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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 28 October 2002**

**Lundi 28 octobre 2002**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Monday 28 October 2002

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 28 octobre 2002

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**JOHN MALETTE**

**Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair):** This morning, my home community of Windsor laid to rest a son of our community who was well regarded by many members of this House. He was a friend and colleague to all of us. He was a friend of mine. His name was John Malette.

John served our community for many years and in many capacities. He was a family man first, an active member of his religious community and, most importantly, he gave back to his community.

John found time for many endeavours. He was a businessman by profession. He operated a number of different businesses very successfully. But what always struck me about John was what he gave back to the community. He served as vice-chairman of Villa Maria, which is a home for the aged in Windsor. He was the chair of Hôtel-Dieu Grace. He was the youngest-ever elected member of the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board. He chaired the high school committee of that organization. John also served in a variety of other capacities, including the advisory board of St Peter's Seminary in London, and was a dedicated active member of our parish, St Gabriel's.

Most important of all, John was a husband and father. His wife, Renee, and his children, Jacqueline, Rachelle, John Paul and Gabrielle, understandably are very proud of him.

John did many things very young. Unfortunately, he died young. He was 45 years old. He was a remarkable individual. He gave a great deal to our community and, most importantly, a great deal to his country, his province and, above and beyond all else, his family.

**PETERBOROUGH PROMOTIONAL  
BROCHURE**

**Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough):** Today I would like to share with all members of the Legislature a good-news story from my riding of Peterborough: international recognition of a promotional brochure produced by the

Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corp.

This brochure received an honourable mention in the special-purpose brochure category for communities with populations between 50,000 and 200,000. The award came from the International Economic Development Council promotional materials awards competition that is held during the IEDC's annual conference in Oakland, California.

The brochure entered in the competition is targeted at site selection consultants and decision-maker influences involved in business locations. It includes information on the benefits of the greater Peterborough area which it offers to investors, and stresses the high level of customer service provided by the GPAEDC staff.

The brochure was designed by a Peterborough graphics design firm, Point of View Visual Communications, owned and operated by Chris White and Dan Wakeford. I'd like to mention that both of these gentlemen are graduates of Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough. Peterborough photographer Michael Cullen, owner of Trent Photographics, took the photographs for the brochure.

I'm very proud of all those who contributed to the development and production of this initiative to attract business to the Peterborough community, a wonderful place to work, do business, live and raise a family.

**HIGHWAY 69**

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** Finally, this government has acted on Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound. After intense lobbying from my community, from the Crash 69 committee and from the Henderson family, the government finally installed warning lights around the Killarney turnoff. They did that with much fanfare. I would suggest that doing the bare minimum after seven years in power isn't anything to brag about.

Today, my community challenges Ernie Eves to make the following announcements when he comes to Sudbury on November 21 for his annual fundraiser, taking money out of Sudbury. We want him to bring money into Sudbury. We want him to announce a starting date for the four-laning of Highway 69 from Sudbury to Parry Sound. We want him to announce that the environmental assessment for the whole stretch of highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound will be done by next June. We want him to announce that indeed he will ensure that the

stretch of highway between Sudbury and Parry Sound is the number one priority of the federal-provincial infrastructure program that he and his Minister of Transportation will make to the federal government. We challenge this government to not only make announcements that are interim at best, but to show that it is truly committed to Highway 69 and, on November 21, to announce a start time for this project.

### SCHOOL POOLS

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I rise today in defence of the many swimming pools in this city, some 84, that risk being closed down. Every day we hear about the possible closures, especially since the hand-picked supervisor has been put in to look after the school board in Toronto. But some of the parents and students have decided that it's time to fight back. This morning I had the privilege to meet with two of them, and they are here today in the gallery, one parent and two students who have gone that extra little step. Mrs Susanne Gyasi, her daughter Brandi-Lee and friend Roxy are all here today.

What these students did is truly remarkable. They determined that at their school, D.A. Morrison school, the swimming pool ought not to close. They have gone throughout the school, to the students and teachers, and into the surrounding neighbourhood and they have collected on a petition some 250 names of people who are fighting to keep their school pool going. It isn't enough for them to simply say that they're going to lie down, that they're going to see the pool actually close. They want to take a proactive part. I salute them and I salute all the students in the school and all the students and parents across Toronto who are fighting for the same thing.

They have presented me a copy. Unfortunately, it's not suitable for presentation in the Legislature, but I intend later today to give it to the Deputy Premier, because that is for whom it is intended, to let everyone know that in this school and in this city, people want to keep their pools open.

### CANADIAN HORSE

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I rise in the House to recognize a farm in my riding that is doing its part to preserve a living example of Canadian heritage. I am of course referring to a rare breed known as the Canadian horse. This animal has been recognized by Parliament as our national horse, and rightly so. Like Canadians and indeed like the citizens of my own riding of Durham, this breed is strong, versatile, hard-working and from a proud heritage. Some describe them as the little iron horse, much like myself.

The breed nearly became extinct in the early years of the past century. However, there is a renewed interest in the Canadian thanks to people like Tim and Frances Tufts of Kendal Hills Kennels. They are proud owners of three Canadian horses, with two foals expected this spring. I

am grateful for the information they have shared on this very unique breed.

The Canadian is descended from the royal horses originally sent to the New World by King Louis XIV of France in the mid-1600s. By the 1800s the breed was renowned in Canada and the United States. In fact, it was the foundation of several other strong breeds, including the Morgan, Standardbred, Tennessee Walker and American Saddlebred.

While its numbers declined drastically in the past century, today the Canadian is making a comeback and there are an estimated 3,000 registered today. They are not only prized as carriage horses, but also can be found in dressage, eventing, mounted patrols, trail riding, and indeed anywhere there is a demand for good-natured, hard-working, versatile horses—much like myself.

I commend breeders such as Frances and Tim Tufts in Durham riding for preserving such an important part of our Canadian heritage.

1340

### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

**Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt):** It's now seven months since our fiscal year ended here in the province of Ontario and still we don't have an audited statement. I remember very clearly that in Mr Eves's first budget in 1996 he promised the audited statements would be presented a maximum of 120 days after the year-end, and they would aim for 90 days after the year-end. We still don't have it. It's the latest, I think, we've ever not had audited statements.

I also remember that very shortly after election, Mr Eves promised to get rid of the two sets of books in the province. The people of Ontario will be, I think, surprised to learn we still have two sets of books and billions of dollars of difference.

The government also promised back in 1996 to present a budget before the fiscal year started. This year it was three months after the fiscal year started before the budget was presented.

Frankly, it's a bit embarrassing. The government likes to say that they want to run the government like a smooth business. Let me just say that no business could get away with audited statements seven months after the fiscal year, two sets of books with billions of dollars of difference, and a budget not presented until three months into the fiscal year. As I say, it's embarrassing for the people of Ontario to find that now, almost seven years after he promised them, we still don't have the things that Ernie Eves promised he would deliver seven years ago.

### VOLUNTEERS

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It is a pleasure for me to rise today to pay tribute to volunteers. This past Wednesday, I had the distinct honour of hosting the 2002 Volunteer Service Awards in Parry Sound. It is particularly satisfying to participate in this annual

ceremony, as it recognizes volunteers and their valuable contributions to our communities.

People who received Volunteer Service Awards last Wednesday were recognized for giving of their time, expertise and resources to make a difference in Parry Sound-Muskoka: people like Jean Beckett, who received her five-year pin for her work with RISE in Parry Sound; Mrs June Crooks, who also received her five-year pin for volunteering with the Lioness Club of Huntsville; Mr Thomas Hart, who was recognized for his more than 30 years of volunteering with the Emsdale Agricultural Society; and Mr Don Scott for his 15 years of dedication to the Gravenhurst Volunteer Fire Department. These are some of the more than 100 people who received their awards last Wednesday.

I am pleased that we not only have a fine volunteer base in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, but that our government has taken the time to recognize these people who make a difference in our communities. I would like to personally congratulate all those fine people who volunteer in our province for their outstanding efforts and contributions to making Ontario the best place in the world to live.

#### PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** I hold in my hand today's top 10 list.

Top 10 Moments from the Tory AGM:

(10) John Snobelen skips the convention because his horse won't go up the escalators.

(9) Cam Jackson complains about downgrade to hotel room. Delegates tire of "When I was a minister" stories.

(8) When asked about the tax break for sports teams, Mike Harris also blames another Premier: Leslie Frost.

(7) Open margarita and daiquiri bar creates typical Tory scene: government lurches from ices to ices.

(6) Harris leaves the convention early because Flaherty won't stop following him around saying, "Please, come back. Please."

(5) Jean Charest says, "I did that driving-the-bus-into-the-convention thing in 1993. That's my bit."

(4) Delegates and at least two ministers seen sporting buttons handed out by the Liberals.

(3) Best-attended session: "How to blame others for your mistakes," chaired by Ernie Eves.

(2) Jim Wilson forced to apologize to Deb Hutton, David Lindsay and Bill Farlinger after accidentally threatening to fire all civil servants who are members of the PC Party.

And the number one top 10 reason, "Why I enjoyed my time at the Tory convention"?

(1) Ernie Eves asked the real leader of the Ontario PC Party to stand up, and nobody did.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Just before we begin, we have with us today in the Speaker's gallery the

new Consul General from Pakistan, Mr Ghalib Iqbal, who is accompanied by his wife. Please join me in welcoming our special honoured guests.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I move that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Monday, October 28, Tuesday, October 29, Wednesday, October 30, and Thursday, October 31, 2002, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Mr Baird moves that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i)—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Dispense? Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1346 to 1351.*

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

#### Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn
Arnott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	Newman, Dan
Baird, John R.	Gilchrist, Steve	O'Toole, John
Barrett, Toby	Gill, Raminder	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Beaubien, Marcel	Guzzo, Garry J.	Patten, Richard
Bountrogianni, Marie	Hardeman, Ernie	Peters, Steve
Boyer, Claudette	Hastings, John	Phillips, Gerry
Brown, Michael A.	Hodgson, Chris	Pupatello, Sandra
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Ramsay, David
Chudleigh, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Clark, Brad	Jackson, Cameron	Ruprecht, Tony
Clement, Tony	Johns, Helen	Sampson, Rob
Coburn, Brian	Johnson, Bert	Sergio, Mario
Colle, Mike	Kells, Morley	Smitherman, George
Conway, Sean G.	Klees, Frank	Spina, Joseph
Cordiano, Joseph	Kwinter, Monte	Sterling, Norman W.
Crozier, Bruce	Levac, David	Stewart, R. Gary
Curling, Alvin	Marland, Margaret	Tascona, Joseph N.
DeFaria, Carl	Maves, Bart	Turnbull, David
Di Cocco, Caroline	Mazzilli, Frank	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Dombrowsky, Leona	McDonald, AL	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dunlop, Garfield	McMeekin, Ted	Wood, Bob
Ecker, Janet	Miller, Norm	Young, David
Elliott, Brenda	Molinari, Tina R.	
Flaherty, Jim	Munro, Julia	

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

#### Nays

Hampton, Howard	Marchese, Rosario	Martin, Tony
Kormos, Peter	Martel, Shelley	Prue, Michael

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The eyes are 79; the nays are 6.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## VISITORS

**Hon Chris Hodgson (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I would like to take a minute to welcome the grade 5 students from Ridgewood Public School in my riding to Queen's Park.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

**Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** My question is to the Minister of Energy, and it concerns Ontario Power Generation, that electricity producer wholly owned by the government of Ontario, that public company that controls 70% of the Ontario electricity market.

As you will know, Minister, Ontario Power Generation has today produced its third-quarter financial report for the period July, August and September, 2002. In the financial report of this public company owned by the government of Ontario, controlling 70% of the electricity market, we are told that net earnings, profit for that three-month period, July, August and September of this year, is up at \$215 million, two and a half times what it was for a corresponding period the year before; this at a time when millions of Ontario electricity consumers—residential, commercial and industrial—are paying through the teeth for this kind of earnings report with extravagantly high electricity prices.

My question, Minister, is simply this: are you confident and can you say to the electricity consumers of Ontario today that your company, our company, Ontario Power Generation, is not in fact, in these very difficult and trying times, gouging Ontario electricity consumers?

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** Recognizing the market share that Ontario Power Generation has in the marketplace, when the market design committee established the rules and procedures, that the government certainly accepted, a rebate was put in place just to act as a check on the market power of Ontario Power Generation. They are required to remit, I would suggest, at least 50% of rates in addition to the 3.8% base amount with which the company was set up to be commercially viable. Any excess profit in the amount of 50% will go back to consumers.

The member opposite is correct that the third-quarter numbers were substantially higher than they've been in the past, but on the other hand, the nine-month net income for the company are actually down from last year.

**Mr Conway:** We'll get to that in a moment. I just want to be clear so everybody understands the situation we're in. All of your constituents will know their hydro bills are up, and up sharply. I got a call the other day from the people who operate the Cobden Arena in Renfrew county. Their bill for electricity for September 2002 was 8,000 bucks, compared to 5,000 bucks a year ago. That's 60% in one year for one month in a community arena. That situation is going to be played out in virtually every community across Ontario as we head into the fall and winter of this season.

Rates are up. You know what else is up? The stranded debt of Ontario Hydro and its successor companies is up by nearly a billion dollars. People don't know that, but since the Eves-Harris government deregulated the stranded debt of the province's utilities, it's up by hundreds of millions of dollars. My question is simply this—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Conway:** This is your plan, your plan that promised to bring down debt, bring down rates and improve service. Rates are up, debts are up and service is in the tank.

My question is a very straightforward one and it concerns Pickering A. This particular report tabled today by Ontario Power Generation indicates that the cost increases with the refurbishments of Pickering A are up an additional \$230 million over the original estimate. The report indicates that OPG is now going to reassess whether or not it is going to complete the four-unit refurbishments later on.

Can you give the House today your best information as to what precisely is the plan for the full refurbishment of Pickering A? What are the true costs? What are the reasons for the delay?

**Hon Mr Baird:** The member opposite raises a number of issues in his question. I would indicate to him that Ontario Hydro's debt has not increased. In fact it's been reduced, as reported in financial statements for 2002. The member opposite would find that since 1999 liabilities have declined by more than \$500 million. I would want to put that on the record.

With respect to Pickering A, it is no secret that this project is not Ontario Power Generation's finest hour. As minister, I'm not happy with what we've seen, and I think there's a lot more that can be done.

The member opposite requests information with respect to why the project has been delayed. They had to conduct a 20-month environmental assessment, which added a substantial delay to the project. I do think it's important that whether there be environmental improvements, nuclear safety and reliability enhancements, millions of dollars being spent to meet federal regulatory requirements in addition to the security enhancements are very important for the future safety of this important economic resource.

**1400**

**Mr Conway:** Not our finest hour: years behind schedule; at last report, \$1.5 billion over budget. Not our finest hour, I'll say. Nothing in the short and intermediate

term will have a more serious and immediate effect on electricity prices that Ontario citizens and businesses will pay than what goes on at Pickering A.

The people of Ontario know they have an obligation to pay the billions of dollars that are at risk at Pickering A. They also have a right to know what the hell is going on down the road at Pickering A.

Minister, on behalf of your government, will you give me and the electricity consumers of Ontario this assurance: will the Eves government on a priority basis—and I mean in the next very few days—commit to ordering public hearings where the Ontario Power Generation people must come forward to a public place where they can be cross-examined on the details of (a) what is the specific set of problems that is causing the delay and the multi-billion dollar cost overrun at Pickering A; and (b) what is the current, latest thinking at OPG and the Ontario government as to what you are going to do, should these delays continue and these costs continue to rise? Are you prepared to commit to a public hearing so we can find out what in fact is going on?

**Hon Mr Baird:** I was prepared, and I did sit through some seven and a half hours of estimates and this certainly did not dominate the discussions with which the member opposite—had he seen it as such a concern, he would have wanted to participate.

We are working on getting six reactors up on-line. We believe we might be able to get three back on-line next year: two at Bruce and one at Pickering. We also are learning that at Bruce they're actually looking at potentially bringing on two more that they had previously thought they would have to mothball. That is obviously encouraging news and good news for the people of Ontario.

I did notice that the other Liberal critic this year said, "Our position has not changed since 1997," and then he went on to say, "The only way we're going to get more made-in-Ontario electricity is to permit the private sector to come in and build made-in-Ontario electricity," something he and his own party voted against just four days ago. Where is the consistency from this member on these issues?

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member from Renfrew used some terminology in his statement that earlier last week—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Thanks. Take your seat. Stop the clock for a quick moment. When that did happen, I saw the reactions of the parents and the teachers, who smiled, so I would ask hopefully that—

**Mr Conway:** Let me apologize. Hydro and hydro rates cause me to get a little upset, but I do apologize to kids, parents and everybody else—and Pickering A, our finest hour.

**The Speaker:** I thank the member. I would appreciate the comments—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. We do have some young people in here. Let's settle down. They're still watching. We've had it. The question comes up. Start the clock.

## MFP FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** My question is for the Deputy Premier. On October 3, 2001, the Chair of Management Board told this House that he had conducted an investigation into provincial government contracts with MFP and found that they were, and I quote, "above-board."

Minister, I have here in my hands confidential briefing notes that directly contradict these claims. The secret notes report, "MBS consultations with ministries indicate that there have been a number of situations involving additional or disputed payments for leasing where the ministry has used MFP Financial Services Ltd." Specifically, we've learned that there was an \$18-million discrepancy between COMSOC and MFP because the government didn't fully understand the questions and the contract it signed. There was another million-dollar discrepancy with economic development, and internal auditors at justice raised concerns.

Deputy Premier, can you tell me why the government would say their contracts were "above-board" when clearly this was not the case?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** What I can tell the member opposite is that certainly the government's goal always in everything we do is to ensure that we make the best use of the taxpayer dollars while obviously making sure that we obtain the tools we need to deliver top-quality public services to the people in this province.

I know that the government has acted on the recommendations in the Provincial Auditor's 2000 annual report, and certainly the government has undertaken a new competitive process for lease financing services. That process was completed, as you know, in February 2002, and that process was fair, open and transparent.

So the government is now taking action to ensure that there is consistency in leasing practices and asset management.

**Mr Crozier:** According to these notes, that's clearly not the case. I would have hoped that the Deputy Premier would have been better briefed on this, when you consider the problems in her own riding as well as those in Windsor and Toronto.

The government told us they'd been investigated, and they said everything was above-board. Now we have confidential notes that dispute that claim.

The notes say that taxpayers were left holding the bag for things written in MFP contracts such as additional refinancing charges after leases were extended and consolidated, and the inclusion of costs related to installation and support services.

Even more frightening, Deputy Premier: the notes also reveal examples of gross mismanagement and incompetence such as contract terms not well documented; the government actually relying on MFP for its information, if you can believe it, and expertise on the contracts; and decisions being made in the short term for fiscal demands

that reflect the ineffective leases that they have with management.

Deputy, we're told that everything was above-board, and clearly that is not the case. Instead of coming clean and admitting your incompetence and your mismanagement, the government tried to hide it. Why did they do that?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** I understand that the member opposite from Essex was actually offered a briefing on some of these contracts in October 2001 and May of this year in order that he could better understand the contracts. I understand that he didn't accept either one of those offers.

I can tell you that the company has complied with all the mandatory terms of the RFP and the master contract set out by MBS. I think it's very important to remember that the contract was written by MBS, not the vendors. So I would again say to the member opposite that there's been an opportunity for you to receive a briefing on the contracts, and I know that offer is still on the table.

**Mr Crozier:** Minister, a briefing when they have the contracts and I don't isn't worth the paper it's written on. We want to see the contracts.

Ninety-five per cent of the computers the government has are leased. MFP manages over half of these assets, worth millions of dollars. Despite evidence to the contrary, we're told the contracts were investigated, and we're told they are above-board. But let's get a little more specific.

These confidential briefing notes also show that the Ministry of Natural Resources leased 3,750 desktop computers from MFP; not laptops, not servers, just desktop computers. You know something? You can go to Future Shop and buy any one of these for less than a quarter of that.

Minister, do you think taxpayers would be happy to learn that MFP was paid \$5,333.33 a year to lease a computer? If not, if you don't think the taxpayers will believe that, will you release the half-billion dollars' worth of contracts the provincial government—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I'm afraid the member's time is up. Deputy Premier?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** I would just repeat the offer that was made to the member from Essex. I would indicate that up until now, the contracts haven't been disclosed because they didn't ask for them. The briefing still stands that you're able to have them.

1410

#### HYDRO DEREGULATION

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** A question for the Minister of Energy. Minister, it seems that killing Kyoto wasn't the only thing that Ralph Klein and Ernie Eves talked about this past week. In Alberta, Ralph Klein used over \$2 billion in taxpayers' money to try to hide his hydro deregulation and privatization mess from the people of Alberta by mailing out rebate cheques just before the election. Now it looks like your govern-

ment wants to try the same strategy. Is your government really going to try to bribe people with their own money just before an election?

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** No.

**Mr Hampton:** Maybe you should talk to your Premier, because his utterances of the weekend sure make it sound that way.

I want to give you some advice. Isn't it better to not make the mistake of hydro privatization and deregulation in the first place? Isn't it better, rather than trying to spread money around in May or June of next year, to ensure that people don't have to go through the pain of sky-high privatized electricity rates? Wouldn't it be better to acknowledge that right now, as a number of American states have—California, Montana, New Mexico—all of which are abandoning hydro privatization and deregulation there? Wouldn't it be better to stop now and stop the pain of Ontario consumers? Wouldn't it be better to do it that way, rather than trying to bribe people with their own money eight or nine months from now?

**Hon Mr Baird:** The member opposite raises the issue that the high electricity rates in the months of the summer and September had some substantial effect. A lot of families and small businesses in this province are tremendously concerned about this issue, and so is their provincial government. That's why, as part of the design of the market, to protect consumers from the market power of Ontario Power Generation, there is a process to provide a rebate. He's exactly correct—what the Premier has asked us to look at.

What would have been done in the past when this member sat on the executive council was that when the heat went up and demand went up and there was pressure upwards on prices, this member opposite and his gang would simply take out the old Ontario Hydro credit card and amass debt to the tune of \$38 billion, a tax on our children and their children. When the member opposite sat on the executive council, the Ontario Hydro debt went up by \$3 billion in just five years. My generation and the next generation are going to have to pay for that waste and that mismanagement. That's why this government is making some fundamental changes to support families and to support the Ontario economy.

**Mr Hampton:** Well, Mr Pickering, you've got a lot of nerve talking about debt, because under your watch you are adding to the nuclear debt. I might want to remind you that it was Conservative governments that started to build Darlington nuclear plant. It was supposed to cost \$5 billion, but it turned out to cost \$15 billion—Conservative government. You're doing the same thing now: ploughing more and more money into nuclear plants, not putting any money into renewables, not looking at the capacity of wind energy, re-creating the whole nuclear debt debacle again.

But the issue is this: what's happening to consumers who have to pay for these double-digit increases in their hydro bills? What's happening to seniors on fixed incomes? Are you going to make them wait until next



May and send them a \$100 cheque and say, "Vote for us," or are you going to do the right thing now: cancel hydro privatization and deregulation like other jurisdictions in North America?

**Hon Mr Baird:** It will come as no surprise to the member opposite that I don't see eye to eye with him on these issues. The member opposite has at least been consistent in his view with respect to reforming the electricity system in Ontario.

We simply believe on this side of the House that it's irresponsible to continue to amass debt to the tune of \$38 billion.

The old Ontario Hydro monopoly was pulling our economy down and was putting an albatross around the necks of future generations. The member opposite wants to talk about a government that was elected when I was two years old and somehow suggests that that is the reason.

I do know that with respect to Pickering A, it's emission-free electricity and it's still a commercially viable project.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Associate Minister of Health and Long-term Care. This summer, while you were busy hiking long-term-care fees for seniors living on fixed incomes, you tried to justify it by saying, "There will be more nurses and better nursing care in homes for the aged and long-term-care facilities."

We showed you two weeks ago that nursing homes in the Durham region were not hiring more nurses. There wasn't better nursing care. They were using the money for things like diapers and to cover their operating budget shortfall. Last week we told you about Rainycrest in Fort Frances not hiring any new nurses, using virtually all the money to cover the budget shortfall, because you're not funding long-term-care facilities adequately. Now we find out about North Centennial Manor in Kapuskasing, which is using their so-called "new nursing money" to cover WSIB deficits and long-term disability benefits: they're not hiring any nurses either.

Minister, was your announcement this summer, when you drove up long-term-care fees, completely phony? If not, why aren't nurses being hired in long-term-care facilities?

**Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** July 31 this year we made an announcement of \$100 million toward nursing and personal care services in all the long-term-care facilities across our province. That money is to fund those items that are under the nursing and personal care envelope. That includes things like salaries and benefits for registered nurses, salaries and benefits for practical nurses, and salaries and benefits for health care aides.

The money in the nursing and personal care envelope also goes toward things like the cost of medical and nursing supplies, the cost of equipment and the cost of

education and training of staff. All of these things go toward providing better-quality care for all the residents at our long-term-care facilities: \$100 million toward nursing and personal care.

I might add that it was the Ontario Long Term Care Association that said that the \$100 million could be used to hire an additional 2,300 full-time-equivalents across the province. That continues to be true today.

**Mr Hampton:** Minister, this was your announcement last summer. You were the one who went out there and told seniors that you were going to hike the fees by thousands of dollars for people who have to have a long-term-care bed, but you said they were going to get better nursing care. In nursing home after nursing home, home for the aged after home for the aged, it's not happening. Lady Isabelle Nursing Home in Trout Creek won't be hiring any new nurses. Extendicare in Haliburton, Versacare in St Catharines and South Centennial Manor in Iroquois Falls are using the so-called "new nursing dollars" to cover up the budget shortfall because the Conservative government won't adequately fund care for our seniors. It was your announcement, Minister. You were the one who said in the House two weeks ago, "There's nothing else the money can be spent on. It must be spent on hiring additional nurses."

I accuse you of ripping off the senior citizens of this province and, worse, I accuse you of making a phony announcement, a completely phony announcement. Stand up now and admit it: none of this money is being used to hire new nurses; it's being used to cover up the fact that your government won't adequately fund health care for seniors.

**Hon Mr Newman:** To the outrageous charges of the leader of the third party, I plead not guilty. When this member was a part of the NDP government, let me tell you what they did when they had something to do with long-term care. They hiked the long-term-care fees in 1993 in this province by up to 38%. That's what their government did.

This government is putting \$100 million into nursing and personal care services. In fact, if you look at the Rainycrest home in the member's own riding of Kenora, I can tell you that Rainycrest has used their additional dollars to maintain nursing and care staffing levels and is not aware that any nursing staff are going to be laid off. I can assure the member opposite that the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care will continue to monitor and evaluate resident care as well as staffing ratios to ensure that a high quality of service is maintained not only in that home but in each and every long-term-care facility across this great province.

1420

#### MFP FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** My question is for the Deputy Premier. We have for months been trying to get information on the government's dealings with MFP Financial. We've asked, we've paid for and we've gone

through now some secret documents that we finally obtained on MFP Financial. You mentioned some sort of briefing on MFP Financial. What we have simply asked for are the contracts. We can read the contracts for ourselves.

On December 11, 2001, my leader, Dalton McGuinty, said, "We think the responsible thing to do in the circumstances is to release the contracts.... Will you agree to that, Minister?" My colleague Dwight Duncan from Windsor-St Clair on October 1, 2002, said, "Given these facts, will you release your government's contracts with MFP to this House today?"

Today I ask that you release the contracts. Minister, will you simply do that? If you have nothing to hide, release the contracts.

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** I find it rather surprising that the member for Essex stands in the House and makes these statements and claims at a time when he has twice been offered the opportunity to have a briefing on the contracts. The reality is, this has been handled in the same way as any FOI request has been handled. You know that and I know that.

**Mr Crozier:** The thing is, Minister, you don't know any more than what's being sent in to you today. I've simply asked for these contracts to be released. I want to be able to go to the people of Ontario and say, "Do you really think that you should pay \$5,333 a year to lease a computer that you can buy for a third or a quarter of that price?" I merely want to be able to go to the people of Ontario and say, "Look, they've got massive problems with MFP in Waterloo"—in your own riding, Minister—"they have massive problems with MFP in Toronto and in Windsor and with the Union Water system." I want to be able to assure the people of Ontario that, because you haven't. So will you release the contracts?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** I understand that the records to which the member opposite is referring have been released under the FOI. I understand that the auditor has already commented on these and that we've acted on them.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** My question today is to the Minister of Labour. Our children have been back in school for a few months now. I understand that the high school curriculum includes comprehensive health and safety education. I believe that this is based on teacher support materials developed by your ministry.

Could you please tell my constituents in Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale how the government is ensuring that our children learn about health and safety on the job, in the community and in their homes?

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour):** I thank the member for the question. Our government is taking steps to educate young workers, much the same age as the

young people who are in our hallowed halls today, actually.

The honourable member refers to teacher support programs. The program is Live Safe! Work Smart! These materials give students critical health and safety information. We're teaching these students their rights and responsibilities, how to identify what is hazardous in the workplace and the best way to protect themselves so that they don't become a statistic, so that they're not injured in the workplace or, worse, killed.

We continue to take the lead on a number of initiatives aimed at improving occupational health and safety skills of students and young workers through the development of young worker health and safety Web sites, through the young worker awareness program with the WSIB and through partnerships with the ministries of Education and Training, Colleges and Universities, many unions and the Workplace Safety Insurance Board in providing Live Safe! Work Smart! material to teachers across the province.

**Mr Gill:** I want to thank the minister for his response. Minister, your ministry is responsible for workplace health and safety. What else is your ministry doing to ensure that our young people are not injured on the job?

**Hon Mr Clark:** The ministry and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board are working with Paul Kells and Rob Ellis, who are fathers of two teenaged boys who were killed on the job. Both have taken up the prevention challenge in very personal ways because it impacted on their families and their lives. Mr Kells has become an internationally recognized health and safety advocate for his community prevention efforts. Mr Ellis shares his son's story with high schools and post-secondary students, business and labour organizations with the aim of educating people so that tragedies that impacted his family will never impact another family.

Beginning this Friday, I'll be kicking off the Live Safe! Work Smart! tour, where I'll be speaking to high school students as well about the importance of work safety in order to—

*Interjection.*

**Hon Mr Clark:** Perhaps you don't care that young workers are being injured on the job; we do.

I'll be going out speaking to high school students and bringing directly to them their rights and responsibilities and how they can ensure that they are safe in the workplace so that they too can come home to their families every night.

#### ENERGY CONTRACTS

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. On a daily basis, consumers across this province are being harangued by door-to-door hydro sales people. Here's the latest assault on a poor senior. A 77-year-old constituent of mine received a letter from Direct Energy threatening that if she and her 84-year-old husband cancelled their contract, they would be charged

a penalty of \$750 with what they call an “early termination fee.” They only tried to cancel this contract because another door-to-door salesperson from another company convinced them to cancel. So when they tried to cancel, they got this letter from Direct Energy saying, “It’s a \$750 charge if you cancel. But if you don’t cancel, sign this and you get a cheque for 75 bucks.”

Mr Minister, as consumer affairs protector, how are you going to stop this haranguing and harassment of poor, innocent people that’s been going on in Ontario for the last two years? What are you going to do to finally put an end to it?

**Hon Tim Hudak (Minister of Consumer and Business Services):** This question rests with the Minister of Energy.

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** We took some substantial measures to further protect consumers in Bill 58 this past spring. If the member opposite has some specific examples of practices that are unethical or illegal, I’d encourage him to immediately contact the Ontario Energy Board where they can conduct an investigation and look at these practices.

It is something which we all take incredibly seriously. If the member opposite has specific information, I’d also be happy to pass it on to the OEB, because we take these matters incredibly seriously.

**Mr Colle:** I’m surprised the minister of consumer affairs doesn’t have the guts to stand up and say he’s going to protect seniors. I’m surprised.

This is about protecting people who are just trying to live their lives in their homes. This has gone on year after year. This is one of hundreds of examples of door-to-door intimidation by these con artists. This senior was so afraid of paying \$750, you know what they did? They went back with Direct Energy, not because they wanted to, but because they’re afraid of their very well-being. This senior has an 84-year-old husband with Alzheimer’s.

This is what’s going on, Mr Minister. What are you going to finally do to stop this mess at every door in Ontario that is taking advantage of poor people who can’t even afford to put food on the table? What are you going to do to stop this?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I’m sorry, I missed that. Order. The minister has the floor. Sorry, Minister.

1430

**Hon Mr Baird:** If someone in Ontario is conducting illegal activities, things that are against the law, intimidating and harassing people, I ask—

**Mr Colle:** This has been going on for five years.

**Hon Mr Baird:** Member opposite, if you don’t want to listen to the answer—you got up and asked a question; I’m taking the issue incredibly seriously. If the member opposite has some allegations he wants to make, give them to me right now, right here. I’ll forward them to the Ontario Energy Board immediately and we’ll conduct an

investigation. If people are breaking the law and threatening and intimidating seniors—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Order. I’ll take this, Minister.

One more and you’re out. You can’t yell. You’ve asked the question very forcefully. Now the minister gets a chance to respond. Sorry, Minister.

**Hon Mr Baird:** We all take these issues incredibly seriously. If there are people out there breaking the law, I want to know about it. It will be forwarded to the authorities responsible, and an investigation and actions will follow.

As for your comments about the Minister of Consumer and Business Services, that’s not a very classy thing to say.

#### DIAMOND MINE

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** My question is for the dynamic and energetic Minister of Northern Development and Mines. As you know, there must be a mining operation in Palmerston, a few miles from where I live, where my father operated a coal and fuel oil business for many years and indeed where I went to high school.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Johnson:** I don’t insist that you listen to the question, but I do insist you shut up so I can address my comments to whomever—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Order. Will the member take his seat for a second. With all due respect, it was your minister who was doing the shouting, not more than three rows from you.

The member is trying to put a question. I know that after a very controversial question, the next question is difficult, but could we please give the member quietness so he can place the question. I apologize to the member for Perth-Middlesex.

**Mr Johnson:** That’s one, and the World Series is over, so I should get three.

I’m always interested in developments in the mining industry, as I am in the role the government plays in mineral investments in Ontario. Earlier this session, the member from Timmins-James Bay asked the Deputy Premier a question regarding a potential diamond mine in Attawapiskat. Minister, can you update members of the Legislature on new developments around this initiative?

**Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** I want to thank my colleague for the question and remind members that mining activities in northern Ontario are important to the quality of life in all of Ontario and all sectors of our economy. After all, we can’t produce the steel, we can’t produce the goods and services, unless we do the mining first, and we’re the number one jurisdiction in the world for mineral exploration.

Last week there was exciting news around the proposed DeBeers development near Attawapiskat in Ontario’s far north. This will be the first diamond mine in

Ontario. DeBeers and the Atawapiskat First Nation jointly announced that they had reached an agreement to proceed with a winter program at the Victor diamond mine. This agreement is very important to the project. It is to allow for completion of a feasibility study. It will also allow for jobs and opportunities for residents of the Attawapiskat First Nation to continue throughout the winter.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate both DeBeers and the First Nation. By working together, they are one step closer to making a prosperous and productive diamond mine in Ontario. They are to be commended for this. We look forward to the continued quality of life and raising of the quality of life for northern Ontarians.

**Mr Johnson:** Thanks very much, Minister. There are two very important sources of industry and economics in the north. Minerals happen to be one, and trees are the other.

Minister, as you mentioned, this project is only going forward thanks to the willingness of the parties to put aside their differences and work together. I know that Ontario's far north is full of similar examples and opportunities. What information can you provide for us today on the opportunities that are available?

**Hon Mr Wilson:** The Ontario government is working on a number of fronts to work with First Nations to build strong, healthy, self-reliant communities in Ontario's far north. I want to commend the Attorney General in particular and my colleague the Minister of Natural Resources for their very hard work with First Nations to help them become self-reliant, help them improve their quality of life, help them with economic development and give them the same opportunity those of us in southern Ontario have: the opportunity for a job, the opportunity to raise a family and to live in Ontario with dignity. The collaborative effort between Attawapiskat First Nation and De Beers should be commended, and I thank the honourable member for doing that in his question. It's a first for Ontario, it's perhaps a model in the future and it's a terrific first step toward creating the jobs that are necessary for self-reliance and for a greater dignity of life for our First Nation people in the far north.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have question for the Minister of Health. Leo and Sheri Walsh of Welland are in the gallery today. Their son Cameron is autistic and needs IBI treatment. He was placed on a waiting list for government funding over two years ago, but now that he's turned six he no longer qualifies for funding. His parents decided to pay for IBI treatment themselves because they're not prepared to give up on him. He's making tremendous progress but his parents have used up all of their savings, they have maxed out their credit cards, and now they are seriously considering selling their home in order to buy a few more months of treatment.

Minister, no Ontario family should have to sell their home in order to pay for treatment for their child. Will you recognize IBI as medically necessary treatment and pay for it for all children like Cameron who need it?

**Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** This is a program of the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services.

**Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services):** I would like to say, first of all, this government cares very much about the needs of children and the families of children who are diagnosed with autism. We know the challenges are extremely difficult, and that's why we believe it's important to offer services to the children and their families. Years ago, if a child was diagnosed with autism in the province of Ontario, it would indeed be extremely difficult to get services. That is why in 1999 we initiated a program. We started with \$5 million, and over these last three years we've increased it eightfold, to \$39 million.

We've chosen to offer an intensive behaviour intervention program because research has told us that this is the program that is most effective. It's part of a large number of programs that we offer to children with special needs, about \$500 million overall, in a bigger budget of \$2.2 billion. This is a challenging disorder—we understand that—both for the children and for the families. Can we do more? Yes. Will we? I'm very confident that our government will.

**Ms Martel:** My supplementary is for the Minister of Health because this is a critical health issue. I've got Mary Turner of Bradford in the gallery today as well. Her twins, Katie and Stephen, and a second son, Scott, all have autism. All three have been lucky enough to receive some government assistance for IBI treatment. Katie, who is the most seriously affected, has just started to use clear language while she's communicating. Katie and her twin, Stephen, both turn six in mid-January, and the limited funding this family has received is going to be cut off. I can tell you that this family cannot afford to pay for IBI treatment for three children. No family in this province should be forced into bankruptcy to pay for treatment for their children.

I ask you again, will you recognize IBI as a medically necessary treatment, and will you provide it for all autistic children in Ontario who need it?

**Hon Mrs Elliott:** As I said, our government does understand that this is an extremely challenging disorder for the children and their families. That is why we have consistently increased our investments to try and provide the services that are most appropriate. Specifically, we've directed our resources to the intervention program. Part of that program is to provide service that will assist in transition to school age. In fact, we have also increased the resources in special education programs in the public school system to assist those children and their families.

This is a challenging disorder. One of the problems we've been having here in Ontario is trying to find enough qualified individuals who will undertake the kind of care and instruction that is required for children. As I

said, can we do more? Yes. Will we? I am confident that we will.

1440

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, what will it take for you to understand the depth of hardship that you have created for Ontario families?

A grandmother in Hamilton sent me an urgent e-mail. She sent you the same plea for help. Karen Baxmeier is a mother who is absolutely frightened for her daughter and grandchildren. Her daughter, Kelly Bryce, a single mom, has been working incredibly hard to raise two children and complete a nursing degree at McMaster. Her youngest child, Jaiden, is two years old and requires a Life-breath ventilator that runs day and night.

Minister, she cannot pay her hydro bill because it has skyrocketed. The utility is now threatening to cut off her hydro this week. Jaiden's life depends on electricity. What are you doing for Ontarians with disabilities whose lives depend on electricity?

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I share the member opposite's concern for those on fixed incomes, who are vulnerable, and the concerns that they have not just with respect to the bills that they're getting in their mail now from the hot months, the three months over the summer, but also their concern of what it will look like in the future.

I also share the concern the member opposite has with the disabled. If there are children with special needs, if there are people on social assistance, there are some measures to provide a measure of support on behalf of taxpayers. Those have been areas where we have put additional funds to support those with disabilities. In the recent budget, we saw a substantial increase. There was more than \$197 million announced with respect to people with developmental disabilities. A substantial amount of that was to provide agency revitalization to help them better serve the people they work for.

**Mrs Bountrogianni:** We need much more than your concern. Kelly's family has exhausted all of the avenues to help her daughter. You really don't have any idea of how hard it is. This young mother told me about other people in her neighbourhood who are not eating in order to pay the electricity bill.

Kelly Bryce is doing all the right things: she's struggling on OSAP to complete her nursing degree, she's raising two small children on her own and she was looking forward to becoming a contributor to our health care system and economy in a few short weeks when she's supposed to graduate. Everything is now in jeopardy. Most importantly, there's a little boy who could die if his electricity is shut off.

I'm asking you again, Minister: what are you prepared to do today to help Kelly Bryce and her children?

**Hon Mr Baird:** With respect to those young people who are medically fragile and require assistance, we put substantial resources in recent years of more than \$17 million of additional support. I believe that there's—

*Interjection.*

**Hon Mr Baird:** The member opposite asked a very legitimate question. I'm trying to take a moment to answer it, but she doesn't want to hear it.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. There's little doubt that promoting public transit, I think we all know in this House, helps to alleviate traffic congestion, reduce traffic volumes on our highways and also improve the quality of life for the people of the province by reducing commuting times and improving our air quality.

Today, there are more than 12 million people across this country who actually use transit. Those who use public transit make about 1.5 billion trips and travel about 15.5 billion passenger kilometres each year.

Minister, could you please tell this House what this government is doing to assist public transit authorities throughout Ontario to maintain transit systems that are safe and efficient?

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation):** Our government certainly recognizes the need for a balance in integrated transportation systems. I can tell you that this government is doing its part to promote public transit in this province. In fact, we've made a clear commitment—something that no previous government has ever made—of \$3.25 billion over 10 years for renewing and enhancing our public transit system.

For example, we gave \$12.8 million to the city of Ottawa to buy 79 new buses to replace some of their older fleet. We gave up to \$912,000 to the city of London to fund projects, including expanded bus services to newly amalgamated areas, and up to \$250,000 to the city of Cornwall to implement an electronic fare collection system. The city of Toronto will receive \$126 million in 2002 to renew TTC infrastructure and improve service.

We are there. We are supporting public transit—

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

**Ms Mushinski:** Thank you, Minister. That's important information for my constituents in Scarborough Centre to know.

Despite the additional \$565 million annually in property taxes that the city of Toronto received as a part of local services realignment, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars this government has invested in the TTC since 1995, we know that the TTC is expecting yet another \$78-million shortfall this year. A fare increase may have a detrimental effect on ridership at a time when the public concern is growing about an increase in traffic throughout the GTA. Minister, what other solutions exist to keep fares down and the infrastructure up to date in the future?

**Hon Mr Sterling:** There are a number of things municipalities can look at. One is to increase the density of their residential population close to the subway, bus transit stations and those kinds of things, something the city of Toronto has not done in the past in terms of some of their planning.

We also encourage the use of innovative partnerships that can deliver high-quality service at a lower cost to taxpayers. As Golden Horseshoe communities put forward projects for the extension of GO Transit services, partnerships with the private sector are encouraged wherever beneficial to the public. In fact, GO Transit currently contracts out all of their rail operations and maintenance and has achieved a higher level of cost recovery than the TTC.

Many other cities have done the same and have shown better results than the TTC. Stockholm, Copenhagen—

**The Speaker:** I'm afraid the minister's time is up.

#### RACCOON RABIES

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, you're responsible for both managing wildlife and treating citizens with dignity. On September 12, your ministry raided the Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre, a world-recognized facility. Unbelievably, they had let a squirrel go more than one kilometre from where it was found, and they had raccoons in their possession.

You got a court order to seize them, although your staff didn't have the courtesy to show the court order. They tricked their way into the facility. Twenty police officers put a perimeter around it to keep the media away and 25 of your conservation officers in bulletproof vests managed to overpower the three female employees in it. You seized 34 healthy young raccoons and one skunk, all from within Ottawa, which has no rabies. Read the local media about it.

Minister, will you apologize to the staff for the brutal treatment they experienced from your staff and will you return the animals to the centre, because you cannot prove that they have rabies?

**Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources):** I thank the member opposite for the question. As we know, a lot of profile has been brought to this issue.

Very specifically, we are concerned with the safety of individuals in that area. Raccoon rabies is a new strain of rabies coming into Ontario and we are doing everything we can. When it comes to the safety of the people in that part of the province, we are going to ensure they are safe. We are also monitoring and keeping track of those raccoons to ensure they are well taken care of.

**Mr Parsons:** You have a full-service ministry: you're bad to both animals and humans. In fact, your ministry is the worst enemy of raccoons in this province. Your own data—and you know it—show that rabies is moving away from Ottawa, yet your staff have killed 7,000 raccoons and found only 14 that possibly have rabies.

Killing every raccoon to save them is not smart. How far are you going to go? Wipe out every animal in Ontario until rabies is finished? Wildlife rescue centres are your allies; they're not your enemies.

I ask you again, will you apologize for the brutal way your staff took over that animal wildlife centre, will you return the animals and will you meet with the rescue centres and work with them co-operatively instead of the confrontation and bully tactics you have used?

**Hon Mr Ouellette:** Clearly, what the member opposite has asked us to do is to direct police forces and law enforcement agencies. This ministry and our government do not in any way, shape or form direct enforcement officers on how they are going to react and deal with situations.

We will ensure that the best interests and the safety of the people of Ontario are looked into and taken care of.

1450

#### QUEEN ELIZABETH II WILDLANDS PROVINCIAL PARK

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is also for the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, I think I speak for everyone in the Legislature when I say that having Queen Elizabeth II visit our province recently was a tremendous honour. As we know, it was her Golden Jubilee. This government decided to memorialize this special occasion in a truly unique way.

Could you please explain to us here today how the government—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Member from Ottawa Centre, come to order, please. Sorry, member.

**Mr Miller:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for getting control of things.

Minister, could you please explain to us here today how the government has decided to remember this very special time when Queen Elizabeth II visited Ontario?

**Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources):** I thank the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka. It truly was exciting for the province of Ontario to have Her Majesty celebrate part of her Golden Jubilee here in the province. That's why we are proud, as part of the government, to announce the Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park, the largest park established to date under Ontario's Living Legacy. It's very special for the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka as well, as a major portion of that park is found in his riding.

Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park will link Ontario's priceless natural legacy with the living legacy of the monarchy.

**Mr Miller:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. I would like to agree with the minister and say that this truly is a wonderful way to commemorate the occasion of Queen Elizabeth II visiting Ontario. I'm also happy to note that part of this new park is in the beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka.

Minister, could you explain to us here today how this park came to be and what features of this park make this park so special?

**Hon Mr Ouellette:** Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park is approximately 335 square kilometres and is approximately 100 to 150 kilometres north-northeast of here. The park was originally regulated as Dalton Digby Wildlands Provincial Park, which were two of the five townships the park was located in. There are dozens of lakes and rivers, including the well-known Victoria Falls, which is a series of waterfalls on the Black River. The park also contains other biologically significant areas such as the Sadowa and the Lewisham wetlands. Also, Ontario's only lizard, the five-lined skink, is found in this very majestic park named after Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

#### ENGLISH CLASSES

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, I want to talk about the importance of English-as-a-second-language programs.

I want to tell you, I came to Toronto from Italy in 1962. I was supposed to be in grade 4, but they put me into grade 3. That very first day, the teacher asked me a question in mathematics which I didn't understand, and immediately I was put into grade 2. I didn't have the benefit of ESL.

Many new Canadians today are not getting the ESL help they need. The number of ESL programs and ESL teachers has dropped in the last five years. There are more and more new Canadians and fewer and fewer ESL programs. Why would you let that happen?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** I'm not sure that all of the facts he has enunciated are exactly as he has represented them, because I can tell the member opposite that funding for ESL has increased every year since we introduced student-focused funding in 1998-99. In fact, this year, 2002-03, it is projected to be approximately \$168.5 million. That is a 50% increase, as compared to 1998-99.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm not quite sure why the minister would boast about kids not succeeding very well. I'm not sure why you boast that you put so much money into ESL. In the survey that People for Education have done, one third of the schools no longer offer ESL and we have one third less ESL teachers. These kids don't have academic programs. We know that if they learn English, they'll succeed. Why would you wilfully limit the academic and career choices for so many new Canadians? Why would you do that?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** All the initiatives that our government has introduced have been introduced with the intention of helping students achieve success.

I would just say to the member opposite, as far as the survey he refers to is concerned, that we have to question the methodology because it only deals with schools that

have actually reported, and so the numbers certainly are not terribly accurate.

I would just refer you to a quote from the Honourable David Cooke, Minister of Education and Training, a member of your party. When asked about ESL, he said, "There's no doubt it's important. We're doing the best we can. We can't spend as much money as we would like to spend because we all have financial constraints." Then he went on to say, "Do you know what? It's obviously a need. Maybe we need to call upon the federal government to help us."

#### PETITIONS

##### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas average tuition fees in Ontario are the second-highest in Canada; and

"Whereas average undergraduate tuition fees in Ontario have more than doubled in the past 10 years; and

"Whereas tuition fees for deregulated programs have, in certain cases, doubled and tripled; and

"Whereas Statistics Canada has documented a link between increasing tuition fees and diminishing access to post-secondary education; and

"Whereas four other provincial governments have taken a leadership role by freezing and reducing tuition fees;

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

"Freeze tuition fees for all programs at their current levels, and

"Take steps to reduce the tuition fees of all graduate programs, post-diploma programs and professional programs for which tuition fees have been deregulated since 1998."

This is signed by literally hundreds of concerned constituents in my riding. I affix my signature in full agreement with their concerns.

##### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River):** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads:

"Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% or \$7.02 per diem effective August 1, 2002; and

"Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month; and

"Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas the increase in the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario ranks last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels.”

I will affix my signature and give it to Matthew to bring it forward to the desk.

#### NATURAL GAS RATES

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

“Therefore be it resolved that we the undersigned demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas; and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases.”

This petition is signed by a number of residents of Chatham, Pain Court, Grande Pointe and Wallaceburg, and I too have signed this petition.

1500

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Further petitions?

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** I also have a petition regarding Union Gas, signed by over 1,000 of my constituents.

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month

for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive increases.”

I’m in full agreement and have affixed my signature to the petition.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):**

This deals with the long-term-care situation. The petition has been signed by people from Gloucester, Picton, Mississauga, Fenwick, Wainfleet, Caledon, Cobham, Thorold, North York and Newmarket. It reads as follows.

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid by seniors, the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities, by 15% over three years, or \$3.02 per diem in the first year and \$2 in the second year and \$2 in the third year, effective September 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month after three years; and

“Whereas this increase is above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario for the year 2002; and

“Whereas, according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario will still rank last among comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas the government needs to increase long-term-care operating funds by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

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

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce the 15% increase over three years in accommodation costs to no more than the cost-of-living increase annually and that the provincial government provide adequate funding for nursing and personal care to a level that is at least at the



average standard for nursing and personal care in those 10 jurisdictions included in the government's own funded study."

As I mentioned before, this has been signed by literally hundreds of individuals from all over the province. I agree with it and have signed it accordingly. I'm handing it now to Hin-Hey.

#### NATURAL GAS RATES

**Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** The petition is related to Union Gas. Retroactive delivery charges continue to come in, and we're still hoping that they will back off and not collect the \$120 charge.

The petition reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million;

"Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship;

"Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

"Therefore we demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases."

I am absolutely in support of this petition, and I am very happy to add my signature to it.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** We have some more, do we? Petitions? Who hasn't been up? The member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

#### WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"The unreasonable and inhumane restrictions that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is placing on wildlife rehabilitators with respect to the release of orphaned animals will eliminate their ability to help wildlife; and

"Whereas wildlife rehabilitators provide an essential public service for many thousands of people seeking help on behalf of orphaned and injured wildlife in Ontario; and

"Whereas the unreasonable release restrictions imposed on wildlife rehabilitators by the OMNR will prevent responsible wildlife rehabilitation, not only compromising wildlife and frustrating the public but

forcing it underground and jeopardizing public safety; and

"Whereas this will incur significant new costs for local governments with respect to bylaw and public health and safety interventions while creating an emotional and volatile climate because the majority of people in Ontario are simply unwilling to see healthy young animals euthanized;

"We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned that the release restrictions imposed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will eliminate the provision of responsible wildlife services in our community; and

"We petition the government of Ontario to work with wildlife rehabilitators to ensure that progressive, humane and responsible regulations with respect to release criteria for rehabilitated orphaned wildlife are put in place in Ontario."

I am pleased to add my signature to over 200 signatures from Ottawa, Acton, Guelph, Rockwood, Stoney Creek, Toronto, Mississauga and Belleville.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas the Ernie Eves government promised the people of Ontario that the opening of the electricity market would deliver lower hydro rates and improve service; and

"Whereas hydro rates have risen 21% over the past five months since the opening of that market; and

"Whereas consumers have been advised to expect power shortages in spite of higher costs; and

"Whereas consumers have not been adequately informed about the unbundling of charges and therefore do not understand and cannot reconcile the charges shown on their hydro invoices;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government convene a legislative committee to oversee electricity issues in order to inform and protect the public interest."

I'm in full agreement and have signed this petition.

#### CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the people of Chatham-Kent and Essex county in Ontario, need a program and health care system where every person who wishes to receive chiropractic services has full coverage, as they would at a visit to the doctor's office.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: that chiropractic services be covered through OHIP."

It's signed by a number of residents from Blenheim and Chatham, and I have signed this petition.

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** Children's mental health services are in great crisis in Thunder Bay. I've got a petition to read to fight for more funding from the province.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the children and families with the Lakehead Regional Family Centre deserve to have quality and timely children's mental health services; and

"Whereas for the first time Lakehead Regional Family Centre has a deficit budget of \$200,000 due to the lack of adequate funding from the provincial government and the sharp increase in the demands for children's mental health services in the city of Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas referrals to Lakehead Regional Family Centre have increased 150% since 1995, and no additional permanent funding has been received to help meet the needs of our community; and

"Whereas since 1993, the government's investment in core funding for children's mental health services has declined by 8%, and salaries for staff are up to 30% lower than in hospitals and other government services; and

"Whereas according to the Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 18% of children and youth in Ontario have a diagnosable mental health disorder, and yet Ontario only treats one in six of these children; and

"Whereas without immediate additional permanent funding, children's mental health services could be severely restricted to those children and families who need it the most;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario and residents of the city of Thunder Bay, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"For the provincial government to provide an immediate infusion of additional permanent funding to the Lakehead Regional Family Centre to help fight the crisis situation facing children's mental health services in the city of Thunder Bay."

I support this strongly and am happy to add my name to the petition.

### IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I have a petition signed by 18 of my constituents who are members or adherents of the Elora United Church. It demands that the provincial government immediately call a public inquiry into the 1996 killing of Dudley George.

### NATURAL GAS RATES

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** More petitions concerning Union Gas:

"Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system

operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01; and

"Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases."

I am in full agreement and will sign my name to this petition.

1510

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas electricity bills have skyrocketed under the Harris-Eves government's flawed electricity plan; and

"Whereas some consumers have signed higher fixed-rate contracts with retailers without adequate consumer protection; and

"Whereas the Harris-Eves government has failed to address electricity supply shortages in Ontario, forcing the purchase of American power at premium prices, driving up prices still further; and

"Whereas the Harris-Eves government appointed a board of directors for Hydro One that has been paying themselves extravagant salaries, compensation packages and severances for senior executives; and

"Whereas Hydro One bought 90 municipal utilities, serving about 240,000 people across Ontario, at premium prices and with borrowed funds. These purchases with borrowed funds have increased Ontario's debt burden; and

"Whereas the Harris-Eves government has added additional fees and taxes on to local electricity distribution companies. These charges have also been passed along to consumers;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Harris-Eves government take immediate action to ensure that Ontarians have fair and reasonable prices for the necessary commodity of electricity in Ontario and that the Harris-Eves government and its leader, Ernie Eves, call a general election on the instability of the energy market so that Ontarians may have a voice on this issue."

I affix my signature. I am in complete agreement.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon Tim Hudak (Minister of Consumer and Business Services):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and

notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 179, An Act to promote government efficiency and to improve services to taxpayers by amending or repealing certain Acts and by enacting one new Act, when Bill 179 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on justice and social policy; and

That the vote on second reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred; and

That the standing committee on justice and social policy shall be authorized to meet for one day at its next scheduled meeting time for the purpose of consideration of the bill; and

That, no later than 4 pm on that day, those amendments which have not yet 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. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. 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. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be 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 justice and social policy, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred; 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 Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Mr Hudak has moved government motion 47. Debate? No. OK, then we go across the floor.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Once again, we're seeing debate limited. This government has chosen to do time allocation on any bill that may have any substance at all. Again, the voice of the citizens in Ontario is being stifled. I can understand why they want to stifle it on this bill, because this is so all-encom-

passing. It's called an omnibus bill. It is 247 pages. I don't know how well it shows on a TV camera but it is a massive document that affects almost every aspect of life in Ontario. The government doesn't want to debate it. The government wants to get it over with because it is better that people not know what legislation is being passed.

That is terribly sad for democracy. This government has slowly chipped away, slowly taken the powers of this Legislature and concentrated them in the Premier's office. There's a sadness in my heart when I think of what people have done to preserve democracy, when we think of various other countries in the world where people are prepared to die to get democracy, and we ram things through.

The member for Beaches-East York went through last week and read every act that is amended by this. I compliment him on it, because it took quite some time to do the reading.

I'd like to talk briefly about the act and why we're opposed to it simply being rammed through without full public debate. There are a multitude of reasons in here, but we can start with the independent health facilities. We have these all over Ontario and you can go and get your X-rays or sonograms done at them.

At one time, when they were going to be sold, there was preference given to another Canadian operator. That's gone. That was gone before this Bill 179 was ever put before the House. There was no interest in preserving our medical system in the hands of Canadians. The most likely candidate to purchase, other than a Canadian, is someone from the United States, and their experience with health care should cause a shudder to go through all of us, with their costs.

They've now changed it in this Bill 179. There used to be a cap on it. You took whatever billings the clinic had billed over the previous year and they were allowed to settle for not over 104% of those billings. There's no cap now. It's up to the minister. This is just begging for for-profit corporations to come into Ontario and exploit—and I'll use the word "exploit"—the citizens of this province. We're moving very steadily toward two-tier medicine.

It happens a little bit at a time. This government says, "Nothing changes. This bill makes a couple of little minor amendments." We get a whole bunch of little minor amendments and pretty soon health care is totally different than it was. I would suggest that health care now is totally different than it was in 1995. In 1995 we didn't have the waiting rooms, we didn't have people without doctors and we didn't have people with money moving to the front of the line. This is one of the steps in enabling that to happen. That's very sad.

This bill also changes some appointments from being made by the Lieutenant Governor to being made by the minister. The difference is that it removes the right of the people of Ontario to find out what's going on using freedom of information.

We need only look at Hydro One. Hydro One was structured so that the citizens of Ontario would get an

absolute minimum amount of material. That philosophy continues today. It's only through marketing offerings that we found out that the president of Ontario Hydro was making \$2.2 million and that we were helping to drive the president's children to school in a limousine each day. At the same time, that limousine would be passing people who were living on the sidewalks, with no home and no food. What a contrast. This bill moves more toward concealing the information that should be available to the public, but, again, it is being barred.

There is some absolutely silly stuff in here that I can't understand the government's lawyers wanting to work on. If someone now wants to know the number of vacation days they have, they're allowed to ask that only once a year. We've got bigger issues than putting through legislation to restrict that. You've already put through legislation that bars someone from having the right to have two weeks off continuously. Now they can only ask once a year. Surely we have something more.

Domestic violence: this is something that perplexes me. A government that purports to oppose domestic violence and in fact has spent some very good money on very good programs is now saying it will be phased in. The things necessary to get a restraining order and having 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week access to a restraining order are going to be phased in. That wasn't mentioned at the press conference. We're talking about people's lives. There's money for cabinet ministers' expenses; surely there would be money for stopping domestic violence, or as much as can be stopped, now, not in a few years. That's not very efficient. That's a long way from efficient and yet they call it An Act to promote government efficiency. I guess a reduction in service may, in some ways, be construed as improving efficiency because you don't have to spend money to do what you have to do. But in this case, I want you to spend the money to save people's lives.

#### 1520

The 407: this government continues to have a love relationship with the corporation that owns the 407. In a secret deal to sell it to them, they in turn have provided absolutely terrible service, even in my rural riding, Prince Edward-Hastings. I have people getting bills from the 407 corporation, and yet they've never been in this area or driven on the 407. Now, when they go to contact 407 the phone is not answered. The light may be on but nobody's home. Now we're seeing that if a cheque to the 407 is bounced, for whatever reason—we certainly don't condone cheques to bounce—this government uses all of its weight as a collection agency for this business.

There's no other business that you do that for. Why are you doing it for the 407 that you would take away the driver's licence if a cheque bounces? I have small grocery stores in my community who take cheques, and if it bounces, they're in trouble. They're often in deep financial trouble and they may have trouble recovering the money and it is a cash flow problem for them. This government says, "You're on your own." But, the 407 and the 407 only, this bill will remove the driver's

licence if someone issues a bad cheque. I guess it pays to be a friend of the Conservative Party because they very clearly look after their friends with this 407 bill.

Longer trucks: I had the pleasure last Friday of speaking to the sheep marketing agency annual meeting in Guelph. I drove back from Guelph to my home in the riding on a dark night in the rain. One of the challenges of driving in a rainstorm is passing trucks and the amount of mist that comes up from them. A dark night, and the traffic lines are not well-painted. They used to be before 1995, but the traffic lines are faded heavily in some areas. When you get into where the 401 is four or five lanes wide, it's difficult to see where the line is. These trucks put up a huge amount of mist that makes it very difficult to pass a truck that's going in the same direction. This bill will allow the Minister of Transportation to extend the lengths of trucks that are allowed. Already they're a problem; this will only extend it. I would suggest that is not an efficiency—efficiency might actually be putting those trucks on railway cars and moving them from one city to another. But certainly extending it is rather scary, and we're going to hand the minister that power.

It's interesting when we look at this efficiency bill at what's not in the bill. I've always been amazed, since 1995, when this government pointed out just how inefficient school boards are. They were going to take money out of the administration and put it in the classroom and they were going to make school boards more efficient—even though school boards spend in the area of 1% to 2% on administration, which is as good as any industry could match. When this government took over school boards, when they are actually responsible for the decisions, if we look at Ottawa, and they said, "There's money being wasted here," did they cut administration? No. They cut classroom teachers—appallingly, classroom teachers for special education students and educational assistants for special education students.

When the government took over Hamilton, did they cut administration costs? No, there wasn't fat there, in spite of what they've said. They cut special education. I would suggest to you that special education students are not inefficient. They are a good moral and financial investment, and a responsibility for us.

In Toronto, are we seeing admin cut? No, we're seeing a tax on special ed and swimming pools. Swimming pools may be viewed as a luxury for most of rural Ontario school boards, but in Toronto, it is the only access students have to that type of physical activity.

You want to talk about efficiencies that should be addressed in this bill: the Family Responsibility Office. I challenge every member on the government side to do some calculations and find out how many hours a day your staff spend dealing with family responsibility issues that the Family Responsibility Office is not handling. It's not that they don't want to handle them well. The trouble is that you cut staff so very heavily there that three quarters of the accounts are in arrears. When we say three quarters of the accounts are in arrears, we mean that three

quarters of the children who rely on payments through the Family Responsibility Office are not receiving the money they need for shelter, clothing and food. Your savings are costing thousands and thousands of children—

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** Two hundred thousand.

**Mr Parsons:** Two hundred thousand children are being shortchanged by your trying to save some money. But again, there seems to be no cap on expense claims.

Farms: how are you making farms more efficient? Well, you closed all the agricultural officers in southern Ontario. That was efficient because it reduced the money you had to spend, but it greatly increased the challenge. I will throw another challenge at you that needs to be addressed: where are the young farmers in Ontario? They're receiving no support from this government; they have a mammoth task. There is a day coming very shortly in Ontario when we will have a problem, when we do not have young farmers to replace the existing farmers we have.

Indeed, not only are you not helping young farmers, but when this Legislature passed the Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act, and it was a good act, you didn't move on from there and say, "What else has to happen? What do we have to deal with?" We are seeing some of the prime land in Ontario, A1 agricultural land, being used for development. That causes prices such that a young farmer can't even consider getting into the business. If you want to do something with an efficiency act, do something that keeps food on the table here in Ontario and that keeps our farmers at work.

Water: we're hearing lots of rhetoric about your actions to improve the quality of water, although you didn't even want to hold the inquiry initially. I suggest that you would invest money wisely to look at the whole issue of the disposal of our garbage. Don't let it go in the ground and pollute the groundwater. Instead of spending money on getting the bad stuff out of the water, why don't you spend a little money and do a whole environmental assessment on every possible source of pollution, every garbage dump, and make sure we're not contributing to the problem in future years? There should be no more groundwater pollution. And when your government shortcuts the environmental impact study, when they remove a lot of the questions so we can fast-track and get this garbage in place, that is not very efficient. That is a disservice to the people of Ontario.

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

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** I am glad to be able to participate in this debate. This is time allocation—what's the number now? I've got to look across the way; somebody for sure is going to tell me.

**Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre):** The third one.

**Mr Bisson:** Oh, yes, the third time allocation motion—in your dreams.

We're now time-allocating the Government Efficiency Act. It's become a matter of course around here that we have three days of debate at second reading and then we

have a time allocation motion on the fourth day. I just think that's rather sad. It says something to the point that democracy within this province and within this Legislature has gone, has kind of slipped away. It says something about the kinds of changes we have to make in our Legislature to make it work properly.

Some people back home are going to say, "What difference does it make if you time-allocate something? I really don't care. I don't really pay any attention to this. I don't watch it very closely." I just say to people, "There is a process in Parliament, at both the federal and provincial levels, that says you're supposed to have a proper amount of time to look at bills, to reflect on where they're strong and where they're weak, and, where they are weak, hopefully to have an opportunity to bring them into committee and have some further discussion with the public, where they get to come and present before us, and we, as legislators, sit back and think about what they've said and then try to strengthen the bills, so that at the end of the day the bills that are passed by our Legislature are stronger bills."

Unfortunately, that's not the case. What we've been doing around here, especially since the Conservatives have taken office—in fairness, some of this was done by all governments. The Liberals brought the idea of time allocation into this Legislature, we in the New Democratic Party certainly used it when we were in office, and the Tories have become masters at it. By and large, every bill that comes through this House is time-allocated. At least before, it was just the odd bill. When we were in government, it was sort of the government initiative bills that would go by time allocation motion. The rest would go by way of regular debate. The Liberals before that, as I said, had the opportunity to time-allocate a number of things, including some rule changes they made.

**1530**

I just say it's rather sad, because here's a really good example of a bill that should be allowed to go to committee in order to make some amendments. There are certain things in this Government Efficiency Act that I can support as a member in the opposition. There's some stuff in here that I think is not a bad idea. But lumped within this particular bill are a number of problematic issues that I think don't belong in this bill and don't belong on a legislative agenda. Because of the process that the government has undertaken—three days of debate at second reading, time allocation, and boom, you're in third reading and it's gone—here we are with a bill that says a number of things that are problematic, and I just want to go through a couple of them.

One of them is under the Employment Standards Act. The government is making a change. They're saying that if you're in a non-unionized environment—I'll just use this as a scenario—and you have, let's say, four weeks of holidays, under the old Employment Standards Act if you wanted to ask your employer, "Listen, I've got four weeks of holidays. I want to take three of my four weeks to go fishing this summer," or "My wife and I are taking a trip somewhere in the fall," you had the ability to do

that. Under changes that this government made prior, it gives the employer the opportunity to say, "No, no, you can't take three weeks straight. You have to unbundle your holidays and you're going to take three days here and four days there and three days here," so that people can't take their continuous holidays in one consecutive session.

I say that's rather unfortunate, because the whole idea of holidays is not only to give people a break from work so they can go out and refresh themselves and come back to their employers with all kinds of energy to perform better; it's also about supporting the tourism industry here in Canada.

If you take a look at the experience in France, they have a system that on day one, when you walk into an employer, the state provides you, by legislation, five weeks' or four weeks' holidays in the first year. As a consequence, France has built the largest tourism industry in all the world. There are more people who holiday and travel in France than in any other country in the world. A lot of people don't recognize that. The reason for that is not only that France is a nice place to visit for those of us who come from abroad, and I've been there a number of times, but people living in France travel. That's the stat that is really interesting. It says that as a percentage, if you were to work out the ratios, there are more French people travelling within France, in their own country, than there are Canadians travelling in Canada or Americans travelling in the United States etc. One of the reasons for that is that the French have encouraged people to take holidays.

This government, by way of a previous amendment to the Employment Standards Act, has said, "You're allowed to take your holidays continuously for those four weeks," if you have four weeks, "but the employer reserves the right to limit that." So if the employer decides that you're only taking three days here and four days there, there's nothing you can do about it as an employee, provided that you get your total four weeks within a calendar year.

Now the government comes with an amendment to what I think was already a bad decision. This is one of the reasons I would like this bill to go to committee. One of the things they say under the Employment Standards Act is that they are going to make it a law that the employer only has to tell the employee—get a load of this—once in a calendar year how many holidays he or she has coming. So figure this one out. I go to my employer on January 1 and I say, "Hey, this year I get four weeks of holidays. Mr Boss, Mrs Boss, I get four weeks, right?" "Yes, no problem, Gilles, you've got four weeks." "OK, cool. I want to book three weeks in April. My wife and I want to go to Florida." "Oh, no, you can't do that. Under the old legislation I'm allowed to say now that you can only have three days there and another week over there." "Oh, I can't take my holiday. Well, thank you very much, Mr Boss, Mrs Boss. I'm going to go out and make my arrangements."

You go out and you take your first week's holiday in April and then you come back and say, "Honey, spring-

time is in the air. The cottage needs opening up. We've got a little bit of work to do there. I think I'm going to go to my employer and say, 'Can I have my other week?'" So I go to my employer and say, "I'm not sure how many holidays I've got coming to me. I've taken three days and two days there and another day over there because you didn't allow me to take my holidays continuously. How many holidays do I have, Mr Employer?" "I don't have to tell you," says the employer. "What do you mean, you don't have to tell me?"

The law, according to the amendment made in this act, says that an employer is only required once in a calendar year to tell an employee how many holidays he or she has coming. Isn't that silly, absolutely silly? I couldn't believe that when I read it in the legislation, but in this act there is a provision to amend the Employment Standards Act so that employers are not required more than once per year to inform employees how many holidays they've got coming. What a silly, silly piece of legislation that I would say has nothing to do with common sense. If this bill got to committee, I think most Conservative members would agree with me and we'd repeal that part of the legislation.

Another part of the legislation that I have great difficulty with deals with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. It goes as follows: The act establishes terms and conditions of agreement related to the administration of student loans. This includes the authority to require performance bonds and loan-default sharing agreements as a condition for the students to be eligible for loans.

That's completely the opposite of the direction we've got to go, I would argue as a social democrat. We are a knowledge-based economy. In other words, the more people we have in our economy who are working that have high degrees of training and skills, the better our economy will do, because that's how we compete in this new modern economy. We can't compete as Mexicans or as Puerto Ricans or as people in Thailand or Vietnam. They basically compete on their wage rate, the low standard of wages they pay their employees and employment standards acts that are nothing like ours when it comes to working conditions. We have to have something that allows us to compete in our own way. How we compete, quite frankly, is by having people who are well trained, well schooled in the colleges and universities with the skills he or she might get as they go through post-secondary education.

My argument is that this particular amendment is going to make it more difficult for students, after high school, to get into college or university. We already know that students that decide to go to college or university, by and large, have to go into debt, significantly large debt, to be able to get that post-secondary education.

What we're now saying is that we're going to add some conditions to make sure the government is able to collect on default loans, basically have students sign promissory notes that are pretty severe. I can tell you, as a young person who was making a choice to go to college

when I went way back when, it would have been very difficult to make that decision to sign that kind of document knowing that the government could hold that hammer against me. If you're going into any kind of graduate studies, tuition in a graduate studies program is at least—it's gone up to about \$7,000 to \$10,000 a year, and you've got to go for a period of five years? Do the math. Students are going to be sitting back and saying, "This is kind of scary stuff."

I would argue that we should be doing exactly the opposite. What we should be doing, what we've been suggesting as New Democrats here in Ontario, is to take a look at some of the European models. Specifically, let's look at what Ireland has done. Ireland, the basket case of economies 20 years ago, basically a have-not economy in Europe, made some very fundamental decisions. One of the key things they said was, "We will make the investments in education. Specifically, we will make the investments in post-secondary education." You know what they did? They made tuition free. They said, "You don't have to pay to go to college or university. We want to encourage all young people in the free state of Ireland to go to college and go to university and get the skills that are offered at those colleges and universities. Later on, there's going to be opportunity for you." As well, that government did some economic development initiatives that attracted some investment into Ireland.

As a result, it's called the Celtic Tiger. They have had, over the past seven to 10 years, a huge, phenomenal response to foreign investment. Why? Because they have the knowledge base within their economy. They got the young engineers, the young professionals who are there, capable, willing to work, who have the energy and, more importantly, have the training.

How did they do that? The government made a policy decision. Rather than investing in a tax cut, as this government has done, they invested in education and gave the young Irish people opportunity and hope by allowing them to go to college or university without a tuition cost.

I would argue that this bill, the Government Efficiency Act, basically—as I said at the beginning, parts of it I can support. I can't support that particular bill because of what I just read as part of this act. It goes completely in the opposite direction from what I believe as a social democrat.

So I say to the government, that's why we shouldn't be time-allocating bills. That's why these bills should have proper House time and proper committee time, so people can come before us and talk to us about these initiatives and tell us how you deal with the issue of collection if the government is going to have an OSAP program in a way that we're not going to scare students out of the school system.

**1540**

Then they've got another amendment in this one. This one really takes the cake. I know my good friend Michael Prue has raised this with me a number of times, and we've chatted about this. This is the 407 debacle. Here's the situation with Highway 407: you buy your trans-

ponder to run up on the 407 and you stick the transponder up on your windshield. You're running down the road and you've been doing that for about a year, for two years or three years, in some cases, and every time you go through with that little sensor it says, "Here comes Gilles Bisson's car. Send him another bill."

Now we've found out that they've got a problem: the little batteries die inside those transponders but there's no mechanism to let you know that the battery is dead. There's no little warning light. There's no little beeping that comes to the unit. There's nothing to indicate your battery's dead, so you don't know. You just get on Highway 407 and you go like you do every morning. All of a sudden, you start getting bills from 407 saying, "You got on this toll highway without a transponder, so we're going to charge you more." You say, "What do you mean? I've got a transponder. Hang on, where's that 407 number? I'm going to call those guys and fix this up." "Beep, beep, beep," you can't get through, or, "Hello, you have reached Highway 407. If you want help, ignore us, because you can press a button and go nowhere."

*Laughter.*

**Mr Bisson:** I'm telling you, it's serious. We've made the calls. You can't get through to them.

Here I am with a transponder I've purchased whose battery is dead. I'm being dinged every time I go through and am having to pay for things I shouldn't have to pay for. Here I am calling the 407 corporation—you know, the private sector does it best, eh? I know Mr Gilchrist will get up afterwards and talk on the virtues of the private sector. We all know how good they are. Boy, do they know how to run that highway. Wow.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Is the transponder battery working in your plane?

**Mr Bisson:** The difference, my friend Steve—you're a pilot as well. The transponder battery on my aircraft is checked every year and certified, as you well know. The one inside the car is not.

Anyway, I just say that here we are in a situation where you're trying to call the 407 corporation to say, "Please, issue me another battery or another transponder. I've got to get this fixed because I keep on getting dinged." You can't get through, so you say, "Not a problem; I'm going to go to the kiosk," because they've got the 407 kiosk where you should be able to go and get this dealt with. You go to the kiosk and they say, "Sorry, can't help you. You've got to call the 407 corporation." "Well, I can't get a hold of them. That's why I came over here." "Sorry, there's no way we can call them because there's no telephone at the kiosk." It's one great big vicious circle after another.

Here is where it gets even better. This is where it comes to this bill. Now I've been charged—I don't know. If I travel every day, that means two trips per day. I've been after 407 for a period of three or four weeks trying to get this straightened out. It hasn't been straightened out, so it means for 20 trips times two, for 40 charges now, I've been charged as if I don't have a transponder. That all adds up to money.

Finally, I get my transponder problem fixed because I finally got a way of getting this fixed, but here's the fun part: I've been charged for this fee I shouldn't have to pay because my battery was dead, so I decide not to pay it. I say, "Listen, it wasn't my fault that you guys never answered your phone. It wasn't my fault that there was no indication to tell me the battery was dead. It wasn't my fault at all. I'm paying for what I've used and I'm not paying those extra charges." They're going to say, "Too bad. You've got to pay us." "But it wasn't me," I say. Then they say—

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** They'll take your licence.

**Mr Bisson:** That's where I'm going, Mr Gill. That's exactly where I'm going. Basically, 407 is trying to collect all this money and I'm saying, "No, I don't want to pay you because I shouldn't have to pay you." They say, "No, you've got to pay me," and I say, "No, I don't want to pay you." They say, "Well, it's OK. The government is giving us some teeth. They're allowing us, in this legislation, to take your driver's licence away."

**Mr Gilchrist:** You're wrong.

**Mr Bisson:** There it goes. I want to hear my friend the pilot over there talk to me about it a little bit later.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order.

**Mr Bisson:** Hello, Speaker. Under this act, they're basically giving the 407 the ability to suspend somebody's licence on the basis of not paying charges they were charged by the 407 corporation.

Certainly we don't want to allow a private sector corporation the ability to suspend somebody's driver's licence. That's a principled item. But most of all, do we want those people to have the right to withdraw somebody's driver's licence on the basis of what I've just described? I don't think so.

I say to the government, we should allow these bills to get to committee. If you think I'm wrong, send the bill to committee. Let's have a discussion at committee. Let's bring the people before the committee who know more about this than you and I put together, Minister of Transportation, and then let's have an amendment if it's necessary, or prove to me that I'm wrong. But there's no mechanism under this process that we have established. We're saying that under the current set of rules we have in this Legislature, there's no time for debate—three days, and everything is time-allocated after the third day—and there's certainly no committee time to deal with the substantive issues inside a bill. So I say to the government, shame on you. That's not the way the process should work.

There are other parts of this bill that really take the cake, as far as I'm concerned. One of the other issues—I'm just trying to find it quickly. I'm not going to get my thumb on it. I wish I could get my thumb on it. It would have been a lot easier if I could have, because I could actually quote the legislation. It's the issue having to do with privatization. One of the things we're doing in the government efficiency bill, as you call it, is giving the

crown and ministers of the crown greater control over what they privatize.

I'm just saying to the government, I know that ideologically you guys support privatization initiatives. I think you're wrong, and I think that giving you a blank cheque to privatize more things is not the way we should do it.

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation):** You started privatization.

**Mr Bisson:** It was a public-private partnership, Norm. You know that as well as I do.

Anyway, under this act we're giving ministers a bigger ability to privatize than they have under legislative checks and balances that are in place at this point.

I just want to say, while the Minister of Transportation is in the Legislature, that we should look at the Ministry of Transportation to show how good privatization has been.

Every weekend, I go up and down Highway 11 to do things for my constituency. It was—I'm trying to remember, because I was on the highway every morning this weekend. Was it Saturday morning or Sunday morning? It was Sunday morning, and I was driving up to Fauquier. They were having an event up in Fauquier that I was going to, and I was meeting with some workers from one of the local mills up in that area about an issue. I got on the highway at 8 o'clock in the morning to drive over to Fauquier. Normally, it takes about an hour and a half to an hour and 45 minutes. The way I drive, it takes about an hour and 45 minutes. I took off and got on Highway 655. There wasn't one snowplow that went on that highway after we'd had a fair amount of snowfall the night before. Because it was starting to warm up in the morning and all those chip trucks had gone by, I'd say you had three to four inches of slush on the highway all the way to Highway 11. My speed along that road was probably around 60 kilometres an hour. Anything faster than that and you'd end up taking the ditch.

I raise that as an issue, because when the highways were maintained by the Ministry of Transportation, we had people who went around patrolling these roads better than they do now. We still do some patrols; I'll give credit to the minister. We still do some, but they were better patrolled to determine when we needed to put the plows out and when we needed to put the salt or sand trucks out. We also had people working the night shift to make sure those highways were cleared in the evening.

It was 8 o'clock in the morning, and there wasn't a sand truck or a salt truck. There was nothing on the road whatsoever. So I called the person I know who has the contract in that area, because it's done by the private sector. What I was told by the woman who answered the phone—I had to call this particular person at home—"Well, he just got up. He's going out to do it now." It was about 8:30 in the morning, and somebody had just got up to go out and plow a highway that had been snowed on six hours before. I'm just saying that's not the way we should be maintaining highways.

If we're going to be giving ministers of the crown a bigger ability to privatize things, I think we should look



at our track record of privatization and from there determine if we should be doing any more.

I know that when the public accounts committee took a look at the whole initiative of the privatization of winter highway maintenance, it came back as an abysmal failure. In all but one case, we lost money. We were paying more money than we did before, and we were getting less service. Only one contract resulted in any savings. The rest of the contracts cost us more money.

I can tell you—I know that my leader Mr Hampton has raised this, as well as myself and others from northern Ontario—that when it snows, you're really taking your chances out on the highway at the beginning of any kind of snowfall, because you don't know when you're going to see the snowplow show up. It's making for a very dangerous situation on the highways.

The minister will get up and say, "What are you doing driving when it's snowing outside?" Well, in northern Ontario it snows quite a bit. It used to be that there was hardly a case, when it was run by MTO, that the highways would end up being closed. I've seen myself out on Highway 11 and Highway 144 and various places across northern Ontario when it would be basically snowing—I wouldn't say a snowstorm, but a severe snowfall—and you were able to get from point A to point B at reduced speeds. The highway was plowed and you didn't have big ruts that you have to drive down. Now what we're seeing—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Bisson:** What's that, Norm?

**Hon Mr Sterling:** How come we have a better safety record now than we did then?

1550

**Mr Bisson:** He says, "A better safety record." I would argue that one. When I talk to the OPP they tell me quite the opposite. One of the reasons is that we're having to drive a lot more slowly because you can't go fast on those roads because they're not plowed. That's my point, Norm. I just told you: 60 kilometres an hour on the 655 up to Highway 11. This whole privatization initiative, I would argue, is not really saving us a lot of money.

So I just say to the Minister of Transportation and others, if we're going to give ministers of the crown a better ability to privatize, I think we would want to look at the experiences of privatization in a fair way. The auditor, through the public accounts committee, looking at the privatization initiative of highway maintenance has been about the only case where we really looked at it seriously. From the committee standpoint, it turned out to be an abysmal failure. So I don't know why we want to give ministers of the crown more ability to privatize.

The last point I want to make, because I know my good friend Mr Prue has a lot to say and I want to leave him at least 25 minutes—

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** Twenty is enough.

**Mr Bisson:** Twenty is fine? OK. It's neat, how you communicate in this Legislature when you're on your feet.

I'm going to come back to one of my hobby horses, the issue of how democracy doesn't work in this Legislature. I just think that every time we have a time allocation debate, it gives me the opportunity to do that, so I'm going to raise it again. I believe that democracy has somewhat died in this province, as it has at the federal level. I was interested to note—I was listening to CBC Radio on Saturday as I was driving somewhere on Highway 11, or wherever it might have been, and they were talking to Mr Martin, who is running for the federal Liberal leadership race. They were talking about how Mr Chrétien was bringing in his new ethics guidelines, that he had all kinds of scandals in the federal Liberal cabinet, where a whole bunch of people have had to quit because of being caught with their fingers in the cookie jar and that Mr Martin was going to fix all that up and basically improve democracy in the federal House of Commons. I just thought it was pretty laughable, because Mr Martin was I think the architect of much of what went wrong in Parliament in the time the Liberals have been in power. So I thought it was pretty interesting to listen to him talk about trying to improve democracy.

But the point that I thought was well made on that radio program was how our institutions of Parliament, and I would argue the institutions of provincial Legislatures, have very much changed over the years, and not for the better, where the only people who have a very strong say are not government members, but the Premier and the cabinet immediately around him or her. In this case it's always a him. We've never had a woman Premier in Ontario. But basically not even all of cabinet; there are a number of cabinet ministers who probably don't have a lot of power, are pretty frustrated and don't have a lot of say, but just basically P and P and the Premier have most of the say.

Then, all of the government backbenchers have to sit in behind because they're trying to get into cabinet. So they get up and they want to make sure they're seen as being the loudest applauders and biggest supporters of the Premier so they can get into cabinet. So they fall into line. But really there's a frustration that goes on, where members of the House on all sides feel that the process doesn't work.

I think a bill like this is a good demonstration. Here government members, by and large, will vote for this bill. They will all vote for the bill because they're told that is what they have to do, even though there are probably members who disagree with parts of this bill. I would argue that we need to modernize our democratic systems in order to make sure that members, and more importantly the constituents they represent, are well heard in these debates, and that at the end of the debate they've been heard and some action has been taken.

I would argue that the first-past-the-post parliamentary system we have is not a good one, that what we need to do in this province is to take a look at the institutions of Parliament in other countries, where they moved to proportional representation, to take a look at that particular issue as one of the ways of being able to re-franchise

voters with the electoral system. But I would argue that you need to have a system that says if a political party has had, let's say, 40% of the vote in a general election, they should have no more than 40% of the seats in the House. If a political party has had 20%, then they should have 20% of the seats in the House.

You can have a hybrid system. You can do what Germany has basically said, which in Ontario's reality is that there are 103 ridings. You'd have elections just as we do now. People would vote at the local level for the constituency person of their choice, whoever the candidate might be, from whatever political party. Then there would be a second ballot—one ballot for the local member, the other ballot for the party of your choice. At the end of the election, they would look at the party ballots and say, "All right, the Conservatives got"—at this point, they're down to what, 31%?

**Mr Prue:** It's 33%.

**Mr Bisson:** It's 33%. If there was an election held today and they got 33%—they've elected members directly and that gives them 33% of the Legislature—you would bump them up to 33% by way of the list members. The purpose for that would be that the parties would then only have representation in the House based on the proportion of vote they got in a general election.

How does that relate to this bill? It relates very importantly, because now the government has to take every member seriously. All government members and all opposition members have to work together. Now the government can't just pass its agenda at 41% of the vote; they have to rely on opposition members as well.

I look at the new cabinet minister, who hasn't been here before and doesn't understand what it's like to be on the opposite side. I hope after the next election you're lucky enough to come back in opposition, because you probably won't make it to government, looking at the polls.

The argument is, if we were to move to a PR system—

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour):** Why didn't you do it when you were in power?

**Mr Bisson:** I'd like to get into that debate with you. I think we were wrong not to do it. I admit it freely. The NDP government, from 1990 to 1995, should have adopted PR. Unfortunately, it was not in our party platform and it wasn't in our policy at the time. It's an issue we have come to the conclusion should have been done. That's why we advocate it. But the point behind it is that members and parties would have to work together to try to do what's right on the part of the people who elect us. If there was an issue, whatever that issue might be, members would have to come into the House and work together with the other parties to make that happen.

The other thing that would have to happen is not only the issue of electoral reform; you would also have to look at the issue of how you change the rules in the House. When is it appropriate to use time allocation? I would argue time allocation is used far too often and far too soon. How are committees structured? How are committee Chairs appointed? How are issues dealt with

in the House when it comes to the legislative process? I think all of that has to be revisited, and the only way that's going to happen is after the next election, either through a minority Parliament—then we would raise it, because we believe it's something that would have to be done—or if we were to form the government.

I'm just going to leave it at that. I know my good friend from Beaches-East York has a few things he wants to say in this debate as well.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr Gilchrist:** It is indeed a pleasure for me to stand to debate the time allocation for Bill 179, the Government Efficiency Act, 2002.

Before I get into the content of the bill, I was struck by the extraordinary amount of time the member from Timmins-James Bay took describing the scenario affecting the battery in his transponder for Highway 407. We have to correct the record. The member is 100% wrong. Not only now but never has Highway 407 Corp had the power to in any way impede the renewal of your driver's licence or your vehicle sticker. You are wrong, as you are wrong on just about everything you stand up and opine about, and as the voters adjudged you each of the last two times.

Let's talk about what the bill actually does offer, shall we? The bill talks about an extraordinary range of what would have historically been considered issues too minor to have justified their own piece of legislation. Back in 1995 when we established the Red Tape Commission, its primary goal was to go through all of the myriad of legislation and regulation that vexed businesses and consumers in this province and find those anachronisms, those duplications, those irrelevancies, those good ideas that didn't quite turn out to be as good as the politician or the civil servant who originally crafted them imagined, and eliminate them.

It is a source of great pride to our government that we can stand here today and tell the electorate that the Red Tape Commission in those years has now eliminated 1,900 regulations. It has repealed 57 entire statutes. It has inspired other ministries to repeal almost 100 more statutes as part of what we call our annual red tape reduction plans within each ministry. Under the previous Premier, and certainly continued by Premier Eves, every ministry is now required as part of its annual business plan to make sure that every law and every regulation it oversees is relevant.

What a radical thought. Imagine making sure that the rules governing businesses and individuals in this province are still needed. It is extraordinary to us that when we got here in 1995 there were hundreds of regulations passed in the 1940s and 1950s that affected businesses and individuals, and yet the original inspiration for the passage of those regulations had long since gone.

**1600**

We love to talk about the fact that there was a regulation when we got here that said that buses had to have an axe on board. That dates from a time when buses had wooden floors, no mandated emergency rear door or

pullout windows. The thought was that if the bus ever overturned or there was a problem at the front of the bus and you couldn't get out the only door, the bus driver would take that axe and chop a hole in the floor or a wall. A small problem: if that axe happened to be on a bus that was heading across into the United States, the Americans would deem that axe to be a dangerous weapon. Guns are OK, but the axe was a dangerous weapon. So the bus driver would have to take the axe out of the bus, hide it in the bushes on this side of the border, go across to Atlantic City or wherever the ultimate destination was and, on the return trip back into Canada, retrieve that axe. Utterly asinine.

How about the regulation that the previous NDP government had prescribed to mining prospectors up in northern Ontario?

**Hon Mr Clark:** Tell me.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I will tell you. It was perhaps the most ridiculous thing we've seen in our survey of thousands and thousands of regulations that govern the province. Imagine that you're a prospector up in northern Ontario. You've discovered the next Hemlo, so you think, and you make a mad dash to process your claim at the nearest mining office. You've just made it in under the deadline. Of course it is first come, first served. You get to the counter, they hand you the form and you discover, to your chagrin, that Bob Rae and the NDP said you had to use a red pen to fill out the mining claim. I know that as a government the NDP used to get a volume discount on red ink. But when it reaches the point where the state tells you what colour pen to be walking around with in your pocket, I don't think there is a single Ontarian who would not agree that that's government micromanagement. It's regulation gone haywire.

**Mr Gill:** What have you got against red ink?

**Mr Gilchrist:** We've got lots of things against red ink. We balance our budgets.

But this bill is simply a continuation of that seven-year legacy of rooting out minor and significant problems that impeded business—things like the \$50 annual filing fee. When we got here, every corporation every year had to pay \$50 just for the privilege of existing for another year. There was a small problem. It was costing the Ministry of Finance more money to administer the collection of that \$50 fee than they were getting in.

At the same time, if you wanted to register a company here in Ontario, we made it really convenient for you, particularly if you were in, say, Thunder Bay, because the office was at 555 Yonge Street. I guess you could stick it in the mail and trust Canada Post to add another few days to the processing time, which used to average 12 to 16 weeks to register a company in Ontario before we were elected in 1995. That's bad enough, but 50% of the people who applied made a mistake in their application. It was kicked out and they had to come back a second time. You can do the math for how long that meant for the average person to register a company in Ontario.

Today, as a result of the changes in a previous good government bill, you'll find a kiosk in most major

shopping malls across this province. At that kiosk many people will have gone and renewed their licence plate stickers, but we also have something in those kiosks called Ontario Business Connects. Now the average time to register a new company in Ontario is not 12 to 16 weeks or, if you made a mistake, 24 to 32 weeks.

**Hon Mr Clark:** How long?

**Mr Gilchrist:** It's 20 minutes. If that's not convenient, you can do it over the Internet in your own home, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Hon Mr Clark:** That's progress.

**Mr Gilchrist:** That's not only progress; that's eliminating barriers to business and individuals doing what they want to do to contribute to our economy, to make investments, to hire, to stimulate the growth and expansion of this great province.

We don't need silly rules. We do need regulation in areas of the environment, in areas of public safety and of course in the realm of health care. But outside of those three sacred areas, we have no interest in duplication, waste or mismanagement.

The bill before us today speaks to the elimination of another 400 irritants, 400 more areas where, as a result of input from civil servants doing the red tape reduction plan or businesses or individuals who have picked up the phone or sent an e-mail to the Red Tape Commission or to various ministries, we now have a process that can accumulate all of these relatively minor issues, each of which probably would never have justified six days' worth of debate in the Legislature, but the aggregate certainly is worthy of the kind of presentation we've offered to all the members in the House via Bill 179.

The amendments will enable ministries to streamline any number of operations for greater efficiency. It allows us to harmonize the statutory and regulatory regimes with the federal government in many cases, or with other provinces. This bill repeals another 15 outdated acts and amends 90 others. It's a record we can be immensely proud of.

I can tell you that this bill, I think, from the lack of substantive criticism from the other side, obviously is worthy of the support of all members in the House. We've heard them rant on and ramble on about all sorts of extraneous issues, but so far in the three days of debate—this now being the fourth—aside from one or two relatively minor points, we haven't had anybody on the opposition benches tell us what's wrong with this bill.

They'll tell you what's wrong with the world in general, they'll tell you why they disagree with time allocation, but having three days to tell us specifically what clause in this bill does not pass muster, is not worthy of the support of us and of them, we have come to the conclusion that there are more important issues, more pressing issues facing this Legislature. The time has come to move this bill out and either into committee or into third reading.

Let me give you a few specifics of what is in this piece of legislation. I think one of the most important ones is the change to the Ontario Heritage Act. We've had many

members in this House over the years suggest that this act doesn't go far enough to protect important heritage buildings in this province. So the provisions in Bill 179 relative to the Ontario Heritage Act would clarify and streamline the archaeology provisions, including the ministry's licensing system for archaeologists, update the heritage designation system and make it more efficient for our municipal partners.

The key changes to the archaeology sections, for example, would clarify that archaeological sites include underwater sites. Many of the members will recall we had significant debate about the preservation of a number of wrecks in two of the Great Lakes—Ontario and Erie, in particular. This bill would now provide for the inclusion of those sites under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The act would also clarify that altering a site or carrying out any kind of field work without a licence is not permitted, defining in regulation terms used in the act that are not currently defined, such as "archaeological site" and "archaeological field work."

The Ministry of Culture would be allowed to issue lifetime licences in the future and take the licensing forms out of the regulations so they could be kept up to date more easily.

One of the other projects the Red Tape Commission and the civil service are working on is in fact the inclusion of all forms on the Internet. So as we've gone through a variety of statutes, including the Ontario Heritage Act, we believe it's now timely, because of the technology available to us, to take forms that previously had been available only in paper format and make sure that they are developed and designed in such a way for easy inclusion on the Internet, so that every single person in this province with access to a computer—and that really is everyone through their community library if they don't have one at home or at work—would be able to download in the future any government form. They would no longer be tied to the hours of operation of government offices or MPPs' offices, again adding to the flexibility and the ease of doing business with government.

If I could continue with the discussion of the heritage act, the changes to the municipal heritage protection provision of the act would make heritage protection more consistent and effective for municipalities all across Ontario, something that I know my home community of Toronto has been asking for for quite some time. These changes would allow municipalities the ability to broaden the mandate of their local heritage committees. Perhaps one of the most important changes is that it would make demolition controls consistent across Ontario. It would increase the maximum fine for any transgression from a quarter of a million dollars to fully \$1 million for any corporation that illegally demolishes any designated property. If that doesn't serve as a significant disincentive for that sort of behaviour, I don't know what more the government can do.

**1610**

The act would also eliminate the requirement that the Ontario Municipal Board has to approve municipal

bylaws establishing heritage conservation districts where there are no objections in the local community. It would remove the requirement for a municipality to obtain the Minister of Culture's consent to prosecute an offence under the act, again giving more tools to the municipalities, something that has been the hallmark of our government for seven years. These amendments would go a very long way toward streamlining, clarifying and strengthening the Ontario Heritage Act, which is why time allocation is so important. All across this province there are any number of buildings facing imminent threat. I know the members opposite, many of whom represent ridings in the city of Toronto as I do, know of sites right here in our community that will be directly impacted by the passage of this bill.

Along the same theme of giving more tools to municipalities, this bill makes amendments to the Public Libraries Act that would increase the flexibility for municipalities in library board composition and appointments, clarify the legislation and harmonize the act. It would make sure the Public Libraries Act is more efficient, transparent and accountable to all our constituencies.

We've made changes to the Foreign Cultural Objects Immunity from Seizure Act—yes, there is such a thing—which reduce the complexity of the approval process, provide improved customer service to stakeholders, simplify government processes and enhance efficiency. Specifically, these changes would give the Ministry of Culture, rather than the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the authority to protect works of art or objects of cultural significance from seizure under judicial process.

Time allocation of the Government Efficiency Act would also afford the Ministry of Finance the opportunity to make changes to the Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act, 1994. The ministry would amend the act to establish a consistent definition of the term "special resolution" and the consequential use of that definition in various sections of the act. It would standardize the requirements for special votes. The ministry would amend the Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act to modernize the way notices of meetings are considered.

Another amendment that the Ministry of Finance would make to that act would clarify the confidentiality expectation to which directors, officers, members and staff of credit unions are expected to adhere. What could be more timely? The greatest debate taking place in the business community right now revolves around ethics and the responsible operation of businesses. The people of this province need to know that financial intuitions under the purview of the provincial government operate to the highest possible standards of accountability and ethics.

Clarification and consistency: these are two issues that are firmly addressed in Bill 179. The legislation will help protect the interests of credit granting institutions that are based in Ontario, such as banks, when they lend money to companies that secure their loans with highly mobile, unsecured capital such as aircraft.

We have a myriad of other changes, but I want to be sensitive to the fact that two of my colleagues want to

speak to this bill as well, so I'm not going to continue going through some of the specifics. But I do want to close with a general comment about why this bill is important. Our government has now passed 14 red tape reduction acts or government efficiency acts. I've mentioned the number of regulations we have eliminated and the dramatic improvement, the streamlining of the operation of government. All those changes have had tremendous positive impacts throughout the business community and on individuals in this province.

When we were elected in 1995, the number one irritant in every survey done by the Ontario chambers of commerce, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and by a myriad of other business groups in this province invariably was the vexation of government regulation, duplication and waste. At the time, the typical poll—I remember the one done by the chamber of commerce—ranked the percentage of respondents who deemed that the number one problem well over one third.

I was interested to read just yesterday that the CFIB's most recent copy of their Mandate monthly booklet showed an updated listing of the problems facing business across this country and particularly here in Ontario. I was pleased to see that the number of respondents dealing with regulation or over-regulation and the complexity of doing business with government had fallen 50% from 1995. Now only 17% of people listed that as a problem facing their business, as something standing in the way of their making new investments, hiring new employees, expanding the size of their operations here in Ontario.

That's not a bad testament to the work of the government in general and the Red Tape Commission specifically. I have only been with the commission formally for I guess about a year and a half, so I am to some extent the beneficiary of the great work that has been done by my colleagues in the seven years leading up to today, but I can tell you it is a vastly different terrain we are walking through when we go to the various ministries and have them look at their regulations and laws today than we faced in 1995.

This bill is another substantive step forward in making sure that government operates as efficiently as possible. When a problem is identified, we have now created a mechanism to bring the solution to that problem into the Legislature in a format that will guarantee speedy passage, even for those items that might normally have never been worthy of debate time in this House.

It's been only about four weeks since the Red Tape Commission hosted what to date is the world's largest conference on regulatory excellence. It was very heartening to hear speakers from all around the world, from jurisdictions that really do have their act together when it comes to the efficient operation of government—places like Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain—and to hear them laud the model here in Ontario as one of the shining lights.

We've gone down a different path than British Columbia or those jurisdictions I've already mentioned, but

with a common goal, and that goal is to make sure that wherever possible, the government have the mechanism to deal in a timely fashion with any kind of irritant facing the business community or individuals.

We're going to continue to improve the operations of the commission. We look forward to further tools being placed at the disposal of the various ministries to ultimately guarantee that the commission puts itself out of business, because it will have become part of the culture within the civil service and the relationship with the political arm of government that it won't be possible to create the kind of nonsensical regulations we inherited back in 1995. This bill is a substantive step forward in that quest.

I commend all the members on the opposition benches, as well as my colleagues, to look very seriously at the content of the bill, put aside our partisan issues and recognize that these 400 changes are all needed, are all important to making sure that business and individuals continue to prosper here in the greatest province in Canada.

**1620**

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to spend a few minutes today to speak to Bill 179, but more particularly to speak to the phrase "efficiency in government."

Before I do, I want to raise the issue, as I do every time I stand up on a time allocation motion—and it's becoming a daily event in this Legislature—that there are very few times when I think time allocation should be used, and this is one of them where I think it should not.

I think democracy in this Legislature is being killed—dying a death of a thousand cuts. Well over 50% of the bills that were brought to us in the last session of the government were time-allocated, and now—I don't have the figure today but we're well over 50% in this session, and that's unfortunate.

The citizens of Ontario should know that regardless of what is in this bill and how good it is, we should have the opportunity to debate it, because this bill is not perfect. The standing orders, Speaker, as you enforce them, say that after seven hours of debate, speakers' times are limited to 10 minutes. I feel, on the vast majority of legislation in this Legislature, every member who wants the opportunity to speak should have that opportunity. But once again, this government has decided to bring in time allocation on Bill 179 and therefore to limit debate.

Not only that, but I'd like to look at some of the detail of this time allocation resolution. After today, this bill will be referred to the standing committee on justice and social policy. That committee "shall be authorized to meet for one day"—

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** Is that all?

**Mr Crozier:** That's all, as the member from St Catharines points out: one day. Of course one day, folks, is not 24 hours, it's not a 12-hour working day, it's not an eight-hour working day; in most cases it's a two-and-a-half-hour working day. The committee "shall be authorized to meet for one day at its next scheduled

meeting time for the purpose of consideration of the bill.” Here we have a 247-page bill that contains some 40 sections, that covers I don’t know how many pieces of legislation, and the committee will have, roughly, two and a half or three hours to deal with this bill in committee.

That, I would say to my friend from St Catharines—if he was amazed at one day only being allowed in committee—is not the only thing. When this bill is brought for third reading, and I’ll read from the motion, “That when the order for third reading is called”—and that will be when the government chooses to do so—“the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment.”

I predict a couple of things. One is that when it goes to committee, and when opposition amendments are proposed, they will be defeated. I suspect the government won’t bring any amendments in, even if they know this bill is not drafted properly or correctly or does not contain what it should, because it would be an embarrassment for the government to bring in amendments. So the opposition amendments will be defeated and the government won’t bring any amendments to it. It will come back for third reading, and that’s it. Done. Democracy again—down. We won’t get a chance to debate it any more.

There won’t be any committee meetings. I say to the government, if they’re so proud of this bill and it does so much, at least there should be the opportunity—you would think they would offer—to have hearings so that the public could understand what a great bill this government is putting forward.

I know it’s whistling in the wind as far as this government is concerned, but I have to stand up and say that time allocation on practically every bill that comes before this Legislature is merely the death of democracy by a thousand cuts. I’m sorry to report to my folks back home that when I don’t get the opportunity to speak on a bill because of time allocation, I can’t speak on their behalf, but I would say that there must be a number of government members over there who don’t get that opportunity either. I don’t know what their constituents say to them. I suspect that in many cases they don’t even advise their constituents that their government is limiting this debate.

I would like to take the next few minutes I have to speak about government efficiency. I brought up in the House earlier today, during question period, a concern that we have with the way the government handles leases of equipment in this province. The reason we have had this concern is because there are other jurisdictions in the province that have had problems with leases. So we wanted to know how it is that this government is not only handling our money but how efficient they are with that money.

I can just say during this bit of debate that we found some very astounding issues that the government hasn’t dealt with in a very efficient way. For example, I will quote from a minister’s briefing note dated October 21, 2001. It was referring to the Management Board Secret-

ariat’s consultations with ministries. It says, “MBS consultations with ministries indicate that there have been a number of situations involving additional or disputed payments for leasing where the ministry has used MFP Financial Services Ltd as its desktop leasing company.

“These issues have, for the most part, been attributable to: the extension of leases past the original term; re-financing of lease costs carried over from the initial lease to a subsequent lease; the consolidation of leases which involved refinancing charges”—and we know how expensive that can be if we’ve ever had to refinance anything ourselves; “the inclusion of costs related to installation and support services” beyond the simple leasing of equipment; “contract terms not well documented over time”—that doesn’t indicate to me that there’s a great deal of efficiency in the way this government handles these contracts; “ministry reliance on lessor information and expertise”—in other words, this government signs contracts when they don’t even know what they’re signing, that go out to the person leasing it to you and you say, “Look, I don’t understand what this thing is that I’m signing but I know that you do, so I’ll sign it anyway”; “lease decisions driven by short-term program fiscal demands causing ineffective lease management.”

As I say, this was in a minister’s briefing note on October 21, 2001. In general terms this government handles leasing, I would suggest, in a very, very inefficient way.

We can go to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, where a briefing note dated September 22, 1999, says, “Comsoc,” which is the Ministry of Community and Social Services, “is still of the view that it has been overcharged approximately \$10 million over the past five years.” That’s not very efficient, in my view.

We can go to the justice ministry, a briefing note of 2001: “At the justice ministries, the internal audit services raised concerns with the MFP contract—namely, the method of extension to the term and the manner and circumstances of the contract’s scope change to include services which were outside the original tender in 1992-93. The justice ministries have implemented a freeze on any new equipment leases pending the implementation of the corporate strategy.”

It goes on. Under the Ministry of Natural Resources, I can refer to instances of inefficiency that apparently aren’t addressed in this 247-page bill. The Provincial Auditor concluded that “[i]n December 1996, the Ministry [of Natural Resources] entered into a computer lease agreement for \$21 million before determining specifically what computer equipment it required.” That’s incredible. They entered into an agreement before they even knew what they needed and set the price of \$21 million. “This resulted in numerous adjustments to the initial contract and an increase in costs totalling \$7 million.” Those were comments in a minister’s briefing note of October 24, 2001.

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It also goes on to say that the auditor determined that, “The Ministry [of Natural Resources] did not obtain the

required approval from Management Board Secretariat for the information technology leases entered into since June 1996, which are valued at approximately \$66 million.” This again is from a minister’s briefing note of October 24, 2001.

Under “Proposed Solutions”—there were a number of them, but I would quote one, again from a briefing note for the secretary of cabinet on October 24, 2001, “The ministries in question [MNR, MEDT, MCSS, and Justice] have taken actions as a result of third party reviews and/or audits to resolve the situation.”

Well, that’s what should have been done in the first place. If any ministry is going to sign a contract and they don’t have the expertise in that ministry to review the contract, then for goodness’ sake, bring in an outside auditor, an outside company, an outside adviser, to give expert advice on that contract before you sign, when you don’t even know what you want, and before you sign a contract even if you do know what you want.

Efficiency, yes. “Efficiency” in this bill doesn’t cover everything. That’s why we think time allocation on this bill at this time is inappropriate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Prue:** It is indeed a privilege and a pleasure to stand here again and talk about this huge bill that is so many hundreds of pages. In going through the bill, I tried to count all of the acts it is going to amend, and it is quite significant. I lost track somewhere between 85 and 90, and there could possibly be even more acts than that.

It all comes down to this time allocation. Is this a good bill on behalf of the government? Is this a good bill for the people of Ontario? Undoubtedly those 85 or 90 acts may be in need of some amendment. I would hazard a guess that maybe two thirds or three quarters of this bill is timely and has changes in it which all members of this House could appreciate and will support and is probably right for the people of Ontario. It will cut red tape, it will lead to efficiencies in government, it will help businesses and it will not do anything to damage the public good. But there are still some troubling sections of the bill that I alluded to in my last speech. There are still very many troubling sections.

With a time allocation motion, it all comes down to a government attempting efficiency over the protection of public good. It is their belief that they are being efficient by limiting debate in this House. It is their belief that by limiting that debate, they can get this bill, and subsequently more bills on their agenda, through between now and when this House adjourns or prorogues in December.

Quite frankly, that is not the way government best serves the people. Government best serves the people when it listens. Government best serves the people when it accommodates. We need to do more in this Legislature to protect the public good, to listen to what the public wants, to hear their criticisms and to make amendments where those criticisms are justified.

Today we have a time allocation motion. I have been here but some 13 months now and I’m quite surprised that only half the bills have been time-allocated. It

seemed to me that almost all of them have been time-allocated since my first day in this Legislature. Every time a bill comes before this Legislature, the members opposite stand up with a closure motion to limit debate in order to either not send it to committee at all or to send it, as in this case, for very truncated hearings. That has to be because the members opposite believe that no good ideas, or no good, can come from seeking either debate or from having added input either from the public or the members opposite them. Frankly, that is a little insulting to both. Many people—lay people, professionals, even opposition politicians—have good ideas. Those ideas should be listened to, explored and encouraged. They should not be cut off.

The members opposite, every time you stand up and move time allocation, minimize the role of opposition. You say the opposition’s job, to criticize, is not a worthy one. You allow us to criticize, but usually only on one, two or three occasions, and then you invoke closure. When it gets hot or heated, when the debate goes in ways you don’t like, or actual flaws are pointed out, you say what we say is not relevant. You brook no criticism; you accept no criticism; you deny criticism. You deny that what we say has merit and you are afraid to let the larger public in on committee hearings, where they can actually show flaws in your great master plan.

This great master plan is one of many omnibus bills that have been before this House in the last number of years. Just so the public can again understand what this bill contains, it changes some 90 laws—some 90 acts—in ways they may not perceive, in ways that would cause great difficulty for them if they actually knew what was happening; that in some cases may help them, yet they would never have any idea that they’re being assisted.

It also causes problems for business, because these are not well documented, and I would hazard a guess that they will not be well documented after we have finished. Because of the government’s overwhelming zeal for efficiency, it will simply be passed. It will be sitting in a binder somewhere and it will not be understood by the very people it is intended to affect, help, assist, or at least regulate what they do in business or in government.

I’ve had the honour for the last six months or so to be on the Legislative Assembly committee and I can tell you there is frustration on all sides of the House at what happens when bills go to committee, at the fact that government members and opposition members often do not have the ability to change the bills. Time allocations are used in the committees. They do not have an opportunity to come forward with good ideas that will be adopted by the government majority in those committees and they therefore see bills go virtually unchanged from the time they are first read here in the Legislature until they are passed in the end. A bill of some 240 pages amending nearly 100 acts cannot, I put to you, be perfect in all regards.

One of the members opposite stood up to talk about what was in this bill and some of the good things that are in it. I’d just like to start with a couple of the good things,

especially one related to heritage. What is contained in this bill around the heritage provisions is absolutely right. What is contained here will allow for municipalities to protect heritage buildings. It will allow for archaeologists to be properly licensed. The heritage community commends what is contained within this bill. The government is right in saying that this is an appropriate mechanism and that this should be changed. I have no difficulties with that and I'm sure all the members of the House have no difficulties.

When I stood here on October 21, just a week ago now, and talked about this bill and what was wrong, I tried to talk about seven points, seven out of 400 that are being changed, where this government needed to listen. To date I don't believe that this government has listened to any of those points. Certainly no one has indicated in this House, to me personally or to my caucus that you are considering any one of the 400 changes that are being proposed.

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I stood here and talked about seven of them that really, really need a second look. They either need to be taken out of this omnibus bill or they need to be radically changed so that, wonder of wonders, you can say that this bill is perfect or nearly perfect.

Just to deal with those again, because I don't think you heard me the last time, although you can find it in Hansard on October 21, the first error of this bill is that it extends a provision which the government put in a couple of years ago: the right to restrict collective bargaining within the construction sector. What you are saying in this bill is that you are going to extend the abrogation of rights of working people to collectively bargain and, if need be, to strike for a period in excess of 46 days, and that can happen only once every three years. You're extending the bill to the year 2005, which means that the construction unions that are building new homes, factories and commercial enterprises in our province will be unable to collectively bargain if that collective bargaining leads to a strike. If that strike goes beyond 46 days, the strike will not be allowed to happen.

This is taking away part of one group in society's right to do what is in their own best economic and pecuniary interests. It is taking away a right which all of them have had enshrined in law for many years. In fact, debates continually take place even to the Supreme Court of Canada on their right of assembly and their right to force change.

None of us in society wants strikes to go on for 46 days—not one person in this House and certainly not I. Strikes can often be divisive. Strikes can often cause hardship, particularly to the strikers themselves. Strikes can often lead to businesses going bankrupt. But the reality of the situation is that if working people through their unions are ever going to have betterment of their lives, if they are ever going to see wage increases, if they are ever going to be able to improve the way that their families are able to live in Ontario, if they are ever to see working conditions and health and safety features

improve, they have to have the ultimate right of stoppage of work. That right ought not to be curtailed to simply 46 days every three years in order to satisfy some government whim.

This is an extension of what was previously a bad bill into the year 2005. I would suggest that once it becomes enshrined in law to 2005, should this government be re-elected, which quite frankly I doubt, it will be extended again and again and possibly go into other manufacturing sectors, public sectors and others that choose their democratic right to withhold services. We think this is a very bad portion of the bill and we ask quite frankly that you withdraw it.

The second part of the bill which I again would like to speak to has to be one of the craziest little insertions in any bill at any time. It is the change to the Employment Standards Act. The Employment Standards Act is to be modified to state that people who work for an employer in Ontario are limited to asking that employer once a year as to their vacation entitlement; once a year to go and find out how many days of vacation you have; once a year to find out whether in fact you can go on that long-planned holiday that you and your spouse might want.

This is a crazy amendment. What it says is that a person who takes one week out of their three-week vacation or three days out of their vacation or a series of single days over many months, and then suddenly decides they would like to take a two-week vacation to go down to the Niagara region or to northern Ontario or to all the places that we and the Minister of Tourism encourage people to go—you say, "I'd really like to get away for 10 days. I wonder if I have 10 days' vacation left." You go over to your boss and say, "I know I asked you about five months ago how many vacation days I've had, but I've had to take a number of them in between. Do I still have 10 days left to take my spouse down to the Niagara Peninsula or to Windsor, or "Do I still have time to go to the ferry at Tobermory?" The employer is now going to be legally entitled to say, "We've already answered you once this year. We don't have to answer you again."

What a silly provision of the law. What a silly provision to limit ordinary people's right to ask an ordinary question which would take only a matter of seconds or minutes, with computerization in most firms, to figure out. Quite frankly, this should be withdrawn.

You have a third problem: the inability of this government to try to help women, and I suppose some men as well, who are being abused. The whole problem of domestic violence in our culture has been addressed by this government, but not very well. It wasn't too long ago that you stood up on that side of the House and talked about tough new domestic violence laws that were going to be in place 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks of the year. They were going to be there constantly.

This bill says something, although I'm not sure what it says. It says that your policy is not a good one, because you are abandoning it in favour of six pilot projects. I don't know what those pilot projects are, and I would



very much like to ask those questions in committee. We don't know what those six pilot projects are going to involve, other than that they are an admission that what you placed and enshrined in law is not working. This is sliding it in the back door, and it may or may not be an improvement on something that is not being done very well. But I have to tell you that we are very cautious in embracing this as a good and needed change, because it has been so poorly spelled out.

You have the ongoing problem of the 407, which my colleague Mr Bisson addressed. The 407 is privately run, of course, because it's been sold off at bargain-basement prices, and you have a corporation that is making money hand over fist. They're making so much money that I would be afraid, if the general public actually found out how much they're being gouged, they would be rise up in arms. But the problem most recently enunciated by a number of people who live in the 905 region and in Toronto who use that system every day is that they have found out that when the transponder breaks or the battery runs down, they are unable to effect the necessary change. They are unable, first of all, to tell that it's not working. Unless you're an engineer or you know the right lights or the right things to do, it is not readily apparent to everyone who drives that every day until they get their bill. More importantly, once it is discovered, as it invariably is, there is no easy remedy to ordinary people to have it fixed, and there is no remedy in the long term for them to end up not paying huge amounts of extra money.

My office received two complaints. I do not represent the 905 region, but I do have people in my constituency who use it every day. We have received two very detailed complaints about the inability of these ordinary people to get through the numbers to get the necessary changes made. I challenge the members opposite who are putting in bills about the 407: before you tinker any further with it, before you allow it, as this bill will, to include bounced cheques in the list of infractions for which the 407 corporation can go after motorists, look at what is happening to those ordinary citizens. Not only have the rates gone up three times this year, but the inability of that corporation to deal with the general public has become legendary.

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I challenge any of you: phone 407-0407; just phone it and see if you can get through. I challenge you to try to get through between the hours of 9 and 5. I challenge you to get through between the hours of 5 and midnight. I challenge you, if some of you are even awake after midnight, to try to get through. You will find that the numbers are constantly blocked. You'll get music. You'll be told that you're waiting in line. But if you're not prepared to wait for more than half an hour, it probably won't happen.

I challenge you to go to the kiosks to try to get it changed, and you will find that the kiosks are not allowed to make the necessary changes to your transponder or to your bills. They cannot help you in any way because they

do not have phones in the kiosk to even get back to their head office.

I challenge you to try to have an amount of money which has been improperly charged to your account taken from your account. None of those things will happen. All of the commuters on that roadway are starting to see the cracks in the system.

It is all well and good that a private corporation can continue to make money off that, but they are not investing any of the money back into customer service, and it is the customers of this province who are looking to this government to try to make the necessary changes.

It is not included in this act. The only thing that is included in this act is that there is now a provision to also have a bounced cheque being able to be dealt with by the corporation. And I would suppose this will include another round of threats of whether or not you can get your licence removed and misstatements about whether or not the government is behind it.

You have additional problems on immunization. You have problems of the long trucks—and I'm mindful of my time. You have problems of the wage loss benefits. All of these, that I spoke to the last time, are not being included in any kind of discussion, and I am mindful that they probably will not be in the timeliness of the committee hearing.

We will have only one day of committee, a couple of hours in order to listen to the problems. We will only have one day in committee to consider amendments. I'm not hopeful that this government will consider any of the amendments, no matter how long we speak to this issue. And we will have only one day for this government to admit that of the 400 provisions, some are wrong.

I ask the government to do the honourable thing and to put in some real committee hearings that last longer than they're proposing.

**Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture):** As I was sitting here when the member from Essex was going through his part of the debate, I felt compelled to respond, since the member was discussing the competitive process for lease financing services.

Around 460 BC, in the age of Pericles, there were a number of scholars who were engaged upon the whole subject of rhetoric and what was noteworthy in that period of time. Corax and Gorgias were noted Sophists of the time, which of course had led to the concept of sophistry. I, on the other hand, am persuaded to follow the teachings of Isocrates—not Socrates; Isocrates—who maintained that truth was paramount in any oration.

I feel compelled to somehow here—and sophistry is not—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** —and I did not say what you think I'm saying.

I will say this: I feel compelled to put some context to all this. I know that earlier in the day the member from Essex was referring to confidential documents. Well, first of all, let's look at that quickly. The documents were

marked “Confidential,” but they were provided to the member from Essex through the freedom-of-information process by the ministry. So it’s no great secret to anyone that he has these documents.

Secondly, let’s talk about what actually is here. The fact of the matter is that the Provincial Auditor in the year 2000 came forward with a number of recommendations in his annual report, that the government undertake a new competitive process for lease financing services.

I’m very pleased to say that one of the very first things I was able to do when I became Chair of Management Board was to take the government down this road to try to somehow put a lot more accountability in a process that quite frankly had existed—this was not a new process that this government initiated, but it was a process that was there throughout the 1990- to 1995 period and from the 1985- to 1990 period as well. So I want to make that clear.

We believed it was important for us to undertake this new process to bring much more accountability and transparency to whatever process was available at the current time. Clearly, we felt it important to listen to what the Provincial Auditor had to say.

I’ve got some technical language here, but I want to tell you this: one of the first things the Management Board undertook was an analysis of what the situation was, how we could respond to what the auditor told us to do. This was based on a number of documents, and let me give you the context. I’m just quoting from the documents that the member from Essex was holding up. I’m trying to put context to the documents he has in his hands. Part of this consideration was the 1998 report by the Provincial Auditor; once again, the report of the Provincial Auditor for the year 2000; the justice ministry’s internal service audit; the ministry’s summaries of reports from independent consultants. By the way, I must tell you that the member from Essex stood up and was speaking about the fact that we had third parties doing investigations and consulting in terms of the contracts in several of the ministries. I will tell you, these consultations and investigations were instigated by the ministries themselves in order for them to comply and find better ways of being accountable in terms of these types of contracts. Clearly, at the end of this, the analysis was that there are no legal disputes between MFP, in this case, and any ministry. That’s also in the documentation the member has in his hands.

Now I’ll deal a bit with the competitive process that we have now instituted, which is what was suggested by the Provincial Auditor, and the auditor also supports this particular type of approach. When you see any type of problem, if it was something that occurred in the past, clearly it’s up to the current government to try to fix it. I believe that’s what we’ve attempted to do here.

This is very technical; at the end maybe I can put some plain-language context to this:

“The competitive process:

“To facilitate the establishment of equipment standards, and to leverage aggregated volume requirements,

clusters must use a competitive process which includes full disclosure of:

“All mandatory and desirable requirements that will apply to the evaluation of proposed equipment products/services; and

“The evaluation process and criteria that will be used to assess proposed hardware products, including the weights allocated to various desirable requirements and any testing that will be conducted.

“At a minimum the competitive process should evaluate, but not necessarily be limited to the following: a discounted pricing structure based on aggregated volumes; proposed technology; product continuity/consistency/stability; product testing; technical support; warranty services; delivery; manufacturer capability/capacity; delivery capacity; relationship/account management....”

These factors are all now required to be in these types of leasing agreements. This is something we have instituted because we believe there should be more transparency and accountability back for taxpayers’ dollars.

This approach is called total cost of ownership, and this is the process that was suggested by the Provincial Auditor. We believe the Provincial Auditor gave us some excellent suggestions. That’s why we’re suggesting we follow them.

What does this mean? If I can translate that in as few words as I can—it’s tough for politicians to do that, of course—what I’m saying is that it’s our contract. It’s our contract, our language, our clauses. Therefore, there’s no mystery in terms of what the contracts are because we as a government have developed them, constructed them. There are no mysteries, as there may be with some other contracts provided by individual companies.

That was the old way. That was the way under the old Peterson Liberal government, and under the Bob Rae NDP government—

**Mr Bradley:** The Davis government.

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** And the Davis government too. You’re quite right, member from St Catharines. It was incumbent upon us to try to fix this. That’s putting the proper context on it, I agree.

The old way of course was that each company provided their own separate contracts. Quite rightly, if you didn’t have a contract expert looking at that, the agreements may not have had the accountability back to the taxpayer that they should have had. Now they are our contracts, our language, our fine print. If you want to play games with it, that’s fine, but it’s our contract so I believe we now have a real accountability back.

The last thing I want to say—I don’t want to take a lot of time on this; I just want to respond to the member from Essex. I will share with you some quotations from previous auditor’s reports dealing with tendering processes.

This is a report from the Provincial Auditor, 1989, page 17. It says, “For the most part, ministries were following government policies and procedures for

purchasing consulting services. However, instances were noted where ministries went through the motions of competitively tendering for assignments, but the process was ... not open or fair to all bidders." That's the Provincial Auditor's report back in 1989.

1700

He dealt with a number of specific instances, which I'll share with you. For example, with respect to the Ministry of Education, also indicating, of course, that the tendering process was not really competitive, he says, "We reviewed 13 consulting contracts of the information technology and assistance branch of the ministry, valued over \$50,000 each, and for the 1989 fiscal year, 12 of the 13 contracts were awarded to consultants who had worked for the ministry continuously since at least 1986 as programmers and systems analysts. Given this situation, one must question the competitiveness of the tendering process." That was, once again, in the Provincial Auditor's report of 1989, on page 20.

Dealing with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, from the Provincial Auditor's report of 1988, the year before that, on page 42, he says, "Four consultants have been under contract to the ministry for more than seven years at rates between \$250 and \$100,000 annually. These earnings by consultants were more than double the salaries earned by employees occupying comparable positions within the ministry."

The last one I will share with you deals with the Ministry of the Environment, from the 1989 report on page 19, where once again he questions the credibility of the tendering process. He says, "It has been agreed that the same contractor will be retained to carry out extra work. Nevertheless, the Ministry of the Environment did go through the motion of competitively tendering the four contracts.... In our opinion, the bidders were not treated in a fair, equitable and responsible manner. This type of activity brings into question the credibility of the competitive bidding process."

We do recognize that there was a problem here. The Provincial Auditor provided us with some excellent suggestions, which we have followed. We think it is important to have that kind of transparency, that kind of accountability, whether it was in the period of the NDP government of Bob Rae or the Liberal government under David Peterson or prior to that. It matters not where the process was not accountable; what matters to us is finding a proper way to make sure we're accountable for taxpayers' dollars.

I thank you for the opportunity to share these arguments with you and put forward the context we need to have, based on exactly the same documentation the member from Essex had.

**Mr Bradley:** As usual, with a bill as complex as this, what we call an omnibus bill, there are some parts of the bill which are worthy of support and a number of parts of the bill which I consider to be hostages; that is, not supportable. Sometimes they are placed there so the opposition will not support the bill and then the government can go out and say, "You didn't support this part of the bill, therefore you must be opposed to it."

Of course, we look at all legislation in its total context and want to ensure that everything in the bill is fine. In fact, the government would have been better to bring forward a number of bills, sit down with the House leaders of the opposition and say, "These bills, where there is complete agreement, can pass very quickly; the contentious items should be held for more debate." That is the sensible way of doing it. I know it's easier said than done, and my friend the former government House leader Mr Sterling and I have discussed this often and expressed the wish that this would happen, but it just doesn't seem to happen for some reason or other.

Rather than discussing yet another time allocation motion this afternoon, which chokes off debate on yet another piece of contentious legislation, we should be talking about the hydro bills that are coming in right now, whether in Algoma or St Catharines or anywhere in the Niagara Peninsula.

The anti-Kyoto member from Mississauga, on the other side, who gets up and reads what the anti-Kyoto coalition has to say all the time—what Ralph Klein says about the Kyoto accord—would know that the telephone calls are coming in at his constituency office and the people are mighty angry about the size of those hydro bills, largely because they thought, when the government promised it was going to bring in a new regime for hydro—it was going to privatize, it was going to deregulate—that somehow under its plan we would see a significant decrease in hydro bills and lots of supply. Well, neither do we have supply, nor do we have the kind of hydro bills that people think are supportable and commendable. I know that on a daily basis, either through the telephone, by e-mail, by fax or by conversations I have with people, there is a huge concern about the skyrocketing hydro bills they're being confronted with. That is the kind of motion or legislation we should be dealing with now as opposed to something else.

I see the Premier, now that he has a poll which shows him down considerably, is starting to say a few different things. He's starting to listen to the opposition, which has said, "Look, you've got to bring in a system of rebates, and you've got to bring them in soon, to counter the effect of these bills," not simply on individual households, and that's extremely important in itself, but also on businesses and on public institutions which will see those bills reflected in the ultimate costs of operations. So I, as you, Mr Speaker, would be concerned that we're not discussing that kind of issue in this House but rather yet another motion simply to shut down the debate on another issue.

I see that the member for Carleton, the Minister of Transportation, has yet another publication, called *On the Right Track*, and of course it's very negative about the Leader of the Opposition. It's a very glossy piece of information, because you've got to know that the Conservatives have almost endless money to spend. Not only do they spend the taxpayers' dollars on government advertising—and that's the regular taxpayer out there—but also in their war chest, which is gleaned from the many

fundraisers, from the richest and most powerful people in the province—not only do they have the government advertising, they have all kinds of money to spend. So you'll see the ads, Norm, during the football playoffs and the hockey games. And they'll be negative advertising, we'll see, as well as trying to extol the virtues of a plan that doesn't exist on the government side.

I know my friend the Minister of Transportation, former Minister of the Environment, author, I might add, of Drive Clean in Ontario—and I want to divert a bit here because I thought the advertising that was done for the Drive Clean program was non-partisan and was there to provide information to people and be positive advertising. I want to commend my friend the Minister of Transportation for that particular initiative. That's one out of about 200 initiatives on this government's part that I would condemn. But I want to say that you have to be positive when there's a reason to be positive, and there is there.

He must be beside himself watching the present Minister of the Environment being the Minister of the Anti-Environment, leading the charge arm in arm with the so-called environment minister from Alberta, our own Premier Ernie Eves arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder with the defender of the oil patch himself, the person who has defended the oil companies and their interests over the years, none other than Ralph Klein.

I asked the question the other day, who in this government is speaking for the environment now that Norm Sterling is no longer the minister? Who is speaking for the environment on the government side? You expect the Treasurer of the province, you expect the Minister of Economic Development and maybe even the Minister of Energy to be taking a cautious approach, but you expect the Minister of the Environment to be the one leading the charge in the other direction, wanting to work with the federal government and other provinces to reduce our greenhouse gases and to clean our air in our province. That's the kind of issue we should be talking about.

When this government talks about efficiency, we on this side start to shudder because we think of the situation in Walkerton. That was sold as efficiency, Walkerton. "All we have to do is close down those government laboratories," said the Conservative government, and so they shut down the regional laboratories of the Ministry of the Environment. They had some of the top scientists in Canada working there, top technical people, people who did the analysis, people who gleaned from the information the necessary information to proceed with legal proceedings, with charges and so on. What did the government do? They came swinging the axe at that time because they wanted to rush their tax cuts into effect before they had balanced the budget, which would have been prudent, recommended by several members on the government side, including the member for Waterloo-Wellington, who sits in his seat today, no doubt with a smile on his face, having recommended that they await the balancing of the budget before they implement those radical tax gifts to the rich.

**1710**

In Walkerton, the government said, "Let's be efficient. Let's listen to this so-called Red Tape Commission." The Red Tape Commission had the Ministry of the Environment employees and staff so intimidated that they didn't even want to challenge the Red Tape Commission. So we had the government close down those laboratories, which operated very efficiently, which notified the local medical officer of health when there was a problem, as well as the operator of the system. They closed down those laboratories and privatized them. Within a period of six to eight weeks, the municipalities and others who were using those government laboratories had to find private laboratories. No proper protocol was put into effect, no proper procedures to be followed to avoid the kind of problem we encountered in the tragedy of Walkerton, where seven people died and well over 1,000 people were seriously ill as a result of drinking the water. That was the efficiency of the Harris government. Of course we all remember that the Treasurer, the provincial Minister of Finance, at that time was none other than the Honourable Ernie Eves, now Premier of this province. So when you talk about efficiency over there we worry, because we remember what happened in Walkerton as to the people of this province.

The government will bring in a bill this week and call it a Safe Drinking Water Act to soothe their conscience and to respond to what the public feels is absolutely necessary. I haven't seen the bill. I suspect it will fall short of the expectations of those who believe we need a very comprehensive piece of legislation. Nevertheless, they'll bring in the bill with a lot of fanfare, there'll be a backdrop saying "clean water," or something of that nature, and the government will try to sell this in a certain way.

The government should be worried. The member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale should be worried as well, because he sees now that the Green Party is up to 8% in the GTA. That doesn't mean they're going to win the election, but it does tell you that people are sensitized to environmental issues, and there you people are leading the anti-environment charge instead of the pro-environment charge, with some exceptions. The Minister of Natural Resources, I know, is going to make some very progressive appointments to the Niagara Escarpment Commission to ensure that there are people who actually want to protect the escarpment, as did Norm Sterling when he was the minister. That's another piece of praise for my friend Norm Sterling. There are lots of things I disagree with him on, but I wanted to mention two positive things today because I like to be positive in my addresses to this Legislature as well as pointing out problems.

One of the parts of this bill that is bizarre to me, and the member for Beaches-East York has mentioned it a couple of times, is the fact that you can only ask your employer once a year how much vacation time you have. I don't know why it's so onerous on the employee to ask twice or three times how much vacation time is left.

Therefore, I think that's a piece of the legislation that should be removed. I hope, when this government goes into committee of the whole, as I know they will want to with this bill, that in fact they will remove that.

The Independent Health Facilities Act: what you're doing now is moving slowly but surely toward the privatization of health care in this province. There was an option available to this government. At Sunnybrook you could have provided additional funds, equipment and time for the purpose of radiation services. Instead, you called in the private sector and gave them the money, and the Provincial Auditor said it's costing you more and it's not as efficient. Besides that, why would you give it to the private sector, privatize health care, when you already had a facility there which could have been used by the public sector? I worry now that these new MRIs and CT scan machines will be going out to private clinics, as opposed to our public hospitals, which have served us so very well over the years.

I promised my friend the member for Kingston and the Islands that I would leave him some considerable time in which to address these issues, but another issue I did want to mention is that you appear to be giving more clout to the Highway 407 Corp to hit people over the head with. Already I get a lot of telephone calls from people justifiably disgruntled about the high cost of using that highway, the exorbitant rates that are charged and the method of administering those charges. That's another thing I wanted to mention, as well as some provisions of this bill which make it more difficult for the public to get information.

I did want to make sure that I leave sufficient time for my friend the member for Kingston and the Islands, so I'll allow us now to go to the Conservative Party and I await with great anticipation hearing from one of their members.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** For those viewing, I hope you don't have your cellphones on.

I think it's important to first acknowledge that this is a time allocation motion on Bill 179. It is a government bill. Those on the other side, as I listen to them, are trying to make the argument for public consultation. This is a rather comprehensive bill. It actually has 247 pages. Half of that is French. So it is significant. In fact, I believe there are 16 schedules, A through P. I think for the general tone, I just want to outline a few of the sections here, if I could, because as I see this bill, the important initiative here is really to reduce red tape or regulations that are redundant. There are administrative trivia in this bill and some explanatory issues with respect to the names of ministries, boards and/or commissions.

I think it's appropriate in a broader sense to put on the record a few things. For instance, the Ministry of the Attorney General is schedule A. Under schedule A, I think there's a very important change. I'm just going to pick some at random. This is just the bill, with no highlight notes. "The Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, is amended to provide for staged implementation.

Amendments are also made to allow designated judges and justices to order substituted service, to prohibit the charging of fees for applications, to clarify that designated judges and justices have power to make emergency intervention orders in areas where the Family Court has jurisdiction, to clarify that intervention orders made be served on Sundays and to clarify the authority to make applications and take evidence by telecommunication." This is early intervention in domestic violence. That's something the community wants. This government is taking action to make it easier to intervene for the safety of victims.

I've covered schedule A.

Schedule B covers the International Interests in Mobile Equipment Act (Aircraft Equipment), 2002. It's really amendments to aircraft movement.

Schedule C is the Ministry of Citizenship.

I think this small schedule D is extremely important and could go unnoticed by the opposition. "The schedule amends the Child and Family Services Act by removing the requirement that the bylaws of a children's aid society be approved by the minister." This in fact may take extra time to be approved by the ministry. "It does not change the requirement that the bylaw be filed with the minister or the requirement that the bylaw contain such provisions as may be prescribed in the regulations." So all it does is expedite an act or bylaw without having to wait for the minister or indeed perhaps cabinet to meet to approve it.

"The schedule amends the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997 and the Ontario Works Act, 1997 by replacing references to the former Immigration Act (Canada)." So it's an administrative matter and makes reference to the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in Canadian legislation. We've harmonized the language within the current Ontario statute.

Schedule E is amendments proposed by the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services. There are some changes to collection agencies "to prohibit all communications for the purpose of debt collection through means that require the person being contacted to pay for the communication, and to provide that rights under the act cannot be waived." Again, it's administrative, to a large extent.

There is another one here that is quite interesting under the consumer protection agenda. "The Land Titles Act is amended to amalgamate the Land Titles Survey Fund and the Land Titles Assurance Fund, to update terminology, and to reflect changes in practice."

**1720**

I can go through in some detail almost all of those 16 schedules I mentioned. Under the Ministry of Transportation—the minister happens to be here—there are a number of very important safety initiatives that, if they had to be completely legislated, would take ages. But I think the public certainly has an interest in knowing, for instance, the anti-avoidance provisions re permits, licences and CVOR certificates.

This is highway traffic vehicles. This, to me, is an important safety initiative: "Subsection 47(3) of the act

provides that a person whose permit, licence or CVOR certificate is under suspension is not entitled to be issued a new one. The schedule re-enacts subsection 47(3) and adds three new subsections to expand these restrictions: if a permit is suspended or cancelled under section 47, the holder cannot be issued another permit; if a licence is suspended or cancelled under section 47, the holder cannot be issued another licence; if a CVOR certificate is suspended under section 47 or revoked under section 17.0.1, the holder cannot be issued another CVOR certificate; and if a CVOR certificate is cancelled under section 47, the holder can never be issued another CVOR certificate." So clearly it's a public safety issue.

I like this particular one. There's one on drivers' licences here, but I don't want to take all the time. In fact, I don't think in many cases this went far enough. Under the Ministry of Transportation—I commend Mr Sterling—"Section 62 of the act prohibits the use of tinted headlamps." We see these on the road now. "The amendment allows tinted headlamps that comply with the regulations." It allows police officers the right tools to do their job, and in many cases these tinted headlights may have other motives behind them.

Rebuilt air bags is another important public safety section here. "New section 71.1 of the act prohibits rebuilding air bags as well as the sale and installation of rebuilt air bags. It also provides for regulations respecting the installation of non-rebuilt air bags." Air bags save lives. This, in many cases, has been a large issue in the collision, repair and insurance business. Some people perhaps are breaking into cars, stealing the air bags and then selling them to auto refinishers and maybe causing some risk to the public.

The slow-moving-vehicle section is another really interesting one. It's the pre-emptive traffic control signal devices—quite interesting. I didn't even know about it. "New section 79.1 of the act makes it an offence to drive a motor vehicle that is equipped with or carries a pre-empting traffic control signal device"—in other words, you have some button in the car that makes the light stay longer or changes the light; I didn't know they existed—"—a device that can suppress or extend an indication on a traffic control signal. A police officer may seize the device and, if the person is convicted of the offence, the seized device is forfeited to the crown. The section does not apply to emergency vehicles." We see those devices in municipalities where fire departments and others are racing through the signals to save lives. It's clearly understandable. But in the wrong hands, they are a safety hazard on the roads.

Load security: people carrying loads and how they should be secured. I am impressed by the number of details. This government and our ministers have taken the time to amend what I call needless, burdensome regulations.

The other side would want to talk—see how big this is?—for 300 years. All politicians talk and talk and talk. We actually do something. That's the whole difference here. They talked for 10 years on the other side until this province ground to a halt.

My confidence in this government goes so far as to say there's no one who is perfect but at least this government is willing to revisit and amend statutes, some of which we're amending here, to make sure that we have the right rules for the people of Ontario.

The bill contains 400 amendments to clarify, streamline and update dozens of acts of 15 ministries. The bill repeals 15 acts and amends nearly 90 others.

We must constantly ensure that our legislation reflects the changing needs of society, takes advantage of technological developments, updates outdated regulations and eliminates unnecessary legislation and regulations.

As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, it's my duty to speak to schedule I for a moment, in the very little time left. I want to share my time with the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale. He said he wanted five minutes.

There are nine acts being amended by our Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: (1) the Health Care Accessibility Act and Health Insurance Act; (2) the Health Protection and Promotion Act; (3) the Immunization of School Pupils Act; (4) the Independent Health Facilities Act; (5) the Ministry of Health Act; (6) the Ministry of Health Appeal and Review Boards Act; (7) the Provincial Offences Act; (8) the Toronto Hospital Act; and (9) the Trillium Gift of Life Network Act.

I'm just going to refer directly to the bill because I did take the time, as it's important to do as an effective member serving the people of Durham and hopefully all of Ontario at some point—

*Interjection.*

**Mr O'Toole:** —and Canada probably—

*Interjection.*

**Mr O'Toole:** No, we'll leave that for another day.

We'll certainly want to get into schedule I. I'm sure the members on the other side want to know about schedule I, which is the Ministry of Health's initiative. I'm convinced that Minister Clement is on the right track, and he has the right PA to help him.

I like this part. It says, "An amendment to section 18.1 extends the time limit"—listen to this; it's very important and subtle and may be missed by most on the other side because they haven't read it—"for requesting reconsideration by the Medical Review Committee or a practitioner review committee of a decision by a single committee member. Currently, the time limit is 15 days. It is extended to 30." That's an important time for people to reconsider decisions and to appeal them.

Penalties are increased for offences under these acts. Currently, these acts provide for a variety of penalties, and it covers the whole issue of the Trillium Gift of Life Network Act.

I'm saying in the last two minutes I have that each ministry, in their rigorous review of their business plan, annually reviews their business plan and the issues that they hear—not from just the MPPs on this side, but all complaints from the people of Ontario—and then goes about dutifully having a committee review those goals. The discussion, in many cases—many of these changes

have been talked about for years. This government takes the time to not just talk but to act.

I believe the government wants to ensure that such complex and legal charter arguments as those involved in the allocation of publicly funded health resources are made in the most appropriate settings: before a court, not before a tribunal of laypersons.

The HSARB is intended to be a forum for the expeditious resolution of factual disputes as to entitlement to payment for various health care services and entitlement to OHIP coverages generally. Timely hearings and decisions are frequently critical to the health of the patient.

I believe that the Ministry of Health is making the following changes under the Provincial Offences Act, and this will conclude my remarks. The proposed legislative changes will address current legislative inadequacies that limit the ministry's ability to administer and enforce provincial health statutes.

These amendments support the ministry's business plan and the Ontario budget and Blueprint commitments to root out waste, fraud and abuse in the health system, and to meet the ministry's strategy for zero tolerance.

First is to establish an explicit unlimited limitation period for the detection and investigation of an offence. This is an expansion of the current period, which is limited. At present there is a six-month limitation period on prosecution of most health-related provincial offences. This time limit is inadequate to fully identify and investigate violations.

Another change is to increase the maximum penalties to allow the judiciary greater flexibility to impose proportionate penalties, which are currently not available. The penalties associated with breaches of health-administered statutes are insufficient and, in many cases, too lenient in proportion to the offence. Increasing penalties provides greater deterrence and sends a clear message of zero tolerance for health and fraud issues within that ministry.

Thank you for listening. There is more to be done, and this government is the government to do it.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** I'm pleased to join this debate as well. Actually, I'm not pleased with the subject matter we're dealing with, which is, of course, another time allocation motion. I know people have heard this before, but I think it's absolutely outrageous the number of times this particular government has used closure, in which it's cutting off the parliamentary debate that we believe in with our democratic system.

Just for the record, in case—and I see all sorts of gestures being made by the members on the other side—some people out there in television land or wherever they may be hearing or watching us, just in case they aren't quite aware as to what has happened in that regard over the last 20 years, let me just remind them that back in the good old Tory days of Davis and Miller, there were 292 bills passed during the five years of the early 1980s, and

three of them were time-allocated. Closure was used three times.

**1730**

We then go to the Peterson minority government, for the two years from 1985 to 1987, when 129 bills were passed. There was one bill, only one, that was time-allocated, where closure was used to shut off debate.

Then we go to the Peterson majority government, from 1987 to 1990, when 183 bills were passed. Do you know how many times time allocation or closure was used? Three times in a matter of three years.

Then we go to the five Bob Rae years, 1990 to 1995, when 163 bills were passed: 18 times. So time allocation or closure was used almost 10% of the time.

Now we get to the Harris years, 1995 to 1999. Over that four-year period of time, 118 bills were passed and time allocation, closure, was invoked 35 times. So we are talking about roughly 30% of the time.

Then we go to the second Harris term, the Harris-Eves term, from 1999 to July 2002, when 71 bills were passed. Do you know how often time allocation or closure was used? Forty-six times. In other words, two out of every three bills over the last three years were time-allocated. Closure was invoked, where the government basically said, "We want to hear no more from anybody. We're going to close it down, and you're going to vote on it one way or another."

But it gets worse than that. In the current session it is my understanding, from checking the records, that this is the fifth time that time allocation has been used in the five weeks we've been here, and during that period of time no bills have passed.

What's the meaning of all this? The meaning is quite simply that this government believes it is not important for their House leader to have any discussions with the House leaders on the other side to come up with some meaningful program, some meaningful method, whereby bills can be debated for a certain period of time so that the important bills get four or five days of debate and perhaps some other bills that everybody agrees to can be passed in one day. No, it would rather just ram its way through. That is the legacy of the Harris-Eves government and we see it in so many different ways.

We could be talking about the hydro bills. I went up to my office between the time that question period took place and the time I came back, around 5 o'clock, and I had received five calls, just in a matter of about an hour or so, from people in the Kingston area complaining about their hydro bills. They cannot believe what is happening to their hydro bills. I will not use these people's names, because I haven't got permission to use them or I haven't had an opportunity to call them back yet. But they all want to talk to me, and that was just in a matter of an hour, about the outrageous increases in their hydro bills.

In one particular case, a residential homeowner in the Kingston area just received a hydro bill of \$700 for one month, in a single-family home; I know there may be all sorts of excuses for it. Somebody might say, "Well,

maybe he didn't pay enough on his standardized bill before." The bottom line is this: the people who have approached me are saying, "Why has my hydro bill increased by almost double the amount that I paid last year?"

We could be talking about the people who need Visudyne treatment, which is an absolutely shocking indictment of this government. Here we can be helping people with a very simple—expensive, yes, but simple—procedure and we could prevent blindness, and this government is saying, "Well, only if you are at severe risk of being blinded can you get that treatment. On the other hand, if you aren't quite in that really serious state, then we're not going to fund it." That is just atrocious. If we know there is a drug out on the market that can help prevent blindness for those individuals who have—what's the name of it, again?

**Mr Bradley:** Macular degeneration.

**Mr Gerretsen:** —macular degeneration—why wouldn't we help them now? For goodness' sake, we live in Canada. We live in Ontario, where we pride ourselves on the health care system we have.

We could be talking about what's happening to all those individuals in long-term-care facilities. I think it is outrageous that this government had the nerve, after the Legislature closed at the end of June, to impose a 15% increase mainly on seniors who live in our long-term-care homes. After they heard all sorts of anger expressed in petitions and in a number of other ways, petitions that are still flowing into this place on a daily basis—today I handed in petitions that had at least 1,000 names on them, and I've got many more here in my desk and many more in my office as well, as do other members on all sides of the House—what did the government say? "OK, we guess it's not 15% that we want immediately from you for additional accommodation costs," which is about \$230 per senior, for individuals who basically have been living on fixed incomes for the last 25 years. "Maybe you can pay it over the next three years."

It gets worse than that when we talk about seniors. You know and I know that in a study the government itself paid for, the PricewaterhouseCoopers study, it indicated that we in Ontario rank absolutely last in the amount of nursing and personal care we provide for our seniors in our senior citizen accommodations, in our nursing homes and the homes for the aged.

That's not good enough. That's not good enough for a government that's got \$2.2 billion in corporate tax giveaways, making us by far the lowest jurisdiction from a corporate tax viewpoint in this entire area. That argument has been made many, many times before, but we could be talking about it; we could be talking about major issues like that.

People are hurting out there. Whether we're talking about the seniors in the nursing homes, whether we're talking about the consumers who live in homes trying to pay their gas bills, whether we're talking about those people who are in waiting lines trying to get into hospitals to get the necessary medical procedures in so many

different areas, there are so many different areas that we could be talking about and that this government should be acting on.

What is it mainly acting on? It is mainly acting on those interests in which its corporate friends, allies, the corporate world, have an interest. Not only that, but on a bill like this it is invoking time allocation.

It's even worse than that. At least at one time we used to have time allocation motions that would say that once the bill has gone to committee for three or four days and once it comes back here, there will be a day of debate. That's gone too.

I don't know how many of you have actually read this time allocation motion, but it says that the next time it's called in the House here, the Speaker shall immediately put every question necessary to dispose of this bill without further debate or amendment. So we have now reached a stage that not only do we say, "Closure of debate. There shall be no further discussion," but we're already prejudging the next stage, when the bill comes back here on third reading. We're not even allowing any debate on third reading when presumably it's gone to committee, in this case for one day and one day only, probably to fix the bill where the government has found some errors and it now wants to make some amendments; that's why the one day is required. But when it comes here in its final form, having come from committee, we don't get the opportunity to debate it even for one day on third reading. So we've taken time allocation, we've taken the closure of parliamentary debate, further and further from democracy at each step along the way.

It may not be an issue that the people of Ontario are incensed about, but I would hope that the media would take an interest in this so that they can help educate the people of Ontario as well. We are losing our parliamentary democracy in this province, and it doesn't do any of us any good. It puts politicians in disrespect as far as the general public is concerned.

I would urge this government: see the error of your ways. Do not use time allocation again; enter into a discussion with the House leaders so that we can come up with a meaningful legislative program so that bills can be debated for the length of time that is required in each and every case.

**1740**

**Mr Gill:** I see I've only got about five minutes left. With the agreement of all parties, I'm sure they'll give me more time. I'm quite confident. I think they will want to forgo the dinner break between 6 and 6:45 and perhaps continue.

It's a very important bill that we're discussing, the Government Efficiency Act, 2002, which by the name itself means government should be more efficient. The motion today is for time allocation. That basically means that enough has been said and it is time to move ahead and do the right thing in terms of passing this bill, which is a very simple bill. It's a big bill, yes. People have been fanning the pages and all of a sudden saying, "It's 200 or 250 pages." I personally think it's not big enough.



There's much more to be done. There are many particular regulations or different items—

**Interjection:** Get rid of the red tape.

**Mr Gill:** There's too much red tape. In fact, my good friend from Scarborough mentioned earlier that there was a great conference held recently, From Red Tape to Smart Tape, and I'm sure many people attended.

It gives me great privilege to stay on course and talk about Bill 179, the Government Efficiency Act. If passed, this bill will be the 15th government efficiency and red tape reduction bill since 1995, since our government took office.

This bill contains in excess of 400 housekeeping amendments that help to clarify, streamline and modernize dozens of acts on behalf of 15 different ministries. The bill is looking at all the ministries and looking at some of the cumbersome items that shouldn't be on the books. They should have been removed perhaps during the time of the Liberals or the NDP, but we are the government who says, "You know what? Let's not leave it on the books. Let's look at it and move forward so that we don't just keep discussing it and talking about it but do something." We are a can-do government, and not just because Chrétien said we should or should not do it.

From time to time, as we know, everybody needs to do some housecleaning. In fact, I was talking to a friend of mine, Nick Dhaliwal, who is in the insurance business. He brought to my attention something in the insurance business itself whereby they cannot do any other profession, cannot earn a living any other way than just doing insurance. Because of the number of insurance agents out there, sometimes it becomes quite difficult when you are limiting people, saying, "You know what? You will only do this. You cannot do this. You cannot do that." On the other hand, a mortgage broker can do real estate and a real estate broker can do mortgages, but an insurance broker can't.

The federal government has reduced some of the red tape in that, I'm glad to say. They have allowed the banks to go ahead with insurance. They have gone ahead with estate-type planning. I was asking my co-chair from the Red Tape Commission to perhaps look at some of these things where people still feel their hands are being tied, that they should be allowed to do things that benefit Ontarians in terms of cutting red tape and providing more competition in the marketplace.

Some of the amendments in the bill before the House today will ensure that the people of Ontario will get better service from the government while others will help the justice system function better.

Another thing this bill provides for is that the Provincial Offences Act will be amended to allow bail hearings, in certain circumstances, to be held by means of audio or video technology and to allow search warrants

to be issued by fax. I see nothing wrong with that. We are moving ahead with bringing in the technology. If people are living in far-out places—and we encourage people to be living up north; we are trying to develop that more and more—then they should have the facilities by means of the latest technology, be it video technology, video-conferencing and audio. Fax is not the latest technology. Based on that, they should be able to perhaps access the same services.

We have set a course for improving government customer service for Ontarians and achieving regulatory excellence. We're delivering on our promises—promises made, promises kept. I've said it before. I think that's fair. It's good to remind people.

It's time allocation of the Government Efficiency Act. We must go ahead and pass that today.

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

Mr Hudak has moved government notice of motion number 47. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will 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 1746 go 1749.*

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

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hastings, John	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Coburn, Brian	Kells, Morley	Runciman, Robert W.
DeFaria, Carl	Miller, Norm	Sampson, Rob
Galt, Doug	Murdoch, Bill	Sterling, Norman W.
Gill, Raminder	Mushinski, Marilyn	Tsubouchi, David H.
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	Wettlaufer, Wayne

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

#### Nays

Bartolucci, Rick	Dombrowsky, Leona	Kormos, Peter
Bisson, Gilles	Duncan, Dwight	Martin, Tony
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	McMeekin, Ted
Churley, Marilyn	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 18; the nays are 12.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

It being very close to 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1750.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / sous-greffière: 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)	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	<b>Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)		
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	<b>Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony</b> (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Huron-Bruce	<b>Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen</b> (PC) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)		
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)		Gerretsen, John (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wetlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	<b>Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre associé de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation	Kitchener-Waterloo	<b>Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth</b> (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	<b>Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie</b> (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	<b>Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W.</b> (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)		
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Leeds-Grenville	<b>Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W.</b> (PC) Minister of Public Safety and Security / ministre de la Sécurité et de la Sécurité publique
Erie-Lincoln	<b>Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim</b> (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	<b>Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne</b> (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
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	<b>Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of the Environment, government House leader / ministre de l'Environnement, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)	Markham	<b>Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H.</b> (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement, ministre de la Culture
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	<b>Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda</b> (PC) Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services / ministre des Services à la collectivité, à la famille et à l'enfance	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Mississauga East / -Est	<b>DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl</b> (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)
Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)	Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	<b>Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Nepean-Carleton	<b>Baird, Hon / L'hon John R.</b> (PC) Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs, deputy House leader / ministre de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones, leader parlementaire adjoint	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe-Grey	<b>Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Nipissing	McDonald, AL (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Northumberland	<b>Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug</b> (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oak Ridges	<b>Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank</b> (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	Stoney Creek	<b>Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad</b> (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oakville	<b>Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary</b> (PC) Speaker / Président	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Oshawa	<b>Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J.</b> (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thornhill	<b>Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R.</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa-Orléans	<b>Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	<b>Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet</b> (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Whitby-Ajax	<b>Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	<b>Young, Hon / L'hon David</b> (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)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

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

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

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