion paper was released on July 13, 1998. More than 4,000 copies were circulated to individuals and organizations, with submissions invited by September 4 that year. Those papers were available in large print, Braille, computer disc and audiotape. In August 1998, the Minister of Culture and Recreation, Isabel Bassett, and her parliamentary assistant, Derwyn Shea, met with representatives of disabilities organizations: business, the transportation sector, the building industry, education and training, health care, municipalities and employee labour groups. Those meetings took place in the GTA, Sudbury, Hamilton, London, Peterborough, Ottawa, Windsor and Thunder Bay. Some 249 groups and individuals were consulted and 265 submissions were received.

1530

In March 2000, the Liberals themselves, despite no attempts --

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: As the minister has reminded us, this is a very important motion. Would you check whether or not there is a quorum present to hear the minister's comments in this Legislature?

The Acting Speaker: The second part of your preamble is a point of order.

The Chair requests that you check to see if there is a quorum present.

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

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant: Quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon Mr Jackson: In March 2000, the Liberals themselves, despite no attempt to introduce an Ontarians with Disabilities Act during their five years in office, and copying the New Democrats, held consultations of their own in 15 communities, resulting in a report released on November 23 of that year. In the fall of 1999 and into 2000, the then minister, Helen Johns, held meetings with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee, the Canadian Hearing Society, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Ontario March of Dimes, Easter Seals, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, Track 3 Ski Association, the YMCA in London, the Peterborough and District Association for Community Living and the Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton. That's just the short list.

Since my appointment as Minister of Citizenship in February of this year, I have continued the comprehensive efforts of my predecessors and have met with more than 100 groups and individuals. Among the cities I have visited are Windsor, Mississauga, London, Orillia, Sarnia, Owen Sound, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Peterborough, Sudbury, Barrie, and the list goes on. This government has consulted and sought input and advice from thousands of persons with disabilities and their advocates across our province. Our record on seeking input from those persons affected by this legislation has been thorough, detailed, substantial and all-encompassing. Those consultations have, most importantly, shown us that the government currently does not have standards of accessibility. They just simply do not exist, a fact acknowledged by the disability community and their advocates. That important work must begin first. In other words, everyone agrees that action is needed, but nowhere in that action is it stated in actual terms. In other words, we can tell the private sector, hospitals and others that they must be more accessible, but we do not have a standard, code or guidelines which the province has endorsed, approved or made into a law to impose.

It's time to stop talking about what might be done and get down to doing what must be done and, more importantly still, will be done. Bill 125 would give us the means to begin the journey of achieving full citizenship for persons with disabilities in our province and yet there is concern that the Liberal Party will not support this legislation. Their critic, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings, told the media yesterday that it is their party's intention to vote against this bill regardless and, incredibly, that everyone should go back to square one. They want to start all over again.

I'm at a loss as to understand this strategy. The Liberals yell for an Ontarians with Disabilities Act but they don't enact or offer up one of their own. Then, when

the most comprehensive Ontarians with Disabilities Act ever formulated in Canada is tabled, they simply oppose it without participating in the clause-by-clause process. This government, after years of investigation, is extending the consultation period by a further three weeks and the opposition parties still criticize these efforts.

Bill 125 has the support of persons with disabilities, but we are ready to talk more and consult further about the amendments they are seeking. We are prepared to work with them. The reality is, though, that we have talked and listened for years and now we are determined to act. What the disabilities community has said very clearly is that they want an ODA implemented. They want the work begun to stop the creation of any more barriers in our province, and they want the process of a managed plan to remove existing barriers begun. That is what they've asked for.

What individuals in Ontario are looking for is not some privilege, but the simple right to enjoy the same kind of life that others in our society enjoy in terms of access to housing and transportation, particularly in terms of access to good jobs that might be available within our society, certainly within our province, and in terms of access to education and physical access to buildings and to our society as a whole.

It is important that we in this House understand the importance of this legislation and its timeliness, to get on with the business of ensuring Ontario is fulfilling its promise to ensure full citizenship for persons with disabilities. As minister, I look forward to the input over the course of the next few weeks at our public meetings of the standing committee on finance and to working on the clause-by-clause, by bringing in this legislation in the year 2001, an important year in the life of Ontarians with disabilities.

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): I am going to join this debate today and I'm going to say to the honourable member clearly, upfront, that I'm going to vote against this time allocation measure and that I'm going to vote against this bill in its current form. The reason I'm going to do that is that I believe -- for anyone who's watching this issue and this debate at home -- this is a really good case study of what this government is all about. This action by this government is as duplicitous as anything I have yet seen brought forward by this government. If the United States had Slick Willy, we have been subjected, and the disabled community in particular has been subjected, to Cam the Scam, because that's what this is about. On this --

Hon Mr Jackson: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think that was ruled yesterday in debate as unparliamentary and inappropriate.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale to bring his debate within the confines of the bill.

Mr Smitherman: I will withdraw -- perhaps unparliamentary. Whether that was inappropriate, I leave others to judge.

On this issue, the government has attempted to send a message that this is a meaningful and significant bill, but in point of fact --

The Acting Speaker: I just want to be very clear that you can't leave it to others to judge; it's me.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: I'm not interested in debate.

Mr Smitherman: I took no issue with your words, Mr Speaker, only with those of the member opposite.

On this matter, the government has attempted to create an impression that is in fact not true. This party, the Liberal Party, has been very clear on this. I'm proud of the work of my colleague the member for Elgin-Middlesex-London. I'm proud of the work of my leader. I'm proud of the work of my colleague from Prince Edward county. What I'm not proud of is the way the government has used words like "consult" to create the artificial impression that the disabled community, in its breadth and depth, is in support of this legislation. I offer no stronger piece of evidence in support of what I just said than that I would prefer to stand with people of quality like David Lepofsky.

In his remarks, the minister accused the Liberal Party of going back to square one. I think it's kind of noteworthy that Square One is a massive commercial complex, privately owned and operated, in Mississauga that is not subjected to this bill whatsoever. To the member whose own legislation looked like the \$5,000 parking spot enforcement price tag, Square One doesn't count.

The member opposite used the Human Rights Code as the standard, but he, in his past life, voted against amendments to the Human Rights Code designed to include people in our society. His record on this matter is very clear, and it is that the words he uses unfortunately are not backed up in terms of the quantity and breadth of this legislation.

I'm happy, in the time I have, to make clear that one of the first experiences I had in this Legislative Assembly, in this very building, this most important, significant public building of the government of Ontario, was to hire a blind woman to work for me. I had to move her to my community office because I could better support her needs there than I could in this building.

1540

Do the elevators in this building have Braille? No, they don't. Were there supports available to me as a member of the Legislative Assembly to allow me to better equip an office so that a blind woman could work for me? No, there were none. That is a shameful set of circumstances here in Ontario. What we have from the government is a minister who stands in his place and talks a lot and uses the words "consultation," "input" and "dialogue," all these mushy words, which means he may hear the sound but he is not listening to the purpose and intent behind the sound.

Liberals have stood in their place and been consistent. We want a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and this bill is not it. For all the savvy presentations of the minister opposite, this bill is neither

strong nor effective in terms of setting a place at the table for the 1.5 million Ontarians who find themselves disabled.

The Minister of Health was here earlier, and we know that his unwillingness to fund Visudyne treatments for people with macular degeneration is forcing new people on to the rolls of the disabled every single day. That's the record of this government.

No more false charades, no more game playing, no more raising of false hopes for those people who have, in their lives, experienced so much discrimination, so many barriers and so many challenges to opportunity. I stand today to say that I will vote against this time allocation. I urge that minister to find his courage within that government to bring forward a bill that is both strong and effective, because this one is not.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The Chair recognizes the Minister of --

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues): Training, Colleges and Universities, Mr Speaker. I was kind of expecting my colleague in the NDP to stand up, so I'm caught a little bit by surprise. I was looking for a letter; maybe it will come across my desk as I begin to speak.

It is my pleasure to speak today to this legislation and to programs for disabled people in Ontario. I speak as a mother of a disabled son, and I also speak on behalf of my constituents who have come into my office and told me just how they feel about any pending programs and legislation. We in London like to think we work together, and over a very long period of time in this Legislative Assembly, we have gradually been able to work with our constituents to make things better.

I find one of my letters here.

I've obviously met with the disabled community and worked with them for many years. I've worked in the field myself. I don't think there is a simple solution to all the challenges, but I do know that what disabled people want is, first of all, the people of Ontario and around the world to understand their needs, to be as helpful and caring as appropriate, to be inclusive. I say that because I feel that in many instances, still, when we meet people who may be in chairs, who may have hearing disabilities or sight disabilities -- they may have abilities in understanding and speaking, like my own son. I think when the world is more aware, they feel very much more included, and they have so much to offer.

In my own personal experience over time, I feel that one of the more important things we can do is to provide people with disabilities opportunities to be part of education groups, to have jobs, to be part of society. What I'd like to do right now is to thank the people who work in this area with so many of our disabled community, giving so much of their time.

I can remember that when I first came to Queen's Park, the people who were disabled, who needed personal caregivers, didn't even have an opportunity to choose their own personal caregivers. Right now we still have

challenges in this regard, and one is that if you have a personal caregiver, you want as far as possible to have that personal caregiver all the time. It's very intrusive and it's something we have to think about. I know that our community care access centres are doing their best to meet the requests in this regard. It isn't just a matter of having people trained; it's a matter of people being able to work the appropriate hours, people going beyond the call of duty in their work to take care of people both in institutions and in their homes.

I use those words advisedly because there are many people who are in settings that used to be in a negative way called institutions, but who are now in institutions, in our colleges, our universities, our schools and sometimes our home care and hospitals, and are treated with the kind of respect they need.

One of the letters I took very seriously goes something like this: "I was delighted to read your thoughts on the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee in your letter" to a person who I had written this letter to. "We agree on many things, of which I have outlined below. I also have a few questions for you. These are also outlined below. But first we need to clear up a common misconception that the government has regarding the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee."

Now, this is very important to this debate: "The Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee does not want a carbon copy of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

I have a lot of experience with that legislation and I have learned over time that there's far too much litigation. The very important public dollars that are spent must go into front-line services, not into the courts. Therefore, we have to make sure that we put nothing into legislation that doesn't necessarily have to be there. If we have regulations and we have policies in almost everything we do, we can change them from time to time as needed.

So I was very pleased to hear from at least one of my constituents with regard to what they in fact did want.

"... it is very expensive due to the hiring of additional lawyers to keep up with all the lawsuits inspired by the ADA." This is a disabled person writing this to me.

"The Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee does not want an act that would encourage lawsuits. This is the system currently used in Ontario. We have been fighting for six long years to stop the way barriers are currently removed in Ontario. This is through expensive litigation" sometimes in the courts, but often "at the Ontario Human Rights Commission."

The Ontario Human Rights Commission is a different place than what it was five years ago. We have cleared up the backlog. I have to give the Ontario Human Rights Commission my compliments in working so hard to deal with as many cases as they can in a timely manner. It's not so that we have the perfect answer in government at any time. But as long as we're working together to see results in a timely fashion, that's what we have to go for.

Too often, the writer says, even the process we have is very expensive. So we have more to do in spite of

improving it over the past six years. He goes on to talk about the shortcomings of the Americans with Disabilities Act. They then go on to say, "People with disabilities face many unnecessary barriers." They do in the world of work, they do in the world of housing and they do when it comes to living like normal individuals. They do not want more legislation.

That's why this letter was an inspiration to me. There were more letters like it, and we in London have in fact had some very good advice.

1550

So I am proud to stand and speak about my support for the legislation that is being presented. It would significantly improve independence and opportunity for persons with disabilities.

There are some points I believe need to be made regarding the issue of enforcement. First of all, we already have the necessary enforcement mechanism to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. It is called the Human Rights Commission. I have spoken about it not being the perfect world, but we've made improvements and there is a terrific attitude. I must say many more people around this province are made aware of how the Human Rights Commission works and the improvements that have been made because they have been very visible in trying to get out to all members of our community, but especially members who suffer with disabilities.

Ontario was the first jurisdiction in North America to have human rights legislation, and our code is still considered one of the strongest. Even so, the government is planning to further strengthen the commission and the Human Rights Code because we cannot do everything at once. But we will be working in this regard. We should stick with the excellent foundation we have rather than create more red tape and more expenses, which would not be more effective than spending money on the front-line services.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, which is constantly being referred to and was again tonight by the opposition: it's a piece of paper. But when one takes a piece of paper and tries to implement it and finds that millions of dollars in every state are being spent to argue against an act that clearly doesn't work, why would we copy it, especially with the intelligence of our own constituents who have taken the time to find out from their friends and family members, as our family has, that that is not the way to go? If I have had undue influence on trying to stay away from too much legislation which cannot be changed instead of moving into programs for the front lines and, as appropriate, regulation, I accept the fact that I've had that kind of influence.

A 30-year window for compliance and hundreds of pages of exemptions: we don't want to go down that road. We don't want the litigation. We don't want a lack of standards. We want standards, and Bill 125 would lead to the standards of accessibility which are needed to strengthen our ability to enforce the laws we already have. Once the standards have been set, we can look at the regulations which would give the bill the extra

strength that is needed if necessary. Our approach should be based on public accountability -- results -- as well as everything that we have done. Of course things are moving very slowly, but in some areas they're working quite quickly.

The acquired brain injury association is here in the Legislative Assembly this evening. Many of us will be going down for their annual informal setting. So many members of this Legislative Assembly are appreciative of the work they do in their communities across Ontario. We in fact have opportunities like this across the province with many groups. It's not unusual for people that represent and work with members of different disabled communities to come here and ask for change. Members of this Legislative Assembly, not always in government, work toward those changes, and it's working in Ontario. But we must strengthen what we already have.

I am underlining public accountability: results. Our legislation is based on giving persons with disabilities a role to play in decision-making that affects them. I think I started this discussion this afternoon by saying that people in communities want to be involved. Disabled people want to be involved in decisions regarding themselves. I think the approach that the minister has recommended to us is extremely responsible. It's based on appropriate actions and roles for levels of government and the broader public sector. It's based on recognition that there are many willing partners ready to work with us to improve accessibility.

First of all, I'll speak to accountability. In Windsor, for 20 years the municipality has worked with its accessibility committee to bring about change, and I have to say the same for my own city of London. They're so far ahead of the game that they audit private and public buildings and publish the results. Consumers with disabilities know which businesses to patronize and which to avoid. I really like that.

I wish we would move forward in some kind of fashion in our own local municipalities as appropriate, not dictated to by the province but when municipalities are feeling comfortable working with the providers of jobs, with businesses that in fact have made their places of work, their places of opportunity for recreation and for good foods, restaurants and meals accessible. I think municipalities, if they aren't already, should consider putting up plaques on those restaurants, on those grocery stores, for people who not only have accessibility but who hire people with disabilities to help them, as they do in London, and start having some recognition.

If everyone in this House decides to move in that direction together, that would be a very good way to move. But that at this time is not what the disabled community is looking for first.

Bill 125 would require accessibility plans as well as progress reports against those plans to be made public. Let's see how well we're doing. Let's measure it. If it's public -- Web sites report on everything across our college and university sector. They report on whether students pass, how many of them get jobs, how satisfied

employers are with the students' education and their ability, how satisfied students are with their own colleges and universities. Now we can do exactly the same with our disabled community, as they can report publicly with regard to progress against accessibility plans.

Giving persons with disabilities a role to play in decision-making that affects them is extremely important. It's a powerful tool, it's a tool for change and it's long overdue. The Accessibility Advisory Council of Ontario and those committees that are involved at the municipal level, with municipalities, I will say, that have always had some kind of committees, should be given credit. I'm very proud of my own city. It took a look at transportation issues for disabled people many years ago, before we ever had a taxi or a Wheel-Trans or any kind of transportation for disabled people, even 15 years ago. I think I'm correct in that, but I could be corrected. In London that's how we've accomplished it. People should be at the table with regard to actions that regard them.

Third, assigning the appropriate role and expectations to levels of government and the broader public sector: the municipal level of government has the most impact on buildings, public spaces, street safety, retail businesses, restaurants etc. They're the ones that can make decisions, along with members of their community who have disabilities or families of people with disabilities, better than anyone else.

In Windsor the casino, the big new hotel and the arena were not built until the municipal accessibility committee had reviewed the plans and had their input into how to make these buildings accessible. That's good news and we could expand it throughout the province. Municipalities need the tools to drive this kind of change, and this is what Bill 125 is attempting to do.

The provincial government must demonstrate leadership and it must inspire change. It can provide support, information, guidance, expertise and facilitation. That's our job. As we move forward, these good news stories should be celebrated so that there's a role model for different programs.

There are employers we actually know about who do not want to come forward. They have their own working relationship now with their employees who are disabled. That workforce in certain businesses and recreation facilities in certain parts of Ontario, the way they work inclusively with each other, including their disabled employees, is to be absolutely rewarded, applauded and admired.

We don't have legislation for this now, and I don't believe legislation will ever work. All we'll do is set up more bureaucracies, more looking over somebody's shoulder, instead of educating people and helping them to reach out to those less fortunate than themselves. Programs for disabled people? Absolutely. But in some areas, especially in employment, let's see how well we do.

1600

We need to lead the way in our own workplaces and public spaces. This is very important. I remember when I

was on the school board in London and we weren't providing these opportunities. These young people go to school. Those programs weren't available to them maybe 20 years ago. We get them excited about their opportunities and we can't even provide the kinds of jobs and supports they need in the public sector. It's extremely important, and we'll be watching how we can move forward. For the broader public sector as well -- all of our schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, public transit providers -- it's extremely important that government services are there and that employment is there as we move forward together.

This is not going to be easy. I'm looking at my colleague right now who was a mayor and I know how hard it was to get the public service to provide the jobs in municipalities as well. It's extremely important. Just look at us. We've all been there, and have we made sure this has happened, where we've had responsibilities? Not to the extent that we should. It didn't happen in St Thomas either. We've got work to do.

Both provincial and municipal governments would make accessibility a condition of buying goods and services, and that's also a powerful driver of change.

There's a lot in this legislation and in the intent of the act itself and possible future regulations that we can work on together. It's not going to happen overnight, but it is going to happen quickly, with all of us working together, not fighting each other on who should accept, I suppose, the congratulations for anything we do together. That is not important. These are real people and they do more for us than we could ever do for them. So this is not about waving the flag or applauding ourselves. This is about a quality of life for people who are so important to our own communities and our families.

The private sector will be affected by this proposed legislation. It will be motivated to change. It understands that there is a substantial market segment out there. Just last weekend -- and there are many, many stories like this -- at Famous Players theatres: a system called descriptive video service, which means that children with visual impairments can better enjoy movies. It's simple. The theatre chain has also introduced rear-window captioning, which allows closed captioning of movies for persons with hearing disabilities. And the list goes on.

I met a wonderful, inspirational person a couple of weeks ago when I was making a speech. She was in a wheelchair and she could make that chair go anywhere just with the touch of her head. That was the only part of her body that worked. She's an inspiration. She has a job and she goes to work. She will be an inspiration to myself and my son and my family forever. This is people working together. We were there together that day because there's a group in Ontario that is promoting more programs for people with disabilities, promoting better education for the public, training people who work with disabled people, and the list goes on.

We should be very proud of our province. We should be very proud of our country. This is a time not to accept

praise for what we've all done or to say we can do it better, and not always in the most pleasant of manners.

The disabled community wants our support but they want to be treated like one of us.

I could go on, but I don't think that's necessary. In closing, I think I can only speak now as a person who has been involved with special education and working with disabled people probably since I was very young. We have come a long way and we will celebrate that together, all of us, and we have a long way to go. Bill 125 takes us another step in the right direction.

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): I'm pleased to rise this afternoon and talk to Bill 125, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. It's unfortunate that the government has yet again brought in time allocation, which means that debate will end and our comments individually will be limited. But I want all members of the House to hear of some of my recent experiences.

Last month, I went on a guided tour with the members of the Chatham and District Association for Community Living. I took this tour in a wheelchair and I experienced first-hand some of the challenges faced by 1.5 million disabled Ontarian residents and most certainly the residents of my community. Things that we take for granted are limited for the disabled, such as full access to all that is offered in their community; for example, sidewalks. The simple notion that some of our sidewalks are not accessible to the disabled came to light.

We are all aware of wheelchair ramps, and many of the wheelchair ramps that are installed throughout my community are in place. However, there wasn't enough thought that went into all of this, because once you advance yourself on a wheelchair ramp, you come to a door that will not open easily for a disabled person. As a matter of fact, we visited one facility that had an automatic door, and that was very good. However, it was a foyer-type entrance and there was a second set of doors, and they were manual. So we need to put more thought and more creativity into why we would have doors that would open automatically at one point and a second set of doors would not. It's very difficult from a wheelchair to open these doors, as I experienced.

I also learned that the level of the placement of elevator buttons is very disconcerting to those seated in a wheelchair. They can't reach the upper buttons. We need to have the placement of those buttons in our elevators in a more convenient position.

Table heights in certain eating facilities were such that the wheelchair would come up and hit the table, and therefore the person who is in the wheelchair cannot reach the food that has been placed in front of them. That is most particularly difficult for those who have to be strapped into their wheelchair. We need to assist these businesses in the recognition of what is required by the disabled in a mandated way and also to provide funding so that they can just raise these tables a few inches so that persons can pull up and enjoy their meal.

The width of store aisles was very disconcerting. Many of the aisles in our stores are not accessible to

those in a wheelchair. I experienced that first-hand. We had to just avoid certain areas of stores because we could not navigate.

I think many of the members are aware of the new technology of security centres in our stores. They're approximately three feet high and they set off alarms when one is stealing from a store. Alarms go off. But thought wasn't given to the placement of these sensors, and the opening is too narrow for a wheelchair to go through, so that the disabled cannot go and shop and spend their monies within some of these facilities.

Change rooms: we found that there were very few stores that had change rooms that were accessible to the disabled, similar to washrooms that we see in many of our buildings. There was no place for one to go and change and try on clothing. It was explained to me that many of the disabled knowingly buy clothing that is too big for themselves because they cannot change in the store or that facility and it's very difficult for them to travel back. So they make one visit and they buy clothing that is actually too large for them.

So we need a stronger act than is presented here by the government today; we most certainly do. We need to eliminate the barriers faced by all our disabled who want to do business throughout our community, such as in law offices and accountants' firms. They want to enjoy all of those activities that are available to them.

1610

I can tell you when I crossed the main intersection in my community, with a merge lane and four other lanes, in a wheelchair, it was frightening. It was frightening for me as an able-bodied person to wheel that wheelchair across that intersection -- very, very busy. It's just the notion that the lights are simply not long enough. For some, they cannot see whether the light has changed or not. It was a most enlightening experience for me and brought to light the need for a stronger disabilities act than we see before us.

Our critic from Prince Edward-Hastings has said, and it's quite apropos, "This bill does very little in the overall community to assist persons with disabilities. The act is totally inadequate because it does not provide a broader range of required changes that would assure the disabled community accessibility and opportunity equal to those who are not disabled." I learned first-hand of this from my vantage point in a wheelchair.

I'm pleased to stand up on behalf of the disabled community and urge the government to do much, much more to help them to enjoy everything that is available to them in their community, no matter where it might be, here in this great province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I appreciate the opportunity this afternoon to respond.

Applause.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to share with all of you who have received me with such enthusiasm this afternoon some thoughts on this time allocation motion on this very important bill

before us here today that's going to affect some 1.6 million disabled Ontarians across this province -- a bill, this afternoon, that's going to shorten significantly the opportunity that we thought might be available to citizens across this province to come and have their say, share with us what they think, make recommendations to the government, suggest amendments and, at the end of the day, have all of our fingerprints all over an act that would in fact do something that would be helpful to the disabled across this province, who have been waiting for over six years on promises made by this government to bring in an effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Alas, however, this act has been, on further reading by everybody concerned, a huge disappointment. The voice that's coming forward that was in this place this week in the media studio talking to all of us, talking to the people of Ontario, is saying, "Yes, we have something on the table. It's a good start but there's a lot of work to be done to make it a bill that will actually be effective and helpful to those people who have been waiting for over six years for an effective ODA to hang their hat on in communities as they try to access services and participate and educate themselves and live a quality of life that befits the kind of province we have here in Ontario."

The minister is being disingenuous when he suggests that what we need to do is push this bill through quickly so that it can be in place and do all those wonderful things that he suggests it can do on behalf of disabled citizens in this province. He knows that what he's doing by pushing this bill through in such a short time span is to let as few people as possible in on the discussion so that we're not allowed to expose the real shortcomings that exist in this bill and the fact that this bill is another of their very well organized and orchestrated and carried out public relations scams that we have become so accustomed to in this place, that on one hand says one thing -- even the name of the bill often says one thing -- but on the other hand, when you look at it, it doesn't come near. As a matter of fact, in many instances -- and some would suggest with this bill, in fact -- it does more to harm than it does to help the people targeted in the legislation.

I'm not suggesting for a second that there isn't something here that we could build on, but the timelines we're now having to deal with, the short span for public input for consultation across the province in a very limited way, will diminish significantly opportunity for the many, many groups out there who have some real concerns about this legislation, who are working desperately hard right now at a hurried pace, having heard today, I'm sure, the limitations, the parameters within which we now have to operate by way of this time allocation motion that was tabled here this afternoon, working feverishly to put together amendments that will give this bill at least some potential for some change in their lives.

Our concern is that the government's not going to listen, that they'll do the consultation with the standing committee after second reading in such a way that will be a public relations exercise. They'll be able to say, "We

did go out there and we consulted and we heard from people. However, at this point in time this is all we feel we need to do," and just ram it through here before Christmas. They'll tell us, "This is the only chance the disabled community has to get this bill through, however short it is in delivery mechanisms. This is the only opportunity we have to get this through before Christmas," before the House prorogues and before they have their leadership convention and then God knows what else happens after that.

If the minister were convinced, as he presents he is, that this bill is the be-all and the end-all, is going to do the things he suggests it has the potential to do, then he wouldn't be so afraid to take it out there in a more fulsome and timely way across this province, to communities in the north, in the east and the west, to big communities and small communities, to communities of various sorts and sizes and makeup across this province so they would have an opportunity to say to him, "We've read your bill. We think, yes, it's a good start," as some groups have said. "It lays a foundation upon which we can build, but we want to build with you into this bill some things that will actually do the job, that will actually call on the private sector to do some things," because in this bill there's absolutely nothing that will actually lay out some timelines for municipalities, will put in place some ramifications for not living up to the guidelines.

I've said on a number of occasions here on Wednesday, when I sit with my colleague from Nickel Belt, "It's Wednesday afternoon, so it must be a time allocation motion" or, on the other hand, "It's a time allocation motion, so it must be Wednesday afternoon," because that seems to be the routine, the regular way of operation, the modus operandi of this government in terms of pushing things through that they feel they need to cover whatever promises they made, in whatever simplistic and short manner, so they can, come an election -- and I know it's not far off. I know when they elect their new leader and he looks around at what he's got to work with, it won't be long before we're before the people looking for another mandate and that kind of thing. They want to be able to wave this bill and say, "Look what we've done for the disabled in the community. We were the only party," as they've been saying. How many years to bring in an Ontarians with Disabilities Act? I have to say to you, Mr Speaker, if they do that, they're misleading a whole lot of people out there across the province and should be called and challenged on that.

The Acting Speaker: I'd ask the member to bring his debate within the rules of the House. We don't like to use those kinds of words because of the kind of response they will have. I'd ask the member to withdraw.

1620

Mr Martin: I will withdraw that term, Mr Speaker. However, I have to say, as I said before, that the government is being quite disingenuous in this whole exercise. At the end of the day -- as a matter of fact, not even at the end of the day. I think most people who have looked at

this bill understand that what the minister, on the one hand, when he was out there going around the province, promised by way an ODA and what he has delivered are two completely different things.

Let me just for a few minutes share with you some of the thoughts of the folks out there, lest you believe that this is just me, a New Democrat in opposition, ranting here about something of which I really know little. I have to tell you that I've had to my office and I've participated in events over the last week or so since this bill was tabled, and all the indications are that the groups that the minister claims are on side where this bill is concerned are indeed not. Once they had a chance to -- they weren't given a chance, actually, before the infamous press conference where he was able to claim the kind of support that he still continues to claim. But once these people had a chance to have a look at the bill before us, which proposes to do the kinds of things the minister promises it will, they and we have been sadly disappointed.

Yesterday morning in this place we had a press conference, held by a number of groups representing the disabled in the province -- the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Canadian Hearing Society, the Muscular Dystrophy Society of Canada, the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the Ontario Association for Community Living, the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf -- and all of them were saying the same thing. Let me just read a piece from the letter they sent to the minister that they were tabling yesterday morning at that press conference. I think it's informative. It says:

"The community agencies listed below" -- and I just listed them -- "would like to initiate a dialogue with you about the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which you introduced on November 5, 2001. The bill is now in second reading and public hearings are about to begin. We view Bill 125 as a framework for effective legislation and a first step in this process. Most of us met with you over the past few months and felt that you truly do understand the need for systematically removing barriers that currently prevent people with disabilities from participating as true citizens in all aspects of life in Ontario." That's an important statement.

"In our view, in many important respects, Bill 125 still falls significantly short of the goal you have been championing. This is particularly the case for people who are blind, deaf or hard of hearing, or for those with intellectual disabilities or disabilities caused by mental illness. For them, we fear the legislation, in its current form, will make very little difference.

"Today, together as organizations representing the full range of ambulatory, mental, intellectual and sensory disabilities, we want to advise you that we wish to work with you through the committee public hearing process to bring about comprehensive, strong legislation that effectively includes and benefits everyone.

"While each of our agencies will be submitting specific amendments" -- and they're feverishly working on

those amendments as we speak, because they know the window is narrow -- "during the committee hearing process, we do want to outline important common concerns." I would ask the minister to pay attention to these concerns, because they lay it out very clearly and very succinctly.

"Currently, the bill lacks a significant role or authority for the advisory council and the lack of an effective mechanism for meaningful disability input into all standards to be made under the bill.

"There is a lack of specific legislated time frames for the creation of effective regulations that will remove barriers across all sectors.

"There's a lack of any real enforcement or mandatory barrier removal and prevention requirements other than for parking violations under the Highway Traffic Act."

If you look at those three guidelines, you'll begin to understand why it is that so many people are so disappointed in this bill, why it is, in fact, that the government is moving forward with this piece of window dressing in such an aggressive and quick fashion. They made the promise; they knew they had to live up to that promise. They don't want to offend any of their friends or benefactors out there in the municipal sector or in the private sector, yet they know they've got to hang this carrot out there for a whole bunch of very needy, disabled people in the province. But again they missed the point and they don't understand the very real intelligence and understanding and ability of the disabled community out there to read this piece of legislation and to understand exactly what it does and, more importantly, what it doesn't do.

"We look forward to presenting you with specific amendments to make this legislation totally effective in making Ontario the first barrier-free society for people with disabilities in Canada. In addition, we hope you will ensure there is sufficient time" -- and this is where this time allocation motion comes in -- "and opportunity within the legislative process to prepare, present and fully consider the necessary amendments, and to ensure the final legislation meets the 11 principles our organizations endorsed as members of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee and indeed the entire Ontario Legislature unanimously endorsed on October 29, 1998."

This is important, this next little sentence, in view of the time allocation motion we're debating here this afternoon: "The legislative timetable should not become a barrier in itself.

"We will be very pleased to meet with you to discuss these issues in more detail and to suggest amendments to strengthen this important legislation."

Let me share with the folks out there exactly what this time allocation motion is doing. After you get through the legalese and the gobbledegook, it says this:

"That at 4 pm on the day" -- I'm sorry. I've got to go back a bit here. I'm getting ahead of myself. It says "when Bill 125 is next called as a government order." That means the next time we get to debate it on second reading. Understand that we've had one full evening --

that's from a quarter to 7 until 9:30 -- on this bill, and one afternoon -- that's from about 4 o'clock to 6 o'clock. We're talking about a sum total of about five and a half hours, if that, on this bill so far, this really important piece of legislation that --

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): That we've waited six years for.

Mr Martin: -- we've waited for for over six years, that's going to affect very directly the lives, and has the potential to affect in a positive way if we do it right, of 1.6 million disabled citizens across this province.

Here's what we're into now: "... when Bill 125 is next called as a government order," -- we're expecting it will be called tomorrow afternoon -- "the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill" -- second reading's over -- "without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs ..."

Then what happens is this:

"That, no deferral of the second reading vote pursuant to" -- we can't defer this to another day for a vote.

"That, the committee shall be authorized" -- this is what people out there need to get their heads around; this is the opportunity you will have to come forward and share your concerns, your ideas, your thoughts, to suggest amendments to this bill -- "to conduct public hearings in Ottawa on Friday, November 30 ..."

That's next Friday, so you have a week to get together with your colleagues and sit down and go over this with a fine-tooth comb, to prepare a submission, to phone the Legislative Assembly and get standing before the committee, or to phone one of the political parties so that they can put your name forward, and then to arrange for all the assistive devices that are necessary to get you from your place of residence to the hearing place, and then to make your submission, not to mention the real concern I have here this afternoon, which I'm sure the folks out there will have -- we haven't heard a thing from the minister today on that. Will these hearings be fully and completely and totally accessible for every kind of disability as they travel the province? Will the blind, the hard-of-hearing and the deaf, will those with other barriers be able to come and comfortably and intelligently, and in a way that communication happens both ways, present to this committee in that short time frame?

"... in Ottawa on Friday, November 30, in Windsor on Monday, December 3, in Toronto on Tuesday, December 4, in Toronto on Wednesday, December 5, in Thunder Bay on Thursday, December 6, and in Sudbury on Friday, December 7; and

"That, the committee meet on Tuesday, December 11, 2001, for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill."

1630

That means it's done. By December 11, this bill will have gone through all the processes and procedures of this place, this very significant and important bill that has taken over six years to come to the surface, that 1.6 million disabled are hanging their hat on to help them

participate more fully in their communities, to help them have the quality of life that they know, in this very rich jurisdiction called Ontario, they can have access to if the government will only do the right thing and make sure there are laws in place that prevent anybody from getting in the way of their achieving that. By December 11 it will all be over.

I suggest that if this government's track record is any indication, there won't be much significant change to the bill we have here in front of us, and that will be sad. As I read into the record the other night when I spoke in leadoff on second reading, from the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, this bill doesn't even come close. As a matter of fact, there are many disabled people out there, some of them at a meeting I had in Sault Ste Marie last week -- the Sault Ste Marie and Area Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee, Sylvia Mosher at that meeting, cerebral palsy challenged, said to me, "Tony, maybe this bill is just unredeemable. Maybe there's nothing we can do with this bill to make it any better."

We had a discussion around the table, and there were some there who were willing to give the government the benefit of the doubt, to take them at their word that in fact they would be willing to listen to what we indicate are shortcomings and do whatever it takes to correct that. But if our track record here of bills coming forward and our very sincere and energetic effort to bring forward amendments and their being accepted by the government is any indication, this bill is not going to see much change between now and December 11.

However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't make the effort. I'm going to once again here this afternoon -- I hope I'm not talking into a vortex over there that goes nowhere. I'm going to suggest this afternoon that the government, if they're serious, and that the minister if he's being sincere in his comments that he actually wants to do something that will be effective and will make change, will make a difference in the lives of the disabled in this province, will be willing to take the time. Will you please take the time necessary? We've been waiting a long time for this. It's a huge bill. There are a lot of things in it that need reworking. The disabled community out there is telling you that. They're willing to work with you in partnership, and we're willing to work with you in partnership if you work with us, to make those changes to make this bill work.

I know our caucus would be willing to sign whatever agreement was necessary at the end of this session, before Christmas, to carry the bill over. If the House wants to prorogue and it's intent on proroguing, that's fine. That's your purview to do. We're saying to you that we will agree to whatever is necessary to carry this thing over so we can have those wide-ranging and fulsome hearings across the province, across small, large and medium communities, in northern, eastern and south-western Ontario, in Toronto, across the province so that every person and organization that has a concern about this bill is given ample opportunity to come and participate, so that at the end of the day they can present their

amendments and we can have the time to discuss those amendments with them so we fully understand why it is they're necessary and maybe make some suggestions for change ourselves that might improve them.

Even the minister might have some thoughts about that if he would cut himself loose from, it seems anyway, the shackles that have been put on him, I would guess by those in perhaps more control than he of the agenda of the government and how much they're willing to allow him to do where this act is concerned, and he would step out with some courage and shake the shackles off and do the right thing, as he knows in his heart of hearts he wants and needs to do in this instance.

Some 1.6 million citizens of this province have been waiting forever. Yes, you can criticize us: we didn't bring in an ODA, we didn't support Gary Malkowski in his effort to get an ODA passed. But I'll tell you, we did a whole whack of other things that enriched and moved forward and supported and facilitated participation by the disabled in their communities and in the life of this province. But let's not let that argument get in the way of now, at this moment, at this time, with this piece of legislation, doing the right thing. Let's not let that smokescreen, that disagreement between the parties here, get in the way. As I said the other night, this is their moment; this is their chance. We have in front of us here an opportunity to make right some very significant wrongs that have gone on for too long for many of our very able citizens who find themselves in some limited ways disabled in their everyday lives; to allow them to participate as fully as they can in the lives of their families, in the lives of their friends, in the lives of their communities, and to take advantage of the great gift that all of them have within them to participate in the economy or the social fabric of the communities in which they live.

Let's not let political wrangling get in the way of us doing that. Let's not let political agendas that don't want to offend one group of people because you want to help another group of people, a very left-behind, disadvantaged group of people, I might say -- and let's do the right thing. Let's take the time that's necessary. Let's take the next few months that we have available to us. There isn't a whole lot on the agenda right now that's of this importance before us.

A few weeks ago the Premier said that he was stepping down, that he felt he had done everything he needed to do in this place and he was going to move on to something else. Let me say to him very personally and directly, here's a legacy that you could leave. You made a promise back in 1995-96 that you would bring in an effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and you made it again a couple of times since then that you would do that, that you would do the right thing. Why don't you take that as a part of the legacy that you leave to the province of Ontario?

You spoke, when you announced that you were stepping down, about what you had done for children in the province, and many of us questioned the legitimacy of

that comment. Here's a chance for you to actually do something that we would have no grounds to criticize you on if you actually turned to your minister, Mr Jackson, and said, "Cam, let's do the right thing here. Let's take this bill and listen to the opposition, the Liberals and the New Democrats. Let's listen to the disabled community out there and let's make sure that we include in this bill all that is necessary to help all those groups out there who are disabled." I listed them a few minutes ago, and there are probably some that I missed who want to come forward. "Let's take the time to hear them out. Let's work with the NDP and the Liberals and pass an amendment to the bill to prorogue that would give us the right to sit in January, February and March and hear from people, and bring back a bill to this place, when we return in the spring, that will in fact give the disabled community that which they need to participate fully in their communities."

I don't want to take up all the time we have available to our caucus this afternoon, because I know our leader has a few things he wants to say where this bill is concerned. He's been very concerned, the same as myself, about this bill. He will tell you, as I will, that we'll be voting against this at second reading. We'll be voting against this at second reading to send a message to the government that we think this bill doesn't cut it.

You say to the disabled community, "This bill puts you in the driver's seat." Let me tell you, they're not in the driver's seat; you're in the driver's seat and we don't know where you're taking us.

So we won't be voting for this bill at second reading, but we know that it's going to pass anyway and that you're going to drive it because you want to be able to wave it around, come the next election, to say that you in fact have done something. Wouldn't it be so much more substantial if, at the end of the day, you had something of substance to wave around and to take credit for with the people of the province?

1640

We're saying to you that if you will allow for full public hearings, if you will commit to us today that you will accept and adopt the significant amendments that people out there are working feverishly at right now -- significant amendments that will take quite some time to work into the fabric of this bill, because it needs significant change -- we're willing to work with you to that end so that we might improve this bill.

Even that organization the Minister of Community and Social Services stands up so often in this place to claim support from and friendship with, the Ontario Association for Community Living, came to that press conference the other morning. What they had to say was quite telling. Most of all, if you read through their statement, and I would hope that the minister would -- both the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Minister of Citizenship -- he will understand that they are saying this bill does not in any way respond to or answer the difficulties that their community of people are experiencing out there. They're hoping that the minister -

- in line with, yes, some of the things that he's done by way of putting some money into that organization so that they can provide some more help to children with autism -- in fact will sit down with the Minister of Citizenship and look at this bill and decide there are some things that he can do here that would affect the lives of the people served by the Ontario Association for Community Living in a significant and an important way, and allow them full participation in the institutions and organizations of the communities that support them, in which they live and in which they wish to participate.

I'll pass on now and hope that the government has heard what I have to say, and will respond constructively and positively to the challenges that I'm not only putting here, but that the organizations out there -- all of them across the board that represent the disabled in this province -- are challenging you to do.

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I am most pleased to join the debate on second reading of Bill 125, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. There have already been over seven and a half hours of debate and there will be a total of three sessional days of debate. In addition to that, my friend Mr Beaubien who chairs the finance committee will be holding hearings right across this province: seven full days of hearing where everybody can make their views known in regard to the bill and how it will work.

As many speakers have noted, this bill is a milestone for this province and for persons with disabilities. We've embarked upon a journey to a fully accessible province. That's our goal, and we have a plan to achieve it. Persons with disabilities are poised to play pivotal roles in reaching that goal: a fully accessible province with equal independence and opportunity for all.

One aspect of the debate that has yet to be touched upon is, how does Bill 125 stack up against the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA as it is referred to?

The ADA was certainly a landmark effort in its day. Who can forget the sensibilities and desires that underlay that bill, and the tremendous goodwill and surge of emotion that greeted its passing? Inspired in part by the difficulties faced by returning Vietnam veterans with disabilities, it represented the collective efforts of our neighbours to the south to do the right thing.

The ADA was a product of its time and it remains well known and much admired. Many people regard the ADA as the bar that all subsequent disability legislation must reach or exceed. The ADA was very much the proverbial elephant in the room as our government was drafting Bill 125, and I must say we had the best of both worlds. The passage of time allowed us to judge what had worked and what hadn't with the ADA. We could see where the bill had triumphed and where it had failed. Bill 125 is a direct descendant of the hopes and dreams that fuelled the ADA and, indeed, legislation in other parts of the western world for persons with disabilities.

My message to you tonight is that Bill 125 is a better bill. It is a made-in-Ontario solution, a key piece of an overall strategy whose goal is the gradual but steady

removal of all barriers standing in the way of greater independence and opportunities for persons with disabilities. The most important item to keep in mind when you hear people comparing the two acts is to think of apples and oranges. The ADA is a bill of a federal government; the ODA is a provincial bill. You simply cannot compare them straight up. They are two different bills responding at two different points in time to two dramatically different situations.

The very fact that the ADA is a federal bill is telling in itself. Perhaps it's a cultural stereotype, but we all tend to believe that individual rights are more important or stronger in the United States. That's just not true in the case of persons with disabilities.

Americans used the ADA to make up for the lack of protection for persons with disabilities in other areas. Special protection for persons with disabilities was not in the Constitution or Bill of Rights, and it wasn't in landmark civil rights legislation passed by the Johnson administration in the mid-1960s. As I say, it was only with the return of thousands of Vietnam vets with disabilities that consciousness began to be raised. In Canada, people with disabilities have enjoyed much stronger basic protection against discrimination through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and codes of the other provinces. As a result, the ADA is top-heavy with enforcement mechanisms and agencies, some of which have been very effective, of course.

In Ontario, we just don't need another enforcement mechanism. That's why our strategy was free to go in another direction, toward partnerships, sharing responsibility and building on the strong foundation of existing legislation and billions of dollars in programs for persons with disabilities.

So, as I say, different countries, different levels of government, different bills. I urge all honourable members not to fall victim to cultural stereotypes that sell short the great strides that have already been made in Canada and in Ontario on behalf of persons with disabilities. In this case, we are ahead of the Americans and have been for years.

There are a number of other reasons why the ADA is not the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow as many would believe:

The jurisdiction of the ADA is limited to workplaces of 15 people or more. In Ontario, the size of the workplace does not matter when filing a complaint to the Human Rights Commission or using the charter to enhance your case.

The complaints-driven thrust of the ADA has indeed spawned many costly, lengthy lawsuits, beyond even what was contemplated for a very litigious society. That is not the Ontario way. Persons with disabilities will continue to utilize the fail-safe protections of the Ontario Human Rights Code. And what's more, it's free to do so.

There is no central administration body for the ADA. This makes acting in concert on initiatives to improve accessibility difficult. Bill 125 gives us the accessibility

advisory committee and the Ontario accessibility directorate to harmonize and guide our journey to full accessibility.

The list of exemptions and exclusions under the ADA is lengthy, which has created confusion and exasperated stakeholders. We are looking at 30-year time spans, in some cases, for conversion and accessibility. That's just too long. In Ontario, we are now committed to full accessibility across all sectors. That's the goal. We will have the power to set time frames by sector and urgency, but we'll do it in partnership and co-operation, not lawsuits and exemptions.

1650

There is a problem with the ADA's definition of "disability" being unclear, which has no doubt contributed to some of the legal wrangling. Bill 125 adopts the wide-ranging and comprehensive definition of disability found in the Human Rights Code. It is very clear. There is no ambiguity and no one is left out.

There are some concerns that have arisen with this landmark American act and how Ontario will avoid falling into some of the same traps. At the same time, there have been some notable successes with the ADA, and we are keen to emulate some of them with Bill 125.

The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario will lead the way in developing programs and services that raise the level of public, employer and broader public sector awareness of the drive toward the vision.

Now, we are moving forward with Bill 125, a multi-billion-dollar program with support already in place for persons with disabilities, and with the rights of persons with disabilities sealed in stone by the charter and the Human Rights Code.

I urge all members of this House to give it swift and speedy passage.

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): It is a great pleasure to rise in this debate, because this is one of the more important issues that this House has to deal with, and it was made more important by the efforts and the length to which the government has gone to avoid this exact debate for six and a half years. The gentleman opposite talked about the Vietnam War. We're almost the length of the Vietnam War in the time that it's taken this government to put something forward that would be reasonable for at least the discussion and debate in this House, and would that it were; would that we had in front of us something that was significant, that gave proper and due respect to the disabled community.

In fact, a very important component of the expectations of the disabled community has to do with time, has to do with the fact that what this government seems to miss completely in this approach is that it is time now to put disabled people in this province on the same footing as the rest of us.

We in the Liberal caucus have no trouble recognizing that in fact this is not a favour for people who are disabled. This is not about a subsidy. This is not even about being kind or compassionate. This is about being fair. This is about treating people with the innate respect that

they deserve. It has practical and keen applications in terms of how people can live their lives and how our society can work better. But unfortunately we do not have that outlook. That practical, principled outlook is not embodied in this bill.

This has the potential, because of the government's lack of ability to take on a full commitment, to become a sham and a scam for the disabled community who have waited these many years. In this bill are not the time frames that they've asked for. There is not the timetable to say, "This is exactly when these things will be accomplished." The government has missed, I guess on purpose -- but we would hold out some hope and expectation that over the next number of days and few weeks that they have allotted for this there is a possibility of change, that they would grab hold of their job as interpreters of the public will; that this does not represent the best we can do here in Ontario. I think that is what the governing party has so far failed to see: that people of all political stripes expect us to exert ourselves; that if we're going to put ourselves forward, we do it in the most impressive and the most time-significant way that we can. That is missing. There's no intensity about what this bill wants to accomplish for us.

This seems to be a bill that could have been introduced 10 years ago. It doesn't really keep in touch with the basic growth that has existed in society around recognizing that people who have disabilities have a tremendous amount to contribute. They are in our classrooms, they're finding their way into some of our public buildings, they're finding their way into some of our employment places, but they're doing it against barriers that are not fair. It's not right that they should have to contend with more than any of the members across the way.

That would be the Liberal approach, to have a level playing field. People who are disabled are not asking for special recognition so much as they're asking for plain recognition of who they are and what they've got to deal with. And what does it take to put them in a position the rest of us have, by accident of birth and circumstance, already available to us? Why couldn't this government grab hold of that with both hands? Why couldn't they say to the wider community, "We have the courage to sit down with the private sector and work out some of the possibilities," because we are currently being denied.

Sometimes the members opposite forget that there was a very low unemployment rate at the time of the last Liberal government in 1987, 1988 and 1989. That was a time when for the first time the private sector started to try and train people who had disabilities that prior to that had precluded their being approached. I was part of some projects that tried to reach people who lived in the disabled community, as well as some single parents and others who were previously thought of as hard to employ, and take the steps necessary. You know, what they found in almost every case is that there were steps that could be taken, that they were modest, and that the thing that held the private sector back was the lack of real official government recognition. That started to germinate some

of the things that have led to this bill as the practical measures on the part of government to help set the table.

We have to get out of that old mindset that somehow what we do for disabled people is a charitable thing or it's something that we do as a social service thing. We do it because of social justice of the most elemental type. These are people, members of our community, citizens, deserving of exactly the same respect as the people who sit in this House, none of whom, to the best of my knowledge, would qualify under the definition of this act for disability recognition. On their behalf, we need to do a better job.

This bill does not present the disabled people of this province, and more important, the non-disabled people of this province who are blessed enough to go through their day-to-day lives without these barriers, with proper leadership. It represents a sadly missed opportunity if it stays in its present form, because it doesn't bring to people their potential. That's all that this bill should do: put in front of people the ability that they already have available to them.

We are looking for this bill to be seriously rewritten, and it can't be rewritten in the time frame that the government has put forward. The government has not allowed sufficient time to actually hear from people around the province. Members of my caucus -- Mr Steve Peters and our current critic, Ernie Parsons -- have been around the province, have talked to people, and know that there is a tremendous amount of resource that could be put into improving this bill if there was goodwill by the government opposite.

The government stands to be defined in part by this bill. This is not just a slipshod exercise to mark off a promise the government made and has not fulfilled over the past six and a half years. It should not be regarded that way. This should be bigger than that partisan interpretation of this government's obligations. The 1.5 million people who could be affected by a proper Ontarians with Disabilities Act cannot be fit into that category of people who have to be tidied up after, but instead need to be dealt with in a much more straightforward fashion.

I appeal to the members of this House, and particularly to the members of the government caucus, to not show the fear they are exhibiting in this bill. They seem to have a fear of the advancement that disabled people have made in this community. They seem to have a fear of leading the public, of articulating that, of saying where we are at. Why can't we go to employers on a phased-in basis and look at ways of creating the employment opportunities for all kinds of people with disabilities, not just the conspicuous kinds in terms of wheelchair ramps and washroom facilities and so on, but things for people with mental disabilities, for developmentally delayed people, to be able to make them participate in society? I say to you, quite different from 10, 15 and 20 years ago, there are technologies available now, there is awareness available now, there is expertise available now, and this bill does nothing to recognize that. It's a shame. There's

no reason why the members of this House in 2001 could not work together and come up with a better bill.

It bespeaks a mindset, and I would hope that mindset wouldn't be one that would hold back something that has the social importance that a properly done bill could do. There's tremendous goodwill out there in the public and this bill vastly underestimates that. It underestimates and to some degree insults the average citizen out there, because it says to them, "All we're prepared to do," after all these years of changing attitudes, after all this time of people putting themselves forward and showing us that they are contributing human beings, from Stephen Hawking to many less well known people, to Richard Metzhoff in my own riding, people who participate fully in their communities but with an aggravation, a holding back, barriers that are clearly identified.

Many times we're asked to address problems, and we don't know exactly what those problems are. We're asked to get involved as a government. This is not the case here. The disabled of this province can tell us, people with disabilities can tell us what they are experiencing on a day-to-day basis, and what they add up to is the stuff of everyday life. We cannot wish it away with a bill, but we can do a better job of putting the motivation behind the public, the private enterprise, the government enterprises of this province.

As the education critic partly responsible for improvement in education, I can say this limiting attitude, this change-in-the-dresser kind of charitable approach of this government that can't bring itself to see people in their full potential, infects the education system as well. We don't give people the full access that we need.

I was in a meeting in Windsor last week full of parents of kids with disabilities, and these are children who were succeeding in the school system. Each and every one of the nine or 10 stories that we heard was of a parent of a child who was succeeding and had those supports taken away, either from the school system or from community and social services, and is falling backwards. That's what this bill potentially represents. Either we seize the moment and articulate for the public what this can do or we will have a number of months and perhaps a few years until the next election, because if this House cannot come up to this moment in history at this time, I can assure you Ontario Liberals will.

1700

Ms Martel: I'm going to take up a bit of our leader's time this afternoon to put a few points on the record. Let me begin by saying of course it's Wednesday so of course it's time allocation day. Isn't it a shame that the government is moving today to effectively shut down debate on a bill that 1.6 million disabled Ontarians have waited over six years for.

I wonder how betrayed these folks are feeling, not only today but with the introduction of the bill and as they read through it, to see that what little there is in this bill could have been brought forward by this government when it was elected in 1995. There is that little in the legislation before us that provides for any change for

those 1.6 million people who have waited so long. They must be wondering what they waited for. The sad reality is that not only does the government shut down debate today on this important bill that so many people have waited so long for -- and must be wondering why they waited -- but the government very clearly wants to shut down the public hearing process and will do whatever it can to shut down the amendment process as well.

My colleague Tony Martin, from Sault Ste Marie, outlined the very limited public hearings that will be allowed with respect to this particular piece of legislation: a handful of communities where a handful of members representing the disabled community will be able to come forward and have their say. That's it; that's all.

The worst thing is that I heard the minister, who was here earlier, say that he was interested in hearing the ideas from the opposition. He was interested in what we had to say. "Bring forward ideas; bring forward amendments." Well, if you actually look at the time allocation motion, it says it all. The time allocation motion says that the committee will meet on Tuesday, December 11, 2001, for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill and that "at 4 pm on the day of the 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 thereto."

This government has no interest, not one second of interest, in receiving amendments, neither from the opposition parties nor, frankly, from the disabled community which, I know, is busy now scrambling to try and put forward amendments to make this bill at least a little bit palatable. This government is not interested in hearing from them.

People who are watching today and people from the disabled community should know that: the government is not interested in what you have to say, folks, about this bill. That is evident because of the very limited public hearings that will take place next week and it is very evident because of the time allocation motion itself, which says that if the committee is lucky to meet at 3 on December 11, it will meet for an hour -- a single, lousy hour -- to hear amendments and that will be it, that will be all. Who are you trying to kid, I say to the minister and to the government members who are here, by trying to pretend that you're even interested in hearing from the disabled community about how you might improve this lousy piece of legislation? It is clear you are not interested in hearing from them to do anything about improving this bill.

I listened to a former commissioner from the Human Rights Commission last week on Ontario Today. It was a wonderful interview and phone-in with Catherine Frazee, a former commissioner who has a disability herself, a mobility impairment. She did a fabulous job of taking this bill apart piece by piece to clearly show that it does not move the yardsticks forward for the disabled com-

munity at all. She was very articulate, very reasoned, very logical. Point by point she exposed Bill 125. That, of course, is what the government doesn't want, which is why the hearings are going to be so rushed, why we're shutting down second reading debate today and why there will be no opportunity for amendments to be put. She exposed this bill point by point and clearly showed that the yardsticks for the disabled who have waited for six years for something concrete from this government are not moving forward by barely an inch under this legislation.

Let's just reinforce for the people who are watching out there some of the things the bill does and doesn't do. The province will create guidelines to address accessibility issues. While we don't know what the contents of those guidelines are, we do know that the province could have created guidelines six years ago if it wanted to do something for the disabled. They didn't have to wait six years to bring forward a bill that now says we're going to have some guidelines, content unknown. "We'll have some more studies, some more review. Maybe we'll do something five years from now for disabled people in this province."

The province is going to create an accessibility directorate and a series of accessibility councils in communities with a population of 10,000 or more, as if people who have disabilities don't live in communities with under 10,000 in population. Where are they going to have their say? You know what's interesting about the advisory committees? They'll have absolutely no power whatsoever to ensure compliance or enforcement of whatever might be passed. The only power they've got is to lobby this government hard and maybe there will be some change. We're going to set up advisory committees of disabled people, primarily, that will have no enforcement mechanism at all with respect to how we might have some meaningful change, how we might demand that the private sector, for example, do something, how we might demand that municipalities, for example, do something. They will have a voice and no power to make any change to go with that voice. That's a slap in the face for the disabled.

Provincial ministries, municipalities, the MUSH sector and transportation service providers will have to create accessibility plans every year. Of course, there's no mechanism to enforce anything in those plans. There are no timelines in the legislation with respect to when some of those plans have to come into shape and actually be in effect. There's no money, of course, to make any of the plans happen. So even if a municipality brings forward an accessibility plan that says they're going to try to make every building they've got, even previous buildings, accessible in every way, shape or form, there's absolutely no money that the province is going to give them to do that. How far down the road do you think we're going to get even in creating buildings where the disabled have access? I suggest to you, Speaker, that we're not going to get down the road very far at all when there's no money to make change, when there's no time-

line to effect that change and when there's no enforcement mechanism to oblige that change to occur.

Only the government of Ontario itself will face any mandatory requirements to make sure there are no barriers in future structures that they buy, lease, renovate or build. Key words: "future structures." What about all the current government of Ontario structures that are not accessible to the disabled? Where are the money, the timeline and the enforcement mechanisms to make sure current structures become accessible? There aren't any.

The bill says nothing about the obligation of the private sector to do one thing to make buildings more accessible, to make sure disabled people can be accommodated in workplaces etc, not a single thing. The bill is silent with respect to any obligation the private sector has with respect to accommodating the disabled. Do we really think that anything is going to change with respect to employing people who are disabled if employers in the private sector don't have to accommodate people with mobility or visual or hearing impairments? No, they will not. Nothing will change.

There are changes to the Municipal Act that allow municipalities to require new businesses to be accessible to get a business licence. The key word is "allow"; not "obligate," not make them responsible, to have to do that -- "allow." So if the municipality really wants to do that, they may force that issue with new business owners, they may make that a requirement, but there is nothing that obligates them to do so. And the bill is silent with respect to existing barriers and existing businesses. Nothing happens with them.

1710

In the short time that I have, because our leader wants to say a few words as well, let me say this: 1.6 million Ontarians took this government at its word in 1995 when, as a commitment in the election campaign, this government committed to bringing forward an Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The three-piece bit of nonsense that was brought forward by the former minister, Isabel Bassett, was a disgrace. Thank God it didn't go anywhere. It wasn't worth the paper it was printed on. The sad reality is that we're here today, six years after the government made its first promise, and we aren't much further ahead. People have waited a very long time in the hope that we would be further ahead. The fact of the matter is that this bill doesn't even meet the 11 principles that this Legislature unanimously adopted as far back as 1998. So we have a scenario where the yardstick under this bill, if not significantly overhauled and changed, will not make the situation better for the disabled in this province.

I regret to say that I don't see anything in terms of the public hearing process or anything with respect to the ability of amendments to come forward that will allow the bill to be significantly overhauled so that it can meet the needs of the disabled. Because I recognize that we're shutting down debate today, that the hearing process will be so truncated and that there is no effective way to make amendments, it seems clear to me that the government is far more interested in going forward with a sham piece of

legislation, with a bit of public relations, than they really are in going forward with a bill that will meaningfully change the lives of the 1.6 million Ontarians who are disabled. I regret that six years later we still find ourselves in this position in this province despite the government's promise of 1995.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): As I look back on my family tree, it was maybe only two generations ago in Ontario that for someone who was disabled the practice was to keep them at home. You didn't send them to school. You kept them out of the community, you sheltered them from the world, because I think in many ways we were ashamed of them. We have come to realize that they are full and equal partners with everyone in Ontario.

We heard commitments made six and a half years ago that we would ensure that they have equal access to living the same life as a citizen, as every other person. This bill doesn't do that. This bill says, "Well, you're welcome into part of our world. You're welcome into city hall, you're welcome into a municipal building and you're welcome into a province of Ontario building." Well, excuse me: you're welcome into city hall if we build a new city hall. You may not be able to get into this one but you can come into the next one if it is ever built. This time allocation motion says, "We don't even really want you in the process of telling us what we can do to remove the barriers for you." This time allocation causes things to happen with such expediency that it is ironic that the group that probably has the greatest challenge to come and meet with us and share their needs, their concerns and their suggestions has been given the least opportunity -- nine days for the nutrient management bill, stretched over months and months; the hearings on this stretched over six days because this bill has to be rammed through.

It is ironic that a bill that purports, as we've heard the rhetoric over and over, to put the disabled community in the driver's seat to allow them to guide, to allow them to develop, to allow them to produce an Ontarians with Disabilities Act in fact gives them no control over the development of it. They can only hope to get some slot to do a presentation. When you look at the time frame, will there be the opportunity for any of these suggestions that come forward to be incorporated as amendments? There doesn't appear to be. If we look at history, a bill that's followed this path is pretty well cut and dried already.

Yet this government wasted six and a half years when they could have worked with Ontarians with disabilities to develop it. They wasted six and a half years. I am reminded of the expression, "Never time to do it right, always time to do it over." There isn't time to do this over. For many, many Ontarians with disabilities, they are sentenced to their homes or they are sentenced to a group home. They do not enjoy the freedom that we take for granted.

In my role as the critic for persons with disabilities, I will confess that after having been at it for a year, I'm still learning. Although we may label a group as "On-

tarians with disabilities," the challenges are so unique with each individual. And so many of the solutions are so easy, but we've not availed ourselves of them.

The Ontarians with disabilities community is not looking for anything that the rest of Ontario doesn't have: they want to live in dignity, they want access to the services that every Ontarian has access to, they want to be accepted in the community as equals. Yet this bill says, "We will spend money on large corporations but we're not going to spend money on your particular group."

With the hearings as they are now scheduled and with the bill as it's coming to the House, I would suggest it is almost cruel, because it purports to give someone some hope that they will finally have rights. None of us could picture wrapping up a Christmas present for our children, gaily decorated, ribbons and everything, and have them open it up and find nothing inside. But that is what this bill is for Ontarians with disabilities. The box is empty. The promises that were supposed to be in there are not there. There's a promise to do things in the future and to look at things. It's been six and a half years of that rhetoric. As Ontario has advanced, it is time now to deliver what we're perfectly capable of delivering.

But we rush it through. Yet the Ontario human rights commissioner identified the major challenge for Ontarians with disabilities as transportation to get to the hearings. Will you have all the services for deaf individuals and blind individuals? I hope so. I'm assuming you will. But it's not limited to that. We have deaf-blind in Ontario who require some very, very special expertise, so they can meaningfully participate for us. For Ontarians with developmental handicaps, these can be very difficult times and it can require a great deal of preparation to do a presentation. That's not allowed for in this bill.

We were not asking for an Americans with Disabilities Act transplanted into Ontario. We were looking for a made-in-Ontario act. After 10 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the evaluation by Americans with disabilities, by both the federal and state governments and by commercial industry and business, was that this is not a bad act. It cost relatively little to implement and it has worked well. So we need to recognize that there's no need to go back and reinvent the wheel. There is a need to do an Ontario one, but one that has some meaning.

It is quite obvious what the priority for this bill is when we recognize that there's no money whatsoever into it. There has been no money directed into this program to remove barriers for it. We talked before about no funding to solve macular degeneration. For individuals with hearing disabilities, this government has a program that provides up to \$500 for a hearing aid. It's always been \$500. If you go to purchase a hearing aid, as my family has in the last year, and you want to buy one that allows an individual to fully participate, the hearing aid is four times \$500. Those with money and those with jobs who have insurance coverage can acquire them, but far too many of our citizens cannot.

The Ontarians with disabilities who require the ODSP to live on, to survive, get \$930 a month, absolute maximum. Many get less. Try to rent an apartment in Toronto, try to buy food, try to have a life on an amount that has not changed since 1990.

The concept of "voluntary" is touted here: "We don't want to enforce. We don't want to do things until the municipalities are comfortable with that." I didn't hear this government say to municipalities, "When you're comfortable with safe water, we think you need to put some standards in." We recognize there are certain fundamental issues, such as safe drinking water, and it is not voluntary for safe drinking water; it's absolutely mandatory.

1720

It's interesting that wherever things are voluntary and self-policing, nobody ever seems to do anything wrong. The life of an Ontarian with a disability is just as valuable as the life of a person who doesn't have a disability or has not yet acquired one. They are entitled to medical services; they are entitled to go shopping; they are entitled to go to a restaurant; they are entitled to a job. There is nothing in this bill that would provide the education, because so many people do not know how to relate to an Ontarian with a disability, and that's their problem, not the person with the disability. We need an education program that provides us with the skills we need. This bill doesn't do that.

We have been challenged that the Liberal Party and my colleague Steve Peters -- we have heard time and time again that there are no recommendations. It is very clear what the Liberal Party would do: first we identify the problem, with full, open public consultation. It has not happened and it's going to happen in a limited way. We have committed to following the 11 principles that were passed in this House, passed unanimously by every party. What will the Ontario Liberal Party do? They will follow the 11 principles, and the disabled community says to us, "If they are followed, then we have achieved what we need to be full citizens."

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): On May 24, 1995, Mike Harris promises in writing an Ontarians with Disabilities Act in the first term of office. What did we see in December 1998? A three-page, toothless piece of paper. On November 23, 1999, one year and 363 days ago, this House unanimously endorsed a resolution that a strong and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act should be enacted no later than November 23, 2001. Here we are on November 21, 2001, two days away from that deadline, and what do we have in front of us with this Bill 125? Not a piece of legislation that is strong and effective, but a piece of legislation that is weak and ineffective.

I think it's a sad day for persons with disabilities in this province that we don't have a strong and effective piece of legislation, that we do not have a piece of legislation here that has the 11 principles that were unanimously endorsed by this Legislature. Are those 11 principles contained in this piece of legislation? No,

they're not. Maybe one of those principles is included in this.

I'm holding this up tonight because the minister last night said nobody was holding up the bill. I'm holding up the bill tonight and it's not a very heavy bill; it's a pretty light bill and it's a pretty weak bill.

I spent 14 months as the critic responsible for disabilities issues. When I was out and about and doing my critic responsibilities, I thought of three people regularly. One was my dad, Percy, who through diabetes had lost his leg. That's when it hit home for me and my family that any one of us could suddenly be hit with a disability in our own home, and how that changed the lives of our family. I thought about my dad pretty regularly as I toured around the province.

A couple of other people I thought about as I toured around: a good friend of mine, Wild Bill McCormick. When I was the mayor of St Thomas -- Bill is a paraplegic who was injured in a motorcycle accident -- Bill would regularly come to my office as mayor to make me aware of issues and improvements we could make within our community. I'll always be grateful for that.

The third person I thought about was a gentleman by the name of David Watson. David has cerebral palsy. David is a true inspiration to anybody who has a disability, because David never let that disability in any way, shape or form get in the way of what he was doing. David was a real advocate for persons with disabilities. Those three individuals gave me inspiration.

I'm saddened today when I start to read through this legislation, because when it starts out first off with the duties of the government and the various sections of this legislation as to how it's going to apply to the government of Ontario, do you want to know the joke of it? We don't need this legislation to have these things apply to the province of Ontario. With a stroke of the pen this government could have implemented every one of these measures, but this government didn't do that.

As you go into this legislation and you look at what it talks about for the government and what the government has to do, there's not a single timeline applied to this. Worse yet, it's not retroactive. It's only on new buildings and new leases.

As you go on, it talks about the duties of municipalities. I can tell you, municipalities have been leaders. Municipalities across this province have recognized that when they constructed facilities, they needed to construct them in a barrier-free manner. They've been doing that because they follow the building code. Municipalities recognized that they had to do everything they could to make sure sidewalk cuts were put in. I commend the city of St Thomas because they've continued that program of replacing sidewalks and ensuring that sidewalk cuts are put in. Municipalities have been doing that.

As you go on in this legislation, one of the glaring omissions is that it talks about municipalities, about schools, about hospitals, about colleges and universities, but do you know what it doesn't talk about? It doesn't talk about the private sector. That's not contained in this

legislation and it should be, because if this legislation is going to be truly strong and effective, it should apply to everybody across this province. It's not in this legislation.

This legislation talks about the Accessibility Advisory Council of Ontario. Do you know what, ladies and gentlemen of this province? We used to have a council very similar to this in this province. Guess who cancelled it? The Harris government did in 1995. That was there, and now they're bringing it back and touting what a wonderful thing it is.

It goes on: you talk about the Highway Traffic Act. I think we do need to crack down on the abuse of the stickers and we do need to crack down on people abusing parking spots, but this legislation doesn't apply to a mall. This only applies to a municipal parking lot. That's a joke.

I commend the government for removing the word "handicap" from this legislation and from other pieces of legislation in dealing with persons with disabilities.

I'm extremely disappointed in this government because I thought that with the number of resolutions that had been unanimously endorsed in this House, they would incorporate the 11 principles, that this would be a strong and effective piece of legislation, not a weak and ineffective piece of legislation.

What's worse yet is they're ramming it through. We've got closure in front of us and they're going to ram this legislation through. But do you know what also is worse? At least the Minister of Agriculture, when dealing with nutrient management legislation, recognized he had to travel all over this province. The Minister of Agriculture made the commitment to go to nine municipalities. Further yet, the Minister of Agriculture made the commitment for full consultation on the regulations, and that's not here.

It's very disappointing, and I know that persons with disabilities in this province -- we've seen the number jump from 1.5 million to 1.6 million. That's 100,000 new persons with disabilities who are living in this province since the Mike Harris government took office in 1995. This is definitely weak and ineffective legislation.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I'm pleased to take a few moments to take part in this debate. Having listened to some of my colleagues in the Liberal Party, I just want to be clear about something, because on the day this proposed legislation was introduced, the Liberal leader spoke and said he wanted "to congratulate the minister and the government for getting religion on this issue" and then said he believed the legislation was good legislation.

I take it now, from listening to some of my Liberal colleagues, that the members of the Liberal Party have changed their position and that they wish to retract the statements of November 5 when they felt the legislation was good legislation and the government deserved to be congratulated. I'm hoping we can get some greater clarity from members of the Liberal caucus because I want to know what their real position is on this.

1730

When we looked at the legislation on November 5, when it was introduced, we pointed out a number of things and I want to emphasize them here today.

This legislation essentially does nothing with respect to the private sector. All of those people in Ontario who struggle with their handicaps and their disabilities would see absolutely no change as a result of this legislation in terms of buildings owned by private sector corporations, in terms of either accessibility or any other changes that would be somehow beneficial to those who are disabled.

Second, I simply want to point out again that the only obligation this legislation imposes or requires of municipalities is that they file a plan. Once they've filed the plan, they don't have to do anything about the plan. They don't have to make any changes. They simply have to file a plan.

Third, and I think this is important, the government says that through this legislation they will set up local advisory committees. As we pointed out on the day this legislation was introduced, advisory committees have absolutely no power. They can't require private sector companies to do anything. They can't require municipalities to do anything. They can't require the provincial government to do anything. All they can do is hold a committee meeting and make note of all the buildings, all the public facilities, all the private facilities which are not accessible to people who are handicapped, which need to be physically changed or need to have some additions made so that they will be more accessible, will be more friendly toward those who have handicaps, those who are disabled. All they can do is come forward and make these recommendations, but there is no obligation on municipalities, there's no obligation on the provincial government, there is no obligation in terms of private sector operators to do anything. They can simply wave their hand.

If anything, I believe that when you look at this and you consider all the promises made by this government, when you consider the resolution that was passed in this Legislature, the 11 principles that were put forward in this Legislature, when you consider all of that and then you consider this legislation, you're left with the feeling that this legislation is cynical, at best, because it doesn't make any changes -- not now, not next year and not the year after that. It provides these hollow local advisory committees that have no authority, no power. At the end of the day, if someone after the passing of this act wants to make changes, the only thing they can do is what they do now: go to the Ontario Human Rights Commission and file a complaint. And they're going to be met with a response from the Ontario Human Rights Commission that they don't have enough staff, don't have enough resources, don't have enough budget and can't do anything.

So what's changed? About the only thing I can see that has changed is that there was a whole lot of media spin put out by the government, a whole lot of propaganda put out by the government, a whole lot of work

done in bringing some of the government's friends down here, paying their way down here, paying for dinner for them and then putting them in front of a microphone and saying, "Well, can you say something good?" We learn now that the very people who did that had not even seen the legislation. Cynical at best.

What needs to be done? If the government wanted to table a whole series of amendments here and now addressing those issues, requiring the private sector to make changes, requiring municipalities to do more besides just file plans, setting out this government's requirements that this government make changes, I think at the very least that's what needs to be done. If the government cannot file amendments which address the 11 principles and address the promises that this government made and once again has failed to keep, then I don't see anything that is really worthy in this legislation.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): In the brief time allotted to me as a result of this attempt to muzzle the Legislature, I will address specifically the 11 points the minister addressed earlier that were part of my resolution in 1998. The minister made the accusation that we have not stated our position. Let's see what was in that.

The first point dealt with the removal of existing barriers and preventing the creation of new barriers. That has to be done. It's not done in this bill. It's part of our platform.

(2) The ODA would "supersede all other Ontario legislation." That is not done in this bill. It has been done in federal legislation. For instance, the Ontario Human Rights Code supersedes all other legislation.

(3) Companies, organizations, government entities and public premises would be made fully physically accessible to all persons with disabilities through the removal of existing barriers and the prevention of creation of new barriers -- private and public. Clearly, there would have to be a negotiating phase over how the regulations would apply, over what time, over what companies. But that is something that was voted on by that party, part of the 1998 resolution, and is not even addressed in here.

(4) "Providers of goods, services and facilities to the public to ensure that their goods, services and facilities are fully usable by persons with disabilities, and that they are designed to reasonably accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities" -- not in this bill; not contemplated in the bill. I don't believe it was discussed in the secret talks the minister had with various interest groups across the province.

(5) The ODA "should require public and private sector employers to take proactive steps to achieve barrier-free workplaces within prescribed time limits" -- not present in this bill at all, anywhere. Simply not present.

(6) "Prompt and effective process for enforcement." There's no enforcement mechanism present in this.

(7) "Process of regulation-making to define with clarity the steps required for compliance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act" -- nothing in the bill about

the regulatory process. The bill doesn't frankly contemplate the regulatory process.

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: At one point they did.

(8) "Education and other information resources to companies, individuals and groups who seek to comply with the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act."

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: The minister laughs. He can laugh all he wants. Nobody but the March of Dimes supports you -- nobody. I say shame on the March of Dimes for supporting this, otherwise a worthy group. I oppose them. I wrote them a letter -- won't support them any more.

Dean LaBute doesn't support this legislation. Dean, I know you're listening. We just spoke a couple of minutes ago. He does not support this legislation. He's looking forward to the committee hearings next Monday in Windsor. Don't suggest that he supports it; he doesn't. I just finished speaking with him about it.

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: I don't support their position on this, and I think they made a bad mistake in taking the government's bait. I've told them that.

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: I don't support their position on this bill.

(9) "Affirmative steps to promote the development and distribution in Ontario of new adaptive technologies and services for persons with disabilities" -- silence in this bill. This is a non-bill.

(10) "The Ontarians with Disabilities Act should require the provincial and municipal governments to make it a strict condition of funding any program, or of purchasing any services, goods or facilities, that they be designed to be fully accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities" -- not in the bill. Part of the resolution that you voted for; not part of this bill.

(11) The key to the achievement of these important goals is the enactment of legislation which provides a means for giving specific direction to employers, landlords, school boards, service providers, manufacturers and sellers of goods and the like and what existing barriers must be removed and what new barriers must be avoided, as well as how this should be done.

Very clearly put out, outlined, adopted by this Legislature -- not part of the legislation. This legislation is nothing more than smokescreen. It does not do what the government says it will. I read with interest -- the minister from London would have read her newspaper's editorial saying, "Disabilities Act Leaves Little to Applaud," and it does; it's nothing. It is absolutely nothing. It is yet again another attempt by this government to ignore the very real concerns of the disabilities community.

It is late in the mandate. There will be a new Premier next year. There will be an election. And as we did in 1999, as we did in 1998 in this House, we will continue to support the 11 principles and outline how they take effect in legislation. This is a sorry attempt by a sorry

government on its last legs to fulfill a broken promise that does not commit to anything. The minister from London has a lot of problems in her riding. I can understand her frustration.

1740

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. We'll not have a debate back and forth. If you want to here, fine. If not, either leave on your own or I'll help you. The Chair recognizes the member for Windsor-St Clair.

Mr Duncan: The London Free Press today says, "Disabilities Act Leaves Little to Applaud." There is nothing worth applauding in this bill -- very, very little. It's just a retreat from the very principles adopted unanimously by this Legislature in 1998. It's an affront, in my view, to the disabilities community. We will participate in the hearings. We will vote against the bill. We'll look forward to a complete rewrite of the act in committee, which won't happen -- we know that. All the secret talks the minister had -- it's interesting, 49 out of 50 groups are now saying they don't support this, including the Dean LaButes of the world and many others.

You can allege that they support this. I know he's watching now. I know he'll be interested to hear what you just said, but it's not accurate, and it's a shame that you would attempt to use people in that way. This bill is bad. This bill should not have been supported by any group that supports and advocates for the disabled. This bill should not have been supported by any group that claims to be an advocate for the disabled. It's regrettable that they were taken in by this.

We'll vote against. In a couple of years time we'll have an opportunity to put into place the principles that every member of this House voted for, including the member from London, who won't stand up for her hospitals, who won't stand up for the disabled in her community and will not acknowledge that her government has failed the disabled community in this province yet again in a miserable, inglorious way.

Mr Caplan: I usually start off my remarks by saying it's a pleasure to speak to something on behalf of the people of Don Valley East, but it really isn't. This is yet another closure motion, a gag order on the Legislature. How could it ever be a pleasure to speak to that, when that's the normal course of action and when this Legislature is shut down for the very purpose it was meant for, which was to discuss important matters? That's what happening here today: people who are going to be watching this on television will see a banner on their screen which says a motion for time allocation -- it's closure, plain and simple, because the government does not want people to take a look at Bill 125, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. They do not want discussion and debate, because once you go below the surface of the title, you find out that there is very little contained therein.

I would commend the minister and the government for the notion of accessibility advisory councils and the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, but you don't need

this bill to be able to do those things. You could do them anyway, so why do we have a bill in front of us without any real substance, without any meaning? That's the real sham, that's the real disappointment, that's what people in Don Valley East have been saying to me. When I was in my riding last week, people were talking about this, and I say to the government, beware, you've been unmasked. If you want to do something, do something meaningful. We on this side of the House will work with you. We believe in the 11 principles passed unanimously by each and every member of this Legislature. It comes from a philosophy and a principle of expanded opportunity. The 20th century's greatest move forward was when women were given the ability to fully participate in society. We enjoyed the greatest prosperity in the history of mankind.

That's the philosophy behind an Ontarians with Disabilities Act, to allow people, all people, an opportunity to be a full partner and to participate fully in employment and in educational opportunity across this province. It's that philosophy that has been undermined, that has been, quite frankly, abused by Bill 125.

When I was a member of the North York Board of Education, there was a federal program to provide infrastructure dollars. We used those dollars to build lifts in our schools, to change the hallways to make them accessible, to build ramps, to make it possible for children and their parents to have access to our schools. That is the kind of real action that could happen with a real and effective Ontarians with Disabilities Act; not with some pabulum, not with some, frankly, next to meaningless bill.

I remember, by the way, I was at the March of Dimes dinner, as was the Minister of Citizenship, when Elizabeth Dole talked about the Americans with Disabilities Act and, quite frankly, if she heard the things coming out of the mouths of this minister or members of the cabinet or backbench members of the government about how the Americans with Disabilities Act is a sham, she would be absolutely floored, because that was not the line then. It is not the truth now and that is not the way it is. That was a bipartisan effort to give all Americans an equal opportunity for partnership and a chance at education and employment, to be full participants in society. It has worked. Poll after poll, in fact every study, has proven and shown that the Americans with Disabilities Act has been a tremendous boon to Americans, to their prosperity.

An Ontarians with Disabilities Act, one with teeth, with meaning, could have equal importance for the people of Don Valley East for sure and for all people in Ontario, because the philosophy says, "We're not doing something for people with disabilities; we're doing something for ourselves." By allowing others to participate in our society, we all benefit, and I can't understand for the life of me why this government just doesn't get that, why the Premier made those promises, why he's not prepared to fulfill those promises, why this minister doesn't get it,

but Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal Party do and we will do something about it.

Hon Mrs Cunningham: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I'd like to introduce, on behalf of my colleagues in the House this afternoon, Mr Vince FitzGibbon, who is the president and cofounder of Brain Injury Community Re-Entry in Niagara -- he is the parent of a son with acquired brain injury; Mr Al Hubbard, from Mississauga, who is also a parent of a brain injury survivor; Mr Clement Lowe, from Mississauga, who is a brain injury survivor; Trudy and Louis Kieven from Hamilton -- they are parents of a brain injury survivor; and Marilyn Shaver, of Thunder Bay, who is a parent of a brain injury survivor.

In spite of the debate that's just taken place, we're all going to make every effort to be together with this wonderful group who are hosting us at a reception in a few minutes.

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order, but we welcome you to our Legislature.

Mr Jackson has moved government notice of motion number 93. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1749 to 1759.

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

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hastings, John	Sampson, Rob
Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Snobelen, John
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Spina, Joseph
Beaubien, Marcel	Johns, Helen	Sterling, Norman W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Kells, Morley	Stewart, R. Gary
Clark, Brad	Klees, Frank	Stockwell, Chris
Clement, Tony	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tascona, Joseph N.
Coburn, Brian	Maves, Bart	Tilson, David
Cunningham, Dianne	Mazzilli, Frank	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Miller, Norm	Turnbull, David
Elliott, Brenda	Molinari, Tina R.	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Gilchrist, Steve	Mushinski, Marilyn	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gill, Raminder	Newman, Dan	Wood, Bob
Guzzo, Garry J.	O'Toole, John	Young, David
Hardeman, Ernie	Runciman, Robert W.	

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Curling, Alvin	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Dombrowsky, Leona	McGuinty, Dalton
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	McMeekin, Ted
Brown, Michael A.	Gerretsen, John	Parsons, Ernie
Bryant, Michael	Hampton, Howard	Patten, Richard
Caplan, David	Hoy, Pat	Peters, Steve
Christopherson, David	Kennedy, Gerard	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Ramsay, David
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Conway, Sean G.	Marchese, Rosario	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	Martel, Shelley	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 47; the nays are 32.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It being well past 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45.

The House adjourned at 1802.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

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

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

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

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

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.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 21 November 2001

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Community care access centres	
Mr Crozier	3713
Architecture and urban design award	
Mr Marchese	3713
Health care	
Mr Gilchrist	3713
Child care	
Mr Patten	3714
Domestic violence courts	
Mr Galt	3714
Snowmobiling	
Mr Gerretsen	3714
South Asian community	
Mr Gill	3714
Education tax credit	
Mr Kennedy	3715
Government process	
Mrs Molinari	3715

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

Standing committee on government agencies	
The Speaker	3717
Report deemed adopted	3717

FIRST READINGS

Arthur Wishart Amendment Act (Franchise Disclosure), 2001, Bill 138, <i>Mr Martin</i>	
Agreed to	3717
Mr Martin	3717

ORAL QUESTIONS

Education tax credit	
Mr McGuinty	3717
Mrs Ecker	3717
Ipperwash Provincial Park	
Mr Phillips	3718
Mr Young	3718
Ontario Power Generation	
Mr Hampton	3719
Mr Wilson	3719
Doctor shortage	
Ms Martel	3720
Mr Clement	3720

Teacher testing

Mr McGuinty	3720
Mrs Ecker	3721

Travel industry compensation fund

Mr Klees	3721
Mr Sterling	3721, 3723, 3724
Mr Hastings	3722
Mr Gill	3724

Air quality

Mr Bradley	3722
Mrs Witmer	3722

Franchise businesses

Mr Martin	3723
Mr Sterling	3723

Audiology services

Mrs McLeod	3723
Mr Clement	3724

Education funding

Mr Agostino	3725
Mrs Ecker	3725

Skills training

Mr O'Toole	3725
Mrs Cunningham	3726

Northern Ontario news coverage

Mr Bisson	3726
Mr Newman	3726

PETITIONS

Education funding

Mr Bradley	3727
------------------	------

London Health Sciences Centre

Mr Hoy	3727
Mr Peters	3727

Post-secondary education

Mr Hastings	3727
-------------------	------

Tenant protection

Mr O'Toole	3728
------------------	------

Audiology services

Mr Caplan	3728
Mr Lalonde	3729

Education tax credit

Ms Churley	3728
------------------	------

Cruelty to animals

Ms Mushinski	3728
--------------------	------

Adoption disclosure

Ms Churley	3729
------------------	------

Children's medical services

Mr Hoy	3729
--------------	------

Education peace plan

Mr Caplan	3729
-----------------	------

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time allocation , government notice of motion number 93, <i>Mrs Ecker</i>	
Mr Jackson	3730
Mr Smitherman	3733
Mrs Cunningham	3734
Mr Hoy	3737
Mr Martin	3737
Mr Martiniuk	3742
Mr Kennedy	3743
Ms Martel	3744
Mr Parsons	3746
Mr Peters	3747
Mr Hampton	3748
Mr Duncan	3749
Mr Caplan	3750
Agreed to	3751

OTHER BUSINESS

Visitors

Mr Bartolucci	3715
The Speaker	3715

Minister's comments

Mr Duncan	3715
The Speaker	3716
Mr Turnbull	3716

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 21 novembre 2001

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2001 modifiant la Loi Arthur Wishart sur la divulgation relative aux franchises , projet de loi 138, <i>M. Martin</i>	
Adoptée	3717