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**Official Report  
of Debates  
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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Thursday 17 June 2004**

**Jeudi 17 juin 2004**

Speaker  
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président  
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk  
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 17 June 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 17 juin 2004

*The House met at 1845.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET MEASURES ACT, 2004

LOI DE 2004

SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES

Mr Sorbara moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to implement Budget measures / Projet de loi 83, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires.

**Hon David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to divide the time to 9:20 equally among the three recognized parties and that each party, commencing with the government, then the official opposition and then the third party, will use its allotted block of time in full.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Joseph N. Tascona):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed. Minister.

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** I'm delighted to be able to lead off the debate on third and final reading of this bill. I will be dividing my time among four of my colleagues on this side of the House.

For me, of course, this is an historic, important and, frankly, incredibly moving moment. I want to spend my time simply to make some final comments on this budget and the measures contained in it and the objectives we are trying to achieve and will achieve through this budget.

Might I say at the outset, though, that I was delighted that we were able to arrange consideration of this bill in public hearings, which took place earlier this week. There were a number of deputants who came before the standing committee, and all of the deputants have added to our consideration of the importance of this bill and ultimately its implementation. So I want to thank those who on relatively short notice were able to make submissions to the standing committee.

The point I want to make in the time I have allotted to me is to remind this House and the people listening to this debate what the objectives were for our party and our government as we prepared the budget, which I presented just over a month ago in this House. If you really want to understand what the budget was all about, you need to understand that there were four all-important objectives,

and I think we will have great success in each one of these objectives.

The first, and this is very important, is that we were looking to bring financial health back to the province. What we inherited when we assumed the responsibilities of government on October 23 was a government that was in the midst of a deficit spiral, a government whose finances, notwithstanding very strong economic growth over the past eight or nine years, had fallen into deficit, and had fallen into a deficit not for a particular year, but had fallen into what's called a structural deficit. That means that in the absence of any particular or important intervention, this province was going to continue to run up debts year after year after year.

So our first and primary objective was to take steps, and we did so by bringing forward a comprehensive plan, to get us out of this debt spiral; and yes, that did involve revenue measures in the form of the Ontario health premium, and I'm going to say a word or two about that premium toward the end of my remarks. But just to make the point again, getting ourselves out of a financial crisis was central to the way we designed and ultimately presented the budget.

1850

The second objective was to ensure that through the expenditures we placed in the budget, we would be making real progress in strengthening the public services that people look to this government and this province to provide, notably in the areas of health care and education. For example—and we've said it over and over again in this House—with the measures and the funds we've allotted to health care, we will be able to begin an historic transformation of health care, so that the system people turn to when they are sick or frail is much more rooted in higher-quality services delivered at a community level. You will see, as we implement the budget, historic new investments in home care—some 400 million additional dollars in home care. You will see additional expenditures in long-term care, those facilities that look after our moms and dads right across the province. You'll see additional investments in transforming primary care so that we are moving away from the classic model of the hospital bed and the doctor's office to a community-based level of care through community health centres, through family health networks and facilities that are right in communities.

The budget also presents historic new investments in public education, and in a sense, for some of us this is one of the most important things the budget does. Our schools right across Ontario over the course of the past

nine years have been war zones. This budget declares peace in the classroom and starts to rebuild our classrooms with new respect for teachers, with new investments, so that we will have smaller class sizes in the early years, so that every elementary school in the province will have a specialist in math and a specialist in literacy, so that we will begin to invest in rehabilitating schools that are crumbling right across the province.

So the second objective was that we start to rebuild public services.

The third objective—and I think that so many of my Liberal caucus colleagues repeated this objective to me leading up to the budget that it was the one that I think we put special emphasis on—was that the budget had to speak to and had to provide for those among us in Ontario who are most vulnerable. I was so proud of the fact that for the first time in some 11 years we could increase the level of assistance to those who are disabled; we could increase the level of assistance to those who live on social assistance for a period in their lives when they are down on their luck or for some other reason are not able to find work. That was the first time in some 11 years that a government in Ontario has been able to do that. And we were able to allocate some \$25 million to children's mental health, an area that had been ignored for years in this province.

So the third objective was to make sure that the budget spoke to all Ontarians, no matter what their circumstances, and we were able to achieve that.

The fourth objective was that we were able in the budget to build a new and stronger foundation for the next generation of economic growth, for the next economy in Ontario. We were able to do that through a number of significant measures. It wasn't simply our commitment to rebuild the electricity sector, which had been allowed to fall into disrepair over the course of the past five years, since 1999. As I said on budget day, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal will be presenting in this House a 10-year plan to start to rebuild Ontario's infrastructure.

**Hon Mr Caplan:** Hear, hear.

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I hear the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal supporting that notion.

In northern Ontario, we were able to make very significant provisions to start to rebuild the economy of the north. We were able to include within the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities new investments in apprenticeships so that we could have the workforce necessary to strengthen our economy, and I think we've been very successful in that regard.

I should tell you I'm quite proud of the fact that recently, over the past several days, all three rating agencies, those that evaluate Ontario budgets and the strength of our economy and our public initiatives, have issued releases saying that they confirm our credit rating. They've said that in times of real stress on our expenditures, the Ontario government, under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty, has taken the right course in preparing the budget.

This budget was not without controversy; there's no doubt about that. I just want to mention perhaps the single, most high-profile controversy of all in the budget, and that is our determination, although we said we didn't think it would be necessary, to bring forward initiatives to raise more revenue in this province. I want to tell my friends in this House and you, Mr Speaker, that in a sense it would have been much easier to say, "You know what? We made an election commitment not to raise additional revenues, so that's the only commitment we'll take." But had we gone down that course, every single member of this House would have to admit that that alternative would involve an historic abandonment of the very responsibilities we have as a Parliament, and as a government, to strengthen our public services.

This year, the Ontario health premium will raise some \$1.6 billion for our treasury. Let's assume that we decided not to go down that avenue. Let's just understand what the consequences would have been. To eliminate \$1.6 billion from our balance sheet would be the equivalent to closing down the entire community college system. That would save us \$1 billion. We could let 10,000 schoolteachers go, give them a pink slip. That would have saved us \$1 billion dollars. These kinds of cutbacks in public services are what Ontario experienced in 1995, when the Conservatives came to government. They slashed and they burned and they left public services on a road to ruin. And what the people said during the election of last October was that they wanted that policy in Ontario to end, and they wanted a government that would begin to reconstruct these services and prepare us for the 21st century.

I've been around the province for the past month, after the budget, north, south, east and west, talking about what's in our budget, where we're going and how we're going to meet these objectives. I've said to crowds large and small that it was not easy for us to bring forward a budget that raised additional revenues in the form of a premium. But I made the point as well that failure to do that would have been a failure of our public responsibilities, given the circumstances that we inherited, to the people of this province. I think I can tell my colleagues in this House that as we begin to implement the measures in this budget and we see a reduction of waiting times for those who need critical surgeries, and we see millions of Ontarians finally have access to primary health care on an urgent basis, and when we see our kids getting free vaccinations, and when we see our classrooms come to life again, and as we witness the beginning of a new era of construction in public transit, roads and sewers, and when we see vitality coming back into our power system and investors saying, "Yes, we want to invest in Ontario because we're satisfied that they've got the electricity thing figured out, and that they've got a high quality health care system," and when we see new life coming to the economy of northern Ontario, and when we see rural Ontario find their place in this great province through the initiatives that we've taken, I think that when we start to see all of that and the positive

impact it will have, members of this House, on all sides, will agree that the tough measures we've taken in this budget, the new course we've set, and our ability to make those decisions and stick with them, and when they see four years down the road that this province has put behind us the deficits, the debts and the interest costs that would have implied, and when those outside the province say, "Things are really starting to happen in Ontario," members of this House will agree that the budget we presented on May 18 was the right budget for Ontario, and passage of this bill today by way of third reading will confirm that.

1900

**Mr Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I'm delighted to join in the third reading debate of Bill 83, An Act to implement Budget measures. In fact, I'm more than delighted, I'm honoured to follow the finance minister after making his comments today, and tell the finance minister that, like all of us in this caucus, we are 100% behind the very tough but important decisions we've had to make for the province of Ontario. It is real leadership that the finance minister has provided this province, tough but important leadership if we want to change the direction of this province and make sure that we bring the positive changes we set out to bring to Ontario last fall.

Let's put this debate into some context. Last fall, we were elected on an agenda for change: change to health care, change to education, change in the relationship that municipalities have across the province and change in the way the vulnerable across this province are treated. We also said during that election, and the finance minister and the Premier have indicated this as well, that we weren't going to raise taxes. But when we arrived here, one of the first things we did was hire a former Provincial Auditor to determine what the budget deficit was that we were inheriting and we found out at that point that it was about a \$5.6-billion deficit. It turned out to be a \$6-billion deficit when all was said and done.

We went through a series of emotions, just like, I think, the people of Ontario are going through right now. First of all, we were angry at the previous government because we all know that they said there was not going to be a deficit. Right up to the moment when the people cast the last ballot in the last provincial election, they said there'd be zero deficit. And we know that turned out to be not true. We know that's had a major impact, when we came here, on our ability to do the things we wanted to do at the time and at the pace we wanted to do them.

So we were angry. The anger emotion soon dissipated into an emotion of frustration. We were frustrated because we had lots of great things that we wanted to do with this province, lots of important changes, but we were frustrated as we were trying to figure out how we could implement this agenda given the situation that was dumped in our laps by the previous government.

That emotion soon left because we realized that we had a job to do. We had to face up to this deficit. It wasn't just going to go away. So it became an emotion of

determination. We were determined to get by this, determined to get the fiscal life of this province back on track and determined to implement the very important changes that we set out to implement last fall.

Our choices were stark. We could have continued the Tory and NDP approach and nickel-and-dimed our way through this situation and, maybe four years from now, if we hit that structural deficit further and further, we could get ourselves re-elected. Maybe. But that would have accomplished absolutely nothing because all the important changes that we needed to bring about in this province couldn't happen.

We could have tried to balance the budget and freeze revenues. That would have required us to cut back on taxes. The Minister of Finance said just a few minutes ago that for us to balance the budget we would have had to cut right out one in four hospitals across this province. We would have had to totally wipe out the college education system. We would have had to fire 10,000 teachers to get those kinds of dollars. Totally unacceptable. There was no way we were going to go there and there's no way the people of Ontario would have wanted us to go there.

So we looked at a third option: raising revenues through a progressive health premium. Recognizing that this was, indeed, contrary to our election commitment not to raise taxes, recognizing that we were going to take some political heat for doing it, we stepped up to the plate nonetheless because we knew it was the right thing to do for the province of Ontario, given the circumstances that we had inherited. I'm confident that the people of Ontario will recognize, once the emotions have died down, that we made the right decision for this province.

There are two key questions that the people of Ontario will have to come to terms with. The first is, did the Liberals mislead the public by committing to not raise taxes during the last election? Let me tell you, the answer to that is absolutely not. There is no way we could fulfill that commitment because of the Tory deficit that had been left for us, that we inherited. They hid that deficit. They knew it was there. They hid it. The fact of the matter is, it was there nonetheless, and we had to deal with it, and that's why we had to make some tough decisions. We couldn't wish that Tory deficit away, so we had to adjust our agenda; we had to adjust our program. I think we did it in a manner that is in the best interests of the province.

The second question is, should we have known? I keep hearing this from time to time from the opposition: We should have known. There's no way the opposition would have known the state of the finances of the province.

**Mr Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** You did know. Ask Gerry Phillips.

**Mr Duguid:** I'll tell you, even the very backbenchers for the government party at the time didn't know the state of the finances. There may have been a few that did. No doubt the Premier probably did, no doubt the Minister of Finance probably did, but—

**Mr Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Is there a quorum?

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** Quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** Proceed.

**Mr Duguid:** We didn't know that the deficit was going to be \$6 billion. I bet you the Tory backbenchers didn't even know about it, but obviously the government of the day must have, and that's the mess they left us with.

But we're going to turn the corner. We're going to make the changes we have to make in health care: more doctors, 8,000 more full-time nurses, stable funding for hospitals, reduced waiting lists, more surgeries and new MRIs, free vaccinations for children for pneumonia, meningitis and chicken pox. For students, \$2.6 billion to fix our crumbling schools, get rid of those leaky roofs, more textbooks for kids, 1,000 new teachers, smaller classes in the early grades, a two-year tuition freeze for colleges and universities. For communities, \$3.3 billion for local roads, two cents a litre from the existing gas tax for public transit, increased numbers of affordable housing, more meat and water inspectors.

I could go on but my time is running out. We made the right decision, the only decision we could make that was in the best interests of the people of this province. I'm proud to stand by this budget. The people of Ontario over time will recognize that we made the right decision for the province of Ontario.

**Mrs Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** I'm delighted to stand and speak to our budget tonight. This was a budget in which we had to make some difficult choices, but I truly believe we have made the right choices. Because we have made the difficult decision to introduce the Ontario health premium, we are going to be able to improve health services for the public of Ontario. We are going to be able to improve health services in hospitals: more cardiac procedures, more cataract surgeries, more joint replacements, more nurses to take care of you while you recover. We're also going to improve health care in the community, where we want to have service for folks: more home care, better service in long-term care, more funding for community mental health, more funding for children's mental health, more vaccinations for children, a whole host of new services. In addition—this is interesting—this year we will be raising an additional \$1.6 billion through our new tax. That list of things I just gave you and more will be \$2.2 billion more in spending on health care.

**1910**

The opposition has been talking a lot lately about the fact that we are also going to improve water and sewage treatment and somehow that's unrelated to health care. Note that I just said that community health care and hospital health care is going to soak up more than our increase in the health tax. But they've been very critical of the fact that we're going to spend more money on sewage and water treatment. In fact, we are committed, in addition to our health care spending, to spending \$257

million extra on water and sewage treatment. I'd like to talk about that, because sewage treatment—

**Mr Chudleigh:** It's in the health care budget.

**Mrs Sandals:** No, outside the health care budget. Sewage is not a very sexy subject, but I'd like to think about it for a few minutes.

Mr Hampton seems to have a very short memory. He seems to have forgotten about Walkerton. In fact, he even seems to have forgotten about his own campaign platform. In his own campaign platform last September, he said, "Get back to the job of helping people maintain their health in the first place, not just treating the sick.... A healthier population means more efficient use of our health care system. Our plan includes ... protecting the quality of drinking water at source." In fact, Mr Hampton seemed to think a few months ago that water and sewage treatment were quite important. But then he forgot about it.

So let's just cast our minds back to Walkerton, where six people died and countless children are still suffering from kidney-related health problems due to the illness they had at the time. Why? Because their drinking water was unsafe. Why was their drinking water unsafe? A failure of water treatment; a failure of sewage treatment; a failure of nutrient management treatment. I think the public remembers that.

But let's cast our minds back a little bit farther. I think a lot of us, when we were in high school history, probably saw those etchings in history books of tenements in 18th- and 19th-century Europe and the people leaning out to throw the slop into the street, and then on the next page, you got the wagons hauling away folks who had died of the latest plague. Hundreds of thousands of people died in European cities. Why? Because they didn't have clean drinking water. They died because they had diseases that were borne in the drinking water.

One of the most important public health advances in the history of medicine is providing safe drinking water. Today, when community development folks go into Third World villages, do you know what one of the first things is that they do? They provide a community well from which people can get clean drinking water. So we make no apologies for focusing \$257 million on water and sewage treatment.

Let's think about sewage treatment. I live in the Grand River watershed, and when that treated sewage leaves Guelph, it goes downstream to Cambridge to Mr Martiniuk's riding, where the people of Cambridge are going to drink that water. When the sewage leaves Cambridge, it goes downstream to Mr Levac's riding in Brant, and when the sewage leaves Mr Levac's riding in Brant, it goes downstream to Mr Barrett's riding, one of the people who is yelling at me here because I'm concerned about sewage treatment. And do you know what happens in Mr Barrett's riding? They pump the water out of the river so they can drink it. I would think that the Conservative members would be very concerned that they have good sewage treatment in my city, in Cambridge, in Brantford and in Kitchener-Waterloo, because ultimately—

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** But you don't call it health care.

**Mrs Sandals:** We're not calling it health care; we're calling it health prevention. In addition to our health care budget, we are providing that.

What about these sewer pipes? Think about what happens with old sewer pipes when they crack and leak. Do you know what happens when sewage pipes leak? Raw, untreated human sewage leaks out of the pipes and leaches into the groundwater. In my community, we actually pump our water from groundwater, from wells, and do you know something? I think it is important to my constituents and to the people of Ontario that we have safe water, clean water, and we make no apologies for investing \$257 million in clean water for the people of Ontario, in addition to all the other improvements we will be making in health care in Ontario.

I will be supporting this budget.

**Mr Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** I'm pleased to have this opportunity to speak to our budget, delivered some four weeks ago. I'll read from an article written in 2002 before the SARS crisis, before the mad cow problems and before 9/11. It's called *The Common (Non)Sense Revolution*: "It is the entire financial program of the Harris Tories that has led Ontario onto dangerous ground. The reality is that, if government revenues are not allowed to rise during good times"—which you had and you wasted—"given away, if you will, in the form of tax cuts—then services can never improve and, quite importantly for economic conservatives, the debt will never be paid."

In fact, during that period you added \$21 billion to the debt in the 1990s and you gave us the gift of a \$6.2-billion debt in 2003-04. That's \$27 billion of new debt in this province. You know, you could have done like Prime Minister Martin did. In the same good times, he paid down \$50 billion of our debt. You raised it \$27 billion. "[I]f higher revenues are bled off through tax cuts while expenditures ... rise, what happens when the economy declines and revenues cease to go up?" That's what happened; that's exactly the point. You caused that. In the same good times, Prime Minister Martin paid down \$50 billion of the Canadian debt.

What did you do in your budget? You sold off assets at fire sale prices to balance the books when you found your revenues were too low, so we had to pick up the pieces. Picking up the pieces means getting more revenues, and how did we do that? It takes courage. We increased taxes. We had to clean up your mess. That's what we had to do. It takes courage to get revenues up.

*Interjections.*

**Mr McNeely:** Sell those undisclosed assets? What were your assets? Were you going to sell the Canadian side of Niagara Falls? You gave away the 407. Were you going put tolls on the 401 and sell it? Maybe you were thinking of selling the Great Lakes. You could have gotten into that.

The deficit didn't happen in 2003. In 2000 and 2001, in good times, they had to reduce the revenues two times

so there was no room for a downturn. Unlike Prime Minister Martin, the Tories cut revenues. When Ontario came into bad times with SARS, 9/11 and mad cow, there were no rainy day funds. Prime Minister Martin had those rainy day funds. He was ready for it. He's had balanced budgets for seven years and he paid down the debt, in addition.

It's interesting—and this was just a year ago, in June 2003, the estimates, this new committee that I'm going to be on, and I was just reading some of it. This is Minister Ecker: "This is our fifth consecutive balanced budget, and no other government has balanced ... budgets.... Just as important, we have achieved our commitment to pay down the debt by \$5 billion"—never done; a \$10-billion lie in June 2003; a \$10-billion difference between reality and what this minister said when she came to estimates committee. That was in the middle of the buildup to the last election, when we had this type of dreaming and fantasizing by the Minister of Finance from your side. No wonder you delivered your budget at the Magna plant. I'm surprised you didn't go to Disney World. It would have been more real.

**1920**

In addition to the debt that shows, there's a social debt of kids lost in the school system because of poor funding, kids giving up on college and university because the costs are too high; and yes, seven people who died in Walkerton because they fired the water inspectors and slashed the environmental budget. That's what you did.

Something should be included in our financial statements that looks after the deterioration of infrastructure. That should be included. Because you took your funding away from municipalities, you have all the municipalities underfunding your infrastructure. The city of Ottawa spends \$16 million in asphalt resurfacing. Their studies tell them they should be spending \$26 billion—\$10 billion under, because you will not help municipalities; not like the days of Davis, Peterson or Rae, when the municipalities were helped. You took away all that help. These figures come straight from management systems. They're not pie in the sky. They're what our infrastructure needs in order to sustain it. Underfunding of \$10 million or \$11 million just in Ottawa, year after year, and the potholes throughout the province are starting to show up; that was your policy of underfunding communities.

What about our neighbour—he's not here—for Nepean-Carleton, the former minister of lost generation? He ran up debt and energy and at the same time he ran down generation, so we got our blackout. He claims it was the ministry he enjoyed most, and no wonder he enjoyed it. By my own calculations of the debt you added, because you didn't maintain your infrastructure, your debt increased by \$27 billion. But in addition: schools, \$8 billion of new debt because you wouldn't maintain them; roads, \$4 billion because you wouldn't maintain them; bridges—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Go ahead.

**Mr McNeely:** So we can add that \$25 billion to the \$27 billion, and it's \$52 billion that you cost this province, that you put us more into debt in the last few years. And where's Harper? He's going to cut \$57 billion from the taxes; typical Harris: same thing. They will cut services, they will cut health care, and his representatives in Ottawa are now coming clean. The city councillors, because they've had this wonderful announcement that we're going to get into light rail transit, have asked him, "Will you honour the agreements that were made by the province and the federal government in Ottawa a few months ago?" Here's the answer they got, and this is from Pierre Poilievre: "My policy is firm. It will honour all signed contracts made by the previous government for infrastructure, bridges and transit initiatives." They know there are no signed agreements yet. These are commitments that are made by politicians, commitments that are in the works that will take some time, but he's backing out of them. Here's what Jan Harder, I think, a councillor from Nepean says, "I must say that I continue to be disappointed by your lack of a clear and unequivocal commitment to the funding of the O-Train expansion to south Ottawa, the Congress Centre, and Fallowfield and Woodroffe Roads improvements.

"You, sir, are skirting around the issue." They will not make the commitment.

**Mr Sterling:** On a point of order, Speaker: Is there any requirement for the Minister of Finance—

**Interjection:** Normie, come on.

**Mr Sterling:** —part of his bill—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr McNeely:** So whether it's Harper or Harris, they're coming out clear: no more help for communities; no more help for cities; let the infrastructure deteriorate. That's where it's going. They like to think they're good managers. How did they run up an additional \$52 billion in debt in their eight years here? Ask yourself.

Taxes are difficult. It takes courage to tax. But we cannot have our children pay for our standard of living. We must pay our own way, and that's what the Liberal budget is all about: paying our own way, getting the services back and looking after this province of Ontario and making it great.

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I just want to say, first of all, the member for Ottawa-Orléans has had a very distinguished career representing his home base of Cumberland and that beautiful part of eastern Ontario. As part of our consultation process dealing with Bill 83, I had the good fortune to visit beautiful communities like Embrun, Cumberland and Rockland. I went there with the member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, Jean-Marc Lalonde. I remember we sat in meetings with ordinary citizens in that part of Ontario, which I think is one of the most historic parts of Ontario, and they were explaining to us some of the difficulties they were having living in these communities. One of the things they kept coming up with was the fact that they could not cope with things

like downloading; they could not cope with a provincial government that wouldn't listen.

That's why this bill that's before us, Bill 83, has some very significant changes, and these are changes that were not ordained from on high at Queen's Park. These came from discussions with mayors and ordinary citizens at public meetings. Our own committee travelled across the province listening to people. In Bill 83 there are some significant changes that are part of the budget. The first section it changed was the Assessment Act. What we heard universally across the province was that the assessment system in Ontario is broken; it isn't functioning properly. It is the most complicated system, which is causing undue stress, not only to the taxpayers, but to the clerks and treasurers. They are having incredible problems with MPAC.

As a result of these dialogues, we came up with some solutions. In this bill we're not going to totally repair an assessment system that is extremely complex and extremely difficult to repair, but we have, for the first time, decided to delay assessments next year. We're not going to proceed with assessments, so people will be able to catch up and the changes and improvements will be able to be processed. So in the upcoming calendar year there will not be a new round of assessments.

We've heard the horror stories of assessments taking place in sugar bushes. We've heard horror stories about people who were trying to appeal their assessment and the deadlines were inappropriate. We were told by the municipalities that it was impossible for the province to assess 4.3 million properties in a couple of months. Therefore, in this bill we've changed the assessment cycle so that the valuation date will now be January 1. This will give ordinary citizens six months to ask for reconsideration of their assessment, and then be able to appeal it.

The way it was before, it was just impossible. We had a lot of anxiety. We had extra costs to municipalities. So this has been incurred, and the municipalities—Hazel McCallion of Mississauga, the mayors of small communities, the mayor of Oakville, AMO—have said this is a good first step in trying to make sense of this assessment mess that was left us. In this bill there are some changes that have been roundly applauded by the stakeholders, who say, "Thanks for listening to us." So that's in this bill.

Also, drug interchangeability and dispensing fee: As you know, the minister said his intention was to ensure that we could bring generic drugs on to the formulary so that we could bring some of the costs down and, at the same time, offer a greater variety of drugs. This will allow the minister to bring on generic drugs more quickly.

We had one question raised in the House, and I think it was a good question, about whether the minister could delist. An amendment was put forward by the minister to ensure that that couldn't happen. It was unequivocal that this was just giving the minister power to bring on a new formulary and not giving more power to delist. So that is



in this bill. That's going to save millions of dollars and bring on cheaper generic drugs as a result.

**1930**

In this bill we're also giving tenants in this province a break. Usually there's an automatic pass-through of an increase on rents. Because we're reviewing the Tenant Protection Act, that automatic increase of 2% will not be passed on. That's also in this bill.

There are also changes in the Tobacco Tax Act, which bring our tobacco taxes more in line with the provincial average. That helps us pay for the costs borne by the health system for tobacco-related diseases.

That's all in Bill 83 in an attempt to try and ensure that the province is managed in a way whereby we'll be able to enhance services, because that's what this bill is about.

One poignant thing that I think is the hallmark of this budget was when Minister Smitherman went to the health sciences centre in Hamilton to announce the immunization program for children so that children don't have to suffer the consequences of chicken pox, meningitis and pneumonia. A pediatrician came up to Minister Smitherman and said, "You know, with the stroke of a pen, by allowing immunization for children, you've done more to help children than I've done in 30 years as a practising pediatrician."

*Interjections.*

**Mr Colle:** I know the members opposite are trying to minimize the immunization program, but immunization of children is something that needs to be done. It's all about transforming health care.

**The Acting Speaker:** Member for Simcoe North, can you just settle down so I can hear the member speak.

**Mr Colle:** It's amazing that the immunization of children will evoke such reaction from the opposition. I just don't understand that.

I would say that this bill, along with our budget, is not only about writing more cheques for health care, it's about getting rid of the silos and barriers that exist in health care so that we can have family teams of doctors; we can have money reinvested in community health centres. We can also have money invested—the great work done by the member for North Bay; reinvested \$190 million in our nursing homes, long-term care so that our seniors have the respect in those homes. We have heard of the deplorable conditions in nursing homes. Through this budget, we are also going to be able to invest over \$400 million in having more home care so that seniors can stay in their homes and they won't be a burden in the emergency room or the hospital.

As I said, this is not just about putting money into the silos as usual; it's about the transformation of the health care system, which is extremely expensive but essential. We are trying to say, through the health premium, that that money will go to delivering health care more comprehensively to those who need it, and not just through the traditional methods, which are good, but we need to meet the challenges of the future.

If you look at the demographics that are going to hit Ontario, all of Canada, the growing population like all of

us here, we're going to have to use our innovation. We're going to have to use our community-based systems, whether it be family health teams, whether it be home care or community health centres, whether we start using an approach that says all communities across Ontario deserve a family doctor or a family health team. We had to make some difficult choices. For instance, we had a group appear before us, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario division. They said, "This budget gives us hope, because for 12 years"—

*Interjections.*

**Mr Colle:** I know mental health doesn't seem to be a priority again with the other side, but these people said that for 12 years the mental health in this province has not been given any attention. So whether it's children's mental health, where we have added \$26 million, or community mental health, they said, "This budget gives us hope for the first time."

Another thing, in terms of prevention and transformation, is that we are now taking over more responsibility for public health. We are uploading 75% to the province because we believe that you can't afford another game of Russian roulette with SARS, or something like it. So we are reinvesting in public health and putting provincial money into it through this budget.

We are also extremely concerned about education, as you said. I've talked about health, but as you know, we've made an historic reinvestment in public education of over \$2.2 billion so our children cannot only have good community health, but our schools will again be clean, there will be more teachers in our schools, there will be programs in our schools where teachers will all be there with a feeling of respect, and it will benefit the community as a whole.

As I said, this budget is certainly not one that everybody agrees with, but it's a definite statement that our priorities are clear. Our priorities are not tax cuts, not trying to win favour with everybody, but we're trying to say that we have to fix health care, we have to fix education, we have to fix our cities and invest in those three basic, primary needs so that we can make this province economically sound, so that we can generate more economic growth and prosperity, so that we can continue to invest in our cities, in our rural communities, so that we can continue to invest in the economic health of Ontario and the medical health of all Ontarians. And we're trying to do our best with this budget.

**Mr Sterling:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Given Mr Colle's concern about our maple syrup producers in Ontario, I ask for unanimous consent to call without notice second and third reading of Bill 46, An Act to amend the Assessment Act, and that we have the vote immediately. I ask for unanimous consent.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? No.

Further debate?

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** As this government rushes to silence the criticism of this dishonest budget, our finance committee members, in

that spirit of accuracy, attempted, to no avail, numerous amendments to reveal the truth of this budget to the people of Ontario. For instance, we proposed an amendment in section 17 of the act to strike out “a new tax called the Ontario health premium,” and replace it with the more accurate “a new tax called the Dalton McGuinty broken-promise tax.” This amendment never saw the light of day until now because of time allocation. We tried again, proposing to replace the same section with “a new tax called the gouge the middle class tax”; also, “a new tax called the Paul-Martin-wouldn’t-help-Ontario tax”; even “a new tax called the Ontario sewer pipe tax.” All attempts to insert a little accuracy, a little honesty and truth in the Budget Measures Act were suppressed by this particular government. We know why. The Liberal broken promise—broken record—is there for all taxpayers, for all working families to see. It’s plain as the long nose on a wooden boy’s face. Using the words of Jack Nicholson, the Liberals “can’t handle the truth.”

#### 1940

As we debate this budget, I recall that, back in December, I read into the record a cautionary tale about a boy carved from wood who had a difficult time when it came to the matter of telling the truth. It was my hope that members of this government—as children of all ages do—would come away with a new-found respect for keeping promises and telling the truth. However, the introduction of the 2004 budget clearly underlines the fact that that evening’s lesson fell on deaf ears.

This government has tinkered with their promises in the past, but this budget represents the big whopper of them all, solidifying the Liberal reputation as a promise-breaking machine that bears little accountability to pledges they made during the election: budget hikes, deficits, delisting of health services, two-tier health care, no hiring of either officers or teachers in 2004. The list goes on and on.

It is clear that there is much more work to be done in impressing on this government the importance of keeping your word. The people of Ontario know the moral of the story. It’s borne out in the opinion poll that indicates that only 9% feel that McGuinty is doing a good job. Clearly, those who claim to represent people as a provincial government still have a long way to go when it comes to grasping the honesty thing.

I would like to open again a storybook I opened a number of nights ago and use some examples long taught to children with respect to the significance of honesty, to help explain exactly what the people of Ontario are trying to tell this government. I refer to *The Book of Virtues*. There is a chapter titled “Honesty,” and it begins:

“To be honest is to be real, genuine, authentic and bona fide. To be dishonest is to be partly feigned, forged, fake or fictitious. Honesty expresses both self-respect and respect for others. Dishonesty fully respects neither oneself nor others. Honesty imbues lives with openness, reliability and candour; it expresses a disposition to live in the light. Dishonesty seeks shade, cover or concealment. It is a disposition to live partly in the dark.” I

would submit this is where the Liberal brain trust has fashioned this particular document. They knew they would break that trust, the faith held by the people of Ontario.

The *Book of Virtues* has a series of pieces on the theme of honesty. There’s a poem titled “The Boy Who Never Told a Lie.”

Once there was a little boy,  
With curly hair and pleasant eye—  
A boy who always told the truth,  
And never, never told a lie.  
And when he trotted off to school,  
The children all about would cry,  
“There goes the curly-headed boy—  
The boy that never tells a lie.”  
And everybody loved him so,  
Because he always told the truth,  
That every day, as he grew up,  
’Twas said, “There goes an honest youth.”

This government would have done well to listen to these lessons of long ago. It seems somewhere along the line they have forgotten the importance of keeping one’s word. I can tell you that the people in Ontario have not forgotten those lessons; hence the 9% failing grade. There is a price to be paid for breaking promises. Clearly the Premier of this province is not a man of his word.

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I’ve been listening very carefully to the member opposite and I know that he’s skirting around the parliamentary language of this place. I think that last statement went over the line.

**The Acting Speaker:** I’ll listen. Go ahead.

**Mr Barrett:** We’ve all heard the tale of Honest Abe. President Lincoln earned his reputation for honesty in both private life and public life. Honesty is sorely needed in Liberal Ontario.

In Horatio Alger’s tale Abraham Lincoln, *The Backwoods Boy*, comes this tale of financial honesty.

“One day a woman came into the store and purchased sundry articles. They footed up two dollars and six and a quarter cents, or the young clerk thought they did.

“But the young storekeeper, not feeling quite sure as to the accuracy of his calculation, added up the items once more. To his dismay, he found that the sum total should have been but \$2.

“‘The money must be paid back,’ he decided.

“The young man knew she lived between two and three miles away.... He walked to the residence of his customer, explained the matter, paid over the six and a quarter cents, and returned satisfied.”

There are many in this province who expect just that kind of honesty. They were told during the election that they wouldn’t be paying more, and yet they are being hit. They’re being hit with a regressive health tax that they will add to their income tax bill. They ask, “Why can’t this government be a little more honest, like Honest Abe, and only charge us what we were told we would be charged with in the first place?”

There's another tale about another President, the first President of the United States, George Washington. People know this story. My time is short. I won't talk about the tale of the cherry tree; that's for another evening.

I would like to conclude that it's time for someone on that side of the House to take a page from George Washington, take a page from Honest Abe's book: Stand up for the truth and honesty in government by taking this broken-promise document off the table and go back to the drawing board.

**Mr John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity once again to speak to this terrible bill. I hope you'll excuse me, Mr Speaker; tonight it is very warm in here and I'm not wearing a jacket. But it is probably quite appropriate that it is warm in here tonight, because on May 18 the people of this province got burned. They got scorched by this government and the finance minister's budget that was tabled in this House on May 18. He called this bill a historic budget, and it is a historic budget.

Let's just talk about what it's done for the Liberal Party. This party here in Ontario is languishing around in the 20-some percentile range at this point. The Premier is at 9%, and this is a government that won 72 seats on October 2, based on false pretences that they ran on.

That's not the only effect. What did it do for their friends in Ottawa? Let's go back to November, when they anointed Paul Martin as Prime Minister. What were they saying? "Massive majority awaits the Liberals. It may be a record. It could exceed 220 seats." Those were the polls out there in November, and that was the Liberal Party's own forecast. Are we now going to get 220 Liberal seats? This party has gone down to the 20-some per cent range, the Premier is at 9% and Paul Martin is going down to defeat on June 28. He will probably be resigning as Liberal leader. The most embarrassing showing by a federal leader in history—to go into the election with that kind of lead and blow it—and he can thank anchor McGuinty for its going down.

**Hon Mr Caplan:** Speaker, I believe that was Kim Campbell.

**The Acting Speaker:** Go ahead.

**Mr Yakabuski:** For the record, Kim Campbell didn't enter the election with the lead, believe me. There were no polls that indicated that Kim Campbell was going to win that election. Maybe you can't remember that far back, but I sure can. Paul Martin—that's another story.

Let's go back to last year. They're talking about this deficit. All they hang this whole thing on is this so-called deficit they inherited. They came into this—

**Interjection:** Oh, come on.

**Mr Yakabuski:** I have never heard of a company that does a fiscal year in six months.

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** Oh, Liberals do.

1950

**Mr Yakabuski:** Liberals do. Liberals want you to believe that halfway through the year, if things aren't going well, you should just quit, not do a thing, and hope

that at the end of the year, somehow a little bird flew over and dropped in a few billion dollars. It doesn't happen that way. If you're not making your payments at home, if the expenses are higher than revenues halfway through the year, you've got to make some changes. You've got to make some adjustments.

What did this government do? It sat there across on the other side and twiddled its thumbs and did nothing. It just spun its wheels, and it kept saying, "We didn't know about this. It came as a complete surprise."

But in September, when Dalton McGuinty signed the taxpayer protection pledge, he was directly asked, "There's speculation out there, Mr McGuinty, that there may be some fiscal problems." "That doesn't matter," he said. "We may have to delay the implementation of some of our programs, but we will not run a deficit." You know what that was, eh? Something that Pinocchio fellow was always doing.

Where does it leave us now? This is the last day for us to stand up and speak for the people of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and speak for the people of Ontario. They have shut us down. They've effectively neutered us as far as a democratic force, and we—

**Mr Dunlop:** There's the boat anchor.

**Mr Yakabuski:** There's the anchor, sinking the good ship Liberal.

**Mr John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm sure it was the previous government that delisted vasectomies.

**The Acting Speaker:** That isn't a point of order. Continue. Let's go.

**Mr Yakabuski:** I'm glad I got mine in long before that.

Let's see what's going to happen tonight. Tonight, we will witness legislated, legalized larceny, because that's what this government is doing. Tonight, it's going to pass this budget that is going to rip the hearts out of working Ontarians in this province and, on the way down, as they're dropping to the floor, they'll have their pockets picked.

This is what this government has done to the people of Ontario. But on top of that, they've added a little salt to the wound, a little insult to injury. Yes, now they're going to tell us about this record investment they're going to make in health care, but in fact they're only putting a quarter of a billion or so of that into sewer pipes. If we were having a little game of Clue here in the Legislature tonight, I would say that Colonel McGuinty did it in the Legislature with the sewer pipe.

I want to wind up because I have other colleagues who have some very serious points to make as well.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Yakabuski:** Promises, promises. For goodness' sake, I believe there is some decency left over there. Remember what you promised. Remember what your campaign said. Remember the commitment you made to the people of Ontario. You have one chance and one chance only tonight. I'm asking all of those Liberals with

consciences to vote against this budget tonight. Give us another chance. We'll come up with something better.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member from Oshawa.

**Mr Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight. It must be late on a Thursday. You can tell. Certainly, people are fired up tonight.

You know, it's somewhat back to the future. We're back in the time when a budget comes around and things are going up. With the previous government, it used to be that at budget time, it was what was going down. Now we're back to the time when things are going up.

We heard the government members speak about a number of things. We heard one member speak about the \$257 million for sewage and water. We heard another speaker speak about \$26 million for children's mental health in all new funding that was being allocated.

Not only that, we heard about \$2.2 billion that was being spent in education. If the taxes were to be increased to balance the budget, then I ask the government and the people out there in the province of Ontario, where is the new money coming from, the \$2.2 billion, \$257 million, \$26 million just mentioned here tonight by government members? I think if they check, and the people at large will very well know, it's going to add up to about \$5.6 billion.

Government members spoke about crumbling infrastructure. I can tell you, as a member in 1999, I certainly saw a large number of schools in my riding close. We had anywhere from seven to 12 at that time because of riding boundary changes and things like that. In 2003, during the election, the people of Ontario saw the benefits. They saw the new schools that were being built, whether it was Queen Elizabeth, Village Union or all the other ones in our community, and the money that was invested in our community. That was taking place at that time.

They talked about new development and infrastructure coming to the province. In our area, we've got the new cancer centre. We've got 401 interchanges. We've got Pinewood. We've got the new university. We've got the reconstruction of the Northview Community Centre—all taking place with the previous government. It was happening then. People will believe what they want to believe, and certainly the people in my riding saw the benefits that were taking place with the previous government.

We also heard about the changes to the Electricity Act and what was happening there. I can tell you that, as Minister of Natural Resources, I worked very hard at coming forward with a policy that changed—you see, the Ministry of Natural Resources has over 660 dams that they're in full control of. The problem is that they're there for water management only. They do not take hydro development into consideration in any way, shape or form. What we were able to do was bring two ministries together, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Natural Resources. MNR set a policy at that time with

the previous government that established that any reconstruction, retrofits or new dams being done all had to take hydro development into consideration. You can figure that on low-flow generation we're looking at one to five megs on each of those dams, and 660 dams will certainly add to the province's energy needs.

What's happened? My understanding from the people I dealt with is that the committee has been shut down and the Ministry of Energy is no longer interested in dealing with MNR because they don't want to deal with water-control dams. Guess what? There is a surplus of 660 potential dams that are available out there for low-flow generation that could add to the province of Ontario.

I'm into the schools. I was in the schools yesterday. Last week, I was in two schools as well. I'm in there on a regular basis. I talk to the principals and teachers on a regular basis.

The impact of capping class sizes from JK to grade 3: What's taking place is, these people are concerned because they have classes of 23 and 24. One school is going to have to put in portables to account for the new class sizes, and we're going to have JK to grade 3 in portables. Not only that, they're also going to have split classes. What that means is that a grade 2 and a grade 3 will be in the same classroom. Yes, you'll have 20 kids in each class. There will be 20 grade 2s and 20 grade 3s. I have seen it right now in Father Venini school, where they have grade 4s and grade 5s. What will take place is, the boards will look at what they are given to deal with and try to accommodate under the finances they have, and these are some of the changes that they will make.

**Interjection:** That's really dishonest.

**Mr Ouellette:** That's the way it happens, though. The principals and the boards will look at it and say, "Guess what? We've got a classroom of 20 grade 2s and a classroom of 20 grade 3s. They're going to have the same teacher, and they're going to be in the same room."

But the big concern from the principals and teachers is, what's going to happen in grade 4? What's going to happen when you have 20 grade 3 students going into grade 4? What's going to take place at that time we have yet to hear.

I was specifically asked—and it was raised on Monday and Tuesday in the Legislature—regarding special ed funding. August 28 is the critical date for that. They have complied with the guidelines. They've fulfilled that, they have spent the money and they're waiting for it now. If they don't have those funds by August 28, the local boards are going to be in a lot of critical trouble because of financial implications.

One thing people haven't figured out—and I haven't heard it around too much yet—is that the government has found a way to limit the increase in health care spending. They've made some announcements here that are effectively going to limit the increase in health care spending.

If you look at our government increase, we went from \$17.4 billion in 1995 to over \$28 billion in 2003, a substantial increase—almost a 47% increase in the health care budget. Now, with the announcements that have

taken place, you're not going to see those increases or changes in the health care budget. Effectively, they have limited the amount of spending increase in health care.

#### 2000

One of the biggest concerns I have, though, is what is yet to come. For those individuals watching and those who have a copy or want to look on the Net, take a look at page 124 of the budget, the last paragraph. It specifically talks about the large increases that were announced and that we're speaking about now, but it also talks about the small increases yet to come. If you read the last paragraph on page 125, it says those small increases will be announced by the independent ministries at a later date. There is nothing to say what's going to happen. Are there going to be park fee increases for MNR for people attending provincial parks? We'll find out, I imagine, as the government moves forward. They're finding the response they are getting now, with the increases they are having now, is that they're going to have to wait till the summertime, when we don't have the opportunity to question them in the Legislature with those other increases that are taking place.

**Mr Barrett:** The devil's in the details.

**Mr Ouellette:** Absolutely. As the member says, the devil is in the details.

People judge a government effectively on how they handle what they've been dealt. In this case, they've been given a choice, and the choice the current government made was, "I'll close as I open." It's back to the future: new budget, tax and spend; what's going up?

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I feel privileged to have the opportunity this evening to speak briefly against the government's Bill 83, the budget bill, on behalf of my constituents in Waterloo-Wellington.

It was with a great sense of anticipation that the House convened on May 18 to hear the Treasurer deliver this first Liberal budget in many years. Certainly the government was expected to respond in an appropriate way to the comments and commitments the Liberal Party had made during last September's provincial election campaign. Promises had been made; promises were expected to be kept. Numerous interest groups had supported the Liberals and they expected to be placated. It was payback time.

This is the situation the Treasurer found himself in, having survived the controversy over his service as a director and chair of the audit committee of Royal Group Technologies, a firm which is apparently under investigation by the Ontario Securities Commission and the RCMP—another shoe that has yet to drop.

As is our custom in this place, members assembled in the Legislature to hear the Treasurer's speech. Normally the galleries for a budget speech are packed. This time, many of the seats were curiously empty. The pages did an extraordinary job of quickly delivering the budget documents to the members. To say the least, I was shocked when I opened my budget speech and budget papers. Mr Speaker, you will recall the outrage that was expressed within this House that day, which was a harbinger of the reaction we would encounter in coffee

shops and on Main Streets as the people of Ontario learned of its contents.

My first public statement was to suggest that the Liberal government's credibility was severely damaged. If anything, I understated the degree to which people felt betrayed, because last fall the Liberal Party campaigned with a TV advertisement in which their leader, Mr McGuinty, promised he wouldn't raise taxes. Because this ad was broadcast hundreds of times, in effect he made the promise hundreds of times.

With the May 18 budget, he broke that promise with a brand new tax on income—not a premium, which they shamelessly and disingenuously continue to call it, but a new tax that they claimed they would put into health care.

With their unwillingness to embrace fiscal discipline, they are breaking yet another key covenant with the people. They promised to balance the budget; instead, they are adding to the provincial debt every year until at least 2008. In doing so, they are leaving our children and grandchildren an even greater financial burden because of their selfish inability to provide the appropriate fiscal leadership we need. Every household, every business, every farm, every going concern has to live within its means and balance its books, and the people of Waterloo-Wellington expect nothing less from this government.

Let's take a moment to deal with the government's defence. They claim they inherited a big deficit that they didn't know about; they assumed office seven months into the fiscal year and spending patterns were established. Nothing could be done. They hadn't found the washrooms yet.

Anyone who has served in government knows this is pure bunk. Our government, in its final year in office, presented the people of Ontario with a projected balanced budget. Admittedly, we might have chosen a more traditional venue for the budget speech, but the fact remains that every budget is a projected budget for the coming fiscal year. That spring and summer, the Ontario economy endured three significant shocks that no one could have foreseen, that no government could have avoided. One identified incidence of mad cow disease in Alberta devastated rural Ontario. A massive electricity meltdown originating in the state of Ohio effectively shut down our industry for a week with negative consequences for our GDP and obviously our revenues. A health care crisis that originated in China, severe acute respiratory syndrome or SARS, tested the limits of our health care system and killed our summer tourism season.

Did all of this have an impact on our budget in-year? Absolutely it did. But the fundamental question the House needs to consider is, does this absolve the government of responsibility for taking action when it took office in October? There were still five months left in the fiscal year, which of course ends March 31. Surely there was a responsibility on the government from the day it took office to deal with this fiscal challenge. I believe they could have balanced the budget if they had wanted to, if the political will had existed. They chose not to do so.

My colleague the member for Kitchener-Waterloo has served as our health critic since the election and has been passionate and tireless in supporting chiropractic patients, optometry patients and physiotherapy patients since this budget insulted them by taking away their OHIP coverage for these needed health services. No matter how you cut it, this is two-tier health care: one tier for the well-to-do and one where the poor can do without. There is still time for the government to extricate itself from this mistake, and they would do well to listen to the former Minister of Health.

I am conscious of the fact that this is a time-allocated debate. The government House leader has placed severe constraints upon the time allocated for this debate. Other members of our caucus wish to speak as well, and I don't want them to be shortchanged.

There is one other thought I wish to express to the House tonight. A few weeks ago in a column by Ian Urquhart in the *Toronto Star*, reference was made to the fact that in the 1995 election campaign I refused to sign the taxpayer protection pledge. This is true. In fact, I was the only Conservative candidate out of 130 who was unable to sign this pledge.

The pledge contained three elements: We were asked to commit to never raising taxes unless we were given explicit permission through a referendum; balance the budget within five years; and institute pay penalties for cabinet ministers if these promises weren't met. We were to bring this legislation in immediately.

The reason I didn't sign it was very simple. In 1994 and 1995, cynicism about politics and politicians was pervasive in our political culture, not unlike today. In response to this, from the time of my nomination meeting in 1995 through the pre-writ period and into the election campaign, I said hundreds of times to my constituents: "I will not be making any promises except one, that being to serve you to the very best of my ability if I'm re-elected."

It's true that I had misgivings about the idea of referendums on taxes because this is foreign to our British parliamentary traditions. Parliaments exist, and have existed for centuries, to set the appropriate level of tax for the public good. We accept responsibility for the decisions we make and are accountable to the people at the ballot box at election time. In any case, I had a choice to make and that was to compromise my integrity, sign the pledge and go along with the crowd or keep my word to my constituents. I chose the latter, and I don't regret it. Perhaps I paid a price, but if I did, it was worth it.

The Premier had the same choice. I believe as a candidate in the 1995 election he had refused to sign the pledge just as I did. I believe he signed it in 1999 as leader of the Liberal Party. With great fanfare and flourish at a staged political event in the 2003 election with the cameras rolling, he cynically signed it again, knowing full well he had absolutely no intention of keeping it.

I must confess, on a personal level I like Dalton McGuinty and always have since I first met him in 1990. I find it hard to believe he would compromise his

reputation to this extent to acquire power. He himself has said repeatedly, "I didn't go into politics to make the people more cynical," yet this will be his lasting legacy.

**2010**

**Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** I want to congratulate the member for Waterloo-Wellington who has just spoken. I personally believe that I could not say any better than he has what I believe I feel in my heart.

The reality is that this Premier had the opportunity to make promises to people that he could keep. Regrettably, he made a promise. He signed, with flourish, the Taxpayer Protection Act and he said he would not raise taxes. In fact, many times he appeared on TV during the election campaign and said, "I will not raise your taxes." When it came to the budget, despite the fact that the Premier and the government had said they had undertaken intensive consultation, there was no indication whatsoever that this government was prepared to put aside all of the commitments it had made to the people of Ontario. Not only did they raise taxes and introduce a very punishing health tax for anyone making more than \$20,000 in this province, but, on top of that, they also decided they were going to move toward two-tier medicine; they were going to introduce more privatization into the system. This from a Premier who had promised that he was going to deliver more front-line services to the people of Ontario. He was going to focus on prevention and wellness rather than illness.

Then, with the stroke of a pen, in the budget we see that they are delisting three services: chiropractic, eye exams for those between 20 and 65, and physiotherapy. Furthermore, when you take a look at the budget, you see that there are reductions in spending for the Ontario breast screening program. That program has a goal of meeting the needs and making sure that 70% of the women in this province over the age of 50 are screened; this at a time when we know that 8,000 women in this province are going to be diagnosed this year with breast cancer and 2,000 are going to die. This Premier and this government, in their budget, have decided they're going to reduce the spending by 10% for the breast screening program and they're going to reduce the program by \$3 million.

There was a complete betrayal of people in Ontario. They believed the expensive promises that were made during the election campaign, and I can personally tell you that people are angry and discouraged. They have become even more cynical about politicians than ever before.

I would encourage all the members in the government bench to think very carefully about the budget and its broken promises. You still have a chance to vote against the budget. You can still increase the funding for those health care programs that are so important. I would encourage you to do so.

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to join the debate on the budget bill which is

being put through this evening—forced through this evening—

**Interjection:** Rammed through.

**Mr Miller:** —rammed through, with two days of public debate—

**Interjection:** Eight hours.

**Mr Miller:** —eight hours of public debate here in Toronto, with very little notice, which is a bit of a joke.

I have a very brief time here this evening and I would like to focus on my own riding, Parry Sound-Muskoka, because this budget bill was a slam in the face for the people of Parry Sound-Muskoka.

On page 96 of the budget papers, there's one little line at the bottom of the page: "As a result, we propose to return the definition of northern Ontario, for the purposes of government policy and program delivery, to what it was before September 2000." That's it. No mention in the budget speech of the word "Muskoka." This has great significance to the people of Muskoka. It removes Muskoka from the north, and this is going to have some negative effects for the people of Muskoka.

They did this without any consultation at all. For a government that says that they consult, that they have democratic renewal, there was no consultation whatsoever with the six municipalities in Muskoka—none whatsoever. They were absolutely caught by surprise. The hospitals in Muskoka were absolutely caught by surprise. Now, all of a sudden, they are scrambling around, trying to figure out how they're going to make ends meet this year.

I've received some letters which really enunciate very clearly how the citizens of Muskoka are feeling. Here's one to me. I'd like to read a part of it.

"Mr Miller,

"I would like to express my concern over the loss of northern Ontario status for Muskoka. We are a community with one of the lowest per-family incomes in the province; our health care has consistently been rated at the bottom of the scale of excellence by Maclean's magazine. Many must travel to Sudbury for medical care—we need our travel expenses subsidized; our hospitals need extra funding in order to recruit doctors, staff, rehab beds etc."

The letter goes on from there, and it's a very well-written letter from a constituent of mine.

In just a week and a half or so, I've received 6,000 petitions demanding that Muskoka be put back in northern Ontario. From what I understand, I've received hundreds more just today—every day, 300 or 400 more petitions.

Here's another letter that enunciates some other concerns.

"Dear Premier McGuinty,

"I finally get it. After five years of trying to make it in the district of Muskoka that I grew up in, and had to move away from to have a job other than a waitress, I give up.

"No matter what I tell you, you think people like me and my neighbours who live in Muskoka are rich prop-

erty owners who don't need any assistance and bear no resemblance to other people in northern Ontario. Why else would you drop our northern designation without warning, without consultation?"

Summing up this letter—and it's a long letter:

"Premier McGuinty, please reconsider this boundary change. Your callous treatment of us in your budget just set us back another decade. The way it was presented to communities to the north of us by your cabinet members was disgraceful. I am astonished that you can be so out of touch with your constituents. Any time you want a guided tour to see the real Muskoka, call me. I will be pleased to enlighten you. You'll have to pay for the gas."

I think that says it very clearly. This measure in the budget is a stab in the back for the people of Muskoka.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** It's very difficult to stand here in the very few minutes I have to represent the people of Durham and their frustration. I just want to enter into evidence here a couple of documents. It's the Public Accounts of Ontario and these are for the 2002-03 fiscal year. This document is signed by the Honourable Greg Sorbara and it's dated November 2003 in Toronto. This is also signed by all of the financial officials, including the auditor of Ontario. To validate this as a legal document, it says that the consolidated financial statements express "the opinion of the Assistant Provincial Auditor as to whether the consolidated financial statements fairly report the activities of the government in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles."

Actually it's quite interesting because Jim McCarter, who is the Assistant Provincial Auditor, states on page 30 of this document that the annual surplus at the end of the 2003 audited statements, signed by Greg Sorbara, is \$117 million. Enter that into evidence: The accumulated debt at that time had moved from—in 2002 the debt was \$132 million; at the end of the 2003 actual audited statement, it was down to \$118 million. I can go on to some extent, because the report of the Provincial Auditor, Erik Peters, also enunciates the same document.

As explained earlier from the member of Waterloo-Wellington in a very eloquent speech, very eloquently delivered, which I give him credit for, it simply tells the truth that he had the same choice as Dalton McGuinty. I'm holding an official copy of the Taxpayer Protection Act, which Dalton McGuinty signed on September 11, 2003, just prior to the election; what I call a deliberate obfuscation, signed by Dalton McGuinty and witnessed in public, in front of the cameras, where he promised—and I will read it: "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise, if my party is elected as the next government, that I will"—

**Interjection:** Did he keep his promise?

**Mr O'Toole:** —listen; it's very important; you told the people an untruth—"not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the explicit consent of Ontario voters." You promised to abide by the Taxpayer Protection Act.

**2020**

How can you, in all conscience—and for the few seconds I have left, I want to cite a few members on the

other side who I think have some conscience, but they have no gall. They can't use their guts. Jim Brownell stated on March 28 that he was unhappy with the budget. Phil McNeely, the person who spoke tonight, called the budget "brutal" on May 29. On May 25, Kim Craiton demanded that McGuinty restore health care and the services he slashed. Dave Levac, who is the whip of the party, told chiropractors on May 29, 2004, that he felt their pain. Marie Bountrogianni said, "We will be fighting to lower the premiums." How much more evidence do you need? You have no confidence to do the dignified and the honourable thing. Ask Mr Sorbara, who's here tonight, to do the right thing.

In the last two minutes I have, I'm going to leave with what I call the litany of Liberal broken promises. I'm going to give you two versions. Listen up. The two versions are federal and then provincial.

Federal: Paul Martin cut health care in 1993. He promised, along with Sheila Copps and Jean Chrétien, to eliminate the GST. Period. He promised to cancel free trade. What did he do? Nothing. The flag scandal, the helicopters, airport—the list goes on of their obfuscation and broken promises. The Liberals have one legacy, and that is that they don't tell the truth.

The provincial litany is as follows: They cancelled physiotherapy, optometry, chiropractic; a health tax; retroactivity; electricity prices; auto insurance—all broken promises. The Liberals simply don't get it. They've time-allocated this debate. They've broken their promises. They've prohibited debate. We have no other choice in this House but to vote against this bill and hold you accountable for the next four years.

**Mr Dunlop:** I'm pleased to complete our debate on third reading tonight. As you know, Mr Speaker, it has been shortened. The government didn't have the courage to go to committee hearings over the course of the summer months, something they talked about—open government and all the hoopla we've heard from this government.

I don't think anybody actually believes anything a Liberal says any more. Yesterday, the Premier foolishly went to Washington, embarrassed himself down there once again, and actually said, "Believe me." That's what he actually told the people down in Washington. Who believes Dalton McGuinty? High school students in Saskatoon don't believe Dalton McGuinty. No one believes you. It's your legacy: A Liberal is a Liberal is a Liberal, plain and simple.

It starts back—and my colleague from Durham mentioned it very clearly a few minutes ago, when he talked about the red book promise to eliminate the GST. That really started it all. That was the architect of the destruction of health care in Canada. Paul Martin—we know where he is today. He finally—

*Interjections.*

**Mr Dunlop:** What it's all about here tonight is—we've heard over and over again from our caucus, from people all across the province of Ontario. We all remember back to the election. We all remember the promises made by all the candidates.

I can see the shame in your faces tonight. You're ashamed you're Liberals. I can look across the room and people are discouraged. They wish they were Tories. They wish they had run under the Tory banner. They want to be on our side, because if you're on our side, you're going to form the next government in 2007 on October 4. That's a fact of life. People don't believe you any more. People do not believe Liberals, no matter where they are today in Canada. And I brought my article along about the boat anchor, Dalton McGuinty, sinking the good ship Liberal run by Captain Paul Martin, soon to be the ex-Prime Minister of our country.

We listen over and over again. They keep going back to this excuse of the deficit. It's so worn out now, it's so tired, that it's actually disgusting. All you had to do today was go out in the parking lot, out in the front of the building here, in the front of Queen's Park, and talk to—I'm assuming there were about 1,000 people out there today, all chiropractors. They said everything today. They said everything. The media were there. We talked to chiropractors from all across the country, talked to their patients and clients. It's actually disgraceful, the comments we heard and the hate toward this government, in just eight short months.

On October 2, 2003, they won a majority government based on a bunch of promises they made that they knew full well they could not keep. Here we are tonight, eight and a half, almost nine months later, completing their first budget. They've already lost one by-election. They were humiliated in that by-election. Now they've brought down their federal counterparts. We know full well that Stephen Harper will likely form the next government. Paul Martin is on his way out. That's where he should be, because he is the man who tried to destroy health care in Canada.

Ladies and gentlemen, I can see the shame in their faces tonight. They're disappointed. They're sorry they brought time allocation to this very, very disastrous budget, the worst budget in the history of the province of Ontario, bar none. Six lousy hours of committee hearings; time allocation tonight.

You guys all have an opportunity. Vote against this tonight. Don't listen to the Premier's office. Don't listen to the Minister of Finance. Forget it. You still have a chance to redeem yourselves. Vote against this budget because I'm sure all of your constituents, by tomorrow morning, will know full well how you voted tonight. You voted for the most disastrous budget in the history of Ontario. If you vote for anything, you should be voting for a referendum to go back to the public. We've said it over and over again tonight: The Premier signed the Taxpayer Protection Act, which called for a referendum. They still have a chance to redeem themselves tonight, to vote against this. Let's go out and call for a referendum under the Taxpayer Protection Act.

Many of you had all kinds of opportunities, and you took time to take part in the photo op, to sign on the dotted line on September 11 with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. Redeem yourselves tonight. Get rid of



that shame that's on your faces. Get rid of it. You have an opportunity to redeem yourselves and vote against this budget tonight. Go back to your constituents, like Mr Craitor, one man who does have some courage over there. Redeem yourself. He already got good publicity because he stood up a little bit against the Premier's office. He's done that. Even Mr McNeely has done the same thing. These are people who have some courage. They've at least stood up and opposed the Premier's office on this absolutely disastrous budget.

All you had to do today, any one of the 71 of you could have come out today to the front of building at Queen's Park and talked to the chiropractors. Nobody from the Liberal caucus showed up. A couple of Dalton McGuinty spies from the Premier's office were there; that's all.

This is a disaster. I know you're going to pass this by 9:20, but I'm going to tell you, you're going to wear this, and many of you people here tonight as MPPs will not be here after October 4, 2007, if in fact you can even keep that promise.

The bottom line here is our caucus is against this particular piece of legislation. It's a disaster for the history of the province of Ontario, and I urge everyone to vote against this budget.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** We've got but 50 minutes. Here we are, it's around 8:30 at night, and we've got but 50 minutes for the New Democrats.

Now you've got to understand. The Liberals, you see, have time-allocated this bill. They've guaranteed there will not be thorough third reading debate. I regret that. I deplore that. I find that most unfortunate, especially with a budget that's so contentious and of so much concern to so many people in this province.

**2030**

I'm going to share this time with Michael Prue, who is our finance critic. He's going to wrap up. When Michael Prue's finished, we will be forced to put this bill to a vote.

I want to make it quite clear that New Democrats will not be supporting Bill 83. New Democrats do not support this government's budget. New Democrats do not support the attack on public health care. New Democrats do not support the Liberal privatization of chiropractic, optometry and physiotherapy. New Democrats do not support the imposition of an aggressive, unfair and regressive tax on low- and middle-income people, who have been paying more than their fair share of taxes for a long, long time now.

Speaker, I'm anticipating you being concerned about me staying on topic. That's why I want to draw your attention to the fact that Bill 83, in particular section 17, is an amendment to the Taxpayer Protection Act. Basically, this government is going to change the law to avoid breaking it. I'm not sure—and I know there are folks in this chamber with more recollection than I have—but it seems to me that there is some precedent. It was Mitch Hepburn, wasn't it—you'd be familiar with this, Speaker—who created the concept of gross negligence to

cover his own butt in somewhat similar circumstances? Others will reflect on that.

But in the context of this bill amending the Taxpayer Protection Act, I want to talk about protecting some taxpayers. I want to talk about one taxpayer in particular, Kenneth G. Wilkinson from Thorold. It was just today that I happened to open his letter to me. I thought, after I read it and phoned him, "By gosh, here's a taxpayer who needs protection." Because, you see, he's getting ripped off by the Ministry of Finance. He is. Back in March, Mr Wilkinson went to the Bay, bought himself a Maytag washing machine and, of course, believed the government when they said they were going to reimburse him for the sales tax on that Maytag energy-efficient washing machine.

So Mr Wilkinson, back after purchasing this Maytag washing machine at the Bay, submits his invoice. Indeed, he submits the sales bill in addition to the invoice, the cash register receipt. I've got a photocopy here of the cash register receipt. The cash register receipt indicates the day the purchase was made. It identifies the model number. It's called an Atlantis. It indicates the serial number, the date of purchase, the amount of provincial sales tax paid. He also included the sales invoice, the five-part sales bill, which repeats all of that information, including Mr Wilkinson's name, his address and his telephone number. It talks about a Maytag Atlantis, model number MAV7501. It identifies the amount of sales tax.

He submits all this stuff, believing that this government was going to keep its promise to rebate the provincial sales tax. What happens? Another broken promise by the Dalton McGuinty Liberals here at Queen's Park. He fills out the application for rebate of retail sales tax and again talks about this being a washer, a Maytag, model number, amount of rebate claimed, purchase date back in March, delivered on April 7. What does he get June 1 from the Ministry of Finance? He gets a letter that says, very impersonally:

"Dear Claimant:

"In order to process your refund application, we require the following:

"—the invoice submitted does not show the information required to process your claim" with respect to "model number, date of purchase, invoice number etc."

Mr Wilkinson was irate, to say the least. Mr Wilkinson felt that this government once again wasn't prepared to keep one of its promises, in particular the promise to him to rebate his sales tax. So he wrote back to the Ministry of Finance on June 10, with a copy to me. He acknowledged receipt of the letter of June 1 and stated, "I would advise all the information was there as requested. However, the key word is public service and it appears your staff is unable to review the documents and satisfy themselves that indeed the information is there.

"I attended the store where I purchased the washer and they quickly identified the information for me"—on the forms that he had submitted—"and I have highlighted them for you....

“While I assume your department receives a large number of requests, a few moments spent ... could quickly calculate and determine that all the information is there.”

He then summarizes the information that’s contained on the invoice, the cash register invoice that’s printed out by the Bay, and on the five-part sales bill, and then notes that, “in all probability I will have to wait another two months for this rebate if all things are in order.”

Well, Mr Ken Wilkinson from Thorold, Ontario, who properly and appropriately submitted all his invoices, expecting a rebate of the sales tax paid by him on this new washing machine, doesn’t think the promises by this government are being kept, and quite frankly, neither does a correspondent called John Gabel, who writes me from Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

Again, I got this letter just a couple of days ago, and it’s a copy of the letter he sent to the Minister of Finance. Mr Gabel writes that he lived in Ontario for over 11 years, up to 2003, and during that entire period, he dealt with Liberty Mutual Insurance, now TD Insurance. He still has a vehicle in Ontario—notwithstanding that he lives in Northwest Territories—a 2000 Toyota Corolla.

“Recently,” he writes, “I called Liberty Mutual to re-activate the insurance on this vehicle (it has been in storage and was only covered by comprehensive insurance during the winter), with my daughter as the primary driver. She is 25 years of age, took driver training several years ago, has her full G licence and has never received a traffic ticket. She did have one ... accident in December 2000 when she slid off the 401 during a bad snowstorm and struck the back of a tractor-trailer.... The OPP was present and she was not charged; to my knowledge no other drivers were charged.” You see, that’s not an at-fault accident, is it? That’s called a no-fault accident. You can’t blame her. No charges were laid. They surely would have been, had she been at fault.

“Liberty Mutual quoted an annual premium of \$6,279.35.” Some \$6,300 a year. “They said that without the accident, it would have been \$2,689” a year. “Twice I phoned Liberty Mutual to ask if this rate was correct or there was some mistake, and was assured that it was correct, and that in spite of the circumstances and relatively low cost of the previous claim, this higher rate would stay in effect until my daughter had been accident-free for six years. I also asked if they would consider forgiving the accident in light of the fact that we had been good customers for so many years ... and my daughter’s good record. I was told they would not consider this.”

He writes: “This is scandalous. I would like your response as to the type of regulation that is in place to prevent this price gouging by Liberty/TD. I also hope this type of situation calls into question the appropriateness of Liberty/TD being licensed to sell insurance in Ontario.

“I am no longer a resident of Ontario, but my daughter is, and she has learned a great deal about the insurance industry through this process. I can be reached by mail or at” his telephone number.”

Obviously, Liberty/TD Insurance is a rip-off. There isn’t a person out there who should be insuring a vehicle with TD Insurance. Liberty Mutual Insurance, based in Boston, was purchased by TD Bank Financial. And as if the banks haven’t ripped you off enough, now TD Bank is ripping off its customers by gouging them with insurance premiums that are atrocious, that are unjustifiable, that are unconscionable. This government promised that it would not only control but reduce insurance premiums by 20%—another promise broken.

Talking about protecting taxpayers, by gosh, today I happened to run across a copy of the minutes of the first meeting of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association. Now, I knew there was such a group, but I picked up the minutes and had occasion to read them. I saw that they had their first meeting, and gosh, it sounded like a good time was had by all. It was just a jolly old time. I mean, they elected people to become vice-presidents, and then one member congratulated the people who had just been elected. Then another member said, by golly, she was really looking forward to the things that they’d be discussing as members of this club.

Then a third member, a Liberal member, cut to the chase. He wasn’t going to waste time with all this dilly-dallying about what nice folks they were or what nice things they could do together; he wanted to cut to the chase. He wanted to know how the delegation was chosen to travel to Quebec City for the convention, for the junket that’s going to be held later. You see, he didn’t want to mess around with the niceties. He wanted to get right to the point. “How do we get on the junket?”

**2040**

Well, the Speaker, being an obliging person and obviously a cornucopia of information, advised that there would be seven members of the club, the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association, plus the Speaker, who would be delegates on this junket to Quebec City. The government of Quebec has a parallel group, so these people nurture each other, and it’s like a club for junket junkies. Do you understand what I’m saying? You can’t go on the junket unless you join the club. There are no membership requirements, but the taxpayer pays for the trip—seven members plus the Speaker, and the taxpayer pays for the trip. But that’s just the beginning.

I happened to have occasion to click on my Internet machine, my computer, and by gosh, what member of this Legislative Assembly was in Marrakesh? Marrakesh: That’s in northern Africa. It’s an exotic destination. I understand federal MPs doing junkets of that ilk, because of course they do junkets all over the world, but a provincial MPP was in Marrakesh on a taxpayer-funded junket. This jumped out at me on my computer machine that MPP Jean-Marc Lalonde was in Marrakesh. I thought that was fascinating, that an Ontario legislator was going to Marrakesh, and I wondered, what other destinations have there been where taxpayers have accommodated members of the assembly with such largesse?

Well, from May 14 to 19, an MPP was in Bucharest, Romania. Bucharest? An Ontario legislator in Bucharest?

I'm not sure. It seems that there were Ontario legislators in Paris, France. Not cabinet ministers, not the Minister of Tourism—they're on legitimate business—but backbenchers, junket junkies, off on these little international visitations. We're talking about Marrakesh, we're talking about Paris, we're talking about Bucharest, we're talking about Dakar, we're talking about Niger, we're talking about Neuchâtel, Switzerland, on the taxpayers' tab.

Maybe the Minister of Health should be financing the commencement of a 12-step program for junket junkies. The sort of people who go off on these junkets could come to the 12-step program meeting and they would stand up and say, "Hi. My name is Jean-Marc and I am a junket junkie, and I want to clear the air right off." That's how the 12-step programs have worked. He'd stand up and say, "Hi. My name is Jean-Marc and I am a junket junkie. I go to places like Marrakesh on the taxpayers' tab. I go to any number of places throughout not just Ontario—"

**Mr Colle:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The standing orders indicate very clearly that we're supposed to speak to the bill before us. I don't know what Marrakesh has to do with Bill 83 and this geographic merry-go-round he's put us on. We're dealing with Bill 83.

**The Acting Speaker:** The point is noted. I'm sure the member is listening.

**Mr Kormos:** Thank you kindly, Speaker. So says the member from Marrakesh.

Yesterday, I happened to reach for Bourinot's parliamentary procedure, 4th edition, 1916. It revealed itself. It just fell open to page 341, where it said, "The precise relevancy of an argument is not always perceptible, but the Speaker must be satisfied that it is relevant, otherwise he reminds the member that he must speak to the question." So to save you from getting up on your feet, I will presume to have been reminded. But I gotta warn you, as I had occasion to tell the Speaker yesterday, the relevance isn't always perceptible, and that's acknowledged. As it was Bourinot—

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I was just in my office—

**The Acting Speaker:** Member, I haven't recognized you yet, OK?

The Chair recognizes the member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

**Mr Lalonde:** Mr Speaker, I thought when a member was absent from the House that we were not supposed to bring up his name.

But, first of all, I want to clarify what he just said. Most of my—

**The Acting Speaker:** That's not a point of order. The member for Niagara Centre, continue.

**Mr Kormos:** Thank you kindly, Speaker. So says the member from Marrakesh. Will he want to make the same explanation as to any other number—you see, the problem, once you get into this, is that you go on down the list and you start identifying other destinations that people have been to on the taxpayers' tab. Far be it from

me—but I suppose in the context of that I should make reference to the membership of the club that met to discuss their junkets to Quebec City. These are members of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association. They are Ted Arnott, Christopher Bentley, Laurel Broten, Michael Bryant, David Caplan, Kim Craiton, Caroline Di Cocco, Ernie Hardeman, Frank Klees, Rosario Marchese, John Milloy, Bill Murdoch, Tim Peterson, Mario Sergio, Norm Sterling, Jim Wilson, John Baird, Gilles Bisson, Mike Brown, Donna Cansfield, Mary Anne Chambers, Bruce Crozier, Kevin Daniel Flynn, Cam Jackson, Dave Levac, Deb Matthews, Jennifer Mossop, John O'Toole, Mario Racco—a person who I know has an intense interest in Quebec-Ontario parliamentary tradition and convention—Monique Smith and Joseph Tascona.

So that's the membership of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association, some of whose members attended that meeting on April 21 to discuss the junket to Quebec City, paid for with taxpayers' dollars—seven members and one Speaker.

Niger, Dakar, and let's not overlook the 30th conference of the International Association of Francophone Parliamentarians in Prince Edward Island this year. Prince Edward Island on the taxpayers' tab in the summertime is going to be a particularly attractive destination. It's going to be in the middle of lobster season.

As I say, my concern is that the budget of the Minister of Health should perhaps be addressing the issue of this addiction to junkets and the junket junkies who find themselves lured by this unsavoury underworld of travel and wining and dining at taxpayers' expense. It's like that movie, *The Man with the Golden Arm*. So they find themselves lured by this unsavoury underground of taxpayer-funded travel, dining and wining.

They then find themselves hooked. They start out on the small stuff. Oh, you might start out on an Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association junket to Quebec City, but before you know it, you're into the heavy stuff. Before you know it, you're into Niger, you're into Marrakesh, you're into Dakar, you're into Neuchâtel, Switzerland. You're spending more and more.

The one remarkable thing about French-language destinations, of course, is that the hub for travel there is inevitably Paris. That is the real lure because the plane tickets are of a calibre—not that they're first-class—that can be extended for, let's say, a week or 10 days, so that you can take the plane ticket, paid for by the taxpayer, and have yourself a vacation in Paris en route or on return from the destination in a former French colony.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Kormos:** Mr Stockwell, as Speaker, perfected the style, and as a minister, he took it to almost criminal proportions. Indeed, he still hasn't paid the \$7,000 he promised to pay back.

2050

*Interjection:* He was absolved of that.

**Mr Kormos:** No, he wasn't absolved. Mind you, you should understand this is still within small claims court jurisdiction.

So I say, in defence of taxpayers, those who have junket addictions should be prepared to stand up and declare themselves to suffer these illnesses. They should be prepared to stand up and tell not only the people in their own communities, but the Ontario press gallery that they've been on this junket. They should be able to proclaim—in fact, they should file with the Clerk or the Speaker's office or the Integrity Commissioner—

**M. Lalonde:** Un point d'ordre, monsieur le Président: Puisqu'on parle des francophones, on devrait s'adresser en français ici. C'est que les personnes qui comprennent le français devraient avoir le temps de nous parler en français.

**Mr Kormos:** Well, I'm sorry if Mr Lalonde is offended by having been identified as suffering from this affliction. I say it not by way of attack, but by way of me expressing concern about his welfare, much as I'd express concern about a person with a bad pharmaceutical drug addiction, a bad booze habit or a bad heroin habit. As I say, 12-step programs can be very effective. I say that junket junkies, if they're going to have clubs and organize themselves into events, would be wise to find themselves a good addictions counsellor. Go over to the Addiction Research Foundation; there are people to help you run these kinds of groups. But the first thing you've got to do is fundamental, whether it's heroin addiction or cocaine addiction or alcoholism or a pharmaceutical drug addiction—

**Ms Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The honourable member is impugning the reputation of our member by suggesting that he has some addiction.

**The Acting Speaker:** That's not a point of order and it's not the case.

Go ahead.

**Mr Kormos:** Yes, Ms Marsales, that's the point. That's the point, and the first step to recovery is to admit it. You see, every addict that I've ever known or know is in denial. They rationalize, they justify, they explain away their habit. Junket junkies are in the same state of denial. Just like the alcoholic who hides the booze in the toilet tank—you know, the mickey of gin—junket junkies hide their junkets. They don't want the public to know about them. They don't want their voters to know about them. They don't want this assembly to know about them.

**The Acting Speaker:** Member for Niagara Centre, I think I've given you some latitude to see where you're going. Do you want to return to the bill, please?

**Mr Kormos:** Thank you kindly, Speaker, for your direction.

Section 17, of course, is an effort by this government to amend the Taxpayer Protection Act. I say taxpayers in this province need protection. I say taxpayers in this province deserve protection. I say taxpayers in this province seek protection. They seek protection from politicians with addictions to junkets that abuse the public purse by heading off not just throughout the province, but

across Canada, across North America, and indeed internationally, on junkets that they—

**Ms Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just want to point out that he keeps carrying on about junkets being made by some people on a committee. There have been no junkets. If I'm going to be accused of taking a junket, I want to at least get the junket. He's making improper insinuations and impugning—

**The Acting Speaker:** That's not a point of order. Take your seat.

The member for Niagara Centre, can you just speak to the bill, please, and we can get off that.

**Mr Kormos:** Of course I will. I say to the member from Stoney Creek, it's a simple matter of, if the shoe fits, wear it. But people with addictions have to overcome their denial, just like this government has to overcome its denial of imposing harsh new taxes on low- and middle-income people. This government perhaps shares some of the same addiction problems as do members of this assembly and, quite frankly, other politicians, be it federally or in other provincial Legislatures, those members who are junket junkies, those members who create clubs and want to join them and belong to them for the sole purpose, like the Quebec-Ontario parliamentary association, of going on those junkets.

I have no qualms about people lawfully consuming that level of taxpayers' money, but come clean. Eliminate and stop the denial. The road to recovery starts with admitting that you have the addiction. Junket junkies of this Legislature and Legislatures beyond, there is a cure. There's a way out. There's freedom for you at the end of the road. It's a simple matter of coming to grips—

**Ms Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know you've tried to rein this speaker in, but according to standing order number 23, "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she: ... directs his or her speech to matters other than ... the question under discussion," and I believe that's what this speaker is doing.

**The Acting Speaker:** Member for Niagara Centre, are you going to speak to the bill?

**Mr Kormos:** I do want the Speaker to note—and it was interesting because just while the member was rising on her point of order, I happened to reach for Erskine May. It fell open in my hand to page 452, and the reference is this:

"The Deputy Speaker deprecated a growing practice of interruptions of debate by members who, 'when the honourable member who is speaking refuses to give way, think that the only way that they can get their word in is by raising a point of order.' He stated that in his opinion such interruptions constituted fraudulent points of order, and should be stopped."

New Democrats are not going to be supporting Bill 83. I say to you that we'll be proud to stand with the people of this province while these McGuinty Liberals continue to deceive and put them under attack.

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** Before I start, I must say that I too have a predilection to be a

junkie. It's probably called the "wild tie junkie" and I think I've outdone myself today on that.

This budget was much anticipated. This budget was waited for by the people of Ontario for many years. They wanted to see what was going to happen in the post-Harris, post-Eves era of a new Liberal government. It was hugely anticipated for all that time.

There were many people in the electorate, many Ontarians who believed the unbelievable at the time of the last election. They believed that a political party could make 231 promises on this hand and one promise on this hand that they wouldn't raise taxes. I think that was an unbelievable belief and it was an unsustainable belief, as we found when the minister stood up to deliver his budget some four weeks ago. It was also, I would suggest, a budget where they were expecting fairness to working families and found out that, in reality, there is no such thing.

This budget is, of course, very controversial. It is not, as the minister has said in his statement—although I think it was adequately set forth when he put his position before this House—that it was because the new government found themselves in a circumstance that was not of their knowing. There have been many speeches in this House over the last few months since October about whether the present government knew about the transgressions of the former government in running up deficits. But I will tell you, I'm going to leave all of those because I think rational people know that politicians who are in this House have at least an inkling of whether or not budgets are in some kind of turmoil, and whether or not politicians are delivering on budgets, throughout the entire cycle of a budget year. Certainly, statements were made by all parties, statements were made by many outside factors during the lead-up to the election that in fact there was a \$5-billion budget deficit. I don't think anyone should deny today that that was not common knowledge inside this Legislature.

I think this budget has become very controversial because of two things: The first was that it implemented an unfair and regressive tax called a health premium; and the second reason for the controversy of this budget is that it delisted important services that people have come to rely upon.

**2100**

I want to deal first of all with the unfairness of the tax. I'm going to use the Canadian Taxpayer Federation for this. This is an unlikely group for a New Democrat to talk about, but they set it out very well in their submission before the committee. They set out that a person or a family making \$25,000 a year will pay under this budget some \$300, or 1.2% of their net income, to pay the tax. They also pointed out, quite correctly, that a family making \$48,000 a year will pay \$450 and will, in fact, pay 0.94% of their family income in this new regressive tax. Then they went to a family of \$72,000 per year and showed that it would decline further, so they would only pay 0.083% of the tax to an amount of \$600. Last but not least, they talked about an individual—not a

family, an individual—earning \$500,000, who would pay \$900, of course, because that's the cap and the maximum. They in fact would only be paying 0.017% of their income in this tax for health.

We on this side of the House, and certainly we in the New Democratic Party, believe that people who can afford to pay the taxes should be the people who pay the taxes and that people at modest and modest-to-low incomes should not have to shoulder a greater burden than those people who are at higher incomes. We believe that is a wrong proposition. In fact, that is the fundamental reason I will tell members on the other side that we do not support your budget.

There are things in this budget that New Democrats welcome which may surprise you. I think it's a great idea that children are going to be immunized. I think it's a great idea that money is going to be spent on our schools, our hospitals and other places that people have been crying out for for years. But we oppose this budget because it is unfair, because you are not getting the money to do necessary, good things in this province from people who should be paying it. You are taking in \$1.6 billion this year and \$2.4 billion in what can only be described as one of the most regressive taxes to hit this province in many years.

I might go back in history just a few weeks before the budget to see the speculation and the trial balloons that were being floated by the Liberal Party at that time, by the Minister of Finance and the Premier, of ways to get the money, the \$1.6 billion. I'm going to have to tell you that one of them was what was called the soup-and-salad tax, trying to get 8% of the money from the provincial sales tax on those who have soup and salad for lunch, and that has been exempt for many years. There was a huge hue and cry across this province and they backed off. But in retrospect, I think the alternate solution that has found its way into the budget is far more regressive even than that tax, which was floated and then abandoned.

People simply cannot afford this tax at a modest and low income. It is a lot of money to poor and modest people earning \$21,000 in a family to even pay \$60 that they do not have. It is a lot of money for a middle-class family at \$72,000 to struggle to fine the \$600 they're going to have to come up with to pay a tax they never should have paid in the first place. It is disproportionate and it is wrong. If that were not bad enough—

**Mr David Zimmer (Willowdale):** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I've raised it with my friend. I'm compelled to introduce my mother-in-law, who's visiting from Victoria, BC. I'm compelled to introduce her tonight. So stand.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's not a point of order, but it's well taken. Member from Beaches-East York.

**Mr Prue:** No, it's not a point of order, but I would do the same for my mother-in-law, Mr Speaker.

It's bad enough that this was done, but then I think it was exacerbated this past week or couple of weeks, when the Premier spent a lot of money—and admittedly from his own party coffers; they seem to be flush—to go on

the radio stations across this province and say that every single penny of this regressive health tax is going to be spent on health care.

I will be the first to admit that Ontario needs new sewers. I would be the first to admit that Ontario needs potholes in roads fixed. I would be the first to admit that Ontario needs a lot of money—

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** Are you speaking against the Dalton McGuinty sewer pipe tax?

**Mr Prue:** Yes. I would be the first to admit that money needs to be spent in many, many areas of this province after years of neglect, but this is a stretch. This is a stretch of monumental proportion, to say that every single penny of this is going into health care. I underline “care.” We all know that health has many fronts, and we all know that getting rid of sewage in a safe way will ensure that health is maintained, but it hardly constitutes health care. It hardly constitutes that.

In fact, in the budgets going back through successive governments—Conservative, New Democratic and Liberal governments—never once before has sewer maintenance been included in the health care budget. Even though that budget is now closing in on 50% of the gross spending of this province, never before until today is it one of the determinants of a health care budget. I think that, quite frankly, was wrong of the Premier, to make those statements on the radio. They certainly are not backed up by this budget.

It was also very wrong that many of the things alluded to in the budget that is being spent because of the increased dollars coming in, everything from immunization to added nurses, is in reality not part of this budget. In reality, it is the \$680 million that has flowed in from the federal government. These are federal earmarked funds. They are to be used precisely for what they’re being used for, and have nothing to do with this budget, in spite of the protestations of the minister.

The second aspect that has been troubling people is the delisting. Of course, other speakers have talked about that. Chiropractic services, which six million people in Ontario used last year, are going to be delisted. Optometry services, that literally about a quarter of the population use each and every two years when they get their eyes tested, are going to be delisted. Physiotherapy services, 80% of which are used by senior citizens, are going to be delisted.

There is no firm rationale of how and why we would not be spending the money in this way. This bill that we’re arguing here tonight is the result of this government’s first closure motion. Part of that closure motion is that we would have two days of hearings, in which we would invite the public and interested parties to come forward and to make deputations. Then after that, there was a forced closure vote and a third reading closure that we’re having here tonight.

I want to tell you, I listened intently. There were six written submissions and 17 oral presentations that came in in a very short period of time. So many groups were left out. The saddest one, to my mind, was the Canadian

Association of Retired Persons, generally known as CARP, who were left out. They had a great deal to say about how this budget is going to adversely affect older Ontarians. They were not heard.

From amongst those that were heard, there were several themes. There were people who came to talk about little tiny aspects of the budget, such as the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association in a written submission about generic drugs. There were people who came to talk about little tiny aspects, like the Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers’ Marketing Board, who wanted a subsidy to stop growing tobacco in Ontario. There was some general support by some of the groups around the areas of the gas tax revenues for cities, primary care, immunization and the tobacco taxes going up. Certainly I can support those sentiments that some of the groups said.

However, most of the people who came before the committee had two things in mind that they wanted to say. The groups wanted to say that they thought the Ontario health premium was wrong, and they wanted to say that those services that are being delisted were wrong as well, perhaps even bordering on the immoral.

#### 2110

I’d like to quote—and I’m assisted here by the very able research officer from Research and Information Services, Larry Johnston, who provided a synopsis for members of the committee—just what some of these people had to say.

On the Ontario health premium, the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario said, “Importantly, the budget and budget speech suggest the government will change rigid legislation,” and went on to talk about that. Then they went on to say that the proposed Ontario health premium is really a tax; it is a very regressive tax, disproportionately bearing on low- and middle-income people—the RNAO, CUPE and the OFL. The RNAO also said, “If the health premium is to proceed, we urge the government to restructure it to ensure that it is as progressive as the current income tax system, with no cap.”

An individual who often comes to sit in this chamber in the place where Mr Zimmer’s mother-in-law is sitting now—you may not recognize the name, but she does often come here—Donna Lynn McCallum, in a written statement, used a lot of common sense, just sort of what the people on the street had to say, when she said, “Charge this levy according to income tax rules, pay a percentage of your earnings, as governed by the income tax law, whereby a person pays a certain per cent of their total earnings, and a person who earns more pays a higher percentage of their earnings, including both big banks and large companies utilizing the tax bracket system.” Eminent sense.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario had a very real concern as well. It is, to read from here, “As employers, municipalities are also concerned that the government be clear that its proposed Ontario health premium is a new tax, and not a restoration of health

insurance premiums eliminated in 1990.” That is a huge concern, because they continue to call it a premium on the other side of the House. If it is a premium, it is going to cost huge millions of dollars to municipalities, private companies and people under unionized contracts. I think the minister had better clarify this pretty fast, because the members in the committee did not want to clarify it too accurately at all, jumping from one side to the other, afraid to call it a tax and admitting it’s probably not a premium as well.

We also had people talk about delisted services. Just to go through some of those again, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario said, “We are troubled by the delisting of essential services.” We have the Ontario Health Coalition: “Delisting and attacks on universality of medicare are a false economy. Delisting of optometry, chiropractic and physiotherapy services will increase the out-of-pocket burden and reduce access to services that promote health and prevent illness.” We also heard again from Ms Donna Lynn McCallum: “I do not feel that any services should be delisted or removed from the health services we have now. Yes, charge us more, but give us more, don’t take away from one service to include another.” In reality, what is happening is that you are charging more and getting less. Certainly all of the people, particularly senior citizens, are seeing they’re getting less in terms of physiotherapy and chiropractic services. We also see from CUPE Ontario, “Chiropractic, physiotherapy and optometry service cuts will create huge pressures at the bargaining table; difficult days in collective bargaining are ahead.”

It goes on and on like this. I’ve only got six minutes left, so I’d just like to talk about the fact that in this truncated committee with hearings that only lasted for a few hours, we heard some 17 people make deputations. No one on the Liberal side of that committee heard a thing that was being said—not one single thing. Of all of the major concerns that were cited by the people who came forward concerned about delisting, concerned about this bill, concerned about how they felt they were not listened to by this government during the whole round of discussions that took place before the budget was produced before this House, not one of them was listened to. In fact, none of the amendments put forward by the opposition were considered. Only a couple of minor government amendments made it through the committee process. Those minor government amendments had nothing whatsoever to do with the people’s concerns in Ontario, none of them. They had absolutely nothing to do with those.

Tonight, prior to coming in, I got a phone call from a woman who wanted to talk about the budget. “What, Mr Prue, can you do to stop this horrific budget?” she asked me. “What can you say? How can you convince them?” I had to be very blunt. Her name was Lina Simon. I told her to watch tonight; I hope she is. I told her I was going to stand up here, as were other speakers who were not government members, and we were going to say what was wrong with this budget and that the members

opposite should withdraw it, the members opposite should change it, the members should do what the people of Ontario want, and that is to have a fair tax system if the measures are needed, and, more importantly, not to delist the services that people like Lina Simon rely upon.

She is a pensioner. She gets physiotherapy. She goes out to get that therapy. She is not in a home; she is not served by home care. She doesn’t pay now, but she is very upset that on her modest income she will no longer be able to get the services she needs to stay well and stay in her home. She has asked that the members opposite consider her plight and the plight, she is sure, of thousands or perhaps hundreds of thousands of seniors in this province who rely on physiotherapy and chiropractic services. I told her that in the end the government members are 71, the opposition members are 32, and the reality is I did not expect anything to happen tonight except the passage of this bill.

This is a rather arcane bill. It contains a whole bunch of stuff, but ordinary citizens would be surprised because this bill does not contain a single word about the delisting. This bill does not contain a single word about optometrists or chiropractors or physiotherapists. It does not contain a single word about the health tax. But it does contain, and I think people should know, section 17, which was alluded to by my friend from Niagara Centre.

Section 17 reads,

“17. Section 2 of the Taxpayer Protection Act, 1999, as amended by the Statutes of Ontario, 2002, chapter 8, schedule L, section 1, is amended by adding the following subsection:” and, if you can understand this,

“(7) Despite subsection (1), the following provisions may be included in a bill that receives first reading in 2004:

“1. A provision that amends the Income Tax Act to establish a new tax called the Ontario health premium in English and contribution-santé de l’Ontario in French.”

What that means, to those who do not know the gobbledegook of this Legislature, is that it allows this government to break the Taxpayer Protection Act, which they were so proud to announce coming up to the election and which they voted for in this very House in 1999. This is an opportunity in this bill, and they are seeking the permission of the Legislature, to break the law of Ontario by the passage of those few words. I have to tell you, Mr Speaker, I think it is a very low day when a bill of this magnitude has a provision inside of it to negate a previous law which this very party voted for.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Prue:** Mr Speaker, the members opposite, I know, are not going to support anything except what they have been whipped to support in this House.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Prue:** No, no. I am not going to do it.

**Mr Baird:** You don’t have the gonads.

**Mr Prue:** I’m sure I do. But anyway, I want the Liberals over there to think very long and hard, because three and a half years is a short period of time, even though it seems like forever in politics. You will be

remembered for tonight. You will be remembered by the seniors, you will be remembered by the people who are being taxed, you will be remembered by the people who believed you in the last campaign that you could do 231 good things and not raise their taxes.

This is an opportunity for you, at the very end, to do the right thing. This is an opportunity for all of you to make the right decision. If you cannot vote against your party, if you cannot do it, I would suggest that excusing yourself out the back door for a few minutes might have the same effect. We are going to see those names and your constituents are going to see your names on that bill when it becomes law.

**The Acting Speaker:** Will the members take their seats? Pursuant to the order of the House of June 10, 2004, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr Sorbara has moved third reading of Bill 83. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This is a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2121 to 2131.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr Sorbara has moved third reading of Bill 83. All those in favour, rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Fonseca, Peter	Qaadri, Shafiq
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoy, Pat	Racco, Mario G.
Bountrogianni, Marie	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	McGuinty, Dalton	Sorbara, Greg
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Watson, Jim
Craiton, Kim	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Wong, Tony C.
Dhillon, Vic	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Oraziotti, David	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Peters, Steve	
Duncan, Dwight	Peterson, Tim	

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

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Baird, John R.	Jackson, Cameron	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Kormos, Peter	Scott, Laurie
Chudleigh, Ted	Martel, Shelley	Sterling, Norman W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martiniuk, Gerry	Wilson, Jim
Eves, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flaherty, Jim	Murdoch, Bill	Yakubuski, John
Hampton, Howard	O'Toole, John	

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 52; the nays are 23.

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

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

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** Mr Speaker, His Honour awaits.

*His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took his seat upon the throne.*

#### ROYAL ASSENT

#### SANCTION ROYALE

**Hon James K. Bartleman (Lieutenant Governor):** Pray be seated.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Joseph N. Tascona):** May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present meetings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

**Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

Bill 8, An Act to establish the Ontario Health Quality Council, to enact new legislation concerning health service accessibility and repeal the Health Care Accessibility Act, to provide for accountability in the health service sector, and to amend the Health Insurance Act / *Projet de loi 8, Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de la qualité des services de santé, édictant une nouvelle loi relative à l'accessibilité aux services de santé et abrogeant la Loi sur l'accessibilité aux services de santé, prévoyant l'imputabilité du secteur des services de santé et modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé.*

Bill 49, An Act to prevent the disposal of waste at the Adams Mine site and to amend the Environmental Protection Act in respect of the disposal of waste in lakes / *Projet de loi 49, Loi visant à empêcher l'élimination de déchets à la mine Adams et à modifier la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement en ce qui concerne l'élimination de déchets dans des lacs.*

Bill 83, An Act to implement Budget measures / *Projet de loi 83, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires.*

Bill 94, An Act respecting public accounting / *Projet de loi 94, Loi concernant l'expertise comptable.*

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these bills.

Au nom de sa Majesté, Son Honneur le lieutenant-gouverneur sanctionne ces projets de loi.

*His Honour was then pleased to retire.*

**The Acting Speaker:** It being past 9:30 pm, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 pm on Monday.

*The House adjourned at 2141.*



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

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

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Alvin Curling

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)	Hamilton East /	Horwith, Andrea (ND)
Ancaster-Dundas-	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Hamilton-Est	
Flamborough-Aldershot		Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon / L'hon Marie (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse, ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative		
Beaches-East York /	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton West /	Marsales, Judy (L)
Beaches-York-Est		Hamilton-Ouest	
Bramalea-Gore-Malton-	Kular, Kuldeep (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon / L'hon Leona (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Springdale		Addington	
Brampton Centre /	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brampton-Centre		Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Brampton West-Mississauga /	Dhillon, Vic (L)		
Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga		Kingston and the Islands /	<b>Gerretsen, Hon / L'hon John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kingston et les îles	
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)		
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kitchener Centre /	Milloy, John (L)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Centre	
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East /	<b>Caplan, Hon / L'hon David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy House Leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley-Est	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
		London North Centre /	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Don Valley West /		London-Centre-Nord	
Don Valley-Ouest		London West /	<b>Bentley, Hon / L'hon Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Eves, Ernie (PC) Leader of the opposition / chef de l'opposition	London-Ouest	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Eglington-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Markham	<b>Takhar, Hon / L'hon Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon / L'hon Steve (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation	Mississauga Centre /	Fonseca, Peter (L)
	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga-Centre	
Erie-Lincoln		Mississauga East /	Peterson, Tim (L)
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga-Est	
	Cansfield, Donna H. (L)	Mississauga South /	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke Centre /		Mississauga-Sud	
Etobicoke-Centre		Mississauga West /	Baird, John R. (PC)
Etobicoke North /	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga-Ouest	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Etobicoke-Nord		Nepean-Carleton	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Broten, Laurel C. (L)	Niagara Centre /	Craiton, Kim (L)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara-Centre	Martel, Shelley (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Smith, Monique M. (L)
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Nickel Belt	
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)	Nipissing	Rinaldi, Lou (L)
Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Northumberland	
		Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon / L'hon Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon / L'hon Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon / L'hon Jim (L)</b> Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa-Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / Thunder Bay-Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon / L'hon Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Timiskaming-Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon / L'hon David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parkdale-High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon / L'hon Gerard (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon / L'hon George (L)</b> Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	<b>Sorbara, Hon / L'hon Greg (L)</b> Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Waterloo-Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Yakubuski, John (PC)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon / L'hon Sandra (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Sault Ste Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	Windsor-St Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon / L'hon Dwight (L)</b> Minister of Energy, Chair of Cabinet, Government House Leader / ministre de l'Énergie, président du Conseil des ministres, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon / L'hon Monte (L)</b> Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon / L'hon Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	<b>Cordiano, Hon / L'hon Joseph (L)</b> Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Scarborough-Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon / L'hon Gerry (L)</b> Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough-Rouge River	<b>Curling, Hon / L'hon Alvin (L)</b> Speaker / Président		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon / L'hon James J. (L)</b> Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs		
St Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon / L'hon Michael (L)</b> Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique		

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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Finances et affaires économiques**

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Ted McMeekin, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne  
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