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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 7 June 2004**

**Lundi 7 juin 2004**

Speaker  
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président  
L'honorable Alvin Curling

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Monday 7 June 2004

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 7 juin 2004

*The House met at 1330.*

*Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I rise today to bring attention to the recent decision, hidden on page 96 of the budget, to change the definition of "northern Ontario" to exclude the district of Muskoka. I find it surprising that there was no mention of this in the budget speech, no consultation with any of the municipalities beforehand and no justification. Thousands from my beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka have signed petitions expressing their anger. This decision will have a massive impact on their lives.

Being excluded from the north will mean cutting the northern medical specialist and family physician incentive program, the health recruitment tour travel subsidy and the locum program for specialists. For the town of Bala, which has been trying to recruit a physician for two years, this will mean no longer being eligible for incentive grants to help them attract a doctor to their community. Meanwhile, the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital estimates that the loss of the northern Ontario heritage fund grants will cost them between \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year. Algonquin Health Services in Huntsville will also see substantial increases in costs and increased difficulty in recruiting doctors. All this comes from a government that says they believe in improving access to health care.

In Muskoka, the average family income is well below that of Sudbury. It also has a growing aging population, which naturally increases the stress on the local health system.

This is partisan and mean-spirited. I urge the government to immediately rethink this decision.

ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** Sixty years ago, a heroic band of brothers landed on Juno Beach to join the invasion of Normandy. These Canadians, most still in their teens, were conveyers of hope and ambassadors of freedom. They helped set the table for an end of tyranny and oppression in Europe.

Yesterday, a band of a different sort walked on Juno Beach. That band was the Burlington Teen Tour Band, Canadian ambassadors extraordinaire. Led by their conductor, Sir William Hughes—"Sir Bill," as he is affectionately known—the band participated in the Juno Beach ceremony in Normandy, France, commemorating the 60th anniversary of D-Day and the battle of Normandy.

The teen tour band was founded in 1947, and has represented Canada in ceremonies around the world. Known as Canada's musical ambassadors, the band has won countless awards. The sons of two of my constituency staff, namely Jim Curtis and Nick Quaglia, were with the band. Together with their talented colleagues, they played an important role in this historic commemoration.

Sixty years to the day, we once again have Canadian youth ambassadors making us proud on the shores of Normandy. Judging from the e-mails sent back home, it was an important learning experience that these young men and women will never forget.

I know members of this democratically elected Legislative Assembly will want to join me in thanking the incredible young men and women of the Burlington Teen Tour Band for representing us at the official ceremony in Normandy. I'm proud of each and every one of these young people. They are indeed a national treasure.

RONALD REAGAN

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** "Twenty summers ago, another American president came to Normandy to pay tribute to the men of D-Day." These were the words of President George W. Bush as he paid tribute to Ronald Reagan during ceremonies in France marking the 60th anniversary of D-Day.

Known as the Great Communicator, former President Reagan, who died over the weekend, is remembered for his sense of humour and his ability to fight battles without creating enemies. He will also be remembered for his deep-rooted conservatism that revolutionized America in the 1980s and ushered in the end of the Cold War, as well as for his sunny optimism and fierce opposition to taxes, big government and communism.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher says "Ronald Reagan had a higher claim than any other leader to have won the Cold War for liberty, and he did it without a shot being fired." Reagan's long-time nemesis, former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, had this to say:

“He has already entered history as a man who was instrumental in bringing about the end of the Cold War.”

Ronald Reagan will be remembered as a great American. His funeral will be held this coming Friday. Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney will be a pallbearer.

#### OHIP OFFICE

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I have a message for the citizens of Toronto. I want to alert them to a petition that I’m doing so that if they’re interested in it, they can sign on to it. It would read something more or less to this effect:

“Yes, Rosario Marchese, I agree with you that the taxpayers in downtown Toronto deserve ready access to an OHIP office.

“Whereas more than 800,000 people live in the downtown core,” George;

“Whereas the only OHIP offices in the entire GTA that service non-homeless clients are at 47 Sheppard Avenue East; 4400 Dufferin Street; 2063 Lawrence Avenue East; or 3300 Bloor Street West; and

“Whereas OHIP is an essential service to all the people of this province; and

“Whereas taking more than one day off work to stand in long lineups at OHIP offices located in distant parts of the city is detrimental to a worker’s productivity, and the economy as a whole;

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

“To immediately locate a suitable building for an OHIP office in the downtown core, and have the office ready to receive clients by the end of 2004.”

I say to the citizens of Toronto that we deserve an office that serves our needs. It is an essential service. The Ministry of Health has an obligation to ensure that the service is provided. If you feel that we need an OHIP office downtown, please call my community office at 603-9664 or, better still, tell the Minister of Health, George Smitherman, that we need an office in downtown Toronto.

1340

#### RELAY FOR LIFE

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** This past weekend, a wonderful event took place in Maxville, in the beautiful riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, in which I was extremely proud to participate, along with Don Boudria, our federal member of Parliament. The Canadian Cancer Society held its fourth annual Relay for Life, a fundraising event for cancer research. The walk, joined by 1,800 participants, took place from 7 pm Friday evening until 7 am Saturday morning. This year, there were also 315 survivors of cancer who participated in this significant event.

Furthermore, I am proud to share with my colleagues that participants in this year’s Maxville walk raised \$443,000. What a success. The small village of Alfred

raised over \$15,000, a great accomplishment. Since its beginning four years ago, the Relay for Life has raised over \$1.5 million for cancer research.

In light of our recent budget, I would like to remind my colleagues that reducing wait times for cancer treatment is a key part of our government’s reform of the Ontario health care system. To participate in this celebration of survival and tribute to the lives of loved ones who have been touched by cancer was truly rewarding.

#### GOVERNMENT’S RECORD

**Mr Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** Mr Speaker, the results are in. In a recent SES survey in Osprey Media this past weekend, 9% of those surveyed supported what Dalton McGuinty is doing here in the province of Ontario—9%—a pretty abysmal rating after only seven months in office. I think Brian Mulroney, the one those across the floor love to hate, even at his lowest, when he was leaving office, had a 15% rating. I’ll ask my colleagues in the NDP, but I don’t think Bob Rae ever came anywhere close to 9%.

Let’s put it into further perspective. According to the FarShores Para News in October 2001, more people believe in aliens than think Dalton McGuinty is doing a good job. There’s some solace, though: 6.3%, close to McGuinty’s rating, said they had seen a ghost, so you’re beating the ghost numbers. And according to the Comedy Network/Ipsos-Reid poll of 2001, 10% of Canadians think the moon landing was faked. I’m not sure about the Elvis rating; that’s a tough one to get a judgment on. But that puts into perspective people’s opinions of Dalton McGuinty and his leadership, with good reason: 32 major broken promises, tax hikes and multi-year deficits that make Bob Rae look like a fiscal conservative, and a delisting of important health care services.

The members across the floor have a chance to stand up tomorrow, Tuesday, and send a message to their boss and to those behind him by supporting Mrs Witmer’s resolution to support health care services.

#### TEACHERS’ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** To the great relief of the thousands of teachers in Ontario, the Ministry of Education has announced plans to eliminate the PLP program. Most people outside the education world would shake their heads and ask themselves, “What’s PLP?” I ask them to imagine that in order to continue in their job or profession they were required to remain on perpetual probation. That’s what PLP was.

The truly silly thing about PLP is that it did not recognize any prior professional development. For example, if you had a master’s degree in a specific field, PLP required that you continue to take courses that you had either long ago or just recently mastered. As another example, marking EQAO tests counted as a recertifica-

tion credit. Surely this job cannot be considered professional development.

There is no requirement like PLP among other professional bodies such as doctors, lawyers or accountants. And of course, for teachers in any private school there is no requirement to recertify or, often, to certify in the first place.

PLP was badly thought out from its very inception. As bad policy, it was patched and modified. No fixing can ever make it work. It needs to be scrapped, and it will be scrapped.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Mr Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** On behalf of my constituents of Mississauga East, I am here to praise our government's decision to commit \$19.9 million in our budget toward the protection of women and children from domestic violence. Our continued dedication to supporting those who are in need is a defining line between our government and the previous government. This pledge was further supported by an announcement last week by the Attorney General when he declared that \$1.6 million from the victim's justice fund be distributed to 18 community-based agencies across our great province.

One of those organizations receiving funding was Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin. With our government's commitment of \$39,140 to Catholic Family Services, they will be able to provide more spaces in their 12-step treatment process for victims of sexual violence and their children. As much as their title would suggest that it is a Catholic entity, they have opened their arms to the community at large, and their dedication to help anyone in need of their support should be applauded.

We must also note that domestic violence is sometimes overlooked or mistakenly assessed by those in a position to help. In Mr Sorbara's budget, he swore we would increase funding for the training of police officers, crown attorneys and others working in the justice system to better assess risk in abusive situations. As much as campaigning to end domestic violence is a useful tool, guiding those in a position to help will ultimately aid those who have been subject to the crime.

Again, I'd like to thank our government on behalf of all those in Mississauga East who will see a positive effect from the funding directed to Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** I just want to comment on an open house that I had at my constituency office on Friday. I want to thank all the constituents who came to visit me. Of course, I had a very good opportunity to discuss with them many of the changes that have taken place in the government in the province.

It was interesting, because we talked quite a bit about the budget, as you can well imagine. Many of my

constituents said to me, "I can't believe how quickly the people of Ontario have forgotten what an incredible state of disrepair this province was left in in September and the uncertainty that existed surrounding our health care services." They couldn't understand how people forgot that they couldn't rely on an ambulance arriving when they called one, or that when they got to the emergency room they might be turned away. They couldn't rely on how quickly they might get the service they needed from their doctor—if the doctor said, "You need this treatment," how long they might have to wait for that. My constituents said to me, "I can't believe how quickly people have forgotten."

What we have done in our budget is ensured that hospital funding is spent on improving patient care. We're providing our clinics with more resources to perform an additional 9,000 cataract surgeries. We're delivering 2,300 more hip and knee total joint replacements annually. We're performing 425 more organ transplants a year. Ontarians wanted shorter waiting times, and that's what we're going to give them. They wanted more comprehensive home care, and we're delivering on that, and many other issues in health.

**Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate CHTV on their 50th anniversary. It was 50 years ago tonight that CHTV went on air and into our homes for the first time. Throughout its 50-year history, CH television has pioneered many television firsts—

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order. That wasn't a point of order. It would have been better done as a minister's statement, I would say.

#### REQUEST TO INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a request by the member for Leeds-Grenville to the Honourable Coulter A. Osborne, Integrity Commissioner, for an opinion pursuant to subsection 30(1) of the Members' Integrity Act, 1994, on whether the Honourable Gregory Sorbara, Minister of Finance, in his responsibility for the budget and budget secrecy, has contravened the act or Ontario parliamentary convention.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

1350

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** We have with us in the Speaker's gallery the public accounts committee for the National Assembly of Kenya. Please join me in welcoming our guests.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended: 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 / 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.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed. The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### REPRESENTATION AMENDMENT ACT (NORTHERN ONTARIO), 2004

#### LOI DE 2004 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA REPRÉSENTATION ÉLECTORALE (NORD DE L'ONTARIO)

Mr Bisson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 89, An Act to amend the Representation Act, 1996 respecting the number of electoral districts in Northern Ontario / Projet de loi 89, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur la représentation électorale en ce qui concerne le nombre de circonscriptions électorales du Nord de l'Ontario.

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

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** You would know that the government, in the last election and, since then, during the throne speech, promised that they would be introducing legislation in this House to make sure that northern Ontario, through the new redistribution, does not lose the number of seats it currently has. As you know, the federal government, through its redistribution, has diminished by one the number of seats in northern Ontario, and this particular legislation deals with that fact so that we're able to maintain the seats we have now.

C'est pour assurer que, à la fin de la journée, le gouvernement garde ses engagements qu'il a faits envers sa promesse, durant l'élection et durant le discours du trône, qui dit qu'on ne va pas réduire le nombre de sièges dans le nord de l'Ontario dans les années à venir. Le gouvernement avait promis ça. Puis je vais être très « supportive » du gouvernement en l'aidant à garder cette promesse. C'est pour ça que j'ai introduit ce projet de loi.

Je regarde à ce point-ci pour avoir le consentement unanime pour passer à la deuxième lecture.

### PROTECTION OF MINORS FROM SEXUALLY EXPLICIT GOODS AND SERVICES ACT, 2004

#### LOI DE 2004 SUR LA PROTECTION DES MINEURS CONTRE LES BIENS ET SERVICES SEXUELLEMENT EXPLICITES

Mr O'Toole moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 90, An Act to protect minors from exposure to sexually explicit goods and services / Projet de loi 90, Loi visant à protéger les mineurs contre les biens et services sexuellement explicites.

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

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm reintroducing this bill on behalf of Mr Wood, who was a former member from, I believe, London South. The bill prohibits a person from selling, offering to sell or distributing sexually explicit goods or services specifically to minors. All of us in the House, I'm sure, would like to protect minors from unnecessary exposure to sexually explicit material. I ask for unanimous support for this bill when it comes to the House for second and third reading.

**M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-Baie James):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Très clairement, quand j'ai introduit le projet de loi il y a une couple de minutes, j'avais demandé le consentement unanime.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** You asked for unanimous consent in your bill?

**M. Bisson:** J'ai demandé la deuxième et la troisième lecture et j'ai demandé le consentement unanime. Ce n'est pas compliqué.

**The Speaker:** The member for Timmins-James Bay asked for unanimous consent for his bill in second and third reading. Do we have unanimous consent? I heard a no.

### DENTAL HYGIENE AMENDMENT ACT, 2004

#### LOI DE 2004 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES

Mrs Cansfield moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to amend the Dental Hygiene Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 91, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1991 sur les hygiénistes dentaires.

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

**Mrs Donna H. Cansfield (Etobicoke Centre):** Currently under subsection 5(1) of the Dental Hygiene Act, there is a prohibition against dental hygienists from carrying out the authorized acts of scaling teeth, actually cleaning teeth, including procedures around the same

issue unless they are ordered by a member of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario. The purpose of this bill is to permit dental hygienists to perform these procedures without such an order.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Do we have consent? We do.

**Hon Mr Duncan:** I move that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 12 midnight on Monday, June 7, 2004, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, say "aye."

All those against, say "nay."

I think the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1359 to 1404.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour, please rise.

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 74; the nays are 8.

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

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** Mr Speaker, on a point of order: It would seem that I owe the government House leader a bit of an apology. The memo actually had come to my desk and unfortunately was underneath all my other documents.

**Interjection:** Resign.

**Mr Bisson:** Resign where, guys?

I seek unanimous consent to move a motion regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business. I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr Klees and Mr Runciman exchange places in order of precedence such that Mr Runciman assumes ballot item number 33 and Mr Klees assumes ballot item number 30.

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

## DEFERRED VOTES

### COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF MEDICARE ACT, 2004 LOI DE 2004 SUR L'ENGAGEMENT D'ASSURER L'AVENIR DE L'ASSURANCE-SANTÉ

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of 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.

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1408 to 1413.*

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

### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Peters, Steve
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	Pupatello, Sandra
Bartolucci, Rick	Jeffrey, Linda	Racco, Mario G.
Bentley, Christopher	Kennedy, Gerard	Ramsay, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kular, Kuldip	Runciman, Robert W.
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sandals, Liz
Brown, Michael A.	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Martiniuk, Gerry	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Sorbara, Greg
Crozier, Bruce	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dhillon, Vic	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Di Cocco, Caroline	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Miller, Norm	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	Mitchell, Carol	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wong, Tony C.
Fonseca, Peter	O'Toole, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gerretsen, John	Oraziotti, David	Zimmer, David
Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie	

### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Martel, Shelley
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Hampton, Howard	Marchese, Rosario	

**Ayes**

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Parsons, Ernie
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Bentley, Christopher	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Pupatello, Sandra
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kennedy, Gerard	Racco, Mario G.
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Ramsay, David
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Mathews, Deborah	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	Mauro, Bill	Sorbara, Greg
Delaney, Bob	McGuinty, Dalton	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	McMeekin, Ted	Van Bommel, Maria
Di Cocco, Caroline	McNeely, Phil	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	Wong, Tony C.
Duncan, Dwight	Mitchell, Carol	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Zimmer, David
Fonseca, Peter	Oraziotti, David	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, please rise and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Scott, Laurie
Churley, Marilyn	Marchese, Rosario	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martel, Shelley	Wilson, Jim
Hampton, Howard	Martiniuk, Gerry	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	
Horwath, Andrea	O'Toole, John	

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 62; the nays are 22.

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

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

**ORAL QUESTIONS****ONTARIO BUDGET**

**Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Premier. On May 31, it was reported by Caroline Mallan that you gave the following quote, and I would expect that you could confirm that you said this: "I gave the Prime Minister a heads up, no doubt about it, with respect to the challenge that the budget would present and the fact that it would contain a health care premium." Can you confirm for us that you did say those words?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Yes, I did.

**Mr Klees:** Given the Premier's confirmation of those words, we do have a problem, and the problem is this: Today the Canadian Press reports that Prime Minister Martin, in an interview with a Thunder Bay TV station, said that he was caught off guard by Ontario's budget. He went on to say that Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty gave him no indication there would be tax hikes, other than a comment that the budget would be a tough one.

Between the two of you, the Premier of Ontario or the Prime Minister of Canada, who is lying?

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** The member from Oak Ridges, I would ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary word.

**Mr Klees:** I withdraw that. I will rephrase the question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Premier?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I'm sure the member opposite and the leader of the third party would be anxious to learn that I'm told that the media report the member is quoting from does not accurately reflect the Prime Minister's comments. The Prime Minister's staff—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** —I know that the member will be genuinely interested in this—are presently in contact with the reporter to get the story corrected and ensure the report is accurate.

**1420**

**Mr Klees:** We will look forward to seeing the spin on this one, because the Prime Minister, I suggest, is caught in a Catch-22: Either he maintains his own integrity or he tries to cover up for someone who hasn't kept a promise and, quite frankly, who only 9% of people in this province now believe.

I'd like to remind the Premier that no other Premier—in fact, no other leader—in the history of this country has lost the confidence of the people so quickly. Some 100,000 people have signed the CTF's petition demanding a referendum. I have in my office literally thousands of names of people who have signed a petition demanding a referendum, and that this Premier, who had no mandate to increase taxes for the people of Ontario, at least keep the law of this province and allow the people of Ontario to have their say so that they can let him know how they feel about this tax increase. Will the Premier—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Premier?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I want to remind the member again that we engaged Ontarians in the most extensive pre-budget consultation exercise ever. I will also remind the member that when he voted to break the Taxpayer Protection Act, he did not first obtain the consent of the people of Ontario by means of a referendum. So he has no standing, moral or otherwise, to preach to us when it comes to talking about what's going to happen with respect to the Taxpayer Protection Act.

We've made some difficult decisions and what we intend to do, as the member well knows, is reduce waiting times in health care and improve student achievement when it comes to public education.

**HEALTH PREMIUMS**

**Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is also to the Premier. Premier, when you decided to break your promise to the people of Ontario and introduce the punishing health tax, were you aware that many school boards in this province had clauses in



their contracts with staff that would require the boards to pay for this new health care tax?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** I'll tell you what I remain painfully aware of, and that is that when it comes to quarterly financial updates which are released by the Ministry of Finance, there was one released by the previous government on August 12, 2003, and that was three weeks before the very election date. It's important to understand that it was released subsequent to SARS, subsequent to the blackout and subsequent to the federal budget. Our party and the people of Ontario looked at this document released by the then government, which specifically said that the budget was balanced.

What we intend to do is ensure that kind of misinformation will never again be released to the people of Ontario by introducing, as we have, the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act to make sure that cannot be perpetrated on the people of Ontario again.

**Mrs Witmer:** I would have to agree with John Weatherup's comments today when he said, "I don't think the government knew what it was doing," in reference to the introduction of the new health care tax.

My question was pretty simple, Premier. When you decided to break your promise to the people of Ontario and introduce the punishing health tax, were you aware that many school boards throughout the province had clauses in their contracts with staff that would require the board to pay for the health care tax, yes or no?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** What we were aware of was that because of the absolutely untenable financial position the previous government had left the people of Ontario in, we were going to have to make difficult decisions. We were very, very much aware of that.

We also knew we weren't going to run away from this particular challenge. So we've called upon the people of Ontario to make an investment in their health care system, which was not an easy thing to do, but we maintain it was an absolutely essential request for us to make to the people of Ontario. What we intend to do, of course, with that premium is to invest generously in our health care system.

Our Minister of Health, who is now not with us because he's not a well man—he has departed from this Legislature because he's been working too hard. He has been working exceptionally hard to ensure that we get wait times down when it comes to cardiac care, cancer care, cataracts and hip replacements. Those are the objectives that we have set for ourselves when it comes to the use of these precious health care premium dollars.

**Mrs Witmer:** This is embarrassing. No wonder the approval rating is only at 9%. It's obvious that John Weatherup was right: This Premier didn't know what he was doing when he introduced the health tax.

I would ask the Premier for the third time: Did you know, when you broke your promise to the people of Ontario and introduced the punishing health tax, that many school boards throughout the province had clauses

in their contracts with staff that would require the board to pay for the health care tax? Yes or no?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Let me address the matter very specifically. These premiums are different from previous premiums introduced by previous governments of Ontario because they are tied to income, meaning they're going to be collected under the Income Tax Act and deducted from paycheques accordingly.

## TAXATION

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Last week, the finance minister accused New Democrats of distorting the truth about your unfair budget. If anyone is guilty of distorting the truth, it is you and your finance minister, who promised working families in Ontario that you wouldn't increase their taxes, and now you've done just that.

Here are the facts once again. Under your budget, a single-parent mom with an income of \$30,000 a year will be forced to pay a shocking 24% increase in her income taxes, while the income tax of an individual who has an income of \$200,000 a year will only increase by 3%. Meanwhile, your budget will give those poor banks and those impoverished insurance companies a \$1-billion tax cut.

Premier, I call it a gross distortion of fairness and justice to attack the middle-class families of Ontario while you give your friends, the banks and insurance companies, a \$1-billion tax cut. What do you call it?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** The accusations that I made last week continue to stand. Let me tell my friend the leader of the New Democratic Party what the actual facts of the circumstances are in this province. We have the most progressive and lowest tax rates for people making anywhere from \$10,000 to \$55,000 in this province, and with the Ontario health care premium, our tax rates continue to be the most progressive.

But I want to tell him one more thing. In his example, he uses the figure of 24%. Under the example that he uses, the average tax rate of that individual rises from—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order. Member from Durham, I would like to hear the Minister of Finance. Minister?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** In the example that my friend uses, the average tax rate for a single mother earning \$30,000 will be about 9.9%. By comparison—and I know you want me to hurry—an individual making \$200,000 in this province pays an average tax rate of about 44%. I consider that to be a very progressive system.

**Mr Hampton:** In fact, the McGuinty government thinks it's so fair that they're going to increase the taxes on that single-parent mom by 24%. Is that your definition of fairness?

Another fact: A couple, where his taxable income is \$50,000 a year and her taxable income is \$50,000 a year,

is going to pay an additional \$1,200 under your health tax. Somebody who has an income of half a million dollars a year is only going to pay \$900. And, oh yes, the insurance companies' profits increased by 500% over last year, and the banks have a \$3.1-billion profit for the first quarter of this year, and you're going to give them a \$1-billion tax reduction.

I put it to you and the Premier again: This is a gross distortion of fairness and justice in the tax system. It is grossly unfair to give banks and insurance companies a billion-dollar tax reduction while you say to someone else, "You have to pay \$1,200." What's your explanation?

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**Hon Mr Sorbara:** Let's get to the gross distortions put out by that member and that party. Let's just talk about the fact that in the budget that we presented in this House, the reduction in capital tax will mean this government forgoing about \$900,000. That is one half of what my friend the leader of the New Democratic Party will be receiving, \$1.8 million to that band of eight members, as a result of the by-election in Hamilton East.

What is much more important about our budget is the fact that we will have some 9,000 additional cardiac surgeries, some 36,000 additional heart procedures, and free vaccinations for every Ontario child for pneumonia, for meningitis and for chickenpox. This budget—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr Hampton:** I'm happy to hear more promises from Liberals. I'm always happy to hear promises from Liberals because everybody in Ontario, and now across Canada, knows that you never fulfill your promises.

But I want to talk again about the capital tax, those poor impoverished banks and those insurance companies that racked up profits of over \$2 billion last year and have increased those profits by 500% this year. You've now admitted that you, over the course of this budget and through this budget, are going to give them a billion-dollar tax reduction every year over the next four years. While working families are being hit to the tune of \$2 billion a year through your unfair and regressive tax, the banks and insurance companies will be paying less and less. I put it to you, that is a grossly unfair, grossly unjust tax system, going after working families for \$1,200 a year while you give the banks and insurance companies what amounts to a billion-dollar tax reduction. How do you justify that?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I will ultimately invite my friend from Kenora-Rainy River to apologize to this Parliament for the distortions that he has presented in that question, but I'll tell you something that is absolute fact: In the fall, that member and that party voted against Bill 2. Bill 2 rolled back all of the corporate income tax cuts that the previous government had put in place. That bill eliminated the seniors' tax credit for high-income senior earners. That bill scrapped the private school tax credit. That's a bill that was supported by people right across Ontario. One small group voted against it: that caucus and that opposition. I tell my friend from Kenora-Rainy

River, one day he will have an opportunity to actually read the budget and find out what is in it. Then his questions in this Parliament can be taken somewhat more seriously.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr Hampton:** I have the budget. Here is what it says: Somebody who has an income of \$30,000 a year will pay an extra \$300 in income tax. That's a 24% tax increase. For a family where he is a teacher and has a taxable income of \$50,000, and she is a nurse and has a taxable income of \$50,000, they're going to pay an additional \$1,200 a year while the banks and the insurance companies pay nothing extra. In fact, they get a billion-dollar tax reduction from Dalton McGuinty and Greg Sorbara.

But I want to ask you about a couple who are struggling on that \$30,000-a-year income—he has \$30,000 and she has \$30,000. They've just had their hydro cut off because they can't afford to pay the hydro bill. Now you're going to take an additional \$600 a year out of their pocket. Can you tell me, when they're already having trouble paying their hydro bill, how they are going to be able to get light, power, keep their food and have hot water when are you going to take another \$600 out of their pocket?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** This from a member of a party that, when they were in power, raised taxes on people earning \$20,000 way back then—I just want to make sure I get this one right—by \$120. Using his mathematics, that would probably be a 50% or 60% tax increase.

This is the party that jacked up hydro rates, my friend the Minister of Energy will remind me, 43%. This is the party that said, "Elect us and we'll bring you public auto insurance." Then they got elected and said, "Well, no, we're not going to do that." This is the party that campaigned on the sacredness of collective agreements, got elected, and ripped up every single one in the province. This is a party which during this federal campaign can't figure out what they want to say to the people of Ontario. They're ignored here and they're ignored across the nation.

**Mr Hampton:** I get the impression that neither the Premier nor the Minister of Finance want to answer this question that comes from two real people. He has an income of \$30,000 a year; she has an income of \$30,000 a year. They have two kids. Her name is Kurin Roller. His name is Noel Bouvier. They live near Kenora. They believed you when you said you were going to cap hydro rates. Since then, their hydro bill has gone out of sight. It's not their fault that they have electric heat. They can't pay their hydro bill, so Hydro came and cut off their electricity. They have no water. They have no sewer now. They can't keep food in the fridge. They have no lights. They asked me, "How are we going to pay our hydro bill now when Mr McGuinty and Mr Sorbara are going to take another \$600 out of our pocket?"

I'm asking you for an answer. How do they pay the bills, whether it's auto insurance that you've increased or hydro that you've increased or now another \$600 that

you want to take out of their modest-income pockets? How do they do this, Minister?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** As a result of the measures we've taken in the budget, the children of that family and families right across Ontario will have free vaccinations. They will have—

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** They're paying for it, Greg. They're paying for it with their premiums.

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I wonder if my friend from Nickel Belt has any interest in the answer at all.

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** I want to tell my friend that they will have more urgent access to community health care. Their parents will have better home care. In their communities, a family health team will provide medical services urgently in a community on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis. More importantly than that, that family, participating in what we are doing in health care, will be able to rely on the fact that this province will have the best health care system in the country and on the continent.

**Mr Hampton:** Minister, here's the problem. You see, they'd just like to have the power turned on so that she can have a shower before she goes to work in the morning, so that their kids can have a shower before they have to go to school, so that their kids can have a hot meal, so that they can keep food in the refrigerator safely. You jacked up their hydro bill. Now you're going to take another \$600 a year out of their pockets to pay your unfair tax, and they don't know how they're going to make it.

I think you owe these people an answer. Will you at least ensure that their power gets turned on so that they can start to do something? As it stands right now, you're taking money out of their pockets on hydro, you're taking money out of their pockets on this health tax, you're taking money out of their pockets if they need to get auto insurance. They can't pay all the bills, and they want to know why they are being hit, while those impoverished banks and those poor insurance companies are getting a billion-dollar tax reduction.

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** My friend is talking about a family whose combined income is \$60,000 a year. The fact is, he knows that we have a program to assist ratepayers who are having trouble with their hydro bills as a result of that program.

**Mr Hampton:** They already tried and were turned down.

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** He also knows that a family earning \$60,000 in the province of Ontario is earning just about the median of the average industrial wage.

He knows as well that for those who are the most vulnerable in Ontario, our budget provided the first relief—whether someone was on a disability program or on social assistance or had kids who required assistance in mental health, for the first time in 11 years we've started to move on that front. I want to tell my friend that we are very, very proud of that part of our budget, as we are every part of the budget.

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## DRIVER LICENCES

**Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. I hope the minister is aware that there is at least one Web site on the Internet that is currently selling Ontario driver's licences. I went on the site this morning, and the licence for sale is now on sale; it's normally \$100, and it's now at \$90. What steps have you taken to ensure that these fake documents are not being passed off as genuine?

**Hon Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** First of all, I am really not aware of that, and I will make sure that I check it out. The steps we are taking are that we are already working to have the driver's licence safety strengthened. We are working with other jurisdictions and other provinces to make sure we can incorporate the security features so the driver's licences are not faked and the security of the drivers can be protected.

**Mr Runciman:** It's astounding that the minister is not aware. I'll send over the Web site address. Clearly this government continues to indicate that security is very much a low priority.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Runciman:** We are talking about a foundation document here that can be purchased on the Internet to build an identity, and the Liberals think that's funny. Let the people watching this today have a clear indication—

**Hon Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** You're funny.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Order.

**Mr Runciman:** —laughing that someone can go on the Internet, buy an Ontario driver's licence, build a fake identity in this province and do who knows what to this country and the United States. That's funny to Liberals. Well, it isn't funny to Conservatives.

I ask the minister, will he give us an indication of what systems he has in place to protect the integrity of Ontario driver's licences? There's obviously nothing, but I would like to have an indication, if he doesn't have one, of when he is going to do something about it.

**Hon Mr Takhar:** I'm sure maybe the member doesn't want to hear what I have to say, but what I said is that my ministry is actively pursuing the development and implementation and attempting to eliminate all the defrauding of driver's licences.

I also want to say that under the Tories, birth certificates were being defrauded, and they did nothing to prevent it. I don't know where the safety was at that point in time.

## HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** My question is to the Premier. On Friday we held a press conference at my constituency office in Kapuskasing which

various health care professionals attended, from physiotherapists to eye doctors to chiropractors. They are all rather upset in regard to the delisting of services that you have put in place.

In fact, one of the people who happened to just be walking by that particular press conference outside our constituency office related that she had attended an eye exam by her eye doctor about three years ago, and as a result of that she had been found to have a malignant cancer behind her eye. If it hadn't been for that particular eye exam, she said she would be dead today.

In your budget, you describe eye tests, along with chiropractic care and physiotherapy, as "less critical services." How can that be a less critical service?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Just so we're clear about what will and will not be covered now with respect to optometry services, we will continue to cover all Ontarians over the age of 65 and under the age of 20. All medically necessary eye examinations will continue to be covered, regardless of the patient's age, including for things like glaucoma or diabetes. We're also going to institute a program for low-income Ontarians. Ontario was the only province that provided coverage for routine eye exams for adults between the ages of 20 and 64. We made a difficult decision. Any savings generated as a result of this will be invested in shorter waits when it comes to things like chemotherapy and radiation.

**Mr Bisson:** Premier, this constituent in Kapuskasing is not over age 65, she is not under age 20, she is not diabetic and she doesn't have a family doctor—

**Interjection:** To get a referral.

**Mr Bisson:** —to get the referral. I say to you again, how can you call the services of optometrists less critical in this case? That woman said she would have died if she had found herself with that cancer after your budget. How do you answer her?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Again, Ontario was the only province that fully funded routine eye exams for all adults. What we're saying now is that if you're 65 or over, we've got it covered; under the age of 20, we've got that covered; and all medically necessary eye examinations are still going to be covered.

One of the other things we're going to do is a matter of investing in what we believe ought to be our highest priorities: There are going to be 150 family health teams. This is community-based primary care reform, which is all about ensuring that this particular individual has access to a physician, a nurse practitioner and other nurses, and it's not a matter of being over 65 or under 20. Family health teams will be accessible to all Ontarians. It's not a matter of age. What we're doing is making investments to ensure that all Ontarians have access to a family doctor and a nurse practitioner.

#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Since taking office, grow-

ing a strong economy has been a priority for this government; as we know, it is not a priority for the NDP. It was an important part of our recent budget, and I know it continues to be of importance for the people of Ontario. What evidence can you provide that the Ontario economy is strengthening?

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** The good news is that in the first few months of 2004, we've seen solid growth in virtually all aspects of the economy, from retail sales to strength in the housing market to a growing consumer sector, and very good news for the month of May: an increase of some 30,000-plus jobs, very many of them full-time jobs.

**Mr Fonseca:** Minister, you mentioned a strong increase in employment numbers. Finding quality employment that can provide a better quality of life is of high importance to many of my constituents and, indeed, to many people in this province. The fact that there are more jobs does not necessarily mean better jobs. What types of jobs are experiencing growth, and in what areas?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** It's kind of across the spectrum, but as far as job creation in May and April—I think there were some 14,000 new jobs created in April. The good news is that the vast majority of these jobs are full-time jobs, many in the health care and social assistance sector, but if you go right across the economy, from automotive to primary industries, you see strength in the economy.

The housing sector, which is so vital to the continued strength of the Ontario economy, continues to show vigorous growth. In fact, housing resale in the last month reported was the highest ever recorded in the history of the province. We are coming into the summer season. I would suggest to you that we are coming into a very strong period of economic growth in the province, and that of course makes all of us in this House very happy indeed.

#### WEST NILE VIRUS

**Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Premier. York region residents are very concerned about potential threats to their health resulting from West Nile virus. What actions should people be taking if they find a dead crow on their property—in their backyard—to assist the local medical officer of health with regard to this?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** The Minister of Health not being here, I'll do my very best to speak to the issue. The advice we're giving Ontarians is they should be contacting their local public health authority and informing them that there may be a crow, in particular—I understand it's the bird of special interest—and putting them on notice and providing them with that information.

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**Mr Klees:** Well, Premier, your plan isn't working. Your medical officer of health is clearly not on the job. I have had a number of calls within the last two weeks from people in York region who have told me that they have, in fact, done as you suggest. They have contacted

the local medical officer of health. In fact, there's a hotline. When they do, they were told, as recently as this past weekend, "Well, we'll get around to it. We may be able to get there within the next couple of days." Yet the same Web site says that the specimen must be picked up within 12 hours in order to do the appropriate testing to determine whether or not spraying should take place.

Why is the medical officer of health for the province not on the job? Why is the medical officer of health for York region not on the job? Will you, sir, please take the initiative to ensure that your medical officer of health does what is supposed to be done under these circumstances, because York region residents are at risk because of their inability to do their job.

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** Many things have been said in the past about Dr Sheela Basrur, but never has she been criticized in the way that she has just been criticized by the member opposite. She is on the job. She is assuming her responsibility.

We have a public campaign underway. Beyond that, we are going to upload another 25% of the cost connected with the delivery of public health services, because we are assuming that responsibility.

This is a government that was accused by the previous chief medical officer of health of the province of Ontario of turning its back on public health. We are assuming our responsibility when it comes to delivering good quality public health in the province of Ontario.

#### HEALTH PREMIUMS

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Premier. We hear every day and all through the media that you are claiming that every penny of health care taxes are going to health care. Nobody believes you, Mr Premier. They don't trust you with their dollars. They know that billions of dollars are going into that great big black hole to be ripped apart and subsumed.

I'm telling you, there is no dedicated fund for those taxes that you are talking about. They are going straight into general revenues where they can be spent on roads, sewers and anything else that you determine. My question to you is that you are dramatically raising taxes on modest- and medium-income people, and now those same people are learning that it is not even going to health care.

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** I have no idea whatsoever where the member is getting that misinformation. The raising of this premium was a difficult decision and I can assure you it's not one that we took lightly. But I can tell you this: Every single penny that will be generated as a result of this new health care premium will be invested in better quality health care for the people of Ontario. Of that, there is no doubt whatsoever.

**Mr Prue:** As Socrates once said, "I would gladly believe you, sir, but not against my better judgment."

Modest- and middle-income people know that there's a fat new tax for them, and they also know that there's no

tax increase for banks and corporations. You have not been straight with the people of Ontario. There is no dedicated health care fund. There is no box on the income tax form that says this money is to go to health care. The reality is that it is all going to general revenue, every single penny of it. You can give no guarantee whatsoever, because of the way you have structured this, that any money at all is going into health.

My question to you is, should the people of Ontario believe you and trust you after the legion of broken promises that you have made here in this House over the last eight months?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** If there was some kind of law against trafficking in misinformation and scaremongering, then they would be the subject of many, many arrests.

Let me tell you what Ontarians are going to get for this premium. They're going to get immunizations for 600,000 children in our first year. We're going to reduce wait times to—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** Could I ask the leader of the third party to come to order.

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** I'm agreeing with the Premier.

**The Speaker:** Order. Premier?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** In addition to the 600,000 Ontario children who will receive free immunizations this year, during the course of our mandate we're going to be creating 8,000 new full-time nursing positions; 150 family health teams; nine new MRI and CT sites; 100,000 more Ontarians will receive home care; children's mental health will receive a healthy injection for the first time in 12 years.

The other thing we're going to do is, we're going to start to make up for lost time because of cuts made to medical school spaces by the former NDP government: We're building a new medical school in northern Ontario; we're going to double the number of spaces for international medical graduates; and we're going to ensure that Ontarians can actually get access to a family doctor.

#### CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

**Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Credit Valley Conservation is an important organization in my riding of Brampton Centre. When the CVC was created in 1954, the Credit River and its communities were facing great challenges. Property-damaging floods were a regular occurrence. In summer, water flow was reduced to a trickle, and in some areas sewage, industrial discharge and sediment polluted our water. Since the formation of Credit Valley Conservation, a slow but steady recovery has occurred.

However, in 1996 the previous government cut the conservation authority funding from \$7 million to less than \$200,000, and at the same time increased financial

pressures on the authority through provincial down-loading. What initiatives is your ministry taking to assist the authority in its responsibility?

**Hon David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources):** I'd like to thank my colleague from Brampton Centre for this very important question. The Ontario budget enhanced the eligibility criteria for the conservation land property tax exemption program. This means that the lands with natural and environmental significance owned by conservation authorities and conservation land trusts may be eligible to receive tax relief under this program. This expansion will increase the ability of these organizations to preserve lands with natural and environmental significance in a manner that is more reflective of the regional conservation objectives and priorities of the local communities.

I'd like to add that the MNR also will be providing \$7.6 million in this fiscal year to our 36 conservation authorities across Ontario.

**Mrs Jeffrey:** Credit Valley Conservation and the Ontario conservation authority have maintained the environment for the benefit of all Ontarians. To their credit, there is as much forest cover in the Peel watershed now as there was 100 years ago. As well, Atlantic salmon, which have not been seen in the river in 150 years, are beginning to return.

But due to the previous government cuts, Credit Valley Conservation has had to lay off half of its staff, cut its board in half and cut programs such as stewardship and natural heritage programs. Our municipalities have expressed great concern because they have endured increasing costs to assist the authority.

We saw the results of a previous government's cuts during the Walkerton disaster. Our government made a commitment to support the environment. Is our government committed to ensuring source water protection?

**Hon Mr Ramsay:** The MNR is contributing to a healthier Ontario by spending an additional \$32 million on watershed-based source protection programs, which complements the \$60 million that my colleague the Minister of the Environment is also spending on these clean water programs. A portion of this funding will go to conservation authorities to fulfill their responsibility in source protection planning.

This new funding for source water protection planning initially supports capacity building in the form of resource expertise, completion of technical studies, information management, systems development, formation of the watershed region, and planning committee process. On April 14 of this year, a new regulation was passed in the Conservation Authority Act that provides conservation authorities with an updated regulatory framework to control development, filling and related activities in water systems, shorelines and wetlands.

#### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** My question is to my good friend the Minister of Finance. It is my under-

standing that your assistant deputy minister wrote to the trailer industry coalition on May 27 regarding the problematic assessment and taxation of recreational trailers used on a seasonal basis. This letter, which I'm reading here, indicates that ministry staff would be pleased to work with the coalition to explore the designation of a proposed new tag system.

I commend you on your staff working to find solutions. It's my hope that you'll find an agreeable solution that fits all the needs, not just in my riding of Durham but throughout Ontario.

As we enter the trailer and camping season, you know just how important it is to bring stability to this industry. I recently spoke with Roger Faulkner, Al Robinson and the Goreskis in my riding of Durham. They have the solution—

**The Speaker (Hon Alvin Curling):** And the question?

**Mr O'Toole:** Minister, are you committed to working to find a solution to recreational trailers as we enter the camping season in Ontario?

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**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** I think the simple answer to my friend is that we most certainly are. That's one of the reasons why we cancelled the retroactive aspects of the trailer system. It's a problem that we inherited. We have begun to make some progress. We cancelled the retroactive application of that system.

The piece of really good news that I have for my friend is that my parliamentary assistant, the member from Eglinton-Lawrence, Mike Colle, is taking on the next phase of reforms in property tax and the problems with MPAC which we've heard about in this House. I'm sure that under his direction we're going to be able to solve this problem in a timely fashion.

**Mr O'Toole:** I think just simply doing the right thing is the answer. I need your commitment today to work with the coalition to implement the tag system before the instability that you've created in the industry. I commend you for looking at the retroactive tax situation in this case, as you should have looked in other cases, I might add.

I want to commend the member for Haliburton-Victoria-Brock, Laurie Scott, as well as Tim Hudak from Erie-Lincoln. We've worked tirelessly and patiently with you and with Mr Colle on this issue. We want your commitment today to solve this problem. Write the letter. Do the right thing for the hard-working people of Ontario, and you'll find support on this side of the House. Admit today, are you going to do the right thing and implement the tag system?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** Here's the commitment that he'll get from me, and it will be firm and unequivocal: We are going to work on this problem and solve it, notwithstanding that the folks that he was governing with up until last October 2 had quite a long time to do something with it and did absolutely nothing. We're going to solve it. But I will not, in this context, make a commitment to adopt any specific solution. We need, as my friend from

Durham knows, to do a little bit more work on this. One of the things that we are doing is extending the assessment period so we have a breather of six months—uniformly praised right across Ontario. We've got a breather of about six months to get some of this stuff right. I will commit to him today that we will get it right.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** My question again is to the Premier, this time on the same issue but a different community.

On Saturday morning, physiotherapists and various eye care specialists, along with chiropractors, assembled at my constituency office for a press conference in order to bemoan the situation in Timmins when it comes to your delisting of important essential health services. The point they make is this: In a situation where we already have a critical shortage of physicians in the north, as well as in other parts of Ontario, patients will have no choice but to suffer pain, in the case of chiropractors, and upon the pain becoming intolerable will have to either go to a doctor's office or to an emergency ward that's already having problems to get health services.

Tell me how delisting health care services for these people is going to assist an already difficult situation when it comes to essential health services for physicians in northern Ontario.

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Again, one of the things that we're going to do with the savings generated by no longer covering certain kinds of services—which, by the way, and I know the member would not disagree with me in this particular regard, are not mandated under the terms of the Canada Health Act—is trying to make up for the closure of medical school spaces many years ago during the NDP government and the shortage of doctors. So we're building a medical school in northern Ontario. We have doubled the number of spaces available for international medical graduates. Beyond that, we are investing in 150 family health teams, to bring primary care to every community in Ontario. Now, this is a challenge we've set for ourselves. But in order to make those investments, it was essential that we make some difficult choices, and we have.

**Mr Bisson:** Premier, you don't get it. Not only are you not going to save any money with this situation, you're going to make a bad situation worse. We have a critical shortage of doctors and physicians across northern Ontario, as do other parts of this province. You're going to be basically shifting patients from chiropractors, eye doctors and physiotherapists, into either an emergency ward that can't deal with them or a doctor's office that doesn't have the time to deal with them either.

My question to you is simply this: How does delisting these important essential services of chiropractors and others assist the situation when it comes to an already critical shortage of doctors in northern Ontario?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I think the public is entitled to know exactly what experts in the area have said in re-

sponse to our budget. Here's a quote from Doris Grinspun, executive director of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. She says Ontarians are the real winners: "I am delighted with the focus on health care, and even more delighted with the focus on real transformation of the system ... home health care, primary health care ... long-term care and public health."

This is from an expert who works together with thousands of nurses on the front lines. We are receiving support for our plan to move ahead with primary care reform and to make sure there are more doctors available in all our communities, including northern Ontario.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

**Mr Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** My question is for the Minister of Finance. The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce is responsible for the grow bonds initiative, that will allow northerners to invest in themselves. Many small to medium-sized northern enterprises have difficulty accessing capital.

We in northern Ontario are very proud of this local initiative and the positive impacts it can have for all of northern Ontario. We thank you and our government for moving forward with grow bonds. Can you provide some detail at this point as to what the program will look like?

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** I've just recently come back from both Thunder Bay and Sudbury, and the part of the budget that made me proudest was the initiatives we're taking in respect of northern Ontario, and in particular the way in which I think the northern prosperity program is going to help generate more new and vibrant economic growth there. I was particularly appreciative of my friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka making some real, honest, positive comments about the grow bond program.

In brief, the program will provide capital for small and medium-sized businesses, new or expanding. The principal and interest of the bonds will be guaranteed by the province of Ontario. It makes very much needed private capital available to a wide variety of businesses right across the northern part of the province.

**Mr Mauro:** I want to thank you again for listening to the needs of northern Ontario. We're very excited about the program. Can you tell me when the grow bonds pilot project will begin in northern Ontario?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** Good question. The answer is, that really is up to the members of the opposition, including my friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka. In order to implement the grow bonds program, we need to pass legislation in this House. Governments can't simply lend money without legislative authority.

So we will soon be bringing forward legislation. We hope and expect that by the end of the year legislation will be in place and the northern grow bonds program can become part of a new and emerging northern economy.

## HEALTH PREMIUMS

**Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is for the Premier. With each passing day, it becomes more obvious that you and your government had little understanding of the consequences of the actions in your budget. If we take a look at the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic school board, both have clauses that date back to about 1990 that ensure that if the government institutes a health care premium, it will be covered by the board for its staff. That would mean, for the Toronto District School Board, that it would cost taxpayers about \$10 million. Will you guarantee that you will not hurt Ontario's students by taking money out of the classroom to pay for your new health tax?

1510

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance):** My friend is fully aware that I have made public, clear, unequivocal statements that the Ontario health premium which was provided for in this budget is not a premium for the purposes of those collective agreements. She can scare-monger as much as she wants in this House. She can suggest that the vitality of the Toronto District School Board or the Toronto Catholic District School Board is threatened by this premium. It is not a premium for the purposes of those collective agreements, and the legislation we'll bring forward in this House will make that eminently clear.

**Mrs Witmer:** It's obvious the government does not understand the consequences of this initiative in their budget, because according to the leaders of the unions, they are going to insist that these premiums be honoured. So I guess I would say to you again, can you guarantee that not one cent of the money you are going to give to school boards is going to be used to pay the unions for this tax? Are you going to guarantee that you will not take any money out of the classroom for our students?

**Hon Mr Sorbara:** My friend has dealt with collective agreements. She knows full well that there may be unions in this province—or an employer—that will try and bargain to participate in a salary increase related to the health premium. If she wants me to use this time and space to intervene in the normal collective bargaining that will be going on, she's got another think coming. She is absolutely wrong.

All I can tell her is—and I'll tell her once again, very clearly—the Ontario health premium is not a premium for the purposes of those collective agreements, because failure to pay the premium does not disqualify the individual from the health care services of this province; failure to pay the premium represents simply a violation of the Ontario Income Tax Act, full stop.

## CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

**Ms Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** My question is for the Premier. I received a call last week from the

office of a doctor who was very eager to meet with me. I discovered that it was a doctor of chiropractic, and why did that doctor want to meet with me? She wanted to meet with me in order to deliver scores and scores of letters from patients who are outraged over the delisting of chiropractic services.

Hamilton is an industrial city. Many citizens have ongoing issues of pain. They have ongoing issues of health management and pain management that are assisted by chiropractic and physiotherapy appointments. I was elected to be a strong voice on behalf of those residents of Hamilton East.

My question to you is: When will they get the kind of response they need from this government? When will this government admit its error in judgment in regard to the delisting of these programs and these essential health services?

**Hon Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Again, just so we don't lose sight of the facts here, prior to the changes we're making here with respect to the provision of chiropractic services, we were only covering \$150 per patient on an annual basis. We will invest the approximately \$100 million saved from eliminating these payments in priority health care areas, such as reducing waiting times for life-saving services such as MRIs, CT scans and cardiac care; we're going to hire more nurses and doctors; and we're going to create family health teams—in fact, 150. It's a difficult decision, but it's what we decided to do. You've got to establish where your priorities are, and that's what we've done.

**Ms Horwath:** My priorities are in speaking out on behalf of the residents of the riding I represent, which is one of the lowest-income ridings in this province, and so it's very important that I bring to your attention that \$150 is a lot of money for the people living in Hamilton East. The costs of these services are going to be even greater to our health care system when these people are forced into emergency rooms and forced into greater visits for primary care.

I ask you once again, when can we expect the government to admit the error of its ways, to just admit they made a mistake and ensure that these people can afford the services they need?

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** I can appreciate that the member is sincere in raising concerns on behalf of her constituents. There is no doubt about that whatsoever. But I would also hope that she's going to inform her constituents about some of the wonderful things we're doing by way of investment in health care by means of this budget.

*Interjection.*

**Hon Mr McGuinty:** We're going to bring immunizations for 600,000 children this year. We're going to reduce wait times for cardiac care, cataract surgeries, hip and joint replacements; 8,000 new full-time nursing positions—I'm sure the member will be interested in that; 150 family health teams; nine new MRI and CT sites. Close to 100,000 more Ontarians will receive home



care. We're increasing the quality of care available to the 70,000-plus seniors who take up residence in our nursing homes.

Those are the kinds of investments we are making. We think they're good investments, we think they're sound investments, but they're the result of making some difficult choices. We've made those choices and now we're making the investments.

### BOCCE BALL

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. On June 2, 2004, Stephen Harper, during a radio interview with FAN 590 regarding infrastructure funding, is quoted as saying, "That's where you end up with bocce courts instead of highways." At the same time Mr Harper, in regard to public spending, said, "Ultimately you can hold David Miller and the municipalities accountable for the decisions they are making."

A bocce court, I believe, is similar to lawn bowling and serves its purpose as both a recreational and therapeutic pastime. Many of our constituents would say that that is money well spent. How do you see the need of financing bocce courts in your ministry?

**Hon James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism and Recreation):** It's extremely important. First of all, I'm surprised that Mr Harper wouldn't be aware that sports such as bocce are important for our health and well-being. It's a lifelong sport that keeps people active and gives them a chance to socialize with their friends. It has a particular appeal among one of Ontario's largest multi-cultural communities. It's a great way for older people to remain active and healthy.

I must say to the member that Canada is obviously bigger and more diverse than Mr Harper thinks. No matter what it looks like from Calgary Southwest, Mr Harper has to learn about the diversity of Canada. Then maybe he would know that bocce is a Canadian sport, that it's exceedingly important in terms of a person's overall health that many people in this community of Toronto in particular, but also right across this country, enjoy. I'm surprised that Mr Harper would pick on bocce one more time when it's a wonderful sport for all Canadians. I think it's somewhat of an insult to those who play bocce ball.

### PETITIONS

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I have a petition entitled "Reject Bill 8—Keep Ontario Government Hands Off Hospital Workers' Contracts."

"Whereas the McGuinty government has introduced Bill 8, the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act, 2003; and

"Whereas Bill 8 paves the legal path for the government to restructure Ontario's hospitals through privatization and contracting-out of services; and

"Whereas Bill 8 would, if passed, give the government the authority to break or vary existing contracts of employment; and

"Whereas Bill 8, if passed, would give the government the authority to override provisions in employment agreements; and

"Whereas this government authority granted by Bill 8 could result in the breaking of contracts with hospital and other health care workers that were bargained in good faith, thus jeopardizing their future employment;

"We, the undersigned, request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the standing committee on justice and social policy to reject Bill 8 in its entirety and prevent government from altering collectively bargained agreements for hospital workers across Ontario."

I sign this petition.

1520

#### PENSION PLANS

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

"Whereas Stelpipe Ltd and Welland Pipe Ltd are currently operating under the protection of the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act, as part of the restructuring process being undertaken by Stelco Inc; and

"Whereas there is a significant unfunded liability in the Stelpipe and Welland Pipe pension plans for hourly employees; and

"Whereas there will be a significant negative impact on the pensions of both active employees and retirees in the event of a windup of these pension plans; and

"Whereas the pension benefits guarantee fund does not protect the entire amount of accrued pension benefits; and

"Whereas the pension benefits guarantee fund may not have sufficient assets to provide such protection;

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

"(1) to amend the provisions of the PBGF in order that it provides complete coverage and protection for the accrued pension benefits of all pension plan members;

"(2) to amend the financing provisions for the PBGF in order to ensure that sufficient funds are available to provide for the complete protection of all accrued pension benefits;

"(3) to take interim action as required in order to provide immediate protection of the accrued pension benefits for both active employees and retirees of Stelpipe and Welland Pipe."

Signed by hundreds. I've affixed my signature as well.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL  
PARKWAY

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Alexander Graham Bell, renowned inventor of society-altering technological inventions such as the telephone, greatly revolutionized the daily lives of people in Ontario, Canada and,” indeed, “the world; and

“Whereas Alexander Graham Bell’s contributions to science, technology and society as a whole were in part developed and tested while he lived in Brantford, Ontario; and

“Whereas Brantford lies at the heart of the section of the 403 which runs from Woodstock to Burlington;

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

“To adopt and pass into law Dave Levac’s private member’s bill, Bill 44, the Alexander Graham Bell Parkway Act, renaming Highway 403 between Woodstock and Burlington as a tribute to this great inventor,” and Canadian and Brantfordian.

I sign my name to this and give this to our page Jason.

LANDFILL

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I’m pleased to present this on behalf of some high school students in north Simcoe. A petition to the Minister of the Environment, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the county of Simcoe:

“Whereas landfill site 41 has the potential to pollute a major source of fresh water supply and affect the life and well-being of present and future generations; and

“Whereas many engineering features related to the site construction are grossly flawed; and

“Whereas landfill site 41 will have a negative impact on many acres of number one and number two farmland; and

“Whereas landfill site 41 has the potential to interfere and possibly cause loss of life due to its close proximity to Huronia airport; and

“Whereas we, as the youth of this part of the province of Ontario, will be left with this unwelcome legacy; and

“Whereas no one has given us the opportunity to be heard on this issue from its inception;

“We, the undersigned youth of Ontario, petition the Minister of the Environment, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the county of Simcoe to correct this gross error in judgment and to stop this madness which will impact on our lives and those of our children and grandchildren.”

I’m very pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

SNOWMOBILING

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“As an avid snowmobiler, my spending on snowmobile-related purchases and hospitality services and amenities while riding contributes to the annual \$1-billion economic impact of snowmobiling in communities in rural Ontario and northern Ontario. My spending helps drive the winter tourism season for much of our province, creating jobs, opportunities and businesses that would not otherwise exist. I am very concerned that my ability to continue snowmobiling in Ontario is threatened by the unaffordable costs of the personal insurance required for my snowmobile. I am also very concerned that the massive costs of third-party liability insurance necessary to cover trails, clubs, volunteers and landowners is forcing fee increases in the trail permit I must buy.

“Therefore, I ask the provincial government to act immediately to implement short-term steps that recognize and alleviate these two insurance problems for next winter, and also to develop long-term solutions to restore snowmobiling insurance to practical and affordable levels so that I can continue to participate and so that snowmobiling can continue to flourish as a major winter tourism generator.”

These were delivered to me by Roger Girard of Val Therese, who lives in Nickel Belt. I agree with him and I’ve affixed my signature to this.

VISITOR

**Ms Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas I have my mother visiting this Assembly today from Winnipeg, Manitoba; and

“Whereas I wish to comply with the Speaker’s rules of introduction; and

“Whereas my family would be very disappointed if she was not recognized;

“We, the undersigned, welcome Noella Laurence to this Legislative Assembly this afternoon.”

I have affixed my signature.

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I have a petition signed by thousands of my constituents and people concerned about Muskoka being taken out of the north. It’s a petition to keep Muskoka part of northern Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the district of Muskoka is currently designated as part of northern Ontario; and

“Whereas the geography and socio-economic conditions of Muskoka are very similar to the rest of northern Ontario; and

“Whereas the median family income in the district of Muskoka is \$10,000 below the provincial average and \$6,000 below the median family income for greater Sudbury; and

“Whereas removing the district of Muskoka from northern Ontario would adversely affect the hard-working people of Muskoka by restricting access to programs and incentives enjoyed by residents of other northern communities; and

“Whereas the residents of Muskoka should not be confused with those who cottage or vacation in the district; and

“Whereas the federal government of Canada recognizes the district of Muskoka as part of the north; and

“Whereas this is a mean-spirited and politically motivated decision on the part of the McGuinty government;

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

“That the McGuinty government maintain the current definition of northern Ontario for the purposes of government policy and program delivery.”

I support this petition with its thousands of signatures, and sign my name to it.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

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

“Whereas auto insurance rates continue to skyrocket, contrary to the official position of the Liberal government and the insurance industry; and

“Whereas more and more drivers are being cut off by their insurance companies for no valid reason and are being dumped into the Facility Association; and

“Whereas all attempts to regulate the auto insurance industry have failed;

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

“That the Ontario government immediately introduce legislation that would bring to Ontario a public, not-for-profit automobile insurance program similar to the ones currently in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.”

Signed by thousands. I have affixed my signature as well.

#### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** “Whereas the current method of allocating municipal tax revenues to the taxpayer by property tax based on current market value” assessment “has the following unwanted characteristics:

“(1) The tax burden varies subject to the desirability of a location, making taxes unpredictable and difficult to budget for;

“(2) The relative market value of a property is subjective and variable and subject to disagreement;

“(3) Long-time residents on fixed incomes in particular are affected, causing hardship, but this problem also affects young families;

“(4) Neighbourhood instability is increased as house sales are accelerated beyond the normal rate of neighbourhood renewal;

“(5) Residents who have done no home improvements pay increased taxes because of new higher cost development in a neighbourhood, out of their control, and perceive this as unfair;

“(6) Widely different property taxes caused by market value pay for equivalent services for each resident, without any apparent conscious policy, social good, and regardless of ability to pay...;

“(7) Long-standing policy exempts the sale of a principal residence from capital gains tax, yet current value assessment effectively contradicts this, causing a prepaid capital gains penalty based on a latent value which may never be realized;

“(8) Resentment in one part of a community that it is paying more than its fair share can lead to division and other socially undesirable effects; and

“Whereas these undesirable effects, which are sufficient ... on their own for our petition, are exacerbated by the increased reliance on the property tax to fund a greater range of government programs as instituted by the former government;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

“To change the method of property assessment so that it becomes based on objective criteria, using a formula such as lot size in conjunction with building total exterior dimensions, and removes the location and desirability factor from the calculation.”

I affix my name hereto, as I support the petition.

#### CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition here presented to me last Friday. It's signed by hundreds, if not thousands, of my constituents, and it is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Re support for chiropractic services in Ontario health insurance plan:

“Whereas,

“Elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need;

“Those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments;

“Elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment at a cost to government of over \$200 million in other health care costs; and

“There was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best

interests of the public, patients, the health care system,” and the government of the province.

I affix my signature, as I totally agree with it.

1530

#### DRIVER EXAMINATIONS FOR SENIORS

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

“Whereas regarding the AZ driver testing, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“The following are some of the concerns which truck drivers and driver-owners between the ages of 65 and 75 years have incurred:

“We feel that the province of Ontario discriminates against AZ drivers once they reach the age of 65 by requiring them to be retested in the same manner as a person who has no experience, ie, written test, air brake test, road test, medical and vision. These tests can become very costly by losing time off work; renting or leasing equipment for road tests.

“This form of testing is only required by the province of Ontario. Every other province in Canada and every state in the United States only require vision and medical exams for licence renewal.

“A driver’s history can be checked through the licence point system and also through CVOR system. The testing system in Ontario is so overloaded with new applicants, it doesn’t make sense to require drivers with 25-30 years’ experience to add to the problem by being tested. Some drivers have to make appointments 100 miles from their home to be retested before their birthday. There are cases where an independent owner-operator has been tested and failed and not been able to drive his own truck home because his licences have been downgraded on the spot. Now he has to absorb more costs to get his equipment home. It seems common sense has become rather uncommon. The ministry seems to have the attitude that once we reach 65 years of age, we wake up one morning and forget everything we ever learned. Maybe we should hold our doctors, lawyers and especially our political leaders to the same standard.

“We feel that an annual medical and vision test should be adequate to maintain our AZ driving privilege.”

It’s signed by hundreds, and I have affixed my signature as well.

#### RETIREMENT HOMES

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas elderly citizens living in retirement homes have no provincial legislation to protect them. Retirement homes are uninspected, unmonitored and unregulated; the quality of care varies widely. We are asking” the provincial Legislature “to implement regular inspections with the authority to impose violations, charges and penalties.

To establish and ensure set standards for retirement homes must be met and adhered to.”

I sign this petition with great glee. Hopefully, we can get something done about it.

#### LANDFILL

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the county of Simcoe proposes to construct a landfill at site 41 in the township of Tiny; and

“Whereas the county of Simcoe has received, over a period of time, the necessary approvals from the Ministry of the Environment to design and construct a landfill at site 41; and

“Whereas, as part of the landfill planning process, peer reviews of site 41 identified over 200 recommendations for improvements to the design, most of which are related to potential groundwater contamination; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has on numerous occasions stated her passion for clean and safe water and the need for water source protection; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has indicated her intention to introduce legislation on water source protection, which is a final and key recommendation to be implemented under Justice Dennis O’Connor’s report on the Walkerton inquiry; and

“Whereas the Minister of the Environment has announced expert panels that will make recommendations to the minister on water source protection legislation; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment will now be responsible for policing nutrient management; and

“Whereas the citizens of Ontario will be expecting a standing committee of the Legislature to hold province-wide public hearings on water source protection legislation;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the government of Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment to immediately place a moratorium on the development of site 41 until the water source protection legislation is implemented in Ontario. We believe the legislation will definitely affect the design of site 41 and the nearby water sources.”

I’m pleased to sign my name to that.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### 2004 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 20, 2004, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I’m pleased to be able to speak to this motion, which, of course, is time

allocated. I'm joined this afternoon by Andrea Horwath, our new member for Hamilton East.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Kormos:** Well, read the standing orders.

**Hon Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask the member opposite not to refer to this as time allocated. It's provided for in the standing orders, which were agreed to by all three parties.

**Mr Kormos:** Precisely my point: It's time allocated, and I find that regrettable. But this is my chance to speak to it, and Ms Horwath will be speaking to it before the afternoon is over in the context of this time allocation.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Kormos:** Look, I don't think there's any secret about the fact that New Democrats have nothing but disgust for this budget. This budget is a vicious attack on seniors, on low-income families, on the middle class—as if they haven't carried enough of a burden—on the sick and on the poorest members of our community. Across my riding and beyond, as I've had occasion on weekends and evenings to get back home and to travel to other parts of the province, there is a unanimity among Ontarians of disdain, not only for the budget but for its authors. There is a visceral contempt out there for Liberals, a contempt that could be justified, I put to you, on any number of grounds, but that, when people are asked to explain, is clearly related to the viciousness, the meanness of this budget, a budget that gives tax cuts to the wealthiest banks and insurance companies and then picks the pockets once again of working women and men, their retired folks and their low-income sisters and brothers.

I got a message from Tracey Cruise. I know her and her family. She lives in Welland—a good woman, a good family, really hard-working people. You're not going to find harder-working folks than these. You're not going to find people who are stronger members of their community than Tracey Cruise and her family. You see, I know her and her family.

Ms Cruise wrote this to me:

"I know this is just one minuscule thing in the big picture of things, but I have to point out something about this health tax, because I've lived the situation." Bear with me, Speaker; bear with Ms Cruise.

"You have met my son before, Jay Cruise, as Helen Brown was kind enough to take him up to meet you and have a tour. We have experienced childhood cancer and all the hardships that come with it. Although Jay is now three years in remission"—and he's a bright young boy. I was so exceptionally proud to have him sitting in the members' gallery here at Queen's Park, watching question period and understanding a little better how this Parliament works, or, from case to case or time to time, how it doesn't work. "Although Jay is now three years in remission, watching the budget, it got me thinking back to those nightmare days when he was first diagnosed." Think about this, friends. This budget provoked memories of the shock, the horror, the agony, the distress and the gut-wrenching pain of this woman learning that her little boy had cancer.

"I could not work when Jay was diagnosed. Unfortunately, my boss had told me to take my time coming back to work and then suddenly my job was filled by his wife. I could not collect unemployment because I was told I was not 'available' to work (shame on me for taking my son for his chemo sessions) so disqualified for employment insurance. We were entitled to the disabled child's benefit, but because it was based on the previous year's income, when I was employed full-time, we received less than \$100 a month, until we filed another year of taxes, then it could be adjusted up. The maximum is only about \$375 anyhow. The additional costs that are not covered are amazing. Even with section 8 applications, not all are covered. Just Jay's medication to stop him from vomiting after chemo cost me \$475 for three days' worth of pills (chemo every three weeks so" you "do the math!) and I never did get section 8 approval. My husband's plan did not cover it either and what was covered was only 60%. Not to mention the trips to Hamilton, (the cancer society was a great help), having to stay in the hospital with Jay for a week for every second treatment, the cost of food etc, etc.

**1540**

"Is the health tax going to be based on the same calculation, ie, your previous year's income? If that is the case, you will have families in the midst of a crisis, having to worry about all that is involved and then worried about that extra expense as well. When your child is diagnosed, it is almost impossible to work and unless you have a generous employer, you will lose one paycheque. It will be another year before their payments are adjusted downwards based on income. I have lived it and believe me," Tracey Cruise writes, "the last thing I needed to deal with when my child was sick was whether I could afford the roof over my head, not to mention the necessities of caring for my child. You have other priorities to deal with. Sure, maybe an appeal process will be in place for a situation where income is changed, but that is not the point. Your priority is dealing with your sick child, not playing with government red tape!!!! You just don't have the time or the energy for it.

"We are faced with increasing taxes (I know another promise broken)," Ms Cruise writes, "and my husband and I were figuring the other night it takes just one pay to cover car insurance, house insurance and life insurance (huge increases.) The other pay has to take care of the mortgage, utilities (again, ever increasing.)" Gas, electricity. "The cost of gas is skyrocketing. When groceries are bought and taxes are paid ... what is left? Now a double-income family has to look at other things to cut in their already stretched budgets or take on more work. How does that benefit a family? Just seven years ago, we were able to live on one pay," Ms Cruise writes. "Seven years ago \$40,000 to \$50,000 was considered a good comfortable income. Today that amount is a necessity and merely a drop in the bucket. When Jay was sick, we incurred about \$20,000 in debt because of lost income and increased expenses. We are still paying that debt load off. If taxes are increased, we will not be able to put the meagre amount we do now in RRSP. Is the Ontario

government going to support me when I have no retirement funds? We are the typical double-income family. We have vehicle loans. My son will start college in another year. Tuition costs are sky high, my budget is stretched to the limit. What funds will he have available? Not likely will he qualify for a loan with us as co-signers because we are stretched to the limits. We will barely be making ends meet. What is wrong with this picture?" Ms Cruise writes.

"I am just sick and fed up with it all. I have always taken each new budget with a shrug. I just feel with everything else that is happening, this is the straw that breaks the camel's back. Not only are we being taxed to death, but nothing is being done about ridiculous increases in insurance rates and utilities. In the past couple of years, I have watched my house insurance double. And that is my reward for claims-free rating!!! I won't even get into the car insurance fiasco. Jay gets his licence in June. Unfortunately, that is not the thrill it used to be. He can drive while he has his beginners, but has to give it up in June as we cannot afford the increase in the insurance rate for him once he gets his next class of licence. He works hard at his part-time job, but that is not enough to put away for college and pay \$150 monthly for the increase in our car insurance. By the time insurance rates are capped, the insurance companies will have jacked our rates so high, they could live off the profits for 90 years or so. Next year, my daughter won't be doing anything extracurricular at this rate." Sad. "Next year, my daughter won't be doing anything extracurricular at this rate.

"I hope Mr McGuinty can sleep at night knowing the extra stress he has just burdened the average double-income family with. Add more taxes and solve less problems, but hey, the budget will eventually be balanced, or will it? By the time it gets balanced, more than half the population will be bankrupt.

"Sorry, I tend to get rather verbose when I get heated up about a subject! Thanks for letting me 'bend your ear.'"

I don't know whether Ms Cruise is watching—or maybe her son, Jay, is—but she should know that while I'm reading her comments—as is her right, I believe; I'm her representative. I'm proud to be Ms Cruise's and her family's voice this afternoon here in this Legislature, because Ms Cruise isn't alone. There are many more double-income families just like her. They're the sort of families that Howard Hampton and other New Democrats have been trying to talk to Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals about during the course of question period.

The views of Ms Cruise are views that are prevalent across this province. It's not one person, one family in one community. Go anywhere: Go to small-town Ontario or big-city Ontario. Go to the north. Go to rural Ontario. Here's a double-income family that acknowledges that they've been blessed, but who find themselves under attack by a government that would rather give tax breaks to the richest of banks and insurance companies, the most profitable of huge, mega, multi-billion-dollar corporations.

I want folks to know that as I've been reading the comments of Ms Cruise on to this legislative record, there is at least one Liberal heckler who has been accusing me of having fabricated this, who somehow suggests that this is a forgery. So, Tracey, at least one Liberal in this Legislature doesn't think you even exist. That's what the heckling was. "That person's not real. That's not a real letter from that woman." So the Liberals were telling me, Tracey Cruise, while I was reading your comments on to this legislative record. Liberals are saying, "You don't exist, Ms Cruise." Liberals are saying, "This is a fabrication."

You see, that's the problem. Liberals here just don't get it, do they? They just don't get it. New Democrats and other opposition members have been railing against the privatization of health care in this province under the Liberal watch; again, part and parcel of that same Liberal budget. Call it what you want. You can call it "delisting services," but when you take critical areas of health care, when you take very specific health professionals like physiotherapists or chiropractors or optometrists and tell folks that their critical medical services—and they are—are no longer to be part of our public health care system—oh, you can still go to a chiropractor; make no mistake about it. You can still go to an optometrist; make no mistake about that. You can still go to a physiotherapist, but by God, you'd better be able to do it the American way with hard, cold cash, you see? It's the American way of health care. It doesn't work in the United States, where only the wealthiest can access medical care, and low-income, and yes, even middle-income people—Ms Cruise and her family are middle-income people who have been pushed to the limit.

These are people who have worked hard all of their lives. These are people who believe in making investments. These are people who were proud to pay taxes, knowing that those taxes were investments in public education and public health care. Here's Tracey Cruise, a woman, because of her son's incredible, and I say incredibly brave and courageous, struggle, fighting his own cancer, who knows full well how important public health care is to all of our welfare.

#### 1550

I told you before and I'll tell you again: I'm old enough, as are a whole lot of other people in this chamber, to remember a time in our history, because it wasn't that long ago, when there wasn't a public health care system. It was well within the lifetime of most of the people in this chamber. Well, not these young pages. But I remember the time, and it wasn't that long ago in the total scheme of things, when once the supper table was cleared, moms and dads, folks, sat down at that kitchen table and in hushed tones debated about whether or not to take a sick kid to the doctor the next day, because doing so meant dipping into the mortgage money or the rent money or the grocery money or the utilities money. You had to weigh your ability to pay against the risk that you were prepared to take, and even the most caring and loving of parents made errors. Because families couldn't

afford to pay, kids didn't get taken to the doctor, and there were casualties. Kids died. Kids were crippled. Others in this chamber of my generation will remember some of those kids. They were our neighbours. By God, sometimes they were our sisters and brothers. Those were not the good old days.

I've witnessed generations of Ontarians like the Cruises working hard, making sacrifices and investments to build public health care, to expand it, to watch it and enable it and nurture it so that it grows. We shouldn't be having a debate about the Liberal government's privatization of critical health services; we should be having a debate about building public health care so that, for instance, we have a public pharmacy plan, we have pharmacare, so that people don't continue to get ripped off by the rich, profitable, multinational corporate pharmaceutical drug manufacturers.

The debate should be about building medicare, building public health care. We should be talking about taking the legacy that our parents left us in terms of medicare, in terms of public health care, and watching it grow with the addition of pharmacare, with the addition of dental care into our public health care system. Rather, this Liberal government, Dalton McGuinty and Ontario's Liberals, have more dramatically privatized health care than the Tories ever even dared attempt, think of, contemplate or propose.

This is a tragedy not just for the thousands and thousands of Ontario families that it punishes, but it's a tragedy because too many generations of Ontarians and other Canadians worked too hard for too long, sacrificed too much to build a public health care system, for us to destroy it now. Ontarians are angry. Ontarians hold this government in the highest of contempt and find it amazing that there's not one single backbencher among the 70-plus with the guts or the gonads to stand up and speak out on behalf of the people they represent. That's sad, that this Parliament is also failing the hard-working women and men of Ontario, their parents and their children.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** In commenting on the member for Niagara Centre, I still haven't got an answer from the member for Niagara Centre or from the other NDP members. Earlier this year, we had Bill 2, which rolled back the corporate tax cuts on big corporations by over \$2 billion. The member for Niagara Centre and all his NDP mates voted with the Conservatives not to roll back the corporate tax cuts. Today he's singing a different tune.

About our budget, one thing we're doing is transforming health care to make sure that there are 9,000 additional cataract operations for seniors. We're making sure that 95,000 Ontarians now get home care who didn't get it before. That's what they're against. The NDP are against us increasing our contributions to nursing homes, \$190 million to make sure we make the nursing homes the best possible.

We are also giving Ontario seniors of low and modest income who are 65 and over—they are tenants; they are

homeowners—an extra \$85 million to increase the Ontario property tax credit to \$625 per household. That's another 33,000 households that are going to get the Ontario property tax credit. This is a huge investment in health care, unprecedented in transforming it, whether it be for home care or nursing care. We're uploading public health to the provincial government—they're against that; they want to keep it downloaded on the property taxes—to make sure we don't have another SARS outbreak.

They're about looking back in a rear-view mirror. We have to transform health care to protect public health care. The NDP just want to talk about it, but they never want to do anything about it. This budget finally does something to make health care for everyone worthwhile and to preserve it. They're always looking for things to criticize. They never mention the good, and there's a lot of good in this budget.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired. The member for Simcoe North.

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'm pleased to join the debate this afternoon on the budget motion, and I want to compliment the member from Niagara Centre on his speech. Once again, he's brought out a lot of very important points.

But I think what really is disappointing about this budget, more than anything else, is the fact that the citizens of Ontario didn't vote for a government that was going to deliver a budget like this. They looked at a plan that Mr McGuinty talked about over and over again in this House. As Leader of the Opposition, he had a plan for hard-working Ontario families, and of course that wasn't taking every penny out of their pockets. He never mentioned that one time. So the people of Ontario feel very, very betrayed with this budget.

That's the problem today. That's what's haunting Prime Minister Martin. I feel sorry for Mr Martin. He's away doing some business right now in Europe and with the G8 nations. He's got the G8 summit to attend. But the fact of the matter is, he's been dragged down severely, and the number one thing that has dragged down Paul Martin is Dalton McGuinty.

We hear it in the ridings. Maybe the Liberal members are hearing nothing but positive things, but I'll tell you, I attended three D-Day functions on the weekend alone, and the budget came up a minimum of probably 50 times during that time. I never initiated one of those discussions. I can tell you that the people of the province of Ontario are extremely disappointed; they're extremely betrayed. They feel betrayed by the antics of Mr McGuinty. "This is a broken promise"; that's all they talk about, and that is Mr McGuinty's legacy. The legacy of the Premier, Dalton McGuinty, is as the broken-promise Premier. That's what he'll go down as.

**Ms Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I'm very pleased to comment on the debate and the comments that were raised by my colleague from Niagara Centre.

It's interesting that he put the budget within the context of one family in his riding and the tragedies that

they faced. I think it was very telling, because really this budget is a tragedy for the people of Ontario. It's a fiscal tragedy for the people of Ontario.

This government is, in its arrogance, lauding this budget as a positive thing. However, everyone I have spoken to in the riding of Hamilton East sees it as a tragic thing. They see it as a tragic thing because it goes back and hurts the most vulnerable people. It hurts the people who are least able to pay and hits them in the pocketbook to a point that they haven't seen in quite some time. People are being hurt by this budget.

The other big tragedy about it is the sheer arrogance of this government in refusing to recognize the pain that this budget is causing. It's a tragedy that this government thinks that everyone can pay, that everyone has the ability to pay. Quite frankly, that's not the case. That's not the case in the riding of Niagara Centre, as Mr Kormos raised. It's not the case in the riding of Hamilton East.

It's interesting, because I also attended many D-Day ceremonies yesterday in Hamilton, and I got the same response from person after person, senior after senior, family member after family member. They were outraged by the tragedy of this budget. They were outraged by the fact that when we were in a by-election in Hamilton East, people were saying, "We're hanging on by our fingernails." At that time, they were hanging on by their fingernails. Five days later, their fingers were cut off by this government. That's not acceptable, and I'll be pleased to be making more comments about this budget as time goes on.

1600

**Mr Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh):** I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to make a few comments on the presentation by the member from Niagara Centre, I believe it is. Regarding the letter that was just read from Tracey Cruise and the comments made that we don't care, I'm going to tell you that as Liberals we do care. That's why we put a budget in place that will put more nurses in our hospitals, that will put in more doctors, that will expand community health centres, that will look into what's needed in our schools.

As a retired educator, I saw the eight years of cuts and problems associated with the cuts to schools. I saw that. Having many family members in health care, I saw the problems related to health care. That's why, when it was time to make a decision on if I would run to represent my riding here at Queen's Park, I had no hesitation in believing that I could come here and make a difference. That's why, with this budget that we have, I know I can speak in support of what it talks about.

It does build on medicare, and it does give backbenchers—I heard here that backbenchers can't have a say. I believe in Tracey Cruise's letter. I've received letters. But you ought to know that I'm going to take those letters and I'm going to build on those, and our party will build on those letters and get the very best that we can get here in the province. I will stand up for the people in my riding.

It is not a budget that's hurting the province, it's a budget that's building for municipalities, it's building for hospitals, it's building for those nurses that I went to see last Friday, who heard that in my riding we are going to put in more full-time nurses.

So there are wonderful things in this budget, and I hope to have a chance to speak more on it later.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Reply?

**Mr Kormos:** Well, I say to the Liberals that their fundamental hurdle is one of credibility. There is a credibility gap that is canyonesque when it comes to Liberals. Look, nobody believes you any more. Maybe your mom does, but nobody else believes you. I hope your mom tells you she believes you because there's that special relationship, but even your mom knows that you're probably not going to keep that promise. But she wants to maintain a relationship with you because, after all, one's children are one's children. Nobody believes the Liberals any more, and nobody believes Mr McGuinty. The old joke is, how can you tell when a politician is—you know. Well, his or her lips are moving. It's an old joke, but it's acquired a whole new currency.

You see, New Democrats believe that maybe if we mobilize and if people mobilize and organize themselves, at the very least we can get this government, with enough pressure on and from backbenchers—because, look, you can criticize McGuinty all you want, but the fact is he can't do anything unless his backbenchers let him. And I want the government backbenchers to know that. Behind closed doors, they can mutter about, "Where the heck is McGuinty taking us with this wacko budget, especially the delisting, the privatization of health care and that health tax," but he won't do it and can't do it unless you let him. So that's why New Democrats and Howard Hampton are out there launching the campaign to get people riled up even more than they are now to stop the privatization of chiropractic, optometric and physiotherapy. Liberal backbenchers, you've got nothing to lose but your chains. Organize yourselves. Fight back. Join the people.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired. Further debate?

**Mr Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I would like to start by saying that I will be sharing my time with the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers, the member from Scarborough East, who is also the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

This is my first full speech in the House. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of Scarborough Southwest for entrusting me with the privilege of electing me as their representative to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I'm humbled by this honour, and I will work to the best of my ability to ensure that their confidence in me is well placed.

As this is my maiden speech, I'd like to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about the riding of Scarborough Southwest. This riding has a long-standing tradition of electing representatives who have played a major role in shaping our province and our country, whether it be the late Honourable Martin O'Connell, a



cabinet minister and adviser to the late former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau; David Weatherhead, another federal Liberal member who became a mentor to me and is still involved in the riding; and others, such as former provincial New Democratic Party leader Stephen Lewis, Richard Johnston and former Ontario ministers Cindy Nicholas, Anne Swarbrick and even my predecessor, Dan Newman. They all serve to demonstrate the importance the residents of this riding have placed in their commitment and desire to work in the riding of Scarborough Southwest. I'm honoured to be following in their footsteps and will try to the best of my ability to do what is best for this community and this province.

I'd also like point out that a former member of this Legislature, Frank Faubert, who recently passed away, was also mayor of Scarborough and served well in this Legislature, as did David Warner, a former Speaker of this Legislature, who also represented a Scarborough riding.

I'd like to say a few words about the riding of Scarborough Southwest, which is located in the southeastern portion of Toronto, going as far west as Victoria Park and as far east as Scarborough Golf Club Road, north to Eglinton Avenue and south all the way to Lake Ontario.

The history of this riding can be seen going back to prehistoric ages when the Scarborough Bluffs were created. They're a tourist attraction to this day, and many people from across Toronto and even Ontario come to visit the Scarborough Bluffs.

I also want to point out that major roads, such as Kingston Road, travel through my riding. Kingston Road had a great history in the past, as it was a thriving cottage-country community where residents from across Toronto would come during the summertime and have their cottages. It was also a connecting road that led to Kingston, Ontario.

My riding has gone through dramatic changes since the end of the Second World War. Transforming itself from a tourist-farming community, it has become a modern urban setting made up of people from all parts of the world and from different walks of life.

I'd like to take this opportunity especially to acknowledge the many veterans from World War II who settled in my community, in the riding of Scarborough Southwest, after the war and have made Scarborough Southwest their home. I also want to commemorate the 60th anniversary of D-Day and the fact that so many fought to make Canada and Ontario what they are today.

The diversity of Scarborough Southwest has led to a beautiful tapestry of cultures that is evident by visiting the stores and plazas that are located on Kingston Road, Danforth Road, Eglinton Avenue and many other major streets that run through the area.

The evolution of my riding through the years has resulted in the creation of a number of community associations, which I would briefly like to acknowledge. Providence Centre, for example, is one of the largest homes for the aged in chronic care in Ontario. It's been there for many years and has provided service to many residents throughout my riding and Scarborough.

I'd also like to acknowledge other community centres and community facilities, such as Mid-Scarborough Community Centre, Warden Woods, Birchcliff and Oakridge. All these centres have served the community in different ways to bring together people from all these different cultural and social backgrounds to make Scarborough Southwest what it is today.

#### 1610

I'd also like to point out that two city councillors, both Gerry Altobello and Brian Ashton from the city of Toronto, have worked closely with me in my new position, and in particular Councillor Altobello has been extremely instrumental in helping me to do my job not only as an MPP in my first early days but in my previous life as a city councillor, which dates back to the start in 1988, quite a few years ago.

In the last five minutes that I speak, I just want to talk a bit about the budget and why I chose to run for this position. I chose to run and seek election in this assembly because I saw, as a city councillor, the overall general decline in the quality of public services in Toronto and especially in the Scarborough area. I grew up in Scarborough. I was born just down the street here at Women's College Hospital and was raised at Ionview Public School and Winston Churchill Collegiate, which were both public schools in Scarborough.

As a city councillor, I witnessed the downloading that took place in the last eight years by the former government. They call it service realignment; I think it was downloading more than anything else. They created a new city of Toronto back in 1997 which had no rules and, really, no organization, except for 56 members and a mayor who had to try to create a new city of Toronto. There was no consultation when this occurred, and the result was that for the first several months, and perhaps the first several years, the city had to redefine itself. The city government had to redefine itself and create a government that is only now starting to work in the last few years.

I want to contrast that with what we did with our budget. The finance minister and the Premier moved immediately to consult with the community and with people right across Ontario to ensure that our budget would be one that was created through a consultation process. I think that's one of the key factors in this budget. The finance minister brought forward a budget last May that was the result of those consultations and the result of hearing from many stakeholders and also from simple people, simple Ontarians who came forward and had ideas as to how best to run Ontario.

Two of the key areas that came forward in the budget, two of the most important areas that came forward in the consultations, were health care and education. We've heard several times in this House already the fact that health care will increase, and our government will be spending a tremendous amount of additional money, including \$2.2 billion in the upcoming fiscal year and an overall increase of \$4.8 billion in the next four years. Several things will result from that, such as 8,000 new

nurses, 36,000 more heart procedures, 2,300 more joint replacements and 9,000 additional cataract surgeries.

Also, people who would otherwise go to the United States for cancer treatment and other services will hopefully be able to get their medical treatment here in Ontario. I think it's very important, and it's something that I heard from many residents when I knocked on doors throughout the campaign.

Secondly, I want to talk briefly about education. One of the first acts that this government undertook was the passage of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, which rejected the idea of private schools and invested in public schools. As I said earlier, I attended public schools here in Toronto, from kindergarten right until grade 13. They were first-class institutions at that time. I heard during the campaign of the deterioration in those institutions, and as a new member of this government, I am hopeful that, with the budget and the implementation of the many different recommendations that the budget speaks to, we'll see the public school service that this province and the residents and students deserve to see.

Finally, in the remaining minute that I have, I want to speak a little bit about what this budget does for our cities. For the first time, we've heard the word "uploading" in this Legislature—at least I have. Previously, the former government downloaded services on to us, whether it be social housing, other types of services, transportation, TTC. They were downloaded, as well as public health, on to the cities. In this budget, and which members of the opposition failed to speak about, is the fact that we brought in a gas tax sharing of two cents per litre, which will tremendously help the new city of Toronto and all the other municipalities across Ontario, with a good chunk of money that's needed to help run the city.

We've also uploaded to 75% public health services. This is a tremendous relief for cities. I've spoken to many councillors, like the ones I mentioned earlier, as well as to our mayor, David Miller, whom I know quite well.

So the budget has done a great deal of things. I could go on longer and speak about it; however, my time is limited. I want to say that I fully support this budget. I first got elected to city council. I ran for this position as an MPP because I truly believe that what Dalton McGuinty and this government are trying to do is in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

**Hon Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I rise to contribute to the consideration of our government's first budget. Let me first share with you an experience I had just last Saturday, when I visited my 92-year-old mom, who lives in a long-term-care facility in Scarborough. It's a very pleasant facility with really dedicated, hard-working staff. I have felt that my mom is very well cared for there.

But last Saturday afternoon she was particularly cheerful. She told me that she was feeling, in her own words, "Absolutely wonderful." She told me that she had just been given a bath, and she felt refreshed and stimulated, in her words, "from her head to her toes."

I had taken her dinner, a special treat. She ate with such enthusiasm and satisfaction that I sat and simply watched with a sense of relief and pleasure. She told me that she knew she would sleep soundly that night because she felt so good. I asked her to tell me her secret for feeling so wonderful. She told me it was the bath that had made her feel so good.

My mom has been having this simple, yet wonderful, of course healthy, experience only once per week. But with the respect and attention that our government is committing to our seniors, residents of long-term-care facilities will be able to enjoy this simple but important pleasure twice, not once, per week. This is one small and personal illustration of our government's focus on better health care.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank our nurses, personal support workers, physicians and other health care providers who each and every day take care of those who are not able to care for themselves any more.

A large number of Ontarians will be needing the help of others to get them through each day simply because they are aging. They have previously cared for themselves, their children, their grandchildren and perhaps great-grandchildren. They have contributed to the well-being of others, sometimes strangers, during their younger years and it is time that their government takes the necessary steps to ensure that they are treated with the dignity they deserve. That is what our government has committed to do.

Because our government is committed to providing medically necessary health care to the people of Ontario, the budget will invest in initiatives that will also shorten wait times for surgical procedures, increase the number of doctors and nurses, deliver free immunizations for children and increase funding for care delivered in hospitals, long-term-care facilities and at home, for those still able to live in their own homes.

I strongly believe the role of government is to take care of those who need the assistance or attention of others, whether temporarily or systemically. Philosophers have referred to this as serving the public good, the common good.

By investing in a stronger public education system, our government is honouring its commitment to ensuring that Ontario's students have the required foundation for academic and social achievement. Our initiatives in education will include smaller classes for younger students, greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy, more help for students at risk, and increased opportunities for students to excel in their particular areas of ability and interest, opportunities like apprenticeships and co-op work programs, so that our province will benefit not only by successfully engaging our youth in learning that excites them, but also by helping our young people to acquire skills that are desperately needed in Ontario's workplaces.

**1620**

I would like to thank our teachers and all who are involved in the education of our young people. I would

argue that there are no other professionals who shape the future of our citizens to the extent that our teachers do.

I am proud that our government has focused its attention on the need for social responsibility, even as it quite correctly has committed to stemming the structural decline of our province's finances. I ran for political office as a Liberal because it is a basic Liberal value that government must ensure the existence of a civil society by taking responsibility for the needs of the people we are elected to serve in a manner that is both socially and fiscally responsible. That responsibility in any civil society must be shared by all citizens, with government being stewards of the people's priorities and the allocation of funding to meet those priorities.

In our budget, we are asking the people of Ontario to work with us to ensure that essential public services like health care and education can be strengthened in order to ensure that our province is as strong and as civil as it can possibly be. The Premier often tells us that we are stronger when we work together. Many of us were taught that we are indeed our brother's keeper. The people of Ontario will be the beneficiaries of these improvements in our public services. Indeed, it is because our government is fully committed to the highest quality of life for the people of Ontario that our first budget reflects the steps required to ensure that our agenda for prosperity can be achieved. Yes, difficult decisions have had to be made. We have asked the people of Ontario to share the cost of those decisions because they will also share the positive outcomes of the investments that are being made in our province.

Mr Speaker, please let me take this opportunity to thank the residents of Scarborough East for giving me the privilege of representing their interests here in the Legislature, in my work as their member of provincial Parliament and as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities for Ontario. It is a privilege that I do not ignore, a privilege that I truly am humbled by.

When I speak with the residents of Scarborough East about the tough decisions we have had to make and the reasons why we have had to make these decisions, they may not be entirely thrilled, but they understand that we have come from an era that has cost our public services more than they had anticipated, and it is now time to correct that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr Dunlop:** I'd like to comment and to congratulate the member from Scarborough Southwest on his maiden speech, although I thought I heard him up here criticizing me a few times in Qs and As and I thought he had already made his maiden speech; I thought he did a fairly good job of his criticism, anyhow—and also the member for Scarborough East on her fine comments.

As we continue with this budget motion, the concern we have on this side of the House is what we're hearing from our constituents. The member for Scarborough East mentioned how proud she was to represent the folks who sent her to Queen's Park back on October 2. I, too, am very proud of the fact that I represent the beautiful riding of Simcoe North.

In my riding, I'm at a lot of events, particularly on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Even early this morning, I was at an event. The word out there is "promise breakers" and the betrayal of the taxpayers. That's what we're hearing, and I think we're going to see it on June 28 when the federal election is held. I think there will be a lot of disappointed Liberals, particularly here in Ontario, and a lot of people are saying it's because of McGuinty. That's what we're hearing over and over again.

People expect a government to keep the bulk of their thoughts, the bulk of their promises. When they campaign on a platform, they expect that, if they're elected, that's the type of thing that will come out. We've really seen a reversal of that, and this budget has topped it all off. I think when we started out with the hydro capping, that was the initial shock that taxpayers really worried about last fall, and now, with the budget, they're very concerned and very disappointed.

**Mr Kormos:** As I indicated earlier, this is a time-allocated debate. It will end at 10 to 6 this afternoon. Fortunately, we'll have a chance to hear from the new member for Hamilton East, Andrea Horwath, in around 32 minutes' time. So I encourage folks who are fans of Andrea's, like I am, to stay tuned and keep their hand off the clicker. Andrea Horwath is going to be speaking, utilizing her 20-minute slot.

I'm excited about this. She was just sworn in last Monday, sat for the first time last Monday, and I've got to tell you, it's as if she has been here for years. She has entrenched herself in the culture of Queen's Park very effectively, very readily. So I'm excited about what I suppose will constitute her first speech in the Legislature—her first speech. I think we have to be careful about how we refer to these things and in terms of what language that could be archaic may imply about certain things. This is going to be a speech to look forward to. So as I say, I'm sitting here on the edge of my seat, anticipating an exciting address by Andrea Horwath from Hamilton East.

She knows her stuff; make no mistake about it. She knows her community; make no mistake about that. She knows what people are thinking. Andrea Horwath knows that nobody believes the Liberals any more, because she spent the weekend back in her riding just like every member of this Legislature spent the weekend back in his or her riding across Ontario, being told time after time that, "We just can't trust the Liberals. How do we know they're"—you know what I'm saying, because their lips are moving. That's how you know. Their lips are moving.

Andrea Horwath, 32 minutes; keep an eye.

**Mr Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** I'm very much pleased to join the debate on this Budget Measures Act. This government's plan is a four-year plan. It's a plan to deliver the real, positive change that Ontarians voted for last October. This is a plan that is going to deliver free vaccinations for our children against chicken pox. This is a plan to deliver free vaccin-

ations against diseases like pneumonia and meningitis. These are diseases that have been killing Ontario children for a long time. Our government made a promise to look after our children in this province. That is why this budget plan is going to deliver free vaccinations to our children against chicken pox, meningitis, as well as pneumonia.

As you know, I'm a family doctor turned politician. I look at this plan as a very positive plan. This budget, if passed, would deliver changes reducing waiting times in our emergencies. It will help us to reduce waiting times for hip surgeries and cancer care.

The people of Ontario told us that they wanted reduced times for hip surgeries, cataracts, as well as radiotherapy for cancer treatment. I am for this budget. I support this budget. It's a very good four-year plan.

1630

**The Deputy Speaker:** Reply? The member for Scarborough Southwest.

**Mr Berardinetti:** On behalf of my colleague for Scarborough East, Mary Anne Chambers, I wanted to thank the members from Simcoe North, Niagara Centre and Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale for providing comments on our speeches. Once again, I think the key to this budget is the fact that we're able to debate the budget, spend the next several days—I know that the member from Niagara Centre mentioned that this is a time-allocated motion or period, but there is time to discuss the contents of the budget over the next little while. I look forward to that debate.

The key will be four years from now, because this is a four-year plan. Four years from now the key question will be, are we better off as a province? Are the residents of Ontario better off four years from now than they were today? That will not be answered until four years from now.

I also want to say again that those who have put their names on the front line here, especially the finance minister and the Premier, have taken a great risk. I took a lot of English courses when I was in university and I like to read a lot. There's a little quote I just wanted to put into the record that reads as follows: "Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocrities. The latter cannot understand it when man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary prejudices but honestly and courageously uses his intelligence." That quote is attributed to Albert Einstein. I'm not surprised that there's violent opposition and all sorts of criticism of the budget today, but I truly believe that our Premier and the finance minister, our cabinet and all the Liberal members here are doing what is courageous, honest, intelligent and in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Barrie-Bradford-Simcoe.

**Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford. I just twisted them around today.

**Mr Tascona:** I'm certainly pleased to join in the debate with respect to the 2004 Ontario budget. This

government, I would say, is taking the province of Ontario back in time to the days of high government spending, waste, tax increases and poor-performing economies. There is no doubt that this budget is viewed as a tax-and-spend budget. I think that's what has got Ontarians very upset with respect to what they expected from this government when they were running for the election.

They weren't running on a tax-and-spend budget; they were running on keeping the status quo. Nothing was going to be changed. I don't think the test is, as the member across the way said, "Will you be better off four years from now?" The test right now is, are you better off now?

The bottom line is, with a budget that contains over 50 separate tax or fee increases, I hardly think we're better off now. The comments I've received in my riding are, "The government, all they're after is getting at our wallets. They're going after us and they're taking our money." They're not convinced that this is a budget that is in the best interests of Ontarians.

So it makes the people of Ontario pay for health care with the new tax, or premium, as they like to call it, that will cost middle-income earners and working families, at minimum, \$300 and, at maximum, \$900 more a year. This is the same OHIP premium that was eliminated in 1989 by the Peterson Liberal government for one very fundamental reason: They didn't feel it was fair. They also didn't want people to have to pay for their health care, and that's what has happened now. People are now paying for their health care because of this new OHIP premium, or tax, as we would call it.

So are people better off right now with respect to their health care system by now being required to pay a tax? It's going to come off your taxes because it's going to be a payroll tax. I hardly think people feel they're better off by having to pay an OHIP premium, especially when they were told that would not happen. There was no discussion on OHIP premiums. In fact, they were told very clearly, the Premier committed in writing that there would be no tax increases and that he would commit to the taxpayer referendum legislation. In fact, what we have here is a tax increase, but no referendum. What the Premier is doing, and it's set out in the budget bill, is he is going to change the Taxpayer Protection Act to ensure that these OHIP premiums can be put forth. So what he's doing is changing the law, changing his obligations, changing what he put in writing with respect to what he was going to do during the election.

And that's what has got people mad. They voted with respect to the representation from this government that there would not be any tax increases. They voted that there wasn't going to be a fundamental change to the health care system where they would have to pay for it. They voted because they felt that the message they were being given was a message they thought they could rely on. And now to their shock, with all the promises that have been broken—I think we're counting up to 31 broken promises to date—what they're seeing is a gov-

ernment that does not live up to its word. Quite frankly, what I can hear when I'm at the door during this federal election is that the Liberal brand has been ruined, and whatever brand that was, people feel that the Liberals are not keeping their word and cannot be trusted. That's the brand that they're going to have to wear.

While people are paying this huge tax for health care, they're losing health care services that were covered before by OHIP. So they're paying more for less, such as free eye exams, chiropractic services and physiotherapy. I've heard a lot of it in my riding with respect to this delisting of services. It's not being received well. I think what you're seeing is a groundswell with respect to people just realizing what's going to happen. The reality of this province now is that you have to pay for your health care, in terms of fundamental services, eye exams, chiropractic services and physiotherapy, especially the age group that would need that, which is the group that is aging, 50 and above. They're going to be paying for these services when they would have expected that they would have been covered because they're necessary. What that means is that it's going to put greater pressure on the OHIP system because of the fact that these services are not going to be covered. So in effect, you're now going to have to pay directly for private services for eye exams, chiropractic services and physiotherapy. Now we have private services that are provided out there that you have to pay for out of your pocket. Before, you didn't have to. How is OHIP improved by individuals having to pay for their health care and also having to pay for services that were previously provided by OHIP? What we have is more taxes and less services.

I saw in the paper the other day that the Minister of Finance—the one responsible, alongside the Premier, for this disastrous budget—said he hadn't run into people who were upset about this budget. He went on to say that the people of Ontario understood why this government did what they did. I guess that is why they are running ads right now trying to undo the damage they have caused. I think everybody has heard those ads being run by the Liberal Party, in the voice messaging of the Premier, with respect to how their health care system is going to be improved by paying for it.

**1640**

Anyway, I'm not sure where the finance minister has been in Ontario, but I'm going to read you some of the feedback I've received from my constituents on this budget. I want to stress that these are just a small sample of the anger and dismay that taxpayers in my riding are expressing to me.

Shirley McGill says, "I make \$32,000 a year and I may be forced to sell my house because of this budget."

From Peter Lewis-Watts in Barrie: "You have now given me, my neighbourhood and the people of Ontario ample evidence that the Liberal Party is totally unfit to govern this province."

Here's another, from Terah Sherwood, a single mother in my riding, who says, "I do not think that these cuts were well thought out and the devastation that they will cause for low-income families will be tremendous."

I could go on, but I don't have enough time on the clock to go through the number of constituents who are expressing their outrage in my riding with respect to this budget.

At this time I want to talk about the fact that there was no mention of capital funding for a cancer care centre in this budget for the Royal Victoria Hospital in my riding. The entire community has been waiting for this cancer care centre. The present cancer care unit at RVH is, and has been for some time now, overwhelmed. I am of the mindset that patients deserve to have these services provided closer to home—these are radiation services—and in a manner that is as efficient and comfortable as possible.

I was at an event there last night, where Ted Long spoke with respect to the cancer care centre. We already provide chemotherapy at the RVH. There has been an expansion of that but there are tremendous numbers of constituents—and we don't just serve the people of Barrie; it goes all the way up to Parry Sound—who are afflicted with cancer who need radiation therapy, and the list is growing. They are hopeful—and certainly Minister of Health Smitherman—of having this cancer care facility up and running by 2006, and I'm hopeful of that too. But I would like to see it operational even sooner than that because the need is there. The people in my riding shouldn't have to go down to Sunnybrook hospital or Toronto, with their families being totally upset in terms of getting this fundamental service.

That's something I was proud about, our government, where we brought a lot of these services closer to home: the MRI service, kidney dialysis, and increased cancer care treatment with respect to chemotherapy, just to name a few in terms of closer-to-home services. If anything is more fundamental in terms of people needing a service such as cancer care, that is it with respect to the cancer care unit that should be provided at RVH.

The same goes for Southlake Regional Health Centre and their plans for building a cancer care centre. Now they're providing cardiac care services, which is a good example, that you need to have those services closer to home, and you can get those from within my riding, which is in the Bradford and Newmarket area where Southlake provides their services for cardiac care, and all the way up to Barrie, which is a great improvement in terms of having to go all the way down to Toronto to get those fundamental services for cardiac care.

The Royal Victoria Hospital and the Southlake Regional Health Centre, alongside the entire community, have been pushing for funding so that these cancer care centres can become a reality. The Royal Victoria Hospital in my riding of Barrie needs this centre, and it needed it yesterday. But this budget provides no capital funding or operating fund for this centre. Instead, it delists health care services for people in my riding.

I also see that this government in this budget did not supply any money for the children's treatment centre in my riding. I notice that the Minister of Children's Services was here. She has been trying to be responsive

with respect to this issue, but the fact of the matter is, and I've mentioned this several times before, that Simcoe county and York region are the only areas left in the entire province that do not have access to children's treatment centre services in their own areas. Quite frankly, that is just ridiculous.

This funding was also needed yesterday in order for children and their families to get the core rehabilitation services they need and deserve delivered in Simcoe county and York region. But the money for this is also not in the budget. Instead, we see a health tax slapped on to Ontarians, with working families being hit the hardest.

As I mentioned earlier in the debate, there are about 50 tax and fee increases. We're going to see a tax increase, the income tax user fee with respect to OHIP premiums. It's estimated that it will cost \$2.8 billion for the full year, which the public is going to pay out of after-tax dollars for health care. All that money comes out of the economy, and the less money that is in the economy, the greater effect you have with respect to maintaining a strong economy.

We also have the hydro tax of \$3.9 billion; a cigarette tax of \$150 million, estimated for the full year at \$200 million; an Ontario wine cooler tax, \$150 million, and the beer tax, an increase of 45 cents per case; the Hydro One increase of over \$150 million; and the driver's licence tax, with an increase of \$50 to \$75.

I can tell you, coming from an area where people commute, and I imagine there are a number of members who have commuting ridings, with the price of gasoline at the pump—last year at this time it was 62 cents per litre and now it's running between 80 and 95 cents per litre in some areas—that's a tremendous increase to their pocketbook. Certainly it's going to have a tremendous increase on the economy, and it's already being noticed. I believe Jeff Rubin, of one of the big banks, indicated that the reality will set in in about five months with respect to people realizing that high gas prices are here to stay. We know that insurance rates to drive an automobile have increased substantially, despite the promise by the government to bring those rates down. And now we see them slapping a driver's licence tax increase on people who want to drive their automobiles. So the cost to drive an automobile is increasing in the thousands of dollars.

I want to put a plug in for my bill this Thursday. Bill 48, with respect to the price freeze, which I brought in in early April to freeze the price of gas at 74 cents per litre, is up for second reading this Thursday. I can tell you it's very important that this government take action with respect to providing some leadership and direction with respect to dealing with gas prices.

I know the Speaker himself has brought forth a bill with respect to notice, which I think didn't receive adoption in Nova Scotia—I don't think it made it out there. But he's put forth a private member's bill to require notice before you increase the rates.

The bottom line with respect to gasoline pricing is it's very important that the government take its role seriously, because they have jurisdiction to set the price, they have jurisdiction to deal with this.

There are people talking about the price of gasoline up north being about \$1.40 per litre later this month. I can tell you that my bill will cover this off in terms of price instability. I know in my riding it has ranged from 74 cents in early April to as high as 95 cents a couple of weeks ago, just a tremendous increase. I can tell you it does not bode well for the economy. The only ones that are going to benefit from price instability are the big oil companies. We can just imagine what their bottom line is going to look like in a couple of months. They will have fantastic profits for the first quarter of 2004, without any question.

The budget itself also eliminates the following tax incentives, and I want to go through them:

It eliminates the workplace accessibility tax incentive. It eliminates the workplace child care tax incentive. It eliminates the graduate transitions tax credit. It eliminates the education technology tax incentive. It eliminates the RST rebate for vehicles purchased to transport persons with permanent physical disability. It eliminates the Ontario home ownership savings plan. It eliminates the Ontario research employee stock option credit. It eliminates the tax incentive for electricity supply and conservation. It eliminates the employer health tax exemption on stock options paid to employers for research incentive companies, and it eliminates the U-turn on corporate tax cut capital. That's just to name a number of measures they took with respect to eliminating tax and adding user fees to this particular budget.

#### 1650

Looking at this budget also in terms of law and order, this Liberal government made a commitment to the people of Ontario to hire 1,000 new police officers for community policing in Ontario. Now Liberals are breaking faith with the people of Ontario by failing to mention this commitment in the budget. In addition, there is no mention of the 100 new probation/parole officers they promised the people of Ontario to make our communities safer. This new budget confirms that this Liberal government is soft on crime. The Liberals are fostering a breeding ground for criminals, organized gangs and thugs, while putting every law-abiding Ontarian at risk. They certainly have not put law and order in any area on the radar screen in terms of dealing with the situation in this province.

But the fundamental thing is that the Liberals said during the campaign—and this is why their federal cousins are being punished at the door and are going to be punished on June 28—they would not raise taxes, they would not impose user fees or run a deficit. So much for that. They are not only doing that, they are raising taxes, we are paying for our health care, and they are adding user fees with respect to how much it costs for your vehicle and in terms of spirits, wines and cigarettes.

The bottom line is that this budget raises the people of Ontario's taxes to the tune of \$9.7 billion and at the same time reduces services. It allows the McGuinty government to run a \$6.1-billion deficit and adds \$12 billion to the provincial debt without finding any real savings. It

breaks more promises, promises that were made to the people of this province just seven short months ago.

I noticed an Ipsos-Reid poll on the weekend with respect to what the public thinks of that budget and what they think of the provincial Liberal government now. Their approval rating has decreased to 34%. The view of the public with respect to whether Mr McGuinty is doing a good job is down to 9%.

**Mr Kormos:** It's single digit.

**Mr Tascona:** The member from Welland is correct: It is single digit. And I can tell—

**Mr Kormos:** With a margin of error of four, it could be zero.

**Mr Tascona:** Let's not get that carried away. But I'll tell you this: It breaks more promises, promises that were just made to people during the election. That's the problem here. That's why the Liberal brand is going to be affected, because of the promises. People expect you to live up to your word. That's where your credibility is. If you don't have credibility, what you say you're going to do during the election, you get in and you do other things. Political credibility is something that you cannot just fool around with, and that's what the Premier has been doing. I remember the comment by the Minister of Finance the day after the budget. He said, "Well, that was yesterday," in terms of the questions he was asked. Well, today is today, and the people are still dissatisfied.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired, so we will have questions and comments.

**Ms Horwath:** I'm pleased to comment on the speech of the member from Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford. The comments he makes are reflective of the comments that I've been hearing, certainly in Hamilton East. It really is about the total shock, I think, and total disbelief, generally, of the public in this government and the fact that the number of promises that were broken so soon after the election last October is unbelievable. It's unbelievable to people that this government has gone back on its word on so many things. The level of tax increases is unbelievable, particularly the ones foisted on those least able to pay.

The lack of leadership that this government is showing and the lack of understanding that it's showing for the residents of this province is enormous. It all culminates around the increased taxes in health care and the delisting of services in health care. That's the lightning rod for people's anger, and that's where people have really lost all faith in the ability of this government to do the right thing by the people of Ontario.

The government keeps saying, "Trust us; we need to make these difficult decisions," but they are not listening to the people of the province. They didn't listen when they were going door to door back in September and October. Certainly I was listening not too long ago. People were telling me they are extremely angry, and that was even before the budget came down. This past weekend I had the opportunity to talk to many people, and they are reeling in anger and disbelief over the broken promises of this government, the increased taxes and the

sheer arrogance that this government refuses to hear what the people of this province are still saying in regard to the budget. It's a fiasco, and I'm glad the member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford had a chance to raise the issues he did.

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** The budget that was presented to this House is a budget that tried to deal with the reality that was faced at the time and the commitment to the people of Ontario that we would restore health care and education.

Unfortunately, the information that was provided by the governing Tories at the time was information that did not give all of the facts. It was very selective. It was selective, because what it did was purport that the fiscal health of this province was very good. In fact, between 2000-01 and 2003-04, the spending of this province increased by 22%, far exceeding the tax revenues, which in that same time declined by 0.6%. The government of the day is the one that holds the facts. They hold the information. If they choose to provide selective information to the people of Ontario and to the opposition members, then you are dealing with—let's put it this way: It isn't an exact accounting of the state of the finances of the province.

Considering those actions of that government, I believe this budget is a beginning of restoring both fiscal health as well as our core services to the people of Ontario.

**Mr Dunlop:** I'm pleased to rise to comment on the speech of my colleague from Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford. I want to bring out a couple of quick points. Mr Tascona continues to talk about and lobby for two major health care facilities in Simcoe county, one being the expansion of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie and bringing a cancer care unit to the city of Barrie and Simcoe county, as well as the children's treatment centre. I commend him for that. I know that a number of residents in my riding use the Royal Victoria Hospital as their principal hospital. As he pointed out, York region and the county of Simcoe are the only areas of the province that don't have a children's treatment centre. There's a fantastic proposal before the Minister of Children's Services, and I fully expect that with the huge increase in spending, that is something that should be announced very quickly.

I also wanted to commend the member from Hamilton East on her election. I know she will be speaking in a few moments. I think her election said a lot. Only seven months after Dalton McGuinty was sworn into office, even prior to the budget, he loses a by-election. I don't think that's ever been done that quickly before, particularly before a budget. Obviously she's a good candidate and she will be an excellent member of this Legislature. However, that said it all. That's the credibility, where Mr McGuinty has taken this government. As I said in an earlier comment, his legacy will be the Premier of broken promises.

**1700**

**Mr Kormos:** I say to the Liberals, yeah, you're right. This province is in a financial crisis. It needs the revenues. Then why did you give a billion-dollar tax cut to the profitable banks and insurance companies? What's

the matter with you guys? Give your head a shake. You give a tax cut, a billion-dollar tax cut, to the banks and the insurance companies, then you tell single moms working at two and three jobs, like the kind of single moms I know where I come from, that they've got to pay a new tax that amounts to a 24% increase in their income taxes. What planet are you guys on?

We know how you got elected. You said anything you had to to get elected, and you did. Whether you believed it or not, whether you intended to do it or not, you said anything you had to to get elected. Then once you're elected, you don't feel any obligation to keep any of your promises. Well, it would be unparliamentary for me to tell you what we call that down where I come from in Niagara Centre. Liberals give billion-dollar tax cuts to banks and impose new taxes on the lowest-income people, the hardest-working folks in this province. That's nuts.

I'm so glad that in two minutes' time we're going to be hearing from Andrea Horwath. You know her. She's the candidate who got elected down there in Hamilton East; the NDP candidate and former city councillor. You've heard about her. You've heard people talking about her. You've read about her in major Toronto newspapers, as well as in the Hamilton Spectator. This is going to be her premiere, debut speech, in two minutes' time here at Queen's Park. I encourage folks to stay tuned, listen to what Andrea Horwath has to say in what will be a historic debut, premiere speech by this bright, capable, young new member of provincial Parliament.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford has two minutes to reply.

**Mr Tascona:** I'm very pleased to respond in debate to the members from Hamilton East, Sarnia-Lambton, Simcoe North and, of course, Niagara Centre. I think the theme through here, as the member of Hamilton East stated, is the refusal to hear and, I would add, the refusal to abide by the law.

The law is very clear with respect to where you increase taxes in contradiction of the Taxpayer Protection Act. The fact that the Premier signed that document and the fact that he said he would not increase our taxes over and over again leads to the anger and the disbelief when you see a tax increase with respect to OHIP premiums. I don't think anybody would have seen that on the radar screen, other than the Minister of Finance and whoever is advising him.

But the fact of the matter is that the Liberals keep talking about, "Well, we just didn't know what was going on." Well, what do you think we do in this House? We have the public accounts committee, we have estimates; we have information. The fact of the matter is, the government got elected six months into the fiscal year. They're trying to make it look like, "Oh, we just got in there and we had to deliver a budget."

The bottom line is that you are making the people of this province pay for the promises you have broken. Political credibility is what this is all about. Whether you like it or not, you got elected on a platform that you said

you were going to abide by. I can't believe that your political credibility has been lost within the first eight months of your mandate. Because it has been lost. Quite frankly, what I'm hearing out there on the campaign for the federal election is that the Liberal brand can't be trusted and they need to be taught a lesson.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms Horwath:** I first want to take an opportunity to thank all of the people in Hamilton East who gave me the honour to be here and, after having only been sworn in a week ago, having the opportunity to participate in this budget debate. It truly is an honour for me to be able to do that, and I want to thank them for putting their confidence in me. They had a lot to say as I was walking through the neighbourhoods and the streets of Hamilton East. People had some very serious concerns and very serious issues, and they do need to be thanked and I want to do that: thank them for sharing their concerns with me and thank them, really, for putting their trust in me to be able to bring their voice to this venerable building and this venerable forum.

I also want to thank the people who helped bring the message from myself and the New Democratic Party to the voters of Hamilton East: the volunteers who helped on that campaign, worked hours and hours and hours; the activists; the full-time workers who took time off work to be there; my family, who participated in many, many ways, particularly in supporting me in the times that I was spending door-to-door, day after day; the ordinary people who decided for the first time to come out and volunteer on an election campaign. It was wonderful to see. There were hundreds and hundreds of people there. We had a number of people from diverse communities who came to work on the campaign. We had a number of people from the Sikh community, from the Muslim community, the labour movement, the environmental movement—people from all over. They came because they were really concerned about the direction that they saw this province going in. They came because they all unified behind a message that needed to be sent to the government.

The funny thing about it is that the voice I bring is following in the footsteps of a member who spoke on behalf of the vulnerable people in Hamilton East, the people who had the least amount of voice, the people who are in fact going to be hurt the most by this budget. I'm very, very proud and honoured to be able to have the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of someone like Dominic Agostino. Although we're from different parties, we recognize that the people of Hamilton East are working people; they are low-income people, moderate-income people. They are people who cannot afford the kind of tax increases that this budget brings to the Ontarians in Hamilton East and to all of Ontario. I can tell you that even though we were from different parties, I spent a lot of time on different issues with Dominic over the years. Prior to even being elected to city council, I worked at a community legal clinic and I was a social justice activist at the time. I was organizing low-income people, organizing workers who were



injured on the job, organizing tenants, organizing single moms on FBA, working with them for legislative change. And he did some great work.

I have to say that I'm very proud to be here and to take up that cause, because it's even more important. It's more important because the government of the day is not listening to those people any more. Those people had great hope, I believe, back in October. The people of Hamilton East had great hope, and that hope dwindled in a matter of a few short months after this government was elected. It dwindled because they felt the government was arrogant and not listening to what they had to say. They were worried—and rightfully so—that a budget was going to come down that was going to hurt them.

Unfortunately, I'm here to tell you that that's exactly what happened and that's exactly how they are feeling. They are feeling betrayed, they're feeling angry, but most of all, they're feeling afraid. They're feeling afraid for their future, because they have been hanging on by their fingernails for a very, very long time, and they were hoping that with a change in government, they would see a change in their quality of life for the better. What I'm hearing is, they're very fearful that the quality of their life is simply going to continue to degrade, particularly if this government doesn't stop and take a look at the mistakes they've made and reconsider some of the measures that have been brought forward in this budget.

This budget is a tax on low- and moderate-income people. It's a plethora of charges and fees and taxes that people simply cannot afford. To add insult to injury, it's a regressive budget that takes us back in time in regard to health care coverage. The delisting of services like chiropractic, physiotherapy, optometry services: These things are the things for which people are going to have to pay more of their money out of their pocket.

Interestingly enough, that very question was put to the Premier earlier today and he laughed it off. It's not a funny thing. He laughed it off saying it will only be a couple of hundred dollars. Well, if you add that couple of hundred dollars to the couple of hundred dollars of extra user fees people are going to have to pay, to the couple of hundred dollars—sometimes over a thousand dollars—of extra OHIP premiums people are going to have to pay, and you can tell very quickly that low- and moderate-income working families in Hamilton East are going to have a very difficult time making ends meet, because every bit adds up and every bit counts. It may not count for the Premier, but it does count for the average working person and family.

**1710**

It's kind of a discriminatory budget, really. I found out recently, to my chagrin, that a person my age is going to have to start wearing eyeglasses pretty soon. Fortunately I don't have to wear them yet, but apparently, when you get around my age, your eyes start to deteriorate. So I expect very soon that I'm going to have to see an optometrist and have that issue dealt with; I'm in that catchment area. Luckily, I'm in a position where perhaps I can afford to pay that fee. But I know hundreds and

thousands of people—I knocked on their doors very recently and talked to them face-to-face—and they can't afford it. Those are the same people who can't afford dental care right now, because they have jobs where there's no health coverage. So they're having problems with their teeth, and now they're going to have problems with their eyes. We expect them to undertake lifelong learning, get better jobs and all these things we talk about—how we encourage people to move forward in their lives—yet all the things this budget does simply take them down a peg, and down a peg and down a peg until they have no hope left.

When you look at some of the things I had hoped myself—as somebody who has lived in Hamilton all my life and advocated in areas of social justice for many years, I had some hopes myself about what this budget might bring. I actually listened to the government during the election, when they were simply another party running for election back in September and October. I had some great hopes, quite frankly, that we would see some major changes in some of the areas I feel passionate about personally, and some of the areas that I know would make a huge difference in the quality of life of hundreds of people in Hamilton East. But I didn't see the kinds of things I was hoping to see. In fact, I'm extremely disappointed.

When you look at basic things that we know would make a huge difference in communities, like affordable housing—nothing, a pittance toward affordable housing. The federal government is putting millions of dollars into affordable housing. This government is not following that lead. This government is not going to scratch the surface of the need for affordable housing in communities across the province. In fact, the estimates I've received indicate that approximately 500 to 550 units will be able to be built with the dollars committed by this government. The city of Hamilton alone has determined that just to meet the existing need we would have to build 700 units a year for at least five years just to deal with the waiting list we have right now. How 520 units across the province are going to scratch the surface of affordable housing needs is beyond me.

Another one that was a shock to me, quite frankly, is the fact that this government decided not to return the money to parents on FBA. That the FBA clawback instituted by the previous government was not fully repealed was a shocker to me. It's really a frightening thing. We did a consultation in Hamilton in regard to this issue. In Hamilton, we, as a city, chose to use the FBA clawback funding that was funnelled to us through the previous government to develop programs and unique opportunities for people to find supports that could help them in regard to getting back to work, child care and various other kinds of things.

The consultation indicated, interestingly enough, that most people in the consultation generally felt the FBA money should really go directly to the people who needed it, directly to those people the money was clawed back from. Interestingly enough, the actual recipients, or the potential recipients, the people who were actually to

receive the dollars, the people who were the poorest of the people being consulted, said, "If the money gets shared around a little bit, we understand that, but, really, it is our money and we do need to have that money back." The bottom line is, these are very low-income people. These are families that could use that funding to provide a decent—or at least a more decent—quality of life for their families and kids, and this government decided not to pass that money on to the people who deserve it. That's really a tragedy.

There's a lot more in this budget that was a shock to me. I've got lists and lists here, and I'll continue to discuss them.

For example, when you look at the OHIP premiums themselves and where we ended up with that, I was personally quite shocked. First of all, the whole principle, the whole idea, the whole aspect of bringing OHIP premiums back was something that just floored people. There were rumours around that that was going to happen, and I was laughing. I kept thinking, "No way. They're never going to do that. They wouldn't do that. That's crazy." Well, you know what? It is crazy. We're living that insanity, and it's just wrong.

It's \$300 for individuals who are earning between \$20,000 and \$36,000. Do you know what it's like to live on between \$20,000 and \$36,000? It's not an easy row to hoe. It is a very difficult standard of living. People earning between \$20,000 and \$36,000 are not living high on the hog. They're eking out a meagre existence, especially with rents the way they are and taxes the way they are after downloading. Particularly in the city of Hamilton, I can tell you, it's been very difficult.

But for an individual earning \$200,000, it's only \$750. That's where the injustice of this OHIP premium comes in. At \$25,000, the surtax is 1.2% of a person's income. At \$70,000, the surtax is 0.86%. Jeez, it's going down. At \$100,000, the surtax is 0.75%—even lower. At \$500,000, the surtax is 0.18% of income. That's what I call regressive taxes. That's what makes these taxes so unfair, so inappropriate and so wrong.

But that's not the only problem with these taxes. The bottom line is, people shouldn't have to pay them. People should not have to pay those taxes, those extra fees, those extra premiums. People expect that their income taxes, the taxes that exist already, should be covering those things.

We heard today—and it's quite frightening to imagine—that we don't even know for sure if those taxes are going to go to health care. There is no dedicated fund that's been set aside. From all of the trust this government has been able to garner with the public, there's a great fear out there that what we're calling a health premium is in fact just going to go into general revenue and be spent away on all kinds of different things. That's totally inappropriate. The tax itself is inappropriate, but the fact that this government is hiding or not coming clean with where exactly it's going to go is a bit of a problem. People are aware of that and they're watching very carefully. They're very concerned.

Add to that the other kinds of taxes that are increasing. You know what? User fees are just taxes with a different name, and people know that. Whether it's tobacco, liquor, licensing or whatever, the bottom line is, people simply can't afford to have all of these increases foisted upon them.

When you increase a user fee, again, it's another regressive type of tax. People are not being taxed based on their ability to pay. It's a user fee. That means no matter how much you can afford, you have to pay a set amount. That's why it's a regressive system. That's why the reliance on revenues from those kinds of fees is something I do not agree with and will not agree with, regardless.

The other quite interesting thing that I was quite concerned about was the lack of attention to those people who are hurting the most and who have been hurting very much for a very long time. In Hamilton East, as I traveled through the neighbourhoods and streets, I found we have many people who are on Ontario disability support. Those are people who are injured or unwell for very many different reasons and in very many different ways. I heard, time after time, significant concerns about their inability to cope, their inability to maintain a decent standard of living, their inability to maintain their homes. People were losing their homes, people were unable to maintain existing apartments, having to continually downsize and try to get cheaper and cheaper accommodations. Why? Because of the amount of benefits they are living on, and not through any fault of their own. These are people who, through no fault of their own, are unable to work. At the very least, society should be able to provide them with a decent quality of life.

#### 1720

I was quite concerned because what people were asking for in terms of ODSP was an adjustment to reflect that, over many years of no adjustments, they had lost a significant amount of their income through inflation. Although a small amount was provided, it comes nowhere near to where people should be in regard to having a decent standard of living on ODSP.

The issue is that there were other choices this government could have made. They've been raised by my colleagues in the NDP, and I'm going to raise them once again. What was mentioned earlier is that in fact there were difficult choices. The government keeps saying there were difficult choices that had to be made. But one of the choices this government had, one of the options they could have undertaken—as opposed to the ones they did, which is whacking the poor and the most vulnerable people—was to collect \$1.6 billion by creating two new tax brackets for those most able to pay. So instead of hitting those least able to afford it, why not put a little bit more on those most able to afford it? That's progressive taxation. That's the kind of thing I believe in. How about eliminating the employer health tax exemption that's sitting there for large corporations? That could have collected \$700 million. That's a choice this government could have made but, no, they didn't. What about returning corporate tax rates to where they

were in 1999? That's \$700 million that could have been raised with that kind of measure.

The bottom line is, this budget just reflects the broken promises that people were worried about when I was on the by-election hustings not too long ago. For moderate-income families, it adds up to painful increases in taxes and user fees, resulting in a reduced quality of life. The right thing to do is to ensure that people pay according to their means. That's the right thing to do. Instead, the poor are getting poorer and the rich are getting richer. Why? Because of budgets like this.

We talk about this thing happening in our society where we're losing the middle class. The middle class is dwindling away. Why? Governments have an opportunity to change that, but they're not. Budgets like this will not change that. In fact, it just exacerbates a polarization of our society. Moderate- and low-income people are paying a higher proportion of their income for services through their taxes. Banks and insurance companies are paying nothing. That's the kind of injustice this budget reflects. That's the problem with this budget. It's quite basic. That's why seniors and low- and moderate-income families despise this budget. That's why this government, as some other people have said, has lost the trust of this populous, the trust of Ontarians and certainly the trust of the people who live in Hamilton East. They cannot trust this government. Why? Because they are continually and arrogantly defending this budget, day after day, in this Legislature, and it's absolutely wrong.

People are not happy. They're not impressed. They want this government to go back and reconsider not only the OHIP premium but the delisting of those services and the unfair nature of this budget. It's not right to put the cost of bringing this province back to where it should be on the backs of those least able to pay, on the backs of the poorest and on the backs of the seniors. That is totally wrong.

I'm very proud to have been able to be here to bring these concerns forward and to fulfill the promises I made to the voters in Hamilton East to bring their voice and their concerns to the government. I hope I've been able to do that in the appropriate time allotted.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** It is my pleasure to rise in response to the maiden speech of our newest member, the member from Hamilton East. She was elected just recently in a by-election in Hamilton East. As she pointed out, she is following in the footsteps of an icon, a legend down in that part of the world. Dominic Agostino served that area very well as a member of provincial Parliament, following his time as an alderman and before that as a school board trustee. As I mentioned the other day in this House, he was known to everyone as a tremendous champion and a tireless fighter for his constituents and for the underdog.

When elections are done and we all go home in the evening, when we're all filing out of this House, we sometimes like to set politics and partisanship aside and take time to congratulate one another, because we all know that largely we come here for the same reasons. We

come here because we do want to make a change for the better and we want to represent the people of this province and make sure their voices are heard and that the things they would like to see done are done. Despite the criticism we have received in the House today, I think that is something that we did.

I know that I listened to my constituents. I went to the public consultations, and I was told by the stakeholders who came to the pre-budget and the post-budget consultations that they were amazed at how well the budget reflected the pre-budget consultations and that there were some very difficult choices to make. It's not perfect by any means, but it is a good start to rebuilding this province on the foundation the people of Ontario wanted.

Aside from that, I want to take the time to welcome Andrea Horwath to the House and to say I know she will speak for and represent the constituents of Hamilton East well and that she is a good voice for the people. Congratulations.

**Mr Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I enjoyed the maiden speech of the member for Hamilton East and echo the comments of the member from Stoney Creek: The member from Hamilton East does speak well on behalf of her constituents. A number of us had an opportunity to meet many of her people in recent weeks, knocking on doors in sunny Hamilton. On election day, I had the pleasure of looking after Hamilton Beach, Burlington Beach, the beach with the hydro towers on it. It was a good day to be down by the lake.

The member from Hamilton East made mention of tobacco taxes in her long list of other taxes and missed moves by the present government in their budget. Just to draw on that comment, we're having a tough time in tobacco country. In a sense, we have a three-legged stool with respect to the government's budget policy with respect to tobacco. We know a war has been declared on tobacco to bring in a smoke-free Ontario. We know that taxes have been increased twice during the reign of the present Liberal government. What we don't know is, when will the third leg of that stool be attached? When will we see the third promised approach; that is, the commitment of assistance to tobacco farmers that is ever more necessary as this particular government revs up the initiative to declare a smoke-free Ontario and continues to increase taxes on tobacco, as we've seen in this present budget?

1730

**Mr Kormos:** We know what real folks, real Ontario, is saying about this budget. They think it stinks. Let's take a look at what Liberal backbenchers are saying about the public response to this budget: "One MPP rethought his brave intent to field all incoming budget calls when they ran hotter than hot, with nine angry rants to each plaudit. Another backbencher thinks he got off lightly with just one death threat, while several caucus members received a slew of them." That's just one reporter with his contact with Liberal backbenchers.

It's enlightening to separate the stuff, the spin that Liberals try to put on the budget here.

In that old RCA Victor ad—you know the one I'm talking about, with the big Victrola megaphone and the dog sitting there—what did the caption say? "His Master's Voice." Right? These Liberal backbenchers are like that little dog sitting there in front of the Victrola, waiting for "his master's voice," which is the script they get, the spin they're told to put on this dog of a budget. You talk about three-legged, this is a three-legged dog. It's blind and it's mangy. Put it out of its misery. I say to government backbenchers, restore if you can—look, no guarantees from this guy—a modest amount of the integrity that some people thought you had when they voted for you. Stand up and condemn this budget as the miserable dog that it is.

**Mr Barrett:** What's the dog's name?

**Mr Kormos:** The dog's name? Never mind not hunting, this dog even forgot anything about house training, let me tell you. This dog deserves to be put out of its misery. Fulfill your responsibilities to your voters.

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** I think it was Winston Churchill who once said, "You never get to the end of the journey if you stop to throw stones at every barking dog."

We can all find things in anybody's budget. I could wax eloquently, I suspect, for an hour without notes about the NDP's and the Tories' past history, but I don't. I want to stand in my place today and welcome—

**Mr Kormos:** We're talking about the present.

**Mr McMeekin:** Wait, Peter. I want to welcome my good friend Andrea Horwath here. Andrea and I go back a long way. We've done some tremendous work over the years together. When I was mayor of the town of Flamborough and occasionally, like Don Quixote, tilted at some windmills, she was one person who took time to listen, to care and even to work together, often on some very unpopular causes. Together we were able to fight, to be champions and to encourage others to be champions for some of the poorest and most disenfranchised people in our community. I want to say to the honourable member from Hamilton East, and my good friend, that if we weren't going to have a Liberal representing Hamilton East, I'm sure glad you're here, because I know you'll be a strong and consistent voice.

That having been said, I just want to say that this isn't rocket science. The member from Hamilton East understands the challenges around downloading and some of the other things. When we arrived and were given the awesome task of forming the government, this place was in one hell of a mess. In fact, I think there was something like an \$8.4-billion revenue problem, and we had to do one of two things: either fire more nurses and collapse some of those issues that we want to care about or increase the revenue stream and respond, as the people of Ontario wanted. We made some tough choices. That's what leadership's all about. I know the member from Hamilton East, in her heart of hearts, understands that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has expired. The member for Hamilton East has two minutes to reply.

**Ms Horwath:** It's actually my honour to first of all thank the member for Stoney Creek, Jennifer Mossop, for her kind words. Although it is an interesting relationship that we have, I do appreciate her words of welcome and particularly her remembrance of Dominic Agostino. I do have to say, though, that I know if Dominic were here, he would have some concerns about this budget as well, I'm sure. I'm glad I can bring some of those comments forward.

I also want to thank the member from Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant for his welcome and his comments. Although I may have some disagreement with some of the specifics, I think many times, when it comes to this budget, we seem to be on the same page. That's something I actually wasn't expecting, to be honest with you, but I'm pleased about it.

My colleague from Niagara Centre as always is very passionate and very brilliant in his delivery. He always brings a smile to my face, because he has many different ways of raising the issues and does that often in a very entertaining way. I thank him for that.

In terms of the final speaker here, my former colleague on regional council, the member from Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot, we did have many challenges in the time we served together on regional council. One of the things I was proud of always doing on regional council, and on city council after that, was to stand up for the most vulnerable, to stand up for the people who are least able to stand up for themselves.

That's a tradition that I'm very proud to be able to continue here in this particular forum. I can tell you that those are the people I'm most concerned about with regard to the effect that this budget is going to have on them. I was able to save a lot of services, notwithstanding the downloading in Hamilton. Here in the Legislature I'll be fighting for those vulnerable people, for the seniors and the poor.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Brownell:** Before beginning my words on the budget, I would like to express my congratulations to the members from Hamilton East and Scarborough Southwest, who gave their maiden speeches in the House this afternoon. I would also like to inform you, Mr Speaker, that I will be sharing my time with the member from Sarnia-Lambton.

With regard to giving maiden speeches here in the House this afternoon—a great honour for these two members. Shortly after the throne speech, I had that opportunity. It was in that throne speech that we set out our plan and made commitments to what we had expressed in a campaign. Now we have set out a budget which will build on, and which is building on, the ideas that we had in an election campaign and in a throne speech. So the individuals this afternoon were able to pick up on items from the budget and use those in the two maiden speeches here today. They did a commendable job and I want to congratulate them.

I would like to say at the outset too, and I alluded to that in a two-minuter that I had a little while back, that a letter from a Tracey Cruise was mentioned here this

afternoon, following the budget. I think it was the member from Niagara Centre who presented that letter. I too have received a number of letters, certainly a number of e-mails.

I can tell you that we have presented a budget that we can build on. It may not be perfect, but it's a stepping stone to the future. It's a stepping stone with many positive ideas that will get Ontario moving for the next four years.

We had an Ontario that had a health care system that needed fixing. We had an Ontario that had an education system and educators who needed the support of a caring government. They have discovered that in this budget. I will allude to that in a few moments.

**Interjection:** 30,000 new jobs in May.

**Mr Brownell:** We'll have that for sure. I know that last week we heard some members from across the floor make comments about things I had said following the budget. I was named. But I also want to say—from the newspaper article where they captured those quotes—and put on the record that I said, "But it is a good budget. We had some difficult choices to make." Those are words that I said.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Brownell:** Right. The budget may not be perfect. There were things that I would like to have seen in the budget that weren't there. There are some thing in the budget that I think we have to build on in the future.

I also said, "I have heard a lot of positive comments about this budget. There is no way I can say no to the budget presented." Certainly, as a collective piece of direction for the future, for the next four years, there is absolutely no way that I can turn my back on teachers; that I can turn my back on students in the classroom.

I spent 32 and a half years in a classroom and I can say we're absolutely right in saying that we have to get smaller class sizes in those primary grades, where we're forming young minds, where we're moving young minds into the senior grades and then off to high school, colleges, universities and then into apprenticeships too.

I laud all excellence for our plan. I believed in it when I ran, I believed in it when it was recognized in the throne speech and I believe in it now, when we will be doing something for education.

**Interjection:** Rozanski plus.

**Mr Brownell:** Rozanski plus, that's exactly what we're doing when we're investing an additional \$2.6 billion over the next four years in our schools, including a \$200-million investment that will leverage an additional \$2.1 billion in capital funding to help fix schools. That is going to have an effect right in my riding. I have crumbling schools in my riding. I have crumbling schools in the Upper Canada District School Board, just as one example. They need some help, and they are getting help from this government and from this throne speech, and I'm excited about that.

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What's more exciting is our plan for educating, for providing more in training and education for the teachers we will put into those openings that will be created in the

primary grades and beyond. We will increase the funding for spaces to an additional 1,000 new teachers in those training positions. And these are teachers who don't have to flee to the United States of America to get their education—

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** Hear, hear.

**Mr Brownell:**—that's right—as nurses have in the past number of years. I would say that in the past six, seven or eight years we've had nurses flee this province to the States, and former students of mine are some of those students who went to the States.

I'm also excited that we will have lead teachers in our schools, that we will have those mentors. The teachers who are starting out on a career will be able to look to those mentors, look to those lead teachers and get best practices in the schools, and I'm excited about that.

I had a wonderful 32 and a half years in education, and it was a happy time in December 2000 when I was able to pass the torch on to a young man who mentored in my class, who did his month of training in my class in April 2000. That was a wonderful, wonderful feeling, and that's the feeling this budget is going to give to education in Ontario.

We'd also like to say that the leaders in the communities of Cornwall and Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh have said that it is a positive budget. I would like to quote our local newspaper, the Standard-Freeholder. Terri Saunders, who reported this, also covered comments from Andrew Neuner, the CEO of the Cornwall Community Hospital:

"The public demand for quality health care services is the impetus for a new premium announced today, a local health official said....

"I think this is a tax brought on by public demand for a high quality of service and things such as reduced wait times. This is how the government responded." This is a quote from Andrew Neuner, the CEO of the hospital.

"The reality is this is happening in a lot of other provinces. Canadians have a high level of expectation when it comes to health care services, and that has to be paid for from somewhere." A quote from Mr Neuner.

"We are pleased to see a priority being placed on prevention and promotion, that side of health care. We know it's necessary to fund what's required, and that has to be achieved one way or another."

I have met with Mr Neuner and I know that he, as a new CEO for the new Cornwall Community Hospital, wants to provide the best in health care delivery at his hospital. I know what those who work so hard in the centre de santé, the francophone health care centre in my constituency, want to provide. They want to provide, just as was mentioned in our budget, the best in community health care centres, those centres that during the campaign, and even pre-campaign, Premier McGuinty came down in my riding to see—to see in operation and to see that it works well. We are going to be providing an additional \$14 million this year to fund and enhance community health centres. That's the way to deliver for Ontario.

I would also like to say that “Pat Finucan, director of the Cornwall campus of St Lawrence College”—and I’m delighted that the Minister of Colleges and Universities is here with us—said he’s “impressed by Tuesday’s provincial budget, which places a lot of emphasis on health and education.

“Among other things, the budget promises more money for universities and colleges trying to cope with a flood of students as a result of the elimination of the fifth year of secondary school.”

This is what he said, following a meeting that was hosted in Ottawa: “I support the choices the government has made.

“The government had to introduce some taxes to pay for health care and education.”

He knows that in order to get the best in health care, the best in education and provide that 3% increase—I heard the member from Hamilton East comment about funding for the Ontario disability support program and Ontario Works. We made a start. After 11 years, this is our start for the future for those people who, through no fault of their own, have to be supported by those programs.

**Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It was Bob Rae in 1993 who froze it.

**Mr Brownell:** That’s right, and it continued.

This is what we’re doing: We’re building on it, and we will build for the future and with the plan we have for the next four years.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Sarnia-Lambton.

**Ms Di Cocco:** I’m pleased to rise on this motion. I believe the people of Ontario are really tired of a lot of the rhetoric that I hear sometimes in this place. Do you know what this whole budget is about? It’s about results. It’s about achieving results—measurable results. One of the biggest problems that I believe every government has—and I believe some of the cynicism we hear from people is because there is a lot of rhetoric—is that government, the province of Ontario, has not measured results before.

When we arrive here as government, we all give our accountants our financial numbers so they can do income tax, for instance. When that happens—and this is what happened to us as government—the accountants will say that they base their evaluation of our income on the information we provide to them, and then they make the evaluation. What happened to us was that the government provided a set of numbers to the people of Ontario and to us, but those figures were not correct. They were distorted, and they did not reflect the finances of the province. Because of that, what happened is that they, unfortunately, put us between a rock and a hard place. We had to decide, how do we restore credibility and the foundation of fiscal responsibility and improve services at the same time? How do we do this? Well, in my humble opinion, we have done a very good job at beginning the process of restoring fiscal health as well as restoring core services in Ontario.

I’ve said before in this House that when we talk about responsible government—between 2000-01 and 2003-04, provincial program spending increased by 22% in this province. What happened is that—I’m not quite sure, Speaker. You’re giving me—

**The Deputy Speaker:** You have about half a minute.

**Ms Di Cocco:** I have six minutes and 46—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thought you might be confused, but at 10 to 6, the vote is placed.

**Ms Di Cocco:** OK. So I have half a minute and you’re going to cut me off. I thought I had 10 minutes. I apologize.

Anyway, I say to the people of Ontario in the short time ... have, do not judge us on the simplistic spin we hear, but judge us over the long haul on results we achieve and better management that we initiate with more transparency and accountability.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to standing order 57(b), I am now required to put the question:

Mr Sorbara has moved that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

All those in favour, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1750 to 1800.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of Mr Sorbara’s motion, rise one at a time.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Patten, Richard
Bentley, Christopher	Gravelle, Michael	Peters, Steve
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoy, Pat	Peterson, Tim
Bountrogianni, Marie	Jeffrey, Linda	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Kennedy, Gerard	Pupatello, Sandra
Brotten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldip	Qaadi, Shafiq
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Racco, Mario G.
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Bryant, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Ruprecht, Tony
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	McGuinty, Dalton	Sorbara, Greg
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Di Cocco, Caroline	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wong, Tony C.
Duncan, Dwight	Oraziotti, David	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Parsons, Ernie	Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please rise one at a time.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	Miller, Norm
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	O’Toole, John
Bisson, Gilles	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Churley, Marilyn	Kormos, Peter	Runciman, Robert W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Marchese, Rosario	Scott, Laurie
Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley	Tascona, Joseph N.
Hardeman, Ernie	Martiniuk, Gerry	Witmer, Elizabeth

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 60; the nays are 21.

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

It is therefore resolved that the House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

It being past 6 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1804.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*







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

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

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon 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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Parliamentary assistant to the Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / adjoint parlementaire au président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Baird, John R. (PC)	Nepean-Carleton	Deputy opposition House leader / leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon / L'hon Rick</b> (L)	Sudbury	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>Bentley, Hon / L'hon Christopher</b> (L)	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (ND)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Chief New Democratic Party whip / whip en chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
<b>Boutrogianni, Hon / L'hon Marie</b> (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse, ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
<b>Bradley, Hon / L'hon James J.</b> (L)	St Catharines	Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Broten, Laurel C. (L)	Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Parliamentary assistant to the Premier / adjointe parlementaire au premier ministre
Brown, Michael A. (L)	Algoma-Manitoulin	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Richesses naturelles
Brownell, Jim (L)	Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh	
<b>Bryant, Hon / L'hon Michael</b> (L)	St Paul's	Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Cansfield, Donna H. (L)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de l'Énergie
<b>Caplan, Hon / L'hon David</b> (L)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy House Leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint
<b>Chambers, Hon / L'hon Mary Anne V.</b> (L)	Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Churley, Marilyn (ND)	Toronto-Danforth	Deputy New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire adjoint du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Colle, Mike (L)	Eglinton-Lawrence	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Finances
<b>Cordiano, Hon / L'hon Joseph</b> (L)	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Craiton, Kim (L)	Niagara Falls	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b>	Essex	Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Curling, Hon / L'hon Alvin (L)</b>	Scarborough-Rouge River	Speaker / Président
Delaney, Bob (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	
Dhillon, Vic (L)	Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	
Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Sarnia-Lambton	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for democratic renewal / adjointe parlementaire au ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon / L'hon Leona (L)</b>	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Urban) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (Secteur urbain)
<b>Duncan, Hon / L'hon Dwight (L)</b>	Windsor-St Clair	Minister of Energy, Chair of Cabinet, Government House Leader / ministre de l'Énergie, président du Conseil des ministres, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Eves, Ernie (PC)	Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Flaherty, Jim (PC)	Whitby-Ajax	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
Fonseca, Peter (L)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Gerretsen, Hon / L'hon John (L)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Gravelle, Michael (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / Thunder Bay-Superior-Nord	
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora-Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Horwath, Andrea (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham-Kent Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Erie-Lincoln	
Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Burlington	
Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	
<b>Kennedy, Hon / L'hon Gerard (L)</b>	Parkdale-High Park	Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation
Klees, Frank (PC)	Oak Ridges	
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
<b>Kwinter, Hon / L'hon Monte (L)</b>	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	
Leal, Jeff (L)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	Chief government whip / whip en chef du gouvernement
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity-Spadina	
Marsales, Judy (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Martel, Shelley (ND)	Nickel Belt	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Deborah (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>McGuinty, Hon / L'hon Dalton (L)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
McMeekin, Ted (L)	Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for seniors / adjoint parlementaire au ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa-Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon / L'hon Madeleine (L)</b>	Ottawa-Vanier	Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound-Muskoka	
Milloy, John (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Mitchell, Carol (L)	Huron-Bruce	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Mossop, Jennifer F.(L)	Stoney Creek	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Culture
Munro, Julia (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Orazietti, David (L)	Sault Ste Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Parsons, Ernie (L)	Prince Edward-Hastings	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Transports
Patten, Richard (L)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Peters, Hon / L'hon Steve (L)</b>	Elgin-Middlesex-London	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Peterson, Tim (L)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs
<b>Phillips, Hon / L'hon Gerry (L)</b>	Scarborough-Agincourt	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (ND)	Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Deputy New Democratic Party whip / whip adjoint du Nouveau Parti démocratique
<b>Pupatello, Hon / L'hon Sandra (L)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Children and Youth Services / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Racco, Mario G. (L)	Thornhill	
Ramal, Khalil (L)	London-Fanshawe	
<b>Ramsay, Hon / L'hon David (L)</b>	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Northumberland	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds-Grenville	Opposition house leader / chef parlementaire de l'opposition
Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (L)	Guelph-Wellington	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Scott, Laurie (PC) Sergio, Mario (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock York West / York-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Business Services / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises
Smith, Monique M. (L)	Nipissing	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Smitherman, Hon / L'hon George (L)</b>	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Sorbara, Hon / L'hon Greg (L)</b>	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	
<b>Takhar, Hon / L'hon Harinder S. (L)</b>	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b>	Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Van Bommel, Maria (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Rural) / adjointe parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (Secteur rural)
<b>Watson, Hon / L'hon Jim (L)</b>	Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises
Wilkinson, John (L)	Perth-Middlesex	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	
Wong, Tony C. (L)	Markham	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Zimmer, David (L)	Willowdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General / adjoint parlementaire au procureur général

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vacant  
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Caroline Di Cocco, Cameron Jackson,  
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Finances et affaires économiques**

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Wayne Arthurs, Marilyn Churley, Bob Delaney,  
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Jerry J. Ouellette, Ernie Parsons,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Présidente: Elizabeth Witmer  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: David Oraziotti  
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Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,  
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**Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales**

Chair / Président: Jim Brownell  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Jeff Leal  
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton, Brad Duguid,  
Peter Fonseca, Tim Hudak, Frank Klees,  
Peter Kormos, Jeff Leal,  
Ted McMeekin, Kathleen O.Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative**

Chair / Présidente: Linda Jeffrey  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Bruce Crozier,  
Ernie Hardeman, Linda Jeffrey,  
Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,  
Bill Mauro, Norm Miller,  
Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

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**Regulations and private bills /  
Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Tony C.Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn,  
Rosario Marchese, Jerry Martiniuk,  
Phil McNeely, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Tony Ruprecht,  
Maria Van Bommel, Tony C.Wong  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

These lists appear in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding appears when space permits.

Ces listes figurent dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions paraît si l'espace est disponible.

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