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of Ontario

Third Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 9 December 2002

Lundi 9 décembre 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 9 December 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 9 décembre 2002

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

ESTIMATES

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates and supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2003, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): Sarnia-Lambton is becoming a toxic waste haven, thanks to the Harris-Eves government. Their lax regulations saw that the now Clean Harbours site near Brigden expanded in 1997 to become the largest toxic waste landfill and incinerator in the country, yet only about 5% of the waste is local. Most of the waste comes from outside the province. Next month, this facility will receive untreated toxic sludge from the Sydney tar pond site in Nova Scotia.

Dalton McGuinty took the time last Thursday to speak and listen to the people in Lambton county. Dalton called the tar pond sludge proposal what it is: a disgrace.

In Ontario, we will take untreated hazardous waste from anywhere and simply dump it into the ground, a practice that has been outlawed in every other jurisdiction on this continent.

The residents have said enough is enough, and thousands are now joining forces to stop the toxic sludge.

The fundamental difference between the values of an Ernie Eves government and a Dalton McGuinty government is that the Harris-Eves government does not stand up for strong environmental laws. But Dalton McGuinty understands that the way to compete is not to have the weakest toxic waste laws in North America but to build strong communities by having the strongest toxic waste laws on the continent.

PORT PERRY LIONS CLUB

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I rise in the House to recognize the Port Perry Lions Club on its 65th anniversary. I would like to congratulate Wayne Burrell, president of the club, and all the members who have given so much to the community.

Lionism in Port Perry began on November 16, 1937, when the local club was founded with 20 members and sponsorship from the Newmarket Lions Club. Ernest Hayes was the first president.

The help they provided to the community included building playgrounds, sponsoring street dances and providing 700 sacks of candy for the Santa Claus parade. Over the years they contributed gift bags for soldiers in World War II, raised funds for the hospital and helped build the first ice pad at Scugog arena.

Today, Port Perry Lions continue to serve the community with hospital fundraisers, support for the guide dog program, Breakfast with Santa, the annual soapbox derby and the Santa Claus parade. Port Perry Lions sponsor a youth fastball team and also volunteer at a local vision screening program for junior and senior kindergarten students. Those are just a few of their projects.

Their roster includes Gord Prentice, who has belonged to the Port Perry Lions for 38 years and has been honoured with the Helen Keller Award. Among the other dedicated Port Perry Lions are Tom Wilson and Maurice Patterson, who each have more than 40 years' service to Lionism in Port Perry and with other Lions clubs. Mr Rob Rice, a past governor for the Lions, is also among its members.

The Port Perry Lions are but one example of the many community organizations that make a difference in Durham and make everyone's lives better with the families they touch. I wish them continued success.

GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): Last week the Provincial Auditor put the lie to the myth this government has propagated that Progressive Conservatives are good money managers. The auditor pointed out that this government spent \$662 million on consultants last year, almost \$400 million more than was spent in 1998.

Ontarians are rightfully outraged at this flagrant breach of taxpayers' trust. This is a shameful amount to waste when our kids are without schoolbooks.

It's simply disgusting that the Ministry of Finance allowed a consultant to be paid \$681,000 in error. It's sickening that the same ministry awarded a \$3-million contract, despite the fact that the lowest bid was less than half that amount, when our hospitals are running deficits. It's appalling that Management Board awarded a \$1.7-million consulting contract without any competition.

This echoes the kind of mismanagement that left taxpayers on the hook for \$5,000 per Ministry of Natural Resources computer last year. This same government refuses to give us the numbers on this and other contracts with MFP and refuses to table any consultant contracts for public scrutiny.

This government obviously doesn't know and doesn't care what they're doing with our taxpayer dollars. It's typical of their mismanagement over the past seven years. Good money managers? They couldn't manage a two-car parade.

THE ARTS PROJECT

Mr Bob Wood (London West): I rise today to inform members about The Arts Project, based in the great city of London. The Arts Project, otherwise known as TAP, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to encouraging, aiding and promoting artists and arts groups in the London area by providing a multi-use facility where they can meet, work, share information, learn new skills and exhibit their art.

The goals of The Arts Project include providing artists, arts groups, schools and non-profit organizations with affordable artists' studios, printmaking studios, education workshops, exhibition space, a performance area, arts-related programs and an on-line art gallery.

There are approximately 6,200 artists living in the London area, plus a large student population that attends arts programs offered by their schools. There are also some 60 arts organizations operating in the area. Historically, these individuals and groups have worked in isolation and there has been little communication and collaboration with each other. The Arts Project is primarily designed to bridge this divide.

The general public and visitors to the city also gain from a strong multidisciplinary arts centre in the heart of London. The following are some of the key benefits that TAP provides: affordable space, accessible public art, unique education opportunities, cross-pollination of the arts, enhancement of London's reputation and downtown revitalization. Through its various activities, shows and events, TAP has seen some 20,000 people pass through its doors to date this year.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation recently awarded The Arts Project with two years of operations funding, which will give the London-based arts centre the required time to become self-sufficient.

I know all members will join with me in congratulating The Arts Project members, volunteers, sponsors and staff for providing such a worthwhile service to the London area.

1340

RACIAL PROFILING

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I rise today to speak about the lack of leadership when it comes to racial profiling. Several weeks ago, a coalition of black community leaders held a press conference and openly called upon this government to finally address the severe problems of racism that exist with some in the police force. To their credit, the police have made some steps in meeting with the concerned community. But where is the leadership by the government of Ontario?

A summit was held, sponsored by Lincoln Alexander, and they too took some steps forward. But where is the leadership by the government of Ontario?

The Toronto city council has passed a resolution and made some steps forward. But where is the leadership by the government of Ontario?

Dalton McGuinty, my colleagues and I just a week ago met with some 35 leaders of the black community, and we are fully committed in eradicating racial profiling unequivocally, with a zero tolerance policy. But where is the leadership by the government of Ontario?

This is not an issue that only concerns the black community. Racial profiling is abhorrent and vicious and impacts us all. This is an issue that requires leadership, integrity and understanding. This is an issue that required a clarion call for justice and the involvement of government, society and the police. This is not about pegging one group against the other. It's about rectifying a wrong, bringing everyone to a conclusive and final agreement. This does not require any more studies; it requires action. Where is the government of Ontario?

FIRST NATIONS MINING AND FORESTRY REVENUES

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): This coming Thursday I'll be introducing in the House a motion for debate, and I'll be looking at various members across the assembly from the three parties to support it.

The motion is quite simple. It reads as follows: "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should, in consultation with First Nations communities of northern Ontario and with other levels of government, develop and implement a mechanism where those communities can share in the revenue from mining and forestry operations that are conducted in their traditional territories."

This motion speaks to a long-standing problem we've had in the province of Ontario and, I would argue, across Canada. This is the first time something like this is being attempted anywhere in the nation; that is, if you have a mining or forestry operation set up, let's say, next to North Bay or Timmins or wherever it might be, there's an automatic mechanism for municipalities to be able to share in the revenue from those projects by way of taxation. It's well understood that if you start up a new

forestry plant in North Bay, there's going to be taxation paid by that company to the city of North Bay in order to be able to offset the costs of running infrastructure and for the betterment of the community. First Nations communities have no such mechanism.

This motion calls for the provincial government, in consultation with First Nations, to develop a process by which if a project like De Beers diamond mine was to start up in Attawapiskat, there would be a mechanism where De Beers would have to pay some form of taxation to the community of Attawapiskat so they can benefit from the full benefits of such a project, just as they would if they had set up that mine in Timmins, Kirkland Lake or Kapuskasing. I call on all members of the assembly to be here Thursday and to vote on behalf of this motion.

SANTA FUND IN NIPISSING

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): Today I'd like to speak about an event that occurs every holiday season in my riding of Nipissing. It is known as the Santa Fund, a fundraising effort that provides assistance to families in need over the holiday season.

Every year, the Santa Fund has a fundraising goal to be met, and this year they are aiming to meet their \$100,000 goal. So far, they are just shy of \$20,000. According to Lachlan McLachlan, the fund chairman of the Santa Fund, they feel very confident that within the next couple of weeks they will be able to meet their goal with the assistance of local businesses, community organizations, churches, schools, carollers and individuals throughout Nipissing.

The Santa Fund has been very successful over the years in helping out those less fortunate. This organization began in 1947 and was founded by the late Sam Jacks, and Doris and Art Haley. The motto is, "No family should go without food." They have maintained this motto, with over 300 volunteers delivering baskets of food, turkey, toys, and clothing for children. The Santa Fund now is one of the city's largest and longest-running fundraising efforts. It continues to grow stronger over the years thanks to the help of many people.

It is a well-known fact that Ontario continues to be the best province in Canada to work and raise a family. Unfortunately, there are still families and individuals who go without. It is organizations like the Santa Fund that truly bring the spirit of the season forward and help out members of their communities through efforts such as this.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park): I rise today to speak about us heading into the holidays. People don't realize that this is likely our last week. These are less than happy holidays for the 280,000 children in the Toronto District School Board that this government has made into political pretzels. Students have been losing

needed services like guidance counsellors in education systems every day.

Today, Kathleen Foley and a few dozen parents made a public presentation on behalf of those students and they have named who to blame. They named, in fact, Ernie Eves as the grinch that stole education in their city and, of course, in communities around the province. They say it's the grinch that stole special education, occasional teachers, educational assistants, parenting centres, and so forth.

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): Oh, yeah?

Mr Kennedy: We hear some "oh, yeahs" on the part of some members opposite, but this week, as they sit there complacently, headed toward their holidays, we have a pregnant mother here today who talked about a social worker who helped keep her going. That social worker was laid off this week. Another student told us of a three-year-old work order on a ceiling that's falling in their classroom.

They also told us about the fudge cookies they brought as a present for Mr Eves because of the fudging that happened with the books here in Toronto. Most importantly, these parents still have hope. They hope that, like the grinch, Mr Rozanski may be able to make Mr Eves have his heart grow three times bigger and change his mind and admit his mistakes. But these children and their parents believe they are more likely to be like disappointed kids at Christmas: that they'll find a lump of coal. But that coal may come in handy in their stocking, because the heat has been turned down in Toronto schools.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I want to say first of all how nice it is to see so many of the students here today in our galleries.

With just over two weeks before Christmas, I, like all members of the House, look forward to spending quality time with my family and friends back in the riding. It is the festive season and the focus is placed on the dangers of drinking and driving.

We now see evidence of this everywhere. Turn on your TV to see it in the form of commercials, or look on the streets of your neighbourhood to see the police authorities implement a RIDE program.

The festive season provides us with the opportunity to get together with people we may not have seen all year long. Unfortunately, getting together often means having a few drinks too many and being faced with the decision of whether or not to get behind the wheel of a car.

I encourage everyone who has to make this decision, perhaps more than once over the holidays, to remember that drinking and driving is the principal cause of death and injury in Ontario. But there is much more at stake. By drinking and driving, we not only risk injuring or killing ourselves or other people; we also risk leaving our family and friends without us.

Our government has implemented a number of measures to fight drinking and driving. For example, we increased fines and suspension periods for convicted drunk drivers and doubled grants to RIDE programs. I introduced a private member's bill to implement an ignition interlock program for people who violate drinking and driving law in Ontario. We will see these devices installed early in the new year.

But no matter how much we do, the decision still counts down to a personal decision, so please remember to make the right choice this holiday season. Please don't drink and drive.

VISITORS

Hon Dan Newman (Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Today marks the 25th anniversary of the air ambulance service in our province. It's my pleasure to recognize four members of the service who are joining us in the members' gallery today. We have Dr Chris Mazza, the CEO of the Ontario air ambulance base hospital program; Steve Farquhar and Steve Darling, two critical care flight paramedics from Bandage One; and Captain Jerry Beatty, a pilot from Bandage One.

I ask that all members of this House recognize these members of the air ambulance service and to congratulate the service for their 25 years of hard work and commitment to Ontarians from north to south and east to west.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I'm also very pleased to have with us today in the Speaker's gallery Her Excellency the Vietnamese ambassador to Canada, who is accompanied by her husband. Please join me in welcoming our honoured guests.

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd like to ask for unanimous consent to wear a button that says "Stop the Toxic Sludge."

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

1350

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

REENA FOUNDATION ACT, 2002

Mr Arnott moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr17, An Act respecting the Reena Foundation.

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

Pursuant to standing order 84, the bill stands referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

GENOCIDE MEMORIAL WEEK ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR LA SEMAINE COMMÉMORATIVE DES GÉNOCIDES

Mr Wood moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 222, An Act to proclaim Genocide Memorial Week in Ontario / Projet de loi 222, Loi proclamant la Semaine commémorative des génocides en Ontario.

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

The member for a short statement?

Mr Bob Wood (London West): This bill proclaims the week beginning on the fourth Monday in March of each year as Genocide Memorial Week. It is similar to a bill I introduced earlier, but adds the United Nations definition of genocide to the preamble and makes a few editing changes to the preamble.

I will be asking the House soon to give second reading to the bill and refer it to committee for consideration.

ONTARIO HERITAGE DAY ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR LE JOUR DU PATRIMOINE DE L'ONTARIO

Mr Agostino moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 223, An Act to proclaim Ontario Heritage Day and to amend other Acts to include Ontario Heritage Day as a holiday / Projet de loi 223, Loi proclamant le Jour du patrimoine de l'Ontario et modifiant d'autres lois en vue de l'ajouter comme jour férié.

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

The member for a short statement?

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): If this bill is passed—if the government will bring it forward—it certainly would give us an opportunity to have a day to celebrate our heritage and history in this great province. I think Ontarians from all walks of life who have come here from many countries would love to participate in that. It would be the second Monday in June and would be declared a statutory holiday.

VISITORS

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): On a point of order, Speaker: It gives me the greatest of pleasure to stand and introduce the class from Our Lady of Perpetual Help school, created in the great riding of Toronto Centre-Rosedale, and the home class of our page, Victoria.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader): I move that, notwithstanding the motion passed by the House on Monday, November 18, 2002, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm until midnight on Monday, December 9, 2002, for the purpose of considering government business.

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

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All 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 1355 to 1400.

The Speaker: Would the members kindly take their seats, please.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Martel, Shelley	
Hampton, Howard	Martin, Tony	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 82; the nays are 7.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

DEFERRED VOTES

KEEPING THE PROMISE
FOR A STRONG ECONOMY ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2002LOI DE 2002 SUR LE RESPECT
DE L'ENGAGEMENT D'ASSURER
UNE ÉCONOMIE SAINTE
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 198, An Act to implement Budget measures and other initiatives of the Government / Projet de loi 198, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires et d'autres initiatives du gouvernement.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1404 to 1409.

The Speaker: Will the members kindly take their seats, please.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bartolucci, Rick	Curling, Alvin	McLeod, Lyn
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McMeekin, Ted
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	Parsons, Ernie
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Prue, Michael
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Churley, Marilyn	Kennedy, Gerard	Ramsay, David
Cleary, John C.	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Conway, Sean G.	Levac, David	Smitherman, George
Cordiano, Joseph	Martel, Shelley	Sorbara, Greg

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 49; the nays are 42.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We have in the members' west gallery Ms Barbara Sullivan, the member for Halton Centre in the 34th and 35th Parliaments.

FUNERAL, BURIAL AND
CREMATION SERVICES ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002
SUR LES SERVICES FUNÉRAIRES
ET LES SERVICES D'ENTERREMENT
ET DE CRÉMATION

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 209, An Act respecting funerals, burials, cremations and related services and providing for the amendment of other statutes / Projet de loi 209, Loi traitant des funéraires, des enterrements, des crémations et des services connexes et prévoyant la modification d'autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Same vote? No. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1413 to 1418.

The Speaker: Would the members take their seats, please.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bartolucci, Rick	Curling, Alvin	McLeod, Lyn
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McMeekin, Ted
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	Parsons, Ernie
Boyer, Claudette	Duncan, Dwight	Patten, Richard
Bradley, James J.	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Bryant, Michael	Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry
Caplan, David	Hampton, Howard	Prue, Michael
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Churley, Marilyn	Kennedy, Gerard	Ramsay, David
Cleary, John C.	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Conway, Sean G.	Levac, David	Smitherman, George
Cordiano, Joseph	Martel, Shelley	Sorbara, Greg

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 49; the nays are 42.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated December 4, 2002, the bill is ordered for third reading.

ELECTRICITY PRICING,
CONSERVATION
AND SUPPLY ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR L'ÉTABLISSEMENT
DU PRIX DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ,
LA CONSERVATION DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ
ET L'APPROVISIONNEMENT
EN ÉLECTRICITÉ

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 210, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of the pricing, conservation and supply of electricity and in respect of other matters related to electricity / Projet de loi 210, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'établissement du prix de l'électricité, la conservation de l'électricité et l'approvisionnement en électricité et traitant d'autres questions liées à l'électricité.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1422 to 1427.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Hampton, Howard	Martin, Tony
Christopherson, David	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Martel, Shelley	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 76; the nays are 8.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

1430

VISITORS

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to welcome the chief and deputy fire chief of the Quinte West Fire Department, Cliff Jeffrey and John Whelan, in our west gallery. I am very proud of the work that they and their department do.

Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to introduce Mrs Lamis Boland, who has come to see her hard-working son, page Anthony Boland, here at Queen's Park.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PROPERTY TAXATION

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): My question is for the Minister of Finance. I have in my hand lists that have been put together by the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. This is a corporation that you created and that is run by your provincial appointees.

The Toronto list is entitled "fine-tuning," and for Windsor it's called the "sensitive" list. The people on this list for fine-tuning of their property tax assessments read like a Who's Who of who can make trouble for the government: along with local politicians, media types such as Moses Znaimer, Peter Mansbridge, Garth Turner, Gord Martineau, and on and on.

The agency is a creature of your government. You created it; you appoint the board. There's a list like this for every region in Ontario, and it's a list about damage control. You went out of your way to go over the assessments for the people on these lists with a fine-toothed comb because you don't want anyone with a high profile causing trouble for you, but the rest of Ontario waits on hold while they complain about their high tax assessments.

Minister, how do you rationalize the creation of these lists?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): As the honourable member may well know, this organization is an independent corporation that is run by the municipalities on property tax assessment. However, it is very, very clear that the issue here is that some taxpayers may well have received treatment that is different than other taxpayers. I think any perception of favouritism by MPAC is unacceptable. That's why I wrote to them this morning and asked them to look into this to assure

taxpayers that everyone has been treated equitably and fairly. They have written back to assure us that an investigation is going on into the existence of that list and what it means and to make sure that no taxpayers have been treated unfairly.

Mrs Pupatello: Well, Minister, let me say to you again that this is an agency you created. You appointed the board members. It is your agency, and you can't sidestep this one. You've politicized the bureaucracy so much that they put together secret lists for special treatment to do their damage control.

It's you who cut the civil service to the bone so there aren't people to do these assessments and reviews like there used to be. There's about half the staff there used to be. There aren't enough employees to handle the complaints by the public, but they've got the time to make these special lists for special people: for city newspaper columnists, journalists, politicians. They get special treatment and an assessment to the 11th degree, and that covers your bases. But for normal people: please, Minister, explain why there would be two standards for people in this province, one for that special list of sensitive people and another for the rest of Ontario complaining about their tax hikes.

Hon Mrs Ecker: First of all, there are not, nor should there be, two standards for taxpayers in this province. That's why I have written to MPAC to ask them to explain themselves and to ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly, that there is to be no special treatment. They have written back and said to us that they are reviewing this to make sure that is indeed the case.

This organization was set up at arm's length from the government to govern the property tax assessment system on behalf of municipalities. Municipal representatives constitute the majority of the governance of this board. But what is important here is that all taxpayers must be treated fairly, and steps are being taken to ensure that is indeed the case.

Mrs Pupatello: Minister, the list exists and there's a secret list of people who get special attention. You appointed the people to run this organization. In Toronto it's called "fine-tuning"; in Windsor it's called the "sensitive" list. Tell us why it could possibly include columnist Gord Henderson on a Windsor list, but you want to stay out of trouble. We've heard that people on the list get special treatment and the average family can't get through on the line. They're put on hold and they don't get answers on why their property taxes are going through the roof. They can't get the service, but special people are getting all the service they require.

Last week we learned that half of Ontario companies aren't even filing their income tax. That's your ministry's problem. Today we learned that half of the people can't get through on the phone lines. They're put on hold when they're trying to call about their property tax assessments, but these special people, the elite of Toronto, are the ones who get all of the attention.

Minister, this is in your bailiwick, and it's about time you do something about it.

Hon Mrs Ecker: That particular list contains a number of politicians on it from all political parties, so if the honourable member believes she or a member of her party have had special treatment, I would be very pleased to look into that.

The assessment rolls are public. We have told MPAC this is not acceptable. We have written to them this morning to ensure that this is not acceptable behaviour. They indeed are launching an investigation to ensure that no taxpayers have received preferential treatment. That would not be right. That is contrary to government policy, and I have encouraged them to do the right thing.

GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I have a question for the Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet. I want to follow up on some concerns raised by the Provincial Auditor last week. He tells us in his report that spending on consultants has more than doubled under the Harris-Eves government.

Over the past three years, the Ministry of Energy has paid one company, Enterprise Canada, over \$600,000 in consulting fees. We've checked the lobbyist registry, and at the same time as you were paying them as consultants for the Ministry of Energy, they were also being paid by Direct Energy and National Grid.

Minister, how could you allow such an obvious conflict of interest to occur?

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): First of all, I point out that last week—and in fact every day that I answer these questions—I indicated that the auditor is making certain recommendations that we accept fully. In fact, what we're doing right now is bringing in rules that will address all the concerns the auditor has. We're trying to make sure that we have that type of full accountability for the taxpayers' money.

These are some of the rules I indicated last week, which I certainly indicate again. The ministries will be required to also provide annual reporting to the Management Board on their use of consulting services. In addition to that, we are requiring full documentation. I also am looking right now, at the request of the Premier, at going further than addressing the concerns the auditor indicated in his recommendations, which we have either implemented or are in the process of implementing now; to go further than that to see if there are any other ways in which we can make sure the public service is far more accountable than it is now.

Mr Duncan: One of the principals is Hugh Mackenzie, a good friend of the Premier's. I should say that our beef is not with him or that firm; it's with you. You are the ones who have allowed the conflict of interest to occur.

Senior civil servants have a cooling-off period. They aren't allowed to profit from their government work. The same either isn't true or hasn't been enforced with regard to government consultants.

Minister, Enterprise Canada's Web site says they offer "an energy practice designed to assist clients in influencing the restructuring of Ontario's electrical and natural gas sector."

The Ministry of Energy paid Enterprise Canada \$600,000. While they were working as government consultants, Direct Energy and National Grid were paying them to influence government energy policy. If this isn't a conflict of interest, I don't know what is.

Minister, were you aware of this situation? If not, what investigations will you undertake to ensure that the public interest was never compromised by your government's incompetence?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: I'm going to send the second part of this over to the Minister of Energy for the response.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs): I read with great interest the report tabled last week by the Provincial Auditor. I think all of us on this side of the House value the contribution that he makes to public administration in the province of Ontario.

I've gone on record a good number of times saying that the taxpayer is well served by the Provincial Auditor. The Premier, on receiving the Provincial Auditor's report, said that with respect to the use of consultants by government ministries, we should not only adopt what he has recommended but perhaps indicate to the Chair of Management Board that we should look even further. I totally agree with the Premier in that regard.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Final supplementary?

1440

Mr Duncan: Minister, documents filed with the lobbyist registry indicate that Enterprise Canada was lobbying on behalf of Direct Energy on the electricity market opening. They were lobbying on behalf of National Grid on both the market opening and the sale of Hydro One. At the same time, the Ministry of Energy was paying them \$600,000. These are two of the biggest decisions your government has taken. These decisions are worth billions of dollars.

In addition to the energy contracts, they were paid by Management Board while lobbying for Accenture. They were paid by the Attorney General while lobbying the government for changes to the Public Accountancy Act. Last year, Enterprise Canada was paid by the Ministry of Health. This year, it's lobbying them for private MRIs.

Taxpayers have paid Enterprise Canada in excess of \$3 million. They have worked for 11 ministries while representing 113 private interests. Will you authorize the immediate release of all their contracts, and will you release what rules you have, if any, governing these consultants and how these conflicts have come to happen? Will you do that today?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: What I will indicate today is what I've been indicating for the last week: the auditor has made certain recommendations, we're following them fully and we're looking to go further than that. I put

on the record again, in case the members of the opposition haven't listened fully, that part of what we need right now, and what the auditor said we needed, is full documentation.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: By the way, we do have lobbyist registration legislation. We brought that in, folks, not you.

It's important for us to make sure there's accountability for money that's being spent. We also indicated clearly that we want to have follow-up reports as well for any use of consultants. We've also asked all the ministries to look first in terms of using internal resources we have in the public service. If they're not available, we will allow the use of consultants. But as part of any consultant's job, they have to make sure we have a transfer of that knowledge to the public service, so that in the future we can depend on the resources we have at hand.

HYDRO ONE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I wonder if Enterprise Canada has any connection with Groupe Action Québec, or is it Groupe Action Canada?

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Enron was a company that engaged in a number of side deals to cover up the bad financial shape of its books. We know from your financial statement that your government is facing a \$2-billion shortfall, so you're going to do a side deal and sell off 50% of Hydro One in order to make your books look better.

Can you tell the people of Ontario why you're going to use the discredited Enron style of economics here in Ontario?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance): We are not; we would not.

Mr Hampton: I think it's pretty clear that the government has indicated it wants to sell up to 49% of Hydro One. I think it's also pretty clear from your financial statement just a couple of days ago and your budget in the spring that you're \$2 billion short. We've asked for estimates out there of what Hydro One might be worth. Even some of your cabinet ministers have indicated that you'd like to get about \$2 billion for the sale of half of Hydro One. That sounds very much like the Enron style of economics. You do a side deal over here and try to cover up the difficulties you're facing with your budget, in terms of your finances. Except the problem here is that when you sell off half of Hydro One, you also sell off half of its profits, \$200 million a year, which the people of Ontario then have to make up either through higher hydro rates or through some other means.

Can you tell me how the people of Ontario come out ahead in this kind of Enron-style deal?

Hon Mrs Ecker: I appreciate the honourable member's concern about balanced budgets in this province. It would have been more helpful for Ontario taxpayers if he and his government had paid attention to balanced

budgets instead of racking up an \$11-billion deficit, having the government spend \$1 million more an hour every hour of the day than they were taking in.

This government, because of the economic planning and policies we put in place under Premier Harris, under Ernie Eves, under Jim Flaherty—those policies have given us balanced budgets for three years in a row. We're on track for another balanced budget this year. We have more jobs, more growth and less debt interest as a percentage of our GDP. The management that we have put in place, and will continue to have in place, is delivering what Ontario needs to generate more jobs and more growth for this province.

Mr Hampton: Your own budget discloses that you have to sell off \$2 billion of assets to give the appearance of having a balanced budget. The Provincial Auditor in his report last week pointed out that currently the stream of revenues, the profit from Hydro One, goes toward the stranded debt. If a private company is interested in half of Hydro One, it's only so they can get their hands on those profits, which means the money will no longer be going to the stranded debt. But you still have to pay on the stranded debt, so you either have to raise the debt charge that people pay on their hydro bill or you have to raise their hydro rates. Any way you look at it, the hydro consumers of Ontario get stuck paying over and over and over again just so you can use a little bit of Enron-style flip-flop to hide the fact that you've got a \$2-billion deficit. Wouldn't it be better to tell the people of Ontario that you've got a \$2-billion shortfall, rather than sticking it to hydro consumers year over year over year with high hydro bills? Wouldn't that be a more honest way of doing it? Why don't you come out and admit that that is what's really going on?

Hon Mrs Ecker: Again, I appreciate the honourable member's concern for the debt of Ontario Hydro. Why was it that his government, when they left office, had racked up the debt of the old Ontario Hydro to \$38 billion? He thought that was acceptable to taxpayers. We did not think that was acceptable. As a matter of fact, the debt has come down for Ontario Hydro. We laid out the plan in the June budget with revenue and expenditure forecasts as we always do, with a plan in place to ensure there is support for more jobs and more growth, and we laid out our plan for a strategic partner in Hydro One: to have them come in with the private sector discipline that I'm sure the honourable member would agree needs to be done with the investments and improvements that will benefit electricity consumers in this province.

HYDRO RATES

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Energy. In September I asked you about the situation in Wawa, a northern Ontario town where people were facing skyrocketing hydro bills. Pensioners were paying more for their hydro bill than they were paying for their rent; Main Street businesses were looking at the prospect of going out of

business—the major employers in the community having to question whether they could stay in business. Then you brought in your so-called hydro rebate scheme and you tried to tell everyone that this was going to make a difference for people. We were talking with folks in Wawa just last week. They're still paying 50% more on their hydro bills. Can you tell them why, despite your much ballyhooed rate cap, they're still going to be paying 50% more on their hydro bills?

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs): As the member opposite will be aware, I spoke to him in September in this place about the cross-subsidization that had occurred in that particular community. The announcement the Premier made on November 11 said that the price of delivery of electricity in Ontario would be frozen.

Mr Hampton: The people there have a different version of it. The people there noticed that the company which now owns virtually all of the hydro system is Brascan. This is the same Brascan that contributed over \$100,000 dollars to your Premier's leadership campaign. Brascan has been allowed to arrange the hydro rates so that people are on an ongoing basis being stuck with hydro bills that are at least 50% more than what they paid before.

You're spending \$1.5 million advertising on television and in newspapers a hydro rebate scheme and a hydro rate cap. Why are the people of not just Wawa but of the surrounding communities going to continue to be stuck with hydro bills that they can't afford to pay? Don't you recognize any responsibility to them, or is your responsibility solely to your corporate friends at Brascan?

1450

Hon Mr Baird: I find it passing strange that the leader of the third party and his entire caucus just stood in their places in the Legislature and voted against Bill 210, a bill that would have provided substantial relief to consumers in Ontario. It would have provided relief to farmers, small business people and working families, and he and his party said no; they wanted none of it. They voted against it at second reading, at time allocation and at third reading.

The member opposite has raised a tremendously serious concern with respect to how this government may have been influenced. If he has any evidence, I would encourage him to take it directly to the Integrity Commissioner, because I don't believe he has any.

ADULT EDUCATION

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): My question is for the Minister of Education. Today a number of students from the York Adult Day School have come to Queen's Park to tell their story. It's a story about how your government has turned its back on them and shut the door on their education.

Your appointed supervisor to the Toronto District School Board, Paul Christie, ordered the closure of the York Adult Day School effective January 2003. That

means that these students will have no chance to complete their education. How do you answer to the students at York Adult Day School when they say you are being insensitive? Students who are here today, students like Inez Lawrence, Diana Lopez, Michelle Allen, Caroline Moran, David Silva, Jay Singh and John Chan, who are in the gallery today, want to know why your government is turning its back on them and absolutely shutting the door on their continuing education. Why is that, Minister?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): Nothing could be further from the truth. I'm sure that the member opposite knows that as well. I understand the decision was made in order to ensure that any underutilization of space could be taken into consideration. A decision was made to consolidate in order to respond to underutilization. There have been no programs reduced or eliminated. Students are all going to continue to be accommodated at the four remaining sites.

This was an administrative decision that has been made. I can assure the member opposite that the programs will still be there. They will be at different locations but I understand they are in each part of Toronto in order that all the people in the city continue to have access to adult programs.

Mr Cordiano: Minister, I don't know what planet you're on but the facts are clear. The closure of York effective January 2003 means that these students will have nowhere else to go because the other schools have waiting lists. They are at capacity. There is nowhere for these students to go.

As a matter of fact, since your government took office in 1995, the number of adult education spaces in Ontario has dropped from about 50,000 to about 8,700 spaces, a tremendous drop of 83%. Not only that, but you reduced the grant per adult student from \$7,000 to about \$2,300. So boards can't fund these spaces. Is it any wonder that the number of spaces has been reduced drastically and these students have nowhere to go?

So I'd like to ask you again, Minister: what do you say to these students who are single moms and people trying to help themselves get back in the workforce? You're turning your back on them. You're shutting the door to their continuing education. That's the end of the story. How do you answer to them? There's no other way to explain it.

Hon Mrs Witmer: Last week I spoke to CESBA, which is an organization that deals with adult learners and continuing education. I congratulated them on the tremendous job that they do with our adult learners. I would say to the members opposite that the decisions that are being made will not eliminate any programs. They will not eliminate the opportunities. According to the information that I have received from the Toronto District School Board, it is simply the consolidation of underused space and making sure that people can be accommodated at the other sites.

Adult education, I would mention to the member opposite, is very important. I understand that the Toronto

school board is going to continue to ensure that students can be accommodated at the four sites.

WEST NIPISSING ECONOMY

Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing): My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Last month, residents of west Nipissing were hit hard by the announcement that Weyerhaeuser was closing its facility there. Being the neighbouring MPP for the area, I understand the feelings and the losses those workers and their families have experienced. What has the government been doing to help residents of west Nipissing?

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): My colleague from Nipissing is quite right: west Nipissing is currently in a very unfortunate situation. However, our government is committed to helping this community in its time of need. Our commitment is very clear. On November 7, I was welcomed to the community of west Nipissing—Sturgeon Falls, to be precise—bearing some very important news.

Before I get into that, though, I would like to commend Mr McDonald, my colleague, for his concern for the people of west Nipissing. AL was the first MPP to voice his concern over the Weyerhaeuser plant closure and to pledge our government's support and action to help overcome the challenges ahead.

Our government stepped up to the plate by announcing in west Nipissing that it would be the first community eligible for the northern Ontario heritage fund's economic diversification program. We've made west Nipissing eligible to receive up to 75% or \$5 million per project. These are economic development programs to bring jobs back to the community, and we've set no limit on the number of projects or the number of \$5-million tranches the community can receive to get itself back on its feet. I know there's a local recovery committee working very hard on doing just that right now.

Mr McDonald: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. Speaking with some of the residents of west Nipissing, I can tell you they were thrilled with your recent announcement. Can you tell me of any more help the Ontario government is willing to provide for the residents of west Nipissing?

Hon Mr Wilson: I too have had the opportunity on many occasions to speak with workers who are directly affected, and their families, and it is a difficult period. I think many people continue to be in shock in that area, but they're in good hands. Their community leaders and the committee they've put together are great people. I've had an opportunity to meet with some of them.

Our ministries are working together. My ministry, with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, is also implementing a community adjustment program to help ensure that adequate resources are available to address the needs of the community. As I said, the local community adjustment and recovery committee is working very hard and are now just getting their minds around the huge potential they have as a community and to move

that potential into actual new jobs and economic diversification for the community.

I know that their neighbour next door, AL McDonald, will continue to keep us posted on progress and will continue to work hard on behalf of those constituents, who aren't in his riding but who live next door and whom he cares very much about. I know he will continue to bring to our attention the needs of that community as they arise.

MINISTER'S COMMENTS

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): My question is to the Minister of Public Safety and Security. By now you would have received the letter that was written by the Provincial Auditor to you on December 6 with respect to certain comments that you made both inside and outside the House last week. Specifically, I'm referring to the summary he provides on the third page of his letter. I would just like to ask you for your comments on this.

He states, "I would appreciate if you could clarify to the Legislative Assembly that:

"—the number of 10,000 was an estimate agreed to by your ministry at the time of the audit;

"—the CPIC number of 5,900 had never been communicated to my office and represents more current information which was obtained by you in November 2002;

"—the CPIC number may be somewhat low because it may exclude information from some police forces;

"—my report is not misleading...."

Now, would you please confirm, Minister, that the auditor is correct in his assessment as set out in his letter to you?

Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security): Again, as I indicated in the House last week, as a former chairman of public accounts I have enormous respect for Mr Peters, the office and the role his office plays. With respect to these matters, maybe I'm misinterpreting the letter, but I think Mr Peters does not take issue with respect to the number we have provided off of CPIC, the 5,900 number. I guess the question is whether there was any disagreement at the time of publication. That's a matter—I've asked my deputy to sit down with Mr Peters, hopefully this week, to discuss this situation.

I think the important part of this is that the auditor's report raised some serious issues with respect to outstanding warrants. We agree with that. We are addressing that very vigorously with additional probation and parole workers, the additional monies we've put into the ROPE squad and a number of other initiatives undertaken by this government.

1500

Mr Gerretsen: Well, Minister, you still haven't answered the question. He specifically asks you in his letter to clarify to the Legislative Assembly that the number 10,000 was an estimate agreed to by your

ministry at the time of the audit. He also specifically states, "My report is not misleading, but you have more current information, which you wanted to provide to the Legislative Assembly and you and I agree that there are thousands of outstanding arrest warrants, many of which are for serious (Level 1) offenders." He goes on to say, "My report does not indicate that there are 3,000 serious offenders in our community being unmonitored." You made those statements last week; that is not contained in this report in any way, shape or form.

You attacked the integrity of his office, an office on which we all rely in this assembly. Minister, will you not do the right thing now and apologize to him and to the people of Ontario for the language that you used last week?

Hon Mr Runciman: I think I handled the issue appropriately last week. With respect to the question of the 3,000 offenders, I am writing back to Mr Peters. I think there has been a misinterpretation, perhaps fuelled by members of the opposition, with respect to this.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Runciman: They're very thin-skinned, aren't they, Mr Speaker? Maybe it has something to do with last week's poll results; I'm not sure.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): You can't bully him.

Hon Mr Runciman: The number 3,000—and I'm sure Mr Phillips wants to hear this—was in respect to the 10,000 figure in the auditor's report. There was an estimate made by the auditor that 30% of those 10,000 individuals with outstanding warrants were level 1 offenders, or serious offenders. That's where the figure came from. So there was a misunderstanding, a lack of communication with respect to that number.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

Mr Bob Wood (London West): My question is to the Attorney General. It relates to the public accounting provisions of the recently passed Bill 213. There have been concerns expressed by many people with respect to whether standards for public accounting are going to be lowered and with respect to what process is going to be used to determine what changes are to be made to the current governance of public accounting. Can the minister assure this House that Ontario's standards for public accounting are not going to be lowered and that all interested parties will be fully consulted before any changes flowing from Bill 213 are implemented?

Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): I thank the honourable member for his question. With regard to the public accounting provisions of Bill 213, which passed through this Legislative Assembly last week, and as the Minister of Labour reminds me, unanimously, I say to you, sir, that I'd be quite happy to share with you what I have shared with interested parties and indeed with members of this Legislative Assembly, members from all three parties of this Legislative Assembly. No part of the

public accounting provisions will be put into effect until there has been full consultation with the interested party. That will include the ICAO, the CMAs and the CGAs. The standards will not be lowered, and any new rules will reflect the high expectations of our trading partners, both internationally and domestically, and only serve to strengthen Ontario's reputation as a jurisdiction in which individuals from around the world have comfort and great confidence in their investments. That will allow for us to continue to grow as an economy and to create jobs in this great province.

Mr Wood: The minister will be aware that one of the key principles of good regulation supported by the Red Tape Commission is that all parties affected should be fully consulted before regulatory changes are made. Will the minister outline for the House the process of consultation which he has in mind for the public accounting changes being contemplated?

Hon Mr Young: We have asked Dean Daniels to look into this matter and indeed to consult with stakeholders, including the ones I mentioned just a moment ago. We've given him the task of making sure that accounting standards in this province continue to be internationally respected and reflective of the high expectations of business and indeed investors. He will not only work at establishing a tough exam but he'll also consider educational and experience requirements, public oversight, codes of professional conduct and monitoring and discipline. All his work will ensure that these standards will operate to protect investors, businesses and citizens. He will consult with parties like the ICAO, the CGAs and the CMAs, and he has already started those consultations. We encourage all parties to co-operate with Dean Daniels, and we certainly look forward to receiving his report in the new year.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): My question is to the Minister of Labour. The Conservative government is forcing people to work overtime against their will. Three men who work at the Toyota assembly plant in Cambridge have spent the last half year fighting for the right to go home after putting in an eight-hour day—the right to go home to rest, to recuperate, to see their families—because Toyota claims those workers don't have that right. Toyota claims that these workers and others have to work overtime, and it says your government has given it the right to do this to those workers. Minister, why did you and your government enact a special regulation that allows bosses like Toyota to force workers to work overtime?

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour): The member for Niagara Centre, I'm sure, would want to be factually correct in his statements. It was an employment standards officer who issued an order against Toyota, and Toyota has disagreed with that and has taken it to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The employment standards officer, an employee of the government, issued an order

on this matter to Toyota, and Toyota disagrees and they've taken it to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. We won't comment further on it because it's before the board.

Mr Kormos: Two years ago, your government brought in these new standards—if they're standards at all, they're not standards for workers; they're standards for bosses—and New Democrats argued that workers would be forced to work overtime. Your government, of course, said it could never happen. The then-Minister of Labour, now the Minister of the Environment, said, "The allegations made by the New Democrats are absurd. You're suggesting that somehow an employee would have to agree to overtime averaging for two years and they'd have no way of getting out. That's absurd, absolutely absurd." Of course, the same member claimed that hydro prices would never go up. He was wrong on both accounts.

These workers have been fighting for over six months for the right not to have to work overtime. They and other workers are being forced to work overtime. The issue is, what are you doing to protect those workers from being called upon, being forced, being required to work overtime? You said it wouldn't happen. It did, and those workers are telling me they now have to hire lawyers and go through a process to do something you said could never happen. What are you doing to help those workers to ensure they aren't working forced overtime?

Hon Mr Clark: The member for Niagara Centre can growl all he wants; it doesn't change the facts. The facts are that employees of the government of Ontario, employment standards officers, made a decision based on the complaints from employees at Toyota. Toyota has challenged that decision. They have that right, unless you believe they don't have the right to disagree and don't have the right to go before the Ontario Labour Relations Board. If a union didn't have that right, you'd be flipping out. But a company has challenged it, not the province of Ontario. A company has challenged the decision of our employees in this matter. This has nothing to do with your rhetoric. You're completely wrong in this regard. Toyota has taken it to the Ontario Labour Relations Board, and we're going to wait for the outcome of the board. You're just making all this up on the fly.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. On the coldest day of this winter, mentally ill and disabled people have been turned away from lodging homes in the city of Hamilton. Many of these folks end up on the street, and some end up in shelters when they're not full. Your government has caused this situation for a number of years now by capping the amount of money that is given for the city to operate lodging homes. This is a serious situation. You have some of the most vulnerable people—people who are mentally ill, people

who are disabled—getting turned away from a lodging home because the cap is there and they cannot accept any more individuals. Where do they end up? They end up back out on the street, and many are on medication, many need that home to carry on from day to day.

The city of Hamilton has asked for \$240,000 to fix this problem. Will you stand up and commit to that money now?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services): We have a number of programs in many jurisdictions to help those who are having challenges with housing. I believe the program the member across the way is referring to is a program to which we added per diem funding last year in response to concerns that were raised on this very matter.

1510

Mr Agostino: Minister, it is clear that you don't have a clue about what you're talking about. You have capped this program for a number of years. The reality is this: 65 people have been turned away from lodging homes—mentally ill, disabled individuals; sick individuals; individuals on medication to control their mental illness. They're being turned out on to the streets. On Saturday night, all the shelters in Hamilton were full. That is the sheer reality that the mentally ill and disabled are facing in my city and across the province. Minister, I hope to God we don't have to wait for someone to die on the street before you act.

I made a very simple request. The city has said that \$240,000 in emergency assistance would give them enough to cover this for the winter, would give enough to ensure that nobody gets turned away from a second-level lodging home, that no one gets turned away from the home who needs its help.

Again, very simple, very clear: will you commit today to the \$240,000 so no one gets turned away from one of these homes: people who need your help and are looking to you to protect them?

Hon Mrs Elliott: In response to my colleague across the way, we have increased the per diem for domiciliary hostels by 16% to \$40 a day, adding another \$7.6 million in provincial subsidy to try and address that concern.

With regard to the Hamilton situation, I understand that there are 100 units under the homelessness phase one and 93 under the homelessness phase two program, for a total of 193 homelessness housing units. There is an organization in position to take up some of the individuals who may be displaced in this particular situation. So I can say to my colleague across the way that we have been trying very hard to address this situation. We have already taken steps to try and address this very matter.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question today is to the Minister of Transportation. The holiday season is fast approaching, a time when family, friends and co-workers gather together to celebrate our holidays. All too often, these holiday gatherings turn into tragedy

because there are still those who drink, get behind the wheel and drive: a deadly combination.

Despite valuable efforts from organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving and the Ontario Provincial Police, drinking and driving remains the principal cause of criminal death and injury in our province.

Minister, clearly the message is not getting through to everyone. Perhaps selfish drivers who continue to drink and drive without any concern for other people's lives will be concerned about the consequences they personally face. Minister, what can drunk drivers in this province expect to face when caught by our police?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation): A lot of people who are caught driving after they've been drinking think a suspension will come in place and they are not aware of the heavy financial penalties that they pay as well. Normally, the fine is anywhere from \$600 to \$2,000 on the first offence. Court costs range anywhere from \$2,000 and up for a lawyer. There's a mandatory remedial program which costs the sentenced person over \$500. There's a licence reinstatement fee of \$100. Now, under the ignition interlock, thanks to Garfield Dunlop, there's an additional fine of \$1,140. In addition, we have learned from the insurance industry that insurance rates go up \$3,000 a year for three years as a result of an impaired driving charge. That totals \$13,000 for an impaired driving charge. People in this province shouldn't drink and drive.

Mr Dunlop: Minister, it is reassuring to know that there are still financial penalties for this reckless offence, as there should be, but perhaps not all drunk drivers are concerned about the monetary penalties. For some, the only answer may be to get them off the road. What has your ministry done to get these safety hazards off the road and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent them from getting behind the wheel drunk again?

Hon Mr Sterling: I mentioned in the first question what the financial penalties were. The other penalties of course are the suspension of the licence on the first conviction, one year; on the second conviction, three years; and the third conviction is a life suspension. Also, there's a 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension. In other words, the licence is taken right away from the person on their blowing 0.08. As well, there is vehicle impoundment for those caught driving while suspended if they had a conviction for impaired driving before. And as I said in the previous answer, there are mandatory in-car breath screening devices installed in vehicles upon licence reinstatement, at the cost of the person who has had their licence taken away.

Perhaps the most cogent reason for not drinking and driving is the life that somebody can save by not drinking and driving.

ONTARIO SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is for the Min-

ister of Education. Recently I've been contacted by a parent who has been told by a Ministry of Education regional staff member that the Ontario scholarship program is being discontinued. Students who are graduating from secondary school after grade 12 do not qualify for consideration for an Ontario scholarship. One parent wrote to me to say, "Although Ontario scholars receive a certificate and no financial award, I believe that the recognition by the province of academic achievement of students in this manner is very important."

Minister, would you please confirm for the students of Ontario who will be graduating from grade 12 this year if your government will continue to recognize those students with honours achievement by awarding them an Ontario scholarship?

Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education): I would certainly take that issue under advisement and I will respond appropriately.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Minister, students in schools are beginning to prepare for their post-secondary experience. On the Ministry of Education Web site today, policy memorandum number 53, which talks to the Ontario scholarship program conditions of award, very clearly describes the requirements for students to be considered Ontario scholars. Students must obtain an 80% average in Ontario academic courses and they must be recommended by their principal. You would know that this year students who would graduate from grade 12 would have no OAC courses and therefore would not qualify.

Students and schools need to know as soon as possible if this program will continue to be offered for students in Ontario. It's very important to students, to their teachers, to their parents and to people in our communities. So I would ask if you would double your efforts to ensure that this kind of information gets to the school communities and particularly to our students who have worked so very hard and who achieve very well so that they would understand—

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

Hon Mrs Witmer: I very much appreciate the question from the member opposite. I would certainly concur with her. I think we have every reason to be proud of the students in Ontario. If we take a look at the international testing results, I think we're seeing that our students are performing better at the international level than ever before. I think we owe a huge debt of gratitude to the students themselves, but also to the teachers and certainly the very supportive families. I can assure the member I will have additional information.

FISHING

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): My question is for my good friend the Minister of Natural Resources. I know personally you have a very active role in promoting youth and other fishing opportunities. I believe these opportunities are very important, as fishing plays a significant role in the recreational life of my riding of

Durham. Your actions have made a difference. I can say that for sure, as I participated with my constituents on Kids' Fishing Day.

I understand there was a national meeting held recently with representatives from other provinces and predominantly non-governmental organizations. Can you inform James Gilchrist of Peterborough and each of us what the intent was of this meeting?

Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources): I thank the member for Durham for the question. A large number of organizations came together from all across Canada, which included provincial organizations, national organizations, non-government organizations and representatives from the various ministries within each of the jurisdictions. They were brought together to review how we can better put together future plans for fishing activities here in Canada, such as National Fishing Week or the family fishing weekend, or moving forward on such things as national retail advertising. I'm sure a lot of people have seen the advertising that has come forward to promote that, because it's very significant. I know for example that fishing in the region of Durham, in the member's riding, represents about \$75 million annually in income, which is very significant.

1520

This meeting was designed to discuss issues such as access and changing society's attitudes on immediate gratification and fast food. I just want to commend and thank Rick Amesbury and all the people involved for their hard work in putting the meeting together.

Mr O'Toole: On behalf of not just the youth but indeed all outdoors people—to see a leader like you as minister in this area is reassuring.

Minister, I know that you pushed the representatives from the other provinces and territories for a Canada-wide fishing initiative. What is it that you and your ministry are doing specifically to promote fishing, not just in my riding of Durham but indeed across the province of Ontario?

Hon Mr Ouellette: Ontario does have a family fishing weekend which usually comes around in July and it will continue on this year.

While I was in Halifax, I also was the lead person leading the other jurisdictions, provinces and territories to fully implement and endorse National Fishing Week Canada-wide, which was well received.

Not only that; we have recently opened the Chatsworth fish hatchery, which is going to provide 2.8 million fish annually to be released in Ontario at a cost of about \$6.5 million.

Annually with our partners, we release over 10 million fish, and we stock over 1,000 rivers, streams and lakes throughout Ontario.

As mentioned, we have a Kids' Fishing Day. There are other programs, which include streamside development.

Not only that; youth is the future in the MNR. MNR is going to focus on those individuals of today to make sure they're there for future generations.

SAULT STE MARIE SAWMILL

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): My question is for the same minister, the Minister of Natural Resources. He knows that over the last couple of months we've had mills close. A sawmill closed in Kirkland Lake. We've had a mill close in Sturgeon Falls; we heard about that this afternoon. Another Domtar mill closed in St Catharines.

In the last couple of weeks we've heard Domtar announce that it's going to close its sawmill in Sault Ste Marie. This will throw 130 mill workers out of work. When you consider the ripple effect throughout the community, hundreds more hard-working people will lose their jobs too.

Closing the mill is bad enough. Now we learn that Domtar wants to ship the wood, and our jobs, to mills in other communities, maybe even ship the wood across the river into the States.

Don't let Domtar rub salt into Sault Ste Marie's wound, Mr Minister. Stand up for the jobs in the Soo. Stop Domtar from shipping away our wood and our jobs. Will you do that?

Hon Jerry J. Ouellette (Minister of Natural Resources): I know that any loss of a mill in any community in northern Ontario is very significant, and we take it very seriously. The member should know that my office is already trying to bring other investors forward who may be potentially interested in that specific mill. There are 50 employees who are going to be retained there, which is very significant, because some of the product that those 50 employees produce will support other mills throughout Ontario.

I don't intend to allow any fibre to leave Ontario. What will happen there is that we will talk with people in other locations to find out if there is a demand within Ontario. If we can retain that wood here, we certainly will.

Mr Martin: We're not convinced over here. We've seen what happened in Kirkland Lake. We've seen the effort that my colleague from Timmins-James Bay made there and you're still allowing them to ship that fibre. First you let Tembec ship Kirkland Lake's wood and jobs away. Now you're giving Domtar the same dirty deal.

Let me remind you that Ontario never wrote Domtar a blank cheque. We let Domtar harvest Soo-area wood because the company promised to build that mill and create all those jobs.

Read my northern lips, Minister: no mill, no jobs, no wood. Stand up for jobs in the Soo. Stop Domtar from shipping away our wood and our jobs. Will you do that?

Hon Mr Ouellette: This is a very in-depth question. He has mentioned Kirkland Lake in there. We met with the mayor from Kirkland Lake, and he wanted us to keep the workers working in the bush. Rather than have those extra 100 or 200 people unemployed in Kirkland Lake, the mayor asked us to keep it there and make sure that fibre flowed within the province of Ontario.

If I can keep people working in Ontario, I intend to do so. Domtar has been very active and has been working

very hard, and has offered the employees early retirement, relocation opportunities and severance and training opportunities to keep the people in the north. If we can help out in any way, shape or form, we will. First and foremost is retaining the fibre, and we will look for options in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. In eight months, the double cohort will come knocking on our doors. You have underestimated the number of spaces by approximately 6,000. Your own report shows that 6,000 students won't have a place at a college or university by the fall.

We have discovered that you are holding conversations with the universities and colleges, asking them to consider not accepting non-traditional students—mature students, college transfers to universities and anybody looking for a second chance in life by pursuing a post-secondary education—because of the fumbling of the double cohort.

You had seven years to plan for this. You mismanaged it. Now, our students, including our adult and mature students, will not have an opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education. Minister, what do you say to these 6,000 students across the province?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues): Point by point, we have not underestimated. We have planned for the 6,000 students. We have not just talked about these special arrangements we have with the colleges and universities; we had them last year and they worked out. They are ongoing conversations. It isn't discovered now; this is part of a long-term plan.

I will also say, I'm wondering if the member opposite is saying we shouldn't put first our own high school graduating students coming from our secondary schools. Is that what the member is saying: not Ontario students first? I'd like to know if that is her problem.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I think the minister should listen carefully. I was speaking about Ontario students. Twenty-five- or 30-year-olds are still Ontario citizens.

I will agree with you on one point: you did know, way back in 1995, the exact number. Mike Gourley, who worked for then-Finance Minister Ernie Eves, told him the exact number of double cohort students. You've recently had a report that confirmed Mr Gourley's numbers. Absolutely, you've known all along how many students will be graduating in the year 2003. You chose, for financial reasons, to ignore this. You chose to put your friends first and students last.

I was speaking about Ontario students of all ages who want to pursue a post-secondary degree. Don't twist my words; just stand up and tell us the truth. What are you going to do?

Hon Mrs Cunningham: The chair of the guidance counsellors for Ontario would refer to this question as one of the many double cohort horror stories.

This is what's happening to our young people. This is a critic, and she knows that the government's priority is to accommodate Ontario high school students. That's the priority. As a matter of fact, last year we were able to do both and this year we plan on doing both, but if you have to choose, you will choose a secondary school graduating student first, period.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

Interjections.

Mr Wettlaufer: I can't even hear myself speak.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. It's your own minister yelling, I might add. Members, please. The member for Kitchener Centre has a question. Sorry, member.

Mr Wettlaufer: Minister, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board comes under your responsibility. I guess for about the last 10 or 15 years, I've heard from medium-sized and small employers in my riding—and I'm sure we've heard them all across Ontario—about the high costs of workers' comp. Many of them have said over the years—and I know they continue to say so—that they would like some kind of credit for reducing occupational injuries and illness and promoting overall workplace health and safety within their plants.

1530

I would like to know exactly what we've done. I know that we have a safety groups program in place, but I'd like to know a little bit more about it, whether or not the employers in my riding and across Ontario are receiving any benefit from it. What kind of an investment is it?

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour): I thank the honourable member for the question. What he's talking about is the safety groups program.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Clark: They don't want to hear it, Mr Speaker. It's so typical. They laugh about these things. These things are so important for the businesses in the community.

The program that we have in place allows for safety programs to be developed right with the employers. The reality is, it creates experience ratings. As a result, if these businesses do things right and improve their occupational health and safety programs, it actually results in much lower premiums for themselves. Historically, we've lowered rates by 30% across the province. We eliminated the unfunded liability down to \$5 billion from the \$9-billion, \$10-billion or \$11-billion deficit that was there before. Incidentally, it was the Liberals who took that unfunded liability from \$2 billion to \$9 billion. We'd like to remind them of that.

At the present time, the employers are working with the WSIB, lowering their lost-time injuries and, as a result, lowering their premiums.

PETITIONS

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I've got a petition here that is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads like this:

"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."

Thousands have signed this. I'm going to give this to Theresa to take to the desk.

HEALTH CARE

Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West): I have almost 7,000 signatures protesting the closure of the Chedoke hospital site and the closure of the addictions rehabilitation services, effective tomorrow. Shame on the government for that. These petitions are calling on the government to reverse both those decisions and do it now. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas the Hamilton Health Sciences intends to close programs at the Chedoke hospital site and eliminate vital community services such as the young adult complex continuing care, addictions rehabilitation and outpatient physiotherapy programs;

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

"We ask the Legislative Assembly to reverse these decisions and keep these valuable programs in our community" of Hamilton.

I proudly add my name to the list of thousands of Hamiltonians who are saying to the government, "Don't make these cuts."

ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROGRAM CENTRE

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I know my constituents are watching as I read this petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a proposal for the creation of an ADP regional vision centre, sight-enhanced and sight-substitution, was made to the Ministry of Health on August 19, 2002; and

"Whereas the proposal was made by a registered ADP vision authorized with the MOH"—Ministry of Health—"who prepared a 26-page report; and

"Whereas the proposal demonstrates the need and benefit that would be derived from such a centre for the people in Durham who are low-vision, blind and perhaps blind and deaf; and

"Whereas ADP centres are more numerous west of Toronto, in the close proximity of Hamilton, Waterloo and the 401, this same privilege should be afforded to the eastern regions instead of coming into the hard-to-reach centres in Toronto; and

"Whereas clients, ophthalmologists, school boards, families, communities and employers want a regional ADP centre in Durham and surrounding areas;

"We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"(1) Approve the proposal for an ADP centre in Durham region as submitted by Deborah Wilson on August 19, 2002, on this date, December 3, 2002;

"(2) Undertake to further enhance access to ADP services east of Toronto, with Durham Region Vision Centre Inc."

This is signed by Susan Para and Nancy Diamond, the mayor of Oshawa. A number of people have signed and authorized this document, and I am presenting it to Anthony, who is from the riding of Oshawa.

NATURAL GAS RATES

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Over 1,500 of my constituents have asked me to read this petition to remind the government that they are expecting it to overrule the Ontario Energy Board approval of the retroactive delivery charge that Union

Gas has put forward. We're hoping the government review of the OEB will accomplish that.

"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"—right now they're saying they will be collecting as of January;

"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 increases."

Some 1,500 people have signed this. I'm very grateful for their tremendous efforts. Hopefully the government will listen. I'm very pleased to add my name to the petition.

MEDICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the OHIP schedule of benefits is often unclear about its definitions of good medical practice for many serious medical conditions: general checkups, re-checks, psychotherapy counselling and often major illness care by specialists. The medical review committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons has been aggressively clawing back payments to hard-working, conscientious doctors on the basis of these flawed definitions and skewed statistical analyses.

"We, the undersigned, request the Minister of Health to suspend further reviews by the medical review committee; return the monies with its penalties, pending a negotiated agreement of an unambiguous schedule of benefits with representatives of affected practising physicians."

I have affixed my signature as well.

CAT SCANNER

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): I have a petition that's signed by a great number of constituents in the city of Woodstock and the county of Oxford. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas various local partners have contributed capital funding for a CAT scan to be purchased by the Woodstock General Hospital; and

"Whereas a CAT scan is an essential piece of equipment for the practice of modern medicine; and

"Whereas a CAT scan is standard equipment for a hospital of this size in North America; and

"Whereas all hospitals associated with a city the size of Woodstock in southwestern Ontario have at least one CAT scan except for the Woodstock General Hospital;

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

"That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care approve the placement of a CAT scan at Woodstock General Hospital and provide the hospital with necessary operating funds to continue with its use."

I will attach my signature to this, as I totally agree with it.

1540

HIGHWAY 69

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it deals, again, with the multi-laning of Highway 69.

"Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines for the north; and

"Whereas the stretch of Highway 69 from Sudbury south to Parry Sound is a treacherous road with a trail of death and destruction; and

"Whereas the carnage on Highway 69 has been staggering; and

"Whereas over the last three years 46 people have died tragically along that stretch of highway; and

"Whereas so far this year 10 people have died between Sudbury and Parry Sound in car accidents; and

"Whereas the Harris-Eves government has shown gross irresponsibility in not four-laning the stretch of Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound; and

"Whereas immediate action is needed to prevent more needless loss of life; and

"Whereas it is the responsibility of a government to provide safe roads for its citizens, and the Harris-Eves government has failed to do so;

"Be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to urge the Eves government to begin construction immediately and four-lane Highway 69 between Sudbury and Parry Sound so that the carnage on Death Road North will cease."

I proudly give this petition to our page from Sudbury, Michael Schonberger, to bring to the table, and together we encourage everyone to drive very, very carefully along that stretch of highway.

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): My petition reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 77 passed second reading on June 28, 2001; and

"Whereas Bill 77, the Adoption Disclosure Statute Law Amendment Act, received committee hearings in November 2001; and

“Whereas Bill 77 addresses privacy concerns for those who wish to avoid or delay contact; and

“Whereas adoptees are dying from genetic diseases in the absence of their family medical history; and

“Whereas birth mothers were never promised confidentiality;

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

“Immediately call Bill 77, the Adoption Disclosure Statute Law Amendment Act, for third reading and final vote.”

I will of course sign my name to this petition, because I fully support it.

WATER TESTING

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Pine Meadows is a retirement community of 195 homes;

“Whereas Pine Meadows is self-contained with its own drinking water system and its own sewage facility;

“Whereas Pine Meadows’ water supply was classified as excellent and high quality by the department of health;

“Whereas prior to the Walkerton concern, Pine Meadows’ costs for water testing were \$40,000 per year;

“Whereas the current costs amount to \$88,000 per year;

“Whereas individual residents in Pine Meadows are charged \$451 per year for these multiple tests;

“Whereas Pine Meadows is being penalized to a greater extent than larger surrounding communities, eg, Fergus, Guelph and Kitchener;

“Whereas residents of Pine Meadows are living on fixed incomes;

“Whereas residents of Pine Meadows can ill afford the unnecessary cost escalation;

“Be it resolved that we, the undersigned, request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to limit the number and frequency of water testing procedures occurring upon an already healthy water system.”

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 increases.”

Hundreds and hundreds of individuals have signed these petitions from all across the riding, in such places as Wheatley, Tilbury and Harrow.

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): 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; ...

“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.”

I’m in full agreement and will sign my signature to this petition.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; it deals with the increase in co-payments in long-term-care facilities.

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid by seniors and 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 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 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;

“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 study.”

This is signed by a number of people in London and Milton. I agree with it, and have signed my name accordingly.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 37(a), I wish to advise the House of my dissatisfaction with the response of the Minister of Public Safety and Security to my question today, Monday, December 9. The reason for my dissatisfaction is that he did not answer the question nor the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Hopefully, you will file that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EXPENSES ACT (CABINET MINISTERS AND OPPOSITION LEADERS), 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR L’OBLIGATION DE RENDRE COMPTE DES DÉPENSES (MINISTRES ET CHEFS D’UN PARTI DE L’OPPOSITION)

Resuming the debate adjourned on December 5, 2002, on the motion for second reading of Bill 216, An Act respecting access to information, the review of expenses and the accountability of Cabinet ministers, Opposition leaders and certain other persons / Projet de loi 216, Loi concernant l’accès à l’information ainsi que l’examen des dépenses et l’obligation de rendre compte des ministres, des chefs d’un parti de l’opposition et de certaines autres personnes.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Further debate.

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): I welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill 216, An Act respecting access to information, the review of expenses and the accountability of Cabinet ministers, Opposition leaders and certain other persons. I think this is a good opportunity to speak about the bill, what’s in it and what’s not in it. I just want to say that basically this comes out of the disclosure that the former Minister of Tourism was found

spending extravagantly on hotels, steak dinners and so forth and other things were happening. Expenses by ministers were not being accounted for. There was no transparency. Through the freedom of information process, the member from Windsor, Sandra Pupatello, found out that these ministers were spending way beyond the norm.

As a result of this, the government is trying to say, “Well, we’re going to check this.” But this bill, in trying to check expenses, seems to be targeted more as a thing of getting back at the opposition for discovering these exorbitant expenses.

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Interestingly enough, in this legislation the expenses of former Premier Bob Rae are included for scrutiny by the Integrity Commissioner, and so are the expenses of former Liberal leader Lyn McLeod. Yet oddly enough, the expenses of cabinet minister Cam Jackson, who was the one who purportedly spent lavishly, are not included in this because he’s no longer a cabinet minister. So he’s exempt from this act, as is Premier Mike Harris, who was in government since 1995. This act obviously omits a number of members of the government or former members and tries to essentially go after the opposition side.

I would hope that the government perhaps gets rid of the accusation that this is meant just to bring an accountability chill over the opposition, and that they will include former Premier Harris in this, and all former cabinet ministers on the government side, if they’re serious about transparency and accountability. So we will see what happens with that.

Day after day we’ve seen incredible disclosures about what expenditures are actually filed by government members and are basically paid by the taxpayer. These are things like Smarties, movies—it just goes on and on. It’s almost the type of thing—if it weren’t so difficult for taxpayers trying to pay their bills, if they were to see what their money is being spent on they would be outraged. Filing after filing indicates that things are not taken very seriously when it comes to filing expense accounts. You wonder who they are thinking of.

We’ve got one MPP, who is a parliamentary assistant, who spent \$862 on a Palm Pilot and charged the taxpayers. Another MPP, a parliamentary assistant on the government side, charged \$178 for office supplies and to the Legislative Gift Shop for a mug, a souvenir plate, a glass. Former transportation minister Turnbull filed expense reports for food and alcohol at the Albany Club. Former transportation minister Brad Clark billed taxpayers for flowers. Dan Newman, when he was Minister of Northern Development, charged bulk candy purchases: \$23 for Smarties, \$16 for chewing gum. These are the types of things that are being charged to the taxpayer by members of the crown and parliamentary assistants.

I think something has to be done more than this government is doing to put a stop to this. We just see time and time again where it is impossible for the taxpayer to get at this information. They hide behind freedom of information where the taxpayer or the opposition

has to pay money to get the information the government has. This is public information, and they are charging the taxpayers thousands of dollars to find out what their money is being spent on. So the government reluctantly tries to block this information and charges so much money that the average person can't afford to find out where their tax dollars are going. This has been going on for years. For the last seven or eight years there has been a pattern of blocking information, and that's why they wanted to block it. When you're spending this kind of money on things like Smarties and everything under the sun, you know why they did not want the public to know this stuff. That's why they charge money to find out where the money is being spent. This government has again gone out of its way to make it impossible in some cases to find out information about what these ministers are spending.

One of the areas that's very obvious too: you find out that the ministers here have spent \$676 million on consulting companies. These are government tax dollars that are supposed to be transparent and there's supposed to be due process, yet these contracts are being let out. As the auditor says, the Provincial Auditor whom they're attacking because he told the truth, not only are these contracts exorbitant—and these are just the same thing as other expenditures of government money. Here's a case where the Management Board, which is supposed to be in charge of the other ministers—in August 2001, a consultant was paid \$14,000, twice for the same invoice. In another case, the Management Board permitted a consulting firm to significantly increase its rates for two of its consulting staff for a period of time. Then this government allowed one consultant to raise his rates—he raised his own rates; this is the consultant—from \$725 a day in April to \$1,800 a day in May to \$2,600 a day in September. This is what the consultants do. This is how seriously they treat taxpayers' money. It is just scandalous.

There are examples over and over again by the Provincial Auditor, who basically says that this is totally out of control; \$672 million spent by this government in expenditures that are impossible to get at. So if the public wanted to find out about these contracts, they could not. In fact, these contracts haven't been released, but the auditor—thank God for the auditor—has been able to get to these contracts and saw the gross waste of money that this government has perpetrated on the taxpayers of this province.

Over and over and over again we've got blatant examples of expenditures by ministers. The ministers are supposed to be in charge. I'll give you some other examples. This is the finance ministry. A math error in the finance ministry saw two financial advisers both get contracts for \$681,000. This was a \$681,000 math mistake made by the Ministry of Finance.

Then we see that another consultant was given a contract for \$3 million under the SuperBuild fund, a price which was double the lowest bid submitted for the work. So someone who bid \$1.5 million didn't get the contract.

The person who bid \$3 million got the contract. Why did that contract, twice as much, get the approval? These are the ministers, and that's why if you look at their expenses—and I think what they pay consultants should be included in this bill, because right now it's a free-for-all for consultants. They look at the ministers of the Ernie Eves-Mike Harris government, and the consultants all across this country smile because Christmas has come early and often for consultants from Santa Claus Ernie Eves. They have given these people blank cheques over and over again, whereas if you're a principal in a school trying to get your roof fixed, they say they have no money. If you're a senior who's in a nursing home, well, you have to get a 15% increase. They have no money to help seniors or kids in schools with leaky roofs, but if it comes to consultants, "Whatever you want." They even get twice what they ask for.

Look at another one. At least 15 senior consultants were paid \$1,200 a day to supervise other consultants. A senior civil servant performing the same job would have been paid \$340 a day.

If you look at what these ministers and their parliamentary assistants are spending on Smarties and Palm Pilots and dinners at the Albany Club, you'll see that they don't really care who gets the money, where it's spent; it is totally out of control. That's why when this government comes forward and says it wants an Act respecting access to information, the review of expenses and the accountability of Cabinet ministers, Opposition leaders and certain other persons, well, there is a whole area where they're spending literally a billion dollars a year on consultants under the sole control of these ministers. There is no scrutiny. There are no rules.

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Then if you try and get the contract—we've asked the minister responsible for all these contracts to make the terms of these contracts worth \$676 million public, to put them on the table. He refused. Why does he not want to put these contracts worth \$676 million on the table? He knows why he doesn't want to: because the Provincial Auditor, who has looked at some of them, is scandalized. The press has said that never in the history of this province has a Provincial Auditor found such gross mismanagement, such free spending without tender, without contracts. That's why there are all these expenses and why they don't want to really tighten up on this kind of stuff. They're pretending now, "We're going to go after the opposition leaders; we'll show them," because they don't want us to raise these issues. They don't want us to get at contracts they've signed. They don't want us to get at how much money they really spend as ministers and parliamentary assistants. They're trying to keep it all hidden because there's a lot of dirty linen there, folks. There's \$676 million that they tried to hide from the public.

Here's another example the Provincial Auditor found on how they control their expenditures. "At both the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Public Safety and Security, we found numerous examples of

payments to consultants that were made without a valid contract in place to indicate the terms and conditions of the consulting arrangement or exceeded the ceiling price of contracts. In one example, we found that payments totalling \$760,000 made by the Ministry of Public Safety and Security to a consulting firm were not supported by a formal agreement." So you can imagine giving someone a contract for \$760,000 without a formally signed contract. This is the government that's pretending now to clamp down on expenditures by all members of this House, supposedly, especially cabinet ministers and the opposition leaders, yet in here there's not a mention of consultants, where they have given systematically, untendered, without competition, with no watchdog, \$676 million of money that comes from the pockets of Ontario taxpayers that could have gone to build better roads, better public transit, better housing and better health care. Instead, they have thrown away \$676 million.

I challenge all the ministers here: if that money was well spent, show us all the contracts. If you show us those contracts for \$676 million, we'd then like to have a real debate on whether you got value for money. We know the Provincial Auditor has basically said in his report that you did not get value for money. This is not the opposition saying it. This is not the media saying it. This is the independent auditor of the provincial Legislature who does not report to government; he reports to this Legislature. As an independent auditor he has slammed this government not only for not getting value for money, but basically for not having or not obeying any rules when it comes not to \$1,000 or \$10,000 or \$10 million or \$100 million; basically there are no guidelines.

So when this government now says that they're going to put in some guidelines, I ask them why there are no guidelines here on what ministers expend not on their Smarties, not on their bills at the Albany Club; I want to know why there are no guidelines in this bill for \$676 million in consulting contracts, which are very clear in the auditor's report. It's very clear that essentially there is a free-for-all here. It's not just one ministry; it's ministry after ministry. The ministry in charge, Management Board, is the worst of all. They're the ones who are supposed to be the watchdog for the other ministries.

I don't think that in this province we have ever seen an indictment of the free-spending ways of a government—and not only free spending. Basically a lot of these contracts were done improperly or were given mistakenly, without following their own rules. They did not follow their own rules.

Time and time again we have examples of a government totally out of control when it comes to spending. Do you know why they can do it? Because they can assign these contracts behind closed doors. The Legislature never sees these contracts. They're never reported in any minutes. The public ask me, "How could you ever vote on these contracts?" Well, we don't vote on the contracts because these contracts are signed by ministers behind closed doors. That is frightening.

We saw today where one of the big consulting firms in Ontario, Enterprise Canada, got \$3 million worth of

contracts, among other things. Then they found out they were working the other side of the table with the energy firms, advising the energy firms and then advising the government. How can that be value for money when you've got one company hired by the government to advise them on energy policy—like hydro and natural gas—and they're also working for Direct Energy and private firms on the other side? This is a blatant conflict of interest because it points to the lack of any kind of scrutiny.

I think the root of it is that all these contracts are never going to see the light of day. This ministry, this minister and the government are refusing to let us see those contracts, because they would be ashamed. They know that the public would ask for their heads if they ever saw who these contracts went to, how they got them, and that they were refusing to let them be made public. It's just glaring.

You've got an editorial here: "Ontario betrayed by ballooning fees."

"The most obscene example of ignored warnings comes from the very ministry that has nickel and dimed welfare recipients for years.

"Peters"—the Provincial Auditor—"returned again this year to the issue of government fumbling over consulting contracts to private companies. The practice has ballooned from \$271 million in 1998 to a whopping \$662 million this year." It's just incredible.

Then you have situations where civil servants are let go or fired, as they were in the Ministry of Public Safety—40 of them were let go—and then they get rehired, in another case, at twice the amount of money. This is incredible. They're paying them this salary, they get fired, and then they get rewarded and come back as consultants. This is a total, flagrant example of how out of control it is.

"In the truly absurd category, how about the 15 consultants hired to supervise other consultants, at a daily rate of \$1,200. A salaried senior civil servant"—again, he was paid 340 bucks. The civil servants who could do the job get paid one third or one quarter of what the consultants do.

The other great one, which has been going on for about seven or eight years, is Andersen Consulting. This government has signed—I guess the contracts must be worth over half a billion dollars with Andersen Consulting. They have been claiming they're doing all these savings, but Andersen Consulting, which is now called Accenture, is supposed to be revamping its computer system. The government, in awarding these contracts to Andersen Consulting, doesn't even obey its own rules. The money they're paying them is totally obscene. They don't even know whether they're getting any value for this money, but Andersen Consulting says, "Oh yes, we did such a good job at Enron, we're going to do a great job for the province of Ontario too." They're still hiring this company, which is an offshoot of Enron. They give Enron a bad name, I think, the way they're hiring this group.

Over and over again, we've got all kinds of examples of a government that allows ministers to hire consultants without any kind of rules. And they don't come cheap. The contracts range anywhere from \$25,000 to tens of millions of dollars, and in the case of Accenture, almost half a billion dollars in contracts. There are no rules. In many cases, there are mistakes. In many cases, the one that offered the lowest tender doesn't get it, or the one that offered twice as much gets it over and over again.

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And then they have the gall to defend this. They think that it's all right for them to have this unfettered right to sign these secret contracts with consultants without any legislative scrutiny. I even challenged them at the public accounts committee to put these contracts on the table. They won't. Put them on the table of this House so we can see them. They will not table the \$676 million worth of contracts, because these contracts are a true abuse of power, an abuse of their control over these accounts. It is just beyond the norm, over and over again: hundreds of consultants paid salaries two to three times higher than the salaries of ministry employees; 40 Ministry of Public Safety employees returned at twice the salary; a contract not to exceed \$25,000 going on for three years to a total of \$455,000.

These ministers in this act are saying they now have this really tough act—they're going to cut back on their own ministers; they're going to cut down the opposition. But they don't have one word about the hundreds of millions they tender out to consultants. That is what is missing in this, because that's a lot more damning than what is happening in the other. It's damning to see what is being spent on restaurants and trips, what is being written off supposedly as government expenses, dinners and booze all over the country, all over the world. They say, "We're going to check that," but I don't believe them. If they're not including any checks on how they pay consultants, I don't think they're going to be watching their own people. They'll keep an eye on the opposition, because we raised this in the House, and they're trying to say, "We're going to watch you now too." Let's see them make these contracts public.

The most galling thing of all—here's a \$1.7-million contract issued by one ministry without any competition. SuperBuild, the ministry in charge of building: a \$681,000 adding mistake. Over and over again, we've got blatant examples of a government that is totally out of control.

We see, day in, day out, that there's essentially one rule for everybody else in this province, who have to tighten their belts and watch their expenses. If you're marginalized or poor or sick, they come after you and make sure you pay up. But if it's consultants' contracts or expenditures of ministers, there is no tightening of the belt; there are just gross expenditures daily. To spend \$676 million, you have to have a whole sophisticated system of this kind of spending.

It's every ministry that's doing it and getting away with it, basically without any rules. The Provincial

Auditor said this is just the tip of the iceberg. We challenge every ministry—

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour): Why did you say "every ministry" if he didn't look at every ministry?

Mr Colle: If he looked at every ministry, we would find hundreds of millions more dollars. If the Provincial Auditor had the time to look at every ministry, we'd probably find twice as much. But the other contracts will never see the light of day either. So you can imagine if you're in a small municipality or a small company—this is the public's company, and we can't even see these contracts that were signed. Who signed the contracts, for how much, to whom did they go and what work did they do? The astonishing thing would be to see how much value we got for \$676 million. And if you try to get the information, you have to pay for it. Over and over again, we've got expenses by ministers and parliamentary assistants. It was like a free-for-all, like a drunken bunch of sailors who had the ability to tap into the government treasury.

This is a province that's been saying to people, "We have to be frugal. We have to tighten our belts. We don't have money for schools. We don't have money to provide for the elderly in their nursing homes." Only one bath a week in nursing homes, yet they find hundreds of millions, probably millions every day, for contracts and expenditures by ministers. And look at the expenditures. We've seen it over and over again. If you look through what has been spent by ministers and parliamentary assistants, it is just beyond the pale and it goes on over and over again. Bar tabs; hotels, 16 times; the Royal York; Ruth's Chris Steakhouse; putting money on the tabs of the bureaucrats; trips to Japan, Arizona, Chicago by Premier Eves; Paris, France. There's no limit if you go over it. Then you go over what the parliamentary assistants and the ministers have spent: \$130,000, Minister Wilson; \$50,000, Rob Sampson; \$41,000, and on and on and on, all on the taxpayers' tab. Smarties, cocktails—there's no limit to it, whether it's hundreds of millions of dollars for consultants or even putting Smarties on a tab. That's incredible.

Here's a politician who went on a trip, and even the fee for his passport—the Minister of Labour, who is here, put 60 bucks for his Canadian passport in anticipation of a business trip to Rome and Siena for a mental health conference. So he put \$60 for a passport on his tab, a personal tab for a passport.

The Minister of Northern Development purchased, at the taxpayers' expense, the book *Podium Humour*, \$19; he put it on the taxpayers' tab. He purchased *A Dictionary of Important Theories*, \$24, on the taxpayers' tab.

There was another minister and a senior aide last July who went on a trip to Zurich, Munich, Newcastle and London, England. They billed their flights for \$11,000. There's no limit to the expenditures.

Now they say, "We're going to tighten up." The only reason they're going to tighten up or try to tighten up or pretend to tighten up is because they got caught, and they got caught because the opposition did their digging. They

tried to shut up the opposition; they tried to make sure the opposition didn't get this information out. The Provincial Auditor has said that these guys not only spend on their personal accounts, but as ministers they're spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year giving to their friends without tender these fat consulting contracts that they refuse to make public. I again challenge this government to table every one of those contracts with consultants. Let's see what you spent that \$676 million on. I would like that to be made public as soon as possible.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): I'm pleased to join the debate on Bill 216, the Accountability for Expenses Act, 2002. Let me begin by saying that the official opposition welcomes greater transparency and accountability in expenses filed using taxpayers' dollars.

The member for Brampton Centre, Mr Spina, was just heckling my colleague Mr Colle, and I would remind Mr Spina that he spent \$86,782 as a parliamentary assistant, not even as a minister. The Chair of Management Board was yelling at us, "Release your expenses." We do that every year, and it's detailed line for line. There are reporting accounts out of here every year and I'm quite happy to do that. I say to the Chair of Management Board, I in fact spent every penny of that budget on my constituency office, on providing services for my constituents and doing the routine business of a member of provincial Parliament.

This bill does in fact provide greater accountability but it is flawed in a couple of areas, and I'd like to use some of my time to address that. Certainly, as we reflect on this bill, the expense abuses of Mr Jackson and others show how out of touch the Eves government is with the people of this province. We want to make sure that this bill actually does what the government says it's going to do, because they're great at promoting a bill saying it'll do something when in fact it doesn't do that. Certainly in a couple of areas it falls short, and I'd like to review those for a minute.

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Former ministers, those who are no longer in cabinet, and former parliamentary assistants from June 26, 1995, to present day, are exempt from releasing this. Who are those people? Well, the biggest name is Mike Harris. Who was Mike Harris? This government likes to pretend that he was never here. They like to talk about a different way of doing government than they were doing, but the fact is they exempt that. The truth is, they're not fully FOIable and, for those listening, that's a freedom of information request. That process, as we have seen, is subject to flaw, it is subject to misinterpretation and it's subject to false information. For instance, last week—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Order. I can't hear the speaker. All right. It's Monday. Everybody is looking toward the end of the week, but I'm going to ask you to just kind of tone things down a little bit, please. Give the member the respect that he's entitled to. Sorry for the interruption.

Mr Duncan: Last week, the Chair of Management Board, in responding to a question that I had placed with

respect to expenses, answered by citing expenses from the Ministry of Labour in 1988 and 1989 and saying that I was employed there at the time, when in fact I wasn't. That is just one example of how those freedom of information requests can be exploited, blacked out and so on. So we have the bizarre situation that the expenses of a former Premier and former leader of the NDP, Mr Rae, must be tabled, but those of the former Premier who was a Conservative Premier, Mr Harris, do not have to be, fully for seven years.

Oh, another time allocation motion was just tabled on this bill, and let's see what this says. Are we going to have third reading debate? No, I don't think so. No further debate at such time. No third reading debate, no committee hearing. Interesting: this is the only government we can find in the history of this great province that's had to do time allocation on bills that all three parties support, and that's in the face of a relatively light legislative agenda. We've had a number of bills of course where they've had to, for instance, repeal their entire energy policy. We had the spectacle of this government repealing a major section of a budget bill—the pension. That's when they wanted to allow employers to grab surplus pensions. After prodding from the opposition, they finally withdrew the offensive part of the bill, a major part of the bill, a budget bill, which shows that this government in my view doesn't even have confidence in its own ability to govern. That's one of the many reasons why none of us should have confidence in this government's ability to govern, and that's why we are looking forward to the election that we are told the government is going to call probably toward the end of March. We look forward to debating these and other issues. We will be debating ethics in government as an important component of what it should be.

I was astounded in the course of my research over the last week when I discovered that a consulting firm that's being paid by the government to consult can be employed by private sector interests to lobby the same ministry that they're employed by. I say to the Chair of Management Board, in the interest of transparency and the interest of accountability, do what I asked you to do today and table those contracts so we can have a very close look at what they were saying and doing with the ministry versus what they were saying and doing with the private sector interests, who clearly wanted to—

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: Yes, here's a very good bill, Mr Bartolucci's Bill 2, An Act respecting Accountability for Ministerial Travel. I heard Mr Clark, the Minister of Labour, indicate that he was in Rome earlier and he expensed his passport. I and a number of us travelled, I should say—this is a matter of public record—with the Legislative Assembly committee this past spring. We were in Great Britain. We were in Scotland. We were in Wales. Do you know what? I had to renew my passport, and I paid for my own passport renewal. I wouldn't have billed that to the taxpayers. Hopefully, the Integrity Commissioner will see fit not to allow that kind of silly thing

to happen again. Passports are good for five years. If he did it this year and he's thrown out of office next year, which this government likely will be, he should at least reimburse the four fifths of the passport cost that he has charged off. It's a five-year passport so, in any event, he should do that.

We do know why the government exempted the parliamentary assistants who are no longer PAs: otherwise, they couldn't have got this bill through their own caucus. I can't imagine that a number of these people want to have their expenses released or least held accountable, the way Dalton McGuinty's are going to be. We welcome that, and I should say that very clearly. I know the third party welcomes that for its leader. We think that's a good process, and we think the idea of the Integrity Commissioner—although I must say we do need to talk about the Integrity Commissioner, his role in this Legislature and how that's going to work.

The government House leader has indicated a willingness to consider an amendment. There's one clause that allows the Integrity Commissioner to consult the government, the executive-in-council, but it doesn't allow the same consultation to happen with the opposition parties. Given that he is an officer of this assembly, we believe that he should be compelled to consult all three or any recognized political party, depending on how many there are in this House in future Parliaments.

There could be two parties. There may be a new mayor of Hamilton by this time next year. Any number of things could happen to change the political dynamic around here. I certainly know whom I'd like to see as mayor of Hamilton. Unfortunately, I am not a citizen of Hamilton and wouldn't dream of suggesting that—

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: No, but I am on the secret list of property taxpayers in Windsor. I'm on that secret list, but I'm not on the secret list in Hamilton.

Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury): The preferred list.

Mr Duncan: The preferred list, yes, indeed. I wouldn't want to interject and suggest that any colleague in this House is particularly well suited for that job, but there's certainly one in this House who I think is. I, of course, would wish that colleague well—

Mr Bartolucci: I think he'll be good.

Mr Duncan: I think he'd be a very good mayor as well. Hamilton is a great city, I might add. Hamilton is very much like my hometown of Windsor. We have a working-class city, a large union component in our city which we're very proud of.

Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture): They've got a football team.

Mr Duncan: Yes, and we do too. Ours plays on the other side of the border but we've actually had professional football longer than most parts of this country. My home, I should tell you—my home that's on the secret list; it's no longer a secret list—is actually closer to Ford Field than I would imagine the member for Hamilton West's home is to Ivor Wynne. We do enjoy

the benefits of living next to a large urban centre and all that goes with that.

I can't imagine in the state of Michigan a scenario like we have here in Ontario. I can't imagine a government of the state of Michigan repealing its electricity policy after it had been warned for four years that it wasn't going to work. I can't imagine that. The state of Michigan just elected a new Democratic governor, a Canadian-born woman who is a remarkably talented person, and they rejected the right-wing policies, the type we've seen coming from this government for the last seven years. I would suggest the people of Ontario will do the very same thing.

Again, I anticipate, and all my friends on the government side are telling me, that the election is going to happen at the end of March of next year. They're saying that. They're saying, "Get ready. Get your signs printed. We're going to come to an election." It will probably be called right before April 1. I would recommend and suggest the date might be April 24. The government backbenchers are saying that, so we fully anticipate that.

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This bill is an important step forward and we welcome it. We look forward to amendments that will provide for the coverage of Mr Harris, the former parliamentary assistants and the now former cabinet ministers. There could be obvious exemptions, I suppose, in certain circumstances. For instance, Mr Spina won't have to release or justify a single penny of the \$86,782 in expenses that he racked up between 1995 and 2002. My colleagues opposite are saying, "Dalton McGuinty should release his expenses." Well, we did. They were \$32,956. Let me tell you, that compares to Mr Spina's \$86,782. Mr Spina was the ninth-highest spender. He was exceeded only by cabinet ministers. That's correct: only by cabinet ministers. Even my leader was 30th on the overall list. So we'll release those detailed expenses. I should tell Mr Spina that Mr Stockwell has agreed to an amendment that would cover his expenses. We look forward to that amendment being brought forward in committee of the whole House, now that we're time-allocating this whole thing here.

We have to consider these expenses at this point. This is the last week that the House will be sitting. We are down to approximately seven or eight two-session days, perhaps a couple of midnight sittings which don't constitute sessional days. It's appropriate that in fact tonight we are addressing a bill that has been designed to somehow get the government out of a pickle. Mr Jackson had to resign earlier this fall as a result of his expenses. This bill is in direct response to that. Earlier today, third and final reading to Bill 210, the hydro bill, the bill that undid everything the Tory government has done over the last four years—a flip-flop of monumental proportions, one that's unparalleled, I think, in this. I've tried to reflect on similar situations. Yes, the NDP had their social contract, which represented a rather strange twist for that party. But this, this policy, in the face of very compelling criticism, right from the beginning—the gov-

ernment never did proceed with the Honourable Mr MacDonald's recommendations, someone for whom I have the highest regard. They never proceeded with that. They didn't listen. They bullied. They pushed things through as they've done on so many occasions.

What we've seen in this session: in addition to that, we've seen Bill 198, the government's budget bill, which had final passage today. That was a very interesting case. Part XXV of that bill, roughly I think 18 or 19 sections of the bill, gave employers the ability to reach into pension plan surpluses and take the surplus out. The government denied that was the case for a number of weeks, and under persistent questioning here in the House by my colleagues Mr Smitherman and the leader of my party, Mr McGuinty, with respect to that issue, the Minister of Finance, Mrs Ecker, just said, "No, you're wrong." Then she said, "No, you're wrong, but we're not going to proclaim the sections of the bill."

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We're debating Bill 216, not Bill 198. I'd ask that you remind the member of that, please.

The Acting Speaker: Sure, I'll remind the member. You are now reminded. Please continue. Thank you.

Mr Duncan: The bills are related. This bill, Bill 216, represents for the government an attempt to clean up, wash up, fix up a problem that they have—that they have—that was hidden from the public until we released it. In that sense, Bill 198 is another bill at the end of the session where the government had to clean up its own mess. The point I'm making, and the members opposite obviously don't want to talk about it, is that they had to repeal an entire section of their budget bill. That's unprecedented. Imagine that. Imagine the confidence convention of this place and other parliamentary institutions and the implication of that. This was after repeated questioning, after repeated opportunities offered by the opposition to do precisely what the government said it should do.

So this government is limping to the finish line on December 12, limping with a bill that reminds us of what happened earlier this year in terms of cabinet ministers' expenditures, and we finally will be trying to bring some semblance of order, accountability and transparency to a process, and all they're able to do is point fingers and say, "We want to see your expenses." Well, we want you to see them too, because we don't have anything to hide, and we want to see Mr Spina's expenses, we want to see Mr Mazzilli's expenses and we want to see Mr Harris's expenses for the last seven years, the same way we are being compelled to provide the expenses of our leader, which we are more than happy to do. We've already released the global figure for Mr McGuinty. We will comply by January 31 with the tenets of this particular piece of legislation.

Yet again we are faced, even as I am debating this bill, with a time allocation motion on this bill. I just want to again explain to those listening what time allocation is. That's cutting off debate, shutting down the opportunity for members to speak. There are about a dozen members

in the Liberal caucus, I suspect, who wanted to speak to this bill who will not have the opportunity now. That opportunity is gone because of this time allocation, this guillotine bill, this attempt to stifle debate, to limit the ability of members to participate in the discussion. What's particularly sad about it is that over the course of events—on the budget bill, they had to go to committee of the whole and then waive their own time allocation motion, because they had shut down debate on that and they wouldn't allow third reading debate.

Looking over the order paper for the last several months, we've had no third reading debate on most major pieces of legislation. Well, why have a third reading process if that's what you're going to do? What's particularly ironic about this is that again we have a bill which all three parties—perhaps I shouldn't speak for the third party; I believe we're all going to support the bill—can support, and they're time-allocating it; they're cutting off debate. That's because they don't want to be here a minute past the earliest hour on December 12, because that means they will have to answer more questions during question period and participate in the broader public debate.

So my colleague, and friend I might add, the government House leader, has the distinction of having introduced a number of time allocation motions this session on bills which all three parties support—absolutely unprecedented in this House or most other places. It would be funny if it weren't so serious. It would be funny if we weren't taking away the ability of members to speak on a bill, because that's what it does. People are elected and are sent here to represent people, and they don't have the opportunity to fully participate.

So transparency and accountability are themes in this bill. Those are the government's themes in this bill. I would challenge Mr Spina to release his expenses for those seven years, detailed invoices, and we'd be happy to explore that more. As I say, I've had indications from the government that in fact they're prepared to entertain a motion to that effect. Even if it's not, I would imagine a member would want to do that just to save us doing it by FOI—

Mr Spina: It's done.

Mr Duncan: I'd ask him to bring them forward if it's done, because we have not seen them yet.

So accountability and transparency are in fact major themes and ethics are a major issue in elections. Ethics are a major consideration that voters have when they go to the polls. I would submit that this government's ethical record is highly, highly questionable.

My leader, Dalton McGuinty, will bring a new level of ethics and competency to government that has been fully lacking for the last seven years. When we table his full, detailed expenses on January 31, I fully expect to see Mr Harris's expenses for the last seven years tabled. That would be really nice to see; to see those released as they're compelling others: Mr Hampton, Mr McGuinty, Mr Rae—poor Bob Rae. He's not even here any more, and they want to kick him around a bit more, which is

fine. I'm sure he'll comply. He has nothing to hide. I wonder why they didn't include Mike Harris's expenses here. I wonder why the Chair of Management Board didn't include former parliamentary assistants.

As I said, the government House leader has indicated a willingness to entertain an amendment. We will certainly put that amendment if given the opportunity. We'll seek to go into committee of the whole House, because right now we've just been given a time allocation motion, which means there will be no more debate at third reading, there will be no committee hearing on this bill. The cover-up continues on the Harris expenditures and others, which, even though they're FOIable, are certainly not easy to get at and are subject to, in my view, in my estimation, manipulation of the worst order, the kind of manipulation the Chair of Management Board said last week, when he said expenses incurred by the Ministry of Labour I was part of—

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: You weren't part of the Ministry of Labour at all.

1640

Mr Duncan: In fact, I wasn't here then. In 1988, 1989, no; I was gone long from here. It's unfortunate that those things are subject to that sort of manipulation—interpretation, if you will.

But back to the themes of transparency and accountability. Another part of that theme this week was the auditor's report, which again deals with transparency and accountability. In addition to the scandal surrounding ministerial expenses, in addition to the flip-flop on energy policy, in addition to taking the pension section of their own budget bill out, in addition to jamming more legislation through this House with no third reading debate, no committee hearings, we now find out that the Provincial Auditor says the Harris-Eves government is wasting hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars: \$662 million on consultants last year, an increase from almost \$400 million in 1998. The government refuses to table the contracts. We've asked for those contracts. They won't table them.

Another set of contracts we've asked for—let's talk about transparency and accountability—is MFP. There's something going on here in Toronto right now, an inquiry into leases regarding computer equipment, police radios and so on. The government of Ontario has contracts for the very same thing with MFP, across ministries I believe. I don't have my notes in front of me, but the Sol Gen was the largest ministry having dealings with MFP. I've asked repeatedly for the government to release those contracts. We tried to get them under FOI and were denied. Why? Because of a third-party intervention. Well, I'd speculate that third-party intervention comes from somebody directly associated with the contracts, though we can't find that out. So again I say, if it's transparency and accountability you're interested in, table the MFP contracts as well.

We have a government in the last, waning months of its mandate, a government that has lurched from crisis to crisis this fall. I can't think of one achievement the

government has had, one item that the government could point to and say, "That's a victory," or "That's a win for us." We have seen a government brought down, and I say that the people of Ontario will remember all aspects of the record and the government's legitimate role in successes and failures in the past and will cast—I hope we get the chance to go to the polls. I know government members are saying it's going to be March. I hope we get to go to an election to determine these things. The government is doing everything it can to clear off every piece, every item on the order paper right now. I believe it's time to give the people a say, because we've all put our cases and we're getting to the point where we're repeating things. The last four months have probably been one of the most mismanaged sessions I've ever seen here, both as a member and watching from outside.

So it is time for an election. It is time for a new vision. It is time for new ideals and for new values. Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals represent the real and meaningful change there. We have laid out policies now with respect to education. We have detailed policies with respect to our communities. We have released policies with respect to a democratic charter that would see the kinds of abuses that we've seen in this House—things like this time allocation motion, which will prohibit third reading debate, will prohibit committee hearings on important legislation—restricted greatly from where they are right now.

I'm always reminded that previous governments, whether the NDP government of Mr Rae or the Liberal government of David Peterson or indeed the Conservative government of the great Premier William Davis, rarely, if ever, used time allocation—rarely, if ever.

Mr Bartolucci: Peterson used it twice.

Mr Duncan: Peterson used it twice. I believe Mr Rae was in the magnitude of 10 or 11 times. Mr Davis, with his mandates, both minority and majority mandates, rarely used the tool either.

You know, people often talk about the decorum in this place and why members do things that appear to be childish. Well, that's because we haven't got the ability to debate things properly. The whip for my party, Mr Bartolucci, who has a number of outstanding private member's bills on the order paper, has told me that about a dozen of our members would have liked the opportunity to discuss this bill. They won't get that opportunity.

It's a bill that, remarkably and regrettably, I suspect—and again, I shouldn't speak for the third party—has the support of all three parties. There have certainly been a number of instances earlier in the session when bills of that nature have had all-party support but have been time-allocated. As I say, I've never seen anything quite like it.

We are confronted by a government that is using the last few days of its legislative time to clean up a mess that it created, just as we spent the last three months. That's why Bill 216 is so similar to the hydro bill and the budget bill. It's a theme. It's about a government that doesn't lead. It's about a government that's bereft of

ideas. It's also about an opposition with new ideas, new leadership and a willingness to take over. It's about Dalton McGuinty being the next Premier of this province and providing the kind of leadership that has been sadly lacking on the other side of the House.

It's about new priorities for Ontario. It's about putting the interests of working families ahead of special interests, like Enterprise Canada. Isn't it amazing: we discover this week that a consultant who is being paid as a consultant by the government can in fact be paid by private sector interests to lobby the government via the same ministry. And again, they refuse to release the contracts. They refuse to talk about that. It's about a government that has the stench of rot to the core.

It's time for a change, and that change will be led by Dalton McGuinty, with progressive new policies as outlined. For instance, in education we will cap the primary grades to 20 students. We will put 1,000 new police officers on the streets in this province. We will hire more crown attorneys. We will put a greenbelt around Toronto to truly protect the moraine and give the people of the greater Toronto area, which is such a magnificent part of this economy and this province, the sense, the belief, that their water system will be protected.

Isn't it ironic that this week we will pass the clean water legislation, which came about because seven people died in Walkerton and hundreds were left ill? Again, the chief medical officer of health said to this government that when he attempted to bring the issue to the Premier's attention—

Mr Spina: He wasn't doing his job.

Mr Duncan: —the Premier turned his head away. Well, the people of Ontario won't forget that, any more than they'll forget Mr Spina's expenses, any more than they'll forget the flip-flop on pensions in the budget, any more than they'll forget the energy fiasco this government manufactured and now is attempting to dig itself out of. The people of Ontario won't forget that.

But most importantly, the people of Ontario will look for new leadership from a man like Dalton McGuinty, who won't need legislation like this for his ministers any more because it would have been in place already—the type of leadership that will restore to government the ethics and confidence which have been sorely lacking in this province for seven long and painful years.

The Acting Speaker: It is now time for questions and comments. Members have up to two minutes each.

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): I listened to the two previous speakers on this issue, and although they did from time to time stray just a little from the topic, there was a kernel of truth in what they had to say. I think what was most important in both their speeches is that they touched on the fact that by December 31, 2002, the Integrity Commissioner will have access to all expenses dating back to June 26, 1995, for the following people: any minister or parliamentary assistant or member of their staff, as of November 28, 2002, and every person who held office as opposition leader and their staff since June 26, 1995.

Quite clearly and carefully, what they said about the former Premier, Mike Harris, is true: he is not included. He should be included. I think the people of this province will be demanding to know how he spent his money while in office. It is only fair that if the opposition leaders—Lyn McLeod and Dalton McGuinty from the Liberals and Bob Rae and Howard Hampton from the NDP—are going to have their expenses under the freedom of information act, it is absolutely and abundantly clear that Mike Harris should have his expenses under that same act as well. To leave that out, I would suggest, taints the entire process. One has a choice. One has a choice to leave them all out or to include them all. But one cannot choose that that one person of such tremendous influence in this province be literally left out, a person who was in charge for seven long years, a person who was in charge during very difficult times for a lot of people and organizations. Clearly he should be the subject of the same guidelines and the same rules as everyone else. I would suggest the government should include that amendment to make this act even better than perhaps it already is.

1650

Mr Spina: For this member to accuse the civil servants of collusion is tantamount to accusing them of breaking the law, because, sir, they are not permitted to do so, and I remind you of that.

Secondly, with respect to my expenses, I make no apology. All my expenses have been FOIed, released and published. In fact, I would like to remind the member that the list that you sent to the newspaper in Brampton, the list that you sent, was clearly detailed. I make no apologies for doing the work of government.

I was given specific responsibilities by the ministers of the day. I travelled from Mattawa to Kenora in northern development, in tourism, and as the PA for small business. I have done it all in six different ministries. I do not accept any criticism for doing a responsible job, particularly for the people of northern Ontario, who had no voice in the government other than the Premier of the day himself. My expenses are clean, sir; in fact, if you want to know how much I had to pay back, here's your 35 bucks, because that's the limit of what you are going to find in my expenses. Tell your researchers to get off their backsides and dig through it, because that's exactly what they will find.

I know what I have claimed. I know what I'm entitled to. I know the good job that I do for the government of Ontario and for the people of this province.

I want to remind the member about the comment made by the newspaper in December 1989 about the Liberals: "This was the crew who promised to be different and blow away wasteful Tory traditions, to spend each buck as if it was theirs." That was a comment made about the Liberal government in 1989. Go blow that stuff somewhere else.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I've let a little latitude, and now I regret it, as usual. So I'm going to ask every-

body to give the respect that every member standing is entitled to.

The member for Sudbury.

Mr Bartolucci: Certainly, Speaker, I'll try to bring it back to order and indicate that the member from Windsor-St Clair, the Liberal House leader, Dwight Duncan, has made a compelling case why the people of Ontario should elect a different government. I believe his case has been added to by the member from Brampton Centre, Mr Spina. I honestly believe that the House leader for the Liberal Party has outlined in a very fair, open way why the people of Ontario should be very, very concerned with the way the Harris-Eves government handles money, especially people's money when we deal with their expenses.

Do you know what I'm really, really concerned about with Bill 216? It's that when they had the chance on April 23, 2001, when I introduced Bill 2, An Act respecting Accountability for Ministerial Travel, they didn't act as a government on this. You effectively spoke in support of it. You said how important it was to be accountable. You said how important it was for the people of Ontario to know how their money is being spent by their elected ministers. We had a second reading debate on April 26, and everybody in this House supported it. We on this side of the House wanted it to go to a committee so that we could have frank and open discussions so that we could improve upon this bill, my Bill 2. You chose instead to bury that at committee of the whole.

In other words, you really didn't want accountability. Then you were caught with several hands in the cookie jars and all of a sudden we're concerned about accountability. My bill is a reasoned amendment that I would hope we will be putting forth very shortly.

The Acting Speaker: Before I go any further, the member who is about to stand up, the member for Timmins-James Bay: I think he just had a cellphone in his hand and actually made a call. If that's what happened, I'm going to give you a chance to deny it, because you're at the other end of the House. But, boy, that better not have happened and I'd better not see that thing come out again. If it does, you're going out of here with it.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): No, actually it's a Palm Pilot. I was doing something on my Palm Pilot. Sorry about that. I'll be more discreet about the use of my Palm Pilot.

You took me a little bit off-kilter here, because I wanted to say—anyway, let me get back to the point of the debate here. I quite frankly find this whole debate a little bit troubling, because what we're doing in this Legislature by way of this debate, I think, is demeaning all of us. We're all sitting here pointing our fingers across the aisle and saying, "We're more pure than you, and we're better, and we've never done anything wrong, and it's only them; oh, not us."

I think we all look the same when we get into these debates, and I quite frankly regret that we're having this debate in the way that we're doing. If we want to talk

about a system of accountability, fine; nobody's going to argue on either side of the House that we don't have to be as accountable as humanly possible and as transparent as possible when it comes to being able to make sure we're judicious with the taxpayers' dollars. That's not the argument.

I think that when we get into this whole debate that "I'm better than you; I spent less than you; you spent more than me"—the reality is that different members have different needs. I live in northern Ontario. My expenses, like Mr Bartolucci's, like Ms Martel's and a whole bunch of others, are higher than anybody else's by nature of where we live.

I listened to the member who was the former parliamentary assistant to northern development and mines. I accept that he's going to spend far more money as a parliamentary assistant in that ministry than he would in a ministry that doesn't travel as much.

If we want to get into a debate about how we make the system more transparent, I am more than prepared to get into that debate and I think it's great. But to get into a debate where we say that we, as public servants—because that's what we are as elected officials—shouldn't be able to expense anything when it comes to our travel, I think is a bit beyond the pale.

The reality is that you eat when you're on the road, you need a hotel room, you've got to pay mileage, you've got to pay airplane fare or whatever it might be, and to somehow suggest that doing those expenditures is wrong I think demeans all of us. I really regret that we're having that kind of debate.

The Acting Speaker: Now one of the original speakers has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr Duncan: I'm pleased to have the chance to respond. Accountability and transparency are important and they've lacked. They have lacked in the area of ministerial expense and accountability. There's no question. If this situation hadn't been provoked, this debate wouldn't have to be happening. It's here now, it's before us, and I would submit that the bill does not suggest, and no one is arguing for a moment, that we shouldn't be spending money. This bill doesn't do that. It simply provides for proper accountability and mechanisms.

I understand what the government said, that the Chair of Management Board has said that there have been fuzzy, unclear guidelines for many years. We welcome this. We welcome the opportunity to compare, because I think that is a legitimate issue. I think it is legitimate because we are challenged to manage the taxpayers' money properly.

I would remind you, I would remind all members, that this is the government that on the one hand has preached restraint. It has preached restraint on school boards. We have supervisors in the three largest school boards of the province. This is a government that has talked a game about welfare recipients, cut their benefits 22%, set up snitch lines to call. This is about double standards. I would suggest to all members that the parliamentary assistant to a minister ought not be spending more than the minister, or several ministers.

Interjection.

Mr Duncan: Yes, it is subject, but unfortunately the bill exempts that parliamentary assistant and it exempts the former Premier. It's a double standard. I do agree with the member for Timmins-James Bay that it's a bit of a gotcha, and that's unfortunate. It's unfortunate that this debate has to happen at all. We should be debating the real issues, but they've time-allocated all of them, so we can't.

We'll support this bill. It's an important step forward. But this is a government that is clearly out of control.

1700

The Acting Speaker: The floor is now open for further debate and to recognize the member for Beaches-East York for what I believe is the leadoff speech of the third party.

Mr Prue: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to speak to this bill, and I should advise that I will be sharing some of my time with other members of the caucus.

This is an important bill. I'm glad that the debate in the last couple of minutes has started to tone down just a little, because all of us in this Legislature will be either supported or demeaned by what is said here today. It is very easy for people out there who aren't in government, who don't like government or who make their living by selling newspapers or through the media to question government expense and people, as I suppose they have the right to do and as many times they should. But government is a business, just like if you were running IBM or any large corporation in this country. It requires one to have expenses, it requires from time to time that one travels and it requires that one represents the business, and in this case the people of Ontario. However, it is important that we lay down very clear guidelines, which in my belief did not exist before this bill, so that everyone understands what those guidelines are and so that the general public and the media can understand as well what they are and what they can come to expect from their politicians, the people in this Legislature and those who work for them.

I stood earlier to comment on a previous speaker and talked about the one glaring aspect of this bill that needs to be remedied. I stand to talk about it again as my first item. What has not been remedied and what is glaring and obvious to anyone who reads this bill is that it exempts the former Premier of this province, Mr Mike Harris, who was Premier from 1995 until just earlier this year. He is not the subject of freedom-of-information requests. Others are, others who are no longer in government, like former Premier Bob Rae, who is subject to this. Others who are leaving government, like the member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan, Lynn McLeod, when she was the leader of the Liberal Party, are not exempted from this bill, nor are current leaders Howard Hampton and Dalton McGuinty exempted from this bill. It would seem very clear to me that a person who exercises so much power, a person who had believers on so many operations in this government, should have his expenses audited like everyone else. To leave them out is to do a

disservice to this Legislature. To leave them out is to make the entire bill far less meaningful than it can and should be.

All members of this House should be mindful of how they are spending taxpayers' money, but especially mindful should be those who are in charge, and ultimately the person who was in charge for all of the period under question, going back to 1995, save and except for the last several months, Premier and former Premier Mike Harris. He was a man, and I agree with what the previous speaker had to say, who presided over a lot of pain in this province—a lot of pain to amalgamated cities and the people who fought them; a lot of pain to the cities and towns that were downloaded with services that they're having difficulty in paying for to this day; a lot of pain to the children in our education system and to the parents who worry that the schooling they're getting today is not as good as the schooling they once got; a lot of pain to those on welfare who had their monies cut by 22% and who continue to exist far, far below the poverty level, almost always in hunger and in want; and to our disabled, who have not had an increase in some eight years, and all the cancelled social housing that was done in 1995, so that people do not have decent and clean places in which to live.

That is the person who was there. Those people need to know that during all that pain they existed through, that they were forced to endure, someone was not living high in the lap of luxury.

I believe with all my heart that former Premier Mike Harris should put his expenses forward and the people who are under that pain should know whether or not he suffered the same consequences, whether he underwent the same problems they did. Obviously he would not have, because his salary alone would have protected him, but they need to know that he wasn't living high on the hog, with expensive golf club dates and foreign trips and everything else. That needs to come forward. I would suggest to the members opposite that if you put that into the bill, if you have the guts to put that into the bill, and you put everyone else through the same scrutiny, then you will get not only the support of this side of the House but also the support of Ontarians across this entire province.

This bill does some good things, and I believe that my caucus in all likelihood, depending on what happens to the bill, whether it goes to committee, whether there are amendments made to it—I hope there are. I hope the public is heard on the bill as well, although given the fact that almost everything is time allocated, I'm not going to hold my breath. It does some good things. It includes cabinet ministers. All of those who are in cabinet will now be subject to freedom of information, as will parliamentary assistants, as will opposition leaders and, I think most importantly, the staff who work for all of those people. It will be incumbent upon them to keep clear and meaningful records of where the money is spent so that there cannot be aspersions cast upon any members in this House, because when aspersions are cast on one of us,

they are cast quite literally on all of us. When a cabinet minister is forced to resign over questionable spending, then it looks bad on all people in public life.

Last week I went to a small, little Christmas luncheon. A man of 90 years of age was present, or just about 90 years of age; quite a remarkable man. He lives in the Leaside area of East York. He told me that he was ashamed he had to tell me, but he felt he had to tell me, that in the last few weeks he has changed his mind, after 90-some years, on his respect for politicians. He changed his mind because of some of the things that were said in this Legislature. He changed his mind because of what was happening in Ottawa and the whole boondoggle around gun control and how much money was being spent, and I guess the fiasco of the federal government from time to time. He changed his mind because of the MFP inquiry in Toronto and the mayor who was called as a witness who did not assume any type of responsibility for the actions that were clearly under his administration.

He told me that for the first time in his life—and remember, he's 90 years old this spring—he was ashamed of our politicians. He wanted to know what I would do or what we could do to get the feeling that he used to have in his younger life of politicians whom he looked up to and whom he admired; politicians who did things for the province, for the city or for the federal government; politicians who worked in the name of the people; and politicians who are not, as he put it, on the take or seeing what they could get for themselves.

It struck home to me that he is not atypical. He is probably your average citizen who is worried about what is perceived to be a decline in standards. This bill hopefully will bring that back, not only for the members of this Legislature but for the people who work for each of us. We have that responsibility, whether they be our researchers or people who work personally for one of the leaders, to make sure that they are acting at all times in the best interests of the people of this province. I believe everyone should be under the scrutiny of freedom of information, every single politician, every single member of staff of a politician, and that most especially includes former Premier Mike Harris.

1710

As a municipal politician for some 14 years before I came into this chamber, which I still continue to look around at in complete awe—you look and find little carvings on the wall you didn't notice the day before; it's really quite an august and wonderful place. As municipal politicians, we had constraints upon us as well. I would suggest that most of the municipal politicians in Ontario, in all our 400-plus cities and towns and regions, work extremely hard, and they have expenses as well. Perhaps we as provincial politicians should emulate some of them. Every year most municipalities require that the expenses of their locally elected people be put out for public scrutiny. Those bills are put out and you can look down the list. In Toronto, the Toronto Star, the Sun and the Globe and Mail publish yearly the list of politicians and how much money they spent.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: They're summaries, just summaries.

Mr Prue: They are summaries, I grant, but anyone can go beyond the summaries and look at what actually was spent.

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): No.

Mr Prue: Yes, they can. The summaries are out there, and you can see which politicians spend the most money, which politicians spend the least money and which politicians are in the centre.

There is another thing municipal politicians do that maybe this Legislature should look at from time to time; that is, in many jurisdictions, although not all of them, when a trip or a convention or something outside the region or municipality is undertaken, if there is not a budget in the politician's local global budget to attend, then the council itself must make a decision whether or not to send that politician or group of politicians. There is often a debate—

Interjection.

Mr Prue: I'm sorry. I didn't hear the muttering. Was it a good one or not?

Interjection: It was a good one.

Mr Prue: All right. I'm sure, but I wish he would mutter it a little louder so I could enjoy it too.

Interjection: You may not, Michael.

Mr Prue: All right. I'll mutter when you get up.

There is almost always a debate on how many politicians to send, whether it be the FCM conference or whether it be a conference of cities around the world. There is a debate about whether one is too many or two is not enough. We should perhaps be getting into these kinds of debates as well, because oftentimes it has been my experience that we should be attending conferences and conventions, we should be going to fly the Ontario flag, not only in this country but also potentially in other ones as well. But the money should be spent wisely. We should be there to give the Ontario perspective, but oftentimes we do not, I would suggest, have to have legions of people when one or two will do.

That brings me back, though, to where we should be going. We should clearly be on the side of expending money wisely and smartly, and we should not be there to over-expend it. It is important, however, that Ontario at all times be represented. It is equally important, perhaps even more important, that Ontarians feel that that representation is meaningful and that the money has been spent in such a way that it promotes our interests, either our interest in bringing new industry to Ontario or our interest in finding new technologies or new ways of providing government services or something that needs to be brought home. I would suggest that if that is done, the public angst about dinners at expensive steakhouses or bottles of wine that cost too much perhaps would be lessened.

This brings me to the next part: the allowable expenses of this bill. The allowable expenses list the word "prudent," that the expenses must be "prudent." I wonder

sometimes what that means, and I've tried to figure it out.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: It means careful.

Mr Prue: It means careful.

Ms Mushinski: It means wise.

Mr Prue: It means wise too to you. OK. The word means a lot of things to many people, but that is the word that is used. Then one questions, as the rest of the bill unfolds, whether or not the expenses can be seen to be wise, whether they are standard business accounting expenses or whether they're not. I'd just like to go through some of those.

There is a "strict"—and I put that in quotes—ban on alcohol for an individual member to have a glass of wine or something with his or her dinner after a hard and gruelling day on the road. However, there is no such ban when it involves hospitality—hospitality with a whole list of persons which I'm going to go through. So if you are by yourself on a lonely highway after a hard and gruelling day of driving around, as Mr Spina suggests, in northern Ontario for eight or 10 hours, to go from one location to another, stop at a small restaurant and have a \$10 meal and a beer, you can't have that beer. I understand why you can't have that beer, because the taxpayer obviously shouldn't pay for it. But on the contrary, if you are driving around in southern Ontario, eastern Ontario or northern Ontario again and you are subject to hospitality, where you go out with someone else, not only would the definition of the meal change, but so would the ability to have alcohol.

The list of people, and it's listed for government persons, has a whole bunch of other definitions. It includes "incurred for a work-related purpose." What is a work-related purpose? Is a work-related purpose the fact that you sit down with someone from another town and discuss government business? If so, how much government business needs to be discussed? It says that it needs to be a modest and prudent use of public funds.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: That should be self-evident.

Mr Prue: It should be self-evident?

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: To most people.

Mr Prue: I'm questioning so it's part of the public record and so it is self-evident not only to myself but also to everyone in this room and hopefully to everyone watching television as well. It must be a modest, prudent use of public funds and it does not include alcohol.

But then there is a whole list of people that this goes on to talk about where it does not necessarily fit. I understand and empathize with whoever wrote the bill and whoever thought of bringing this forward why it doesn't necessarily fit. I would hope the members of the fourth and fifth estates and people watching this on television would understand that a government employee, whether it be a member of the Legislature, one of the staff or a civil senior servant, someone acting on behalf of the government, from time to time will have to do business in a way in which business is normally done not only in North America but throughout the world.

There is a whole list of people who can be feted beyond a simple meal. Those include other governments, so that if a member of this House were to entertain other governments, whether they be other provincial governments, municipal governments, I guess federal governments and even international governments, that type of feting would be allowable under this act. For dealing with members of the public sector, public interest groups, industry, labour, national and international organizations, charities and formal conferences, the member would be allowed to interface with them at something less than a prudent use of public funds.

The reason I'm raising this is not to criticize the bill but perhaps to help explain the bill, not to the members opposite but perhaps to those who are listening. It is necessary from time to time that groups interact with cabinet members and members of the Legislature and that quite normally and naturally this may include hospitality. As I said earlier, I came from the municipal sector and this was not at all uncommon. It was not and should not be uncommon for a mayor or a group of councillors to go and try to get a new factory to locate in their town or city. They may have to travel, and some do, a great deal of distance. I know the mayor of Toronto went to Los Angeles to try to convince the movie industry to come here to make more films. By all accounts, that travel and expenditure were probably wise. Even though what seemed to be a significant amount of money was spent, it did pay many times the return in the number of movie shoots that can be seen on the streets of Toronto. And with all the difficulties we have with those in terms of parking and traffic and noise, and perhaps the little bit of pollution that they engender, it is still a good thing for the economy of this city.

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That is the type of example where money must be spent in order to make money. But I also have seen others where the travel was little more than a junket, when the person came back sometimes empty—and you don't win on every trip—because there really was no expectation of getting anything at all. Those are the types of things that we—

Interjection.

Mr Prue: Excuse me. I can't hear your muttering either. If you're going to heckle me, at least do it loudly enough to be heard.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): We're talking about municipal politicians' junkets.

Mr Prue: With the greatest of respect, there are some at the municipal level; there are some at the provincial and federal levels as well. What we need to do and what I'm trying to say is that we need to get away from those which clearly have no benefit and that are seen by the public and by the press, quite wisely, as simply wanting to go to a sunny or great location in order to see it. With the greatest of respect, I think we have to be better than that.

That brings me to the next point. I've only been here some 14 months, but I have seen—

Applause.

Mr Prue: Are you clapping because I've only been here 14 or because I've made so much impact in 14? I hope it's the latter.

Obviously, I cannot speak for all members of the Legislature, but I want to say that I have been very impressed how most if not all of the members of this Legislature have spent their money and what they have done in their travels. The work is gruelling, the work is extremely difficult and the province is very large. In order to see this province and do justice to the people of this province, it does require an enormous amount of travelling. That's one of the things I have discovered in my short 14 months. Trips even just to Windsor take five hours, and all of the little side trips to go to the towns I've gone through to talk about urban visions, or to eastern Ontario or to the north. This province is an enormous place and the travel within the province is really quite great. It takes a lot of stamina to be a politician and a lot of being away from your family for long periods of time.

One needs to recognize that in that travel there will be expenses. There will be expenses to represent Ontario. There will be conferences coming up during the spring, and there was even something in the print media today questioning whether Ontario should be represented at a conference in Australia. I would suggest that it is not untoward to send someone there, provided that something can be gained or learned and brought back to be of benefit to the people of this province. If we go there with no intention of doing that, then it is little more than a junket and of course we should not be party to that.

I've also been very impressed by the association of francophone assemblies and the number of times that travel is undertaken to monitor elections that Ontario is part of and the building of the worldwide Francophonie and what is involved there. It seems to me that that too is a legitimate use of government funds.

I went on to read the bill, and there were other things in there that were intriguing and that I agree with. One was that the consumption of and expenditure on alcohol should normally be less than the cost of the food. I would suggest that this is a prudent thing to say, because there is a whole range of alcohol that can be sold or imbibed at meetings which other governments, the public sector, interest groups, industry, labour, national and international organizations, charities and formal conferences might do, but it does not have to be expensive and certainly should not involve \$1,500 and \$200 bottles of wine. Clearly, if a glass of wine is in order, a glass of Ontario wine is in order, and really that is the limit to which we should go.

There is more here on the hotels. This is always a controversial item. I would suggest that I think there needs to be a little bit better balance than the writers of this legislation have put forward. What they said quite clearly is that there needs to be a balance of economy plus the status of the minister. They need to be balanced. I guess if you are a minister in the inner cabinet, you

need to stay at a five-star hotel versus a four-star hotel if you're a parliamentary assistant, a three-star hotel perhaps if you're a committee Chair and a two-star hotel—I don't know—if you are a lowly backbencher. I'm not sure what that means. Perhaps that should be clarified because, with the greatest of respect, I think a clean hotel is what should be asked for; a clean hotel, and not necessarily a luxurious hotel.

Mr Bisson: I've seen some two-star hotels, and I'll tell you.

Mr Prue: I think that's what needs to be worked into this legislation. It is, of course, mandatory that someone has a place to sleep, as our homeless would tell you. It's important to have a roof over your head, but it should not be at five-star hotels when there are options. I would suggest that when most travel in this province and country, in almost every city and town there are options.

It goes on—and I think they should revisit this one, because I do have a little bit of a problem with this—include the expenses of spouses. When the spouse is required to be at an official function, those expenses are paid for; I guess if there is a gala and they say, "We'd like your wife or your husband to come with you to the gala so that you can walk in." With the greatest of respect, I know our spouses all put up with a great deal from all of us in this place, not being home sometimes for days and weeks on end, but to expenditure this for the purpose of attending gala dinners or to have a partner with you at those dinners seems to me to be an untoward expense for the taxpayers of the province.

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: That's the Monte Kwinter-David Peterson exception.

Mr Prue: I don't know the David Peterson exception. I'm only speaking for myself personally and perhaps—

Hon Mr Tsubouchi: Monte took his wife to Italy.

Mr Prue: I hope Hansard caught that, because all I caught was "a wife in Italy."

Mr Bisson: My wife won't go to Italy.

Mr Prue: Your wife won't go to Italy.

Mr Bisson: She won't go anywhere.

Mr Prue: My wife would go to Italy in a minute. If she's watching this, which I doubt, I have to tell you that whenever I have been required to travel in past jobs, her attendance with me was always at my expense. I believe that is the way it should be. It should be done exclusively and only that way. The members of this Legislature make enough money that we can afford to do that. Quite clearly, that is the rule that should be followed. If your spouse or family attends with you, it should not be done at the taxpayers' expense. I would hope the members opposite would rethink this one and perhaps exclude it when it comes time to do the final bill.

Last but not least, it does not include mini-bars, videos and that type of thing, which is perfectly logical.

I go back to where I began, and that is that Premier Harris should be included in this bill. The public has a right, especially those members of the public—which includes almost all of us in this province—who have had to make sacrifices over the seven years. We have had to

make sacrifices, again, for purposes of amalgamation and downloading to municipalities; the sacrifices of the working poor, people who have not had an increase in the basic minimum wage, welfare recipients who have had their money slashed, people who live in abject and extreme poverty, people on ODSP who have not had a raise in eight years, and the list can go on and on. All of those people have an unqualified right to make sure that the man who was in charge of what went down there is himself squeaky clean, and he should be included. I would suggest that if you're going to exclude him, then you're going to have to exclude others as well, and all of us need to be there.

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In the New Democratic Party, we believe that this is a good bill. The bill needs, though, to expand beyond just hospitality. It needs to expand beyond just where you eat or where you sleep or what you drink or how you travel. It needs to include other expenditures. We believe that it should open up and reveal expenditures of consultants who are brought in. I don't know about the other parties; I don't think we've done it, at least not in the last seven to 10 years, I hope never, but consultants who are brought in for image building, American consultants who come in and tell people—

Mr Bisson: It didn't work for Dalton, though.

Mr Prue: I don't know. I don't know who it has worked for and who it hasn't, but there are some swirling statements, undercurrents, that monies are being expended by this Legislature for that purpose. If that is correct, then it needs to be rooted out. We need to get to the bottom of that and we need to make sure that hard-earned taxpayers' money is not being expended on consultants, particularly those who come from south of our border, who come up here to refurbish and remake politicians in some style other than what they really are. If that is the case, I think the taxpayers truly would be indignant. I hope that this bill will go so far as to determine whether those types of expenditures are being made and that something is done to stop them.

I'm just about finished. I would like to close by commending the government for bringing forward this bill. It has of course come forward all too quickly, and I guess it's because of some of what was happening to them in the political process and in the media. But it is an honest attempt, I would suggest, to try to set the scales right and it is an honest attempt to make sure that all members of this Legislature are subject to freedom of information laws and that all members of this Legislature would know what is appropriate on which to expend taxpayers' money in a prudent way. If that is done and if that is the ultimate end to this bill, then I would commend it.

I would suggest to the members opposite, though, there are some improvements: number one, to include Mike Harris; number two, to take out the expenses for spouses who travel with members; and number three, that some kind of categorization of hotels to clearly indicate that which is acceptable versus that which is lavish might be in order. If those are done, then I would suggest that

this bill will be supported by all parties in this Legislature.

I have spoken a little bit beyond my 30 minutes, and I am going to turn over the balance of my time to my colleague Tony Martin, whom I'm leaving with a little over 27 minutes.

The Acting Speaker: The floor goes to the member for Sault Ste Marie.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): If a page or somebody might bring me a glass of water, I'm probably going to need it before I'm finished.

I appreciate the opportunity to put a few thoughts on the record here this evening with regard to this bill. I'm not going to focus completely and totally in a disciplined way on the bill itself, because I think it speaks for itself. But I do want to put it in some context and help people understand how I see it playing out in this place and in the broader political world out there that I think we all have to be so very careful to protect and support and to grow in a way that is positive and constructive and in keeping with the thinking of those who so many years ago set in place the way we govern ourselves here in this province and indeed across the country.

We've seen in the last few years in Canada and in Ontario a very direct attack on the institution of government, a nibbling away at the corners, some very obvious throwing of grenades into the very heart and a diminishing of the role and the potential role of government in the ordering of the public business of the jurisdiction we call Ontario, and I think that's to our detriment. I don't think that serves any of us well, and in particular it doesn't serve our constituencies, the people who send us here.

This latest volley, this bill that's before us here this afternoon, is another piece in that agenda, in that campaign that is being driven primarily by a right-wing element in the province of Ontario, a right-wing element across this country that comes to us, I would say, most directly and primarily from the United States of America, where the Republicans have been able to very effectively bring forward a chilling and a challenge to democratic processes, to government institutions that have seen very many people, particularly our most vulnerable and at-risk people, not well served—particularly that group but I think we've all been not well served.

I think that we've shown over a number of years in Ontario and in Canada that when we work together collectively, when we focus on communal activity, a contribution to community by all people, and we order that, we organize that in a way where everybody gets a chance to participate, everybody gets a chance to bring their gifts, their talents, their training to the common effort, and at the end of the day, everybody gets to participate in the good that's created from that effort together, then we have a better community, we have a healthier community, we have a safer community, we have a community that works for all people and we have a community that I believe evolves, then, in an intelligent and compassionate fashion such that fewer and fewer

people fall through the cracks, fewer and fewer people feel at risk when they walk down their streets at night, when they send their kids out to play or when they go on vacation and leave their homes relatively unprotected while they're away.

That's what worries me about what we're involved in here these days, it seems, and particularly this afternoon as we take a look at this bill, because this bill is a direct result of a challenge by the official opposition. It's their job, their responsibility to challenge government in any way they see necessary to make sure that it is living up to the rules and regulations that are in place and at play in this process that we all participated in.

The official opposition, through some diligence and, I would say, some effort in research, found some things that the government was doing that weren't quite by the rules that have been laid down. Of course the government across the way, who came here priding themselves on how they're going to be better than everybody else, how they are going to actually not only be better but they're going to change this place so that we're all better in the long run, are cut to the quick, so to speak, with this challenge, with this critique, with this exposing of behaviour and spending patterns that aren't reflective of what they speak, what they write, what they put in their documents that they present come election time that people then base their decision on when they vote. So they in turn decide, "OK, what's good for the goose is good for the gander." So they say, "Well, we're going to change the rules so that we can more effectively go after members of the opposition in terms of what they're doing by way of the expenditures they make as they do their work and try to be good politicians and participate in this place and across the province."

But you see, I think that at the end of the day they're not going to find much. I think they're going to go through the history, the records of some of the leaders of the official opposition. They'll probably go through some records of some of the folks who serve over here. They'll have a sharp pencil and they'll spend a lot of time, and they'll find there isn't much, there really isn't a whole lot there.

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What they'll find in the end, and what we'll all find in the end, is that the rules as they exist, without the changes that are being proposed in this bill, actually cover all that. If you want information on somebody, if you want to find out what somebody is doing, on behalf of the Board of Internal Economy or the legislative precinct, as they go about their business trying to serve their constituents and meet with individuals to promote the activity of government and the furtherance of good government, to include people in the discussion we all have here so we're all smarter and more aware of how things affect or don't affect the everyday life of a particular individual, community or group of people, the rules that are already in place provide for that.

I know that from time to time I get a phone call or a little note from the folks over at the finance branch in the

Whitney Block asking me to justify a particular request I've put in for a return on an expenditure. They say, "Tony, what was that about, and how does that work? Do you understand that that's not in keeping with the rules as laid down in the book we're all given when we come here?"

When I first arrived here in 1990—and I know that you, Mr Chair, probably went through the same exercise—we were talked to very clearly and very directly by people who had been here for a long time as to what we could and couldn't do. We were over in the Macdonald Block, I think, for quite some time, for a number of days, as we went through an in-service. People explained to us how this place worked, how you hired staff, what your staff could do, what they were responsible for, what you could do, what you could spend money on.

Most importantly, they talked to us about what you couldn't spend money on, because they wanted to make sure we didn't get caught doing some things, whether innocently—and I suggest that a lot of times people in this place, if they make a mistake, even in terms of spending some money in doing their jobs, in most instances it's innocent. It's not to try to take advantage or to unduly benefit oneself. But if you do that, there are rules and regulations that have been put in place, that have evolved over a number of years and that have been changed from time to time with all-party participation. What's different this time is that we have a whole new set of rules that aren't actually a collective effort to try to improve the circumstance within which we all work to bring greater accountability and clarity to what's going on, but it's a bit of tit-for-tat.

As I said a minute ago, the official opposition is doing their due diligence, as they are charged to do in that role as opposition, critiquing the government on its behaviour and habits and challenging them. Some of the government members are coming forward and apologizing, admitting to having made a mistake. I think that's fair. That's fine. That's all in keeping with the way you do that kind of thing. Then you get on with your business. At the end of the day, when all is said and done and all the exposure that happens here—when you go into public life, you have to expect that's going to happen. You're laid bare in front of your colleagues, the province and your constituents. They'll decide ultimately whether what you've done is bad enough or egregious enough that you don't deserve to be in public life any more. They'll make that decision, and always do.

It's interesting how they do that and how they come to their decisions about who is and who isn't deserving to serve in this place. I remember sitting here one night listening to Mr Conway, the member from Renfrew, talk about a gentleman who got caught doing something untoward in public life. The assembly that he was serving in deemed him not to be acceptable any more. They fired him, and their constituents sent him back.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):
Billy Joe MacLean.

Mr Martin: Billy Joe MacLean. The next election the constituents decided differently. “The guy made a mistake,” they said. He apologized for that mistake. It was an honest mistake, I suppose. I don’t know Billy Joe MacLean and whether in fact it was an honest mistake or not, but he made a mistake and he went back to his constituents in the next election and said, “Hey, you elected me. You sent me to this assembly to serve and they decided that I couldn’t serve any more on your behalf. I’m saying that they don’t have the right to do that”—and then they’ll send you back.

What I’m saying to the assembly here this evening and to you, Speaker, and to the folks out there is that we do have a process in place here of oversight, of people having to be ultimately accountable. It’s the rules that we all watch for ourselves and for each other and that we from time to time, yes, here in this House, have a debate about in question period and at other times. We have staff over in the Whitney Block who oversee our expenditures. I know I send mine in every month and do my best job to make sure all the receipts are in place, all the kinds of receipts they want. I’ve gone through about three different variations of what receipts they will accept and won’t accept. It changes with every three or four or six months as some new consultant comes in and says, “Well, maybe we should do it this way,” or “Maybe that receipt doesn’t quite do it; maybe we need some other kind”—always over there trying to find a way to make sure we are living within the rules and regulations that are set in place for us here, and they are.

There are rules and regulations in the standing orders that are very clear, very precise and very understandable in terms of what we can and cannot spend as individual members and as members of cabinet and as members with responsibility in leadership roles. We know. We know that, and we know that if we break those rules, we may get caught because there are people here who will take it upon themselves to research and find out what’s going on and may in fact catch us and then we will be called to be accountable and explain what we’ve done. We have staff, as I’ve said, over in the Whitney Block who, because they know the rules even better than we do, because they’ve been here a lot longer than we have been and will be here a lot longer than we will be, will vet those documents, those expense claims that go in.

At the end of the day, ultimately, we will be judged by those folks who elect us out there in our constituencies when we go back. I suggest that we’ll probably be heading there in another three or four months. My bet is, and if you like, I’m a gambling man—I’ll put some money on us being into an election and finished by the end of April of next year. I’ll say that. I think that’s where we’ll be, that all of us will be before our constituents before the end of April next year.

That’s to some degree part of what this is about here this afternoon too, that we have an election coming up. We have a government that’s obviously in trouble. They’re behind in the polls. They’re not very popular on a number of fronts, hydro being the most obvious, and

our leader, Howard Hampton, has been absolutely unrelenting in his attack on the agenda of the government where hydro is concerned, and rightfully so. That’s our job to do, just as it was the Liberals’ responsibility, if they thought it was of interest and in the public interest, to do some research and inquire as to the spending habits of some of the members and cabinet members across the way. That was their right to do. We will then answer to that before the public come the election.

That’s this little drama play that we’re all part of here this afternoon, the discussion of this bill that was put, that was tabled, that will call on every Premier of the province, back to Leslie Frost, I suppose, to have his or her expenses exposed so that we can all have a good look at them and decide whether they’re in order or out of order.

Mr Bisson: What about Sir John A. Macdonald?

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Mr Martin: Maybe John A. Macdonald too; I’m not sure. But I know that if you look at this bill, you’re not going to be able to go back and look at Mike Harris’s expenses. I believe that was some of the assessment done on the bill, that he’s not one of the people we have access—

Mr Bisson: Not as opposition leader.

Mr Martin: Not when he was in opposition; that’s right. We can as government but not as opposition. We can’t look at his. He’s one of the ones we can’t look at. That’s interesting. The government thinks we’re going to find something. The government is in trouble. It’s in trouble on a number of fronts. It’s trying to put fires out. One of the ways you deal with something like that is that you try to find a diversion. My kids do this. They’re very good at it. I’m trying to deal with something they’ve done that I want to talk about and get corrected and they’re forever trying to get me off on a tangent. It’s really because they know that dad’s not too swift sometimes, particularly if it’s late at night or if I’ve had a long day or mom’s on his case.

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): I disagree. You’re swift.

Mr Martin: Am I? My kids don’t think I’m very swift, and there are times when they’re very smart. They are. They’re professionals at this. Actually, the Conservatives should hire some of them to give them some advice as to how they might hang on to power in the next election. That worries me.

Mr Bisson: I wonder if the pages do that to their parents.

Mr Martin: Sure, they do. You do that, eh? Your parents catch you doing something and you know that you’re in the wrong and that you’re in big trouble, so you try to find a way to get the subject on to something else.

Mr Bisson: I see them smiling. They’re smiling.

Mr Martin: We know the game they play. That’s what the government is doing here. They’re trying to get the focus off the very real and important issues that we should be talking about as a Legislature here that affect every member of the communities we come from and are elected from so that we can’t start looking at, “How much did you spend? Did you have a beer? Did you have

a glass of wine?”—all that really important stuff. I’m not saying for a second that we shouldn’t be concerned about over-expenditure or wrong expenditure and people being accountable. But if we’re running around in this place, this city and this province trying to find each other having a beer—

Interjection.

Mr Martin: Yes. Just pay for the damn thing yourself and get on with it. That’s what I say, and we should all know that. The government members across the way are very happy to talk about common sense. For them, common sense is the foundation upon which everything they do is built. Common sense should have told them that they shouldn’t have been chalking up big bar bills and shipping them off to the Legislature and the people of Ontario to pay. If they had been following their own advice and following the common sense axiom that they laid out in their election platform of 1995, they would have known that they shouldn’t have been doing that. It’s in the rules. It says you can’t do that and that they eventually would get caught—because you do.

Kids know that if you keep doing the same thing over and over again and you know it’s wrong, mom and dad are sooner or later going to catch you and then you’re going to have to pay the price and face the music. It’s the same thing here. If you keep doing the same thing over and over again, if you keep breaking the rules and do not live according to the common sense approach that we all know we need to live by here, sooner or later somebody is going to catch you with your hand in the cookie jar, taking more than you’re supposed to. You’ll get slapped. After that, life goes on.

In this place, life goes on until you get to an election, and then you have your constituents asking you, “A couple of months ago you were brought up in the Legislature and I read it in the paper. I read that you were out for a big dinner and you had booze and wine and stuff, and that wasn’t according to the rules. I want you to explain to me why you did that and why that makes any sense and why I should continue to provide my support of you as a member of Parliament for my constituency.” That’s what will happen, and this government knows that. They know that they’ve been caught with their fingers in the cookie jar, that a number of their cabinet ministers have been out wining and dining when they shouldn’t have been, particularly a government that prided itself when it came here in 1995 on being good managers, fiscal, prudent and all those words you hear where that kind of thing is concerned. They point fingers across the way, particularly at this little group over here, and say, “You guys are big spenders. You guys don’t know how to manage. You guys wouldn’t be able to run a candy shop.” But I’ll tell you, I don’t remember, when we were government for five years, anybody raising that kind of an issue. We did some things when we were government, innocently and foolishly, that we shouldn’t have done. We got caught for that and it was exposed. But I’ll tell you, we weren’t out there living the life of Riley on big expense accounts.

Mr Bisson: They were too afraid to get caught.

Mr Martin: Yes. I remember when I got here somebody saying to me, “Aren’t you going to get the corporate card?” So I went looking in the ministry that I was part of and said, “Where’s the corporate card?” and they said, “There isn’t any for you, Tony.” No corporate card, not that I would have known what to do with it anyway, because that’s not where I came from. Before I came to this place, I ran a soup kitchen.

I know the member for Timmins-James Bay, before he came here, worked for a union. He was an organizer and worked for working men and women. They wouldn’t let him get away with the kind of irresponsible spending that went on across the way.

I know that the member for Beaches-East York was the mayor of the city of York. He ran a good ship over there, and I don’t think you heard any scandals coming out of that place about people spending money wrongly or not following the rules etc.

Interjection.

Mr Martin: Maybe they weren’t caught, but I would guess that—this is the point that I want to wrap up my 30 minutes on here. I would guess that probably 99% of the people who come and serve at Queen’s Park are decent, hard-working, good-living—

Interjection.

Mr Martin: I’ll leave that to you. You get up next and you tell us. I don’t know who they are.

Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot): I think they’re all decent.

Mr Martin: Yes, most politicians I’ve met in my 12 years in this place are OK. I don’t always agree with their politics; I don’t agree with their approach. I think that sometimes what they do in the name of governing and the public interest is certainly not in keeping with my approach or my understanding of what we should be doing and my philosophical tack on life. But I find that for the most part everybody is trying their best. Everybody is trying to live according to the rules, even if it’s because they know that if they don’t, they might get caught. That’s part of life. There are things we don’t do because we know they’re the wrong thing to do and morally and ethically we shouldn’t be doing them, and there are other things we don’t do because we know that if we do them we might get caught. That’s life. I think around here that’s the axiom as well.

We have 103 members elected by constituencies from across the province who come to this place, and I believe they’re probably briefed the same as we are, particularly government members. I would guess that every new government when it first gets elected, because there are usually a lot of new members, will be taken through a very intensive period of orientation, where they’re told the dos and the don’ts, where they’re told what they can and they can’t do.

Mr Bisson: You shall listen to the Premier.

Mr Martin: Yes, that’s right, the Premier is God and all those kinds of things. But more than anything, you’re told that if you want to have a long life in this place, if

you want to serve your community and the province for a long time, live according to the rules.

Mr Bisson: Keep your nose clean.

Mr Martin: Keep your nose clean, as the member for Timmins-James Bay said. Live according to the rules.

We've had a good set of rules in this place, and I don't think we should be moving as quickly as we are tonight and probably tomorrow to change those rules, particularly based on the rationale and the reason behind why that is happening. You can tip a scale in a way that makes the whole thing not work properly, not give you the information that you require because you're focusing on the wrong thing.

I suggest that we already have in place a set of rules that, if we all live by them, if we believe in common sense, as we used to understand common sense before 1995, we'll be able to serve in a way that will be of great

pride to the people of this province. Yes, from time to time, when somebody falls afoul of those rules and regulations or the common sense approach, they will get caught, as they do, as they have, and they will be held accountable. Ultimately, as is the way in our political system, they will go back before their constituents and will have to present themselves as worthy or not worthy. Their constituents will pass judgment, and then they'll either come back here or not come back here, based on their track record.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I enjoyed this little opportunity this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker: You're very welcome.

It now being 6 of the clock, this House will stand adjourned until 6:45 this evening.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (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	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (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	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (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	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre associé de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie (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	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)		
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) Minister of Public Safety and Security / ministre de la Sécurité et de la Sécurité publique
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (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	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (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	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (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	DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl (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	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Nepean-Carleton	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (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	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (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	Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	Stoney Creek	Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J. (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thornhill	Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R. (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa-Orléans	Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (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	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	Young, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		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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