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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 24 March 2004

Mercredi 24 mars 2004

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 24 March 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 24 mars 2004

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

DEATH OF MEMBER FOR HAMILTON EAST

Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): It is with a profound regret and a deep sadness that I report to this House that a short while ago our friend and colleague the MPP for Hamilton East, Dominic Agostino, passed away. I am informed that he passed away suddenly from cancer. There will be a time soon in this House when we can appropriately pay tribute to our friend, after all members have had a bit of time to cope with this news.

I can report that I spoke with his sister, Mary, and conveyed to her, on all our behalf, our sadness, and extended to her, and through her to their extended family, our sympathies at the passing of their brother, son and uncle.

Let me just say this, Speaker. Dominic so loved this place. He loved politics, and he loved the game. He loved the to-and-fro, the back and forth. He was a relentless champion for his principles and his constituents. He always did what he sincerely felt was the right thing to do.

But the greatest loss today is felt by his family. Our thoughts and our love are with Dominic's mother, Teresa, his brother Ralph and his wife Rose, Dominic's sister, Mary, and her husband, Tony, and Dominic's beloved nieces and nephews. I know today they are also thinking of Dominic's late father, Salvatore.

I understand that some other members of the Legislature would like to say a few words. I would ask as well that when that has come to a conclusion, we have a moment of silence in honour of our friend and colleague Dominic Agostino.

Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton): It's certainly with great sadness that I rise to join the Premier on the passing of our colleague and friend. He was someone who was tremendously proud of his background, tremendously proud of his hometown of Hamilton and the east end of Hamilton, who had elected him for some 22 years, far longer than I even realized when I first became friends with Dominic. They returned him in every election for a reason. He never forgot who sent him, whether it was on the school board or at city council or in this place.

He cared passionately. He was a small-l liberal's Liberal. He cared passionately about the disadvantaged. I can tell you that in our first year in government he was Mike Harris's worst nightmare. He never, regardless of

the political consequences, backed down from fighting for what he believed in, whether it was popular or not.

He will be tremendously missed. On behalf of all our colleagues in the official opposition, we look forward to a more appropriate time to pay tribute to him. But at this time, our deepest sympathies and thoughts are with his family—the Premier mentioned his nieces and nephews he so proudly put on his Christmas card, with a big smile—and his many friends, who will miss him greatly.

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): On behalf of New Democrats, I too want to especially offer condolences to his family.

I know that members of the Liberal caucus are probably having a very difficult time today. We want you to know that because of where Dominic sat for eight years, right over here, we knew him quite well too. In fact, we looked forward to his wisecracks, and there were always many. We looked forward to his interventions. Because of our particular nature, we really did appreciate his scrappiness, the fact that here was somebody who, on any issue, was going to make his views known. We appreciate the probably very difficult time that many members of the Liberal caucus are having, so our condolences to you too.

I understand there have been some discussions about what should follow from here. I think all of us should take some time over the next day or so to remember our friend and our colleague and pay the proper respects to his family, his community and to us, his friends.

The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling): Before we take the moment of silence, allow me to express my feeling for a human being I have admired a lot. I hope that we all remember his energy, his intelligence, and know that our colleague Agostino lives with us forever.

May we stand for a moment of silence.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker: Thank you.

MOTIONS

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader): I move that out of respect to the memory of the late member for Hamilton East, Dominic Agostino, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock next Monday.

The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Agreed.

The House adjourned at 1343.

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