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Monday 7 March 2005

Lundi 7 mars 2005

Speaker
Honourable Alvin Curling

Président
L'honorable Alvin Curling

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 7 March 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 7 mars 2005

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal): I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 167, An Act to amend the Education Act, when Bill 167 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of the second reading vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); however, a deferral of the third reading vote shall be allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue): Mr. Caplan has moved notice of motion 317. Mr. Caplan? No. Mr. Kennedy.

Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education): I will be sharing my time with the members for Perth–Middlesex, Guelph–Wellington, Markham and Sault Ste. Marie, who's also the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education.

It is a great pleasure to join in this discussion this evening because the bill in front of us really does allow us to enter a new era in terms of education in this province, an era where we're able to contemplate success as the main adjective or the main descriptor of what we are accomplishing in education and getting away from the conflict that has characterized it for so many years in the past.

It is a decision for every member of this House to make, that we are able to neutralize, if you like, the kinds of things that are happening in education by delivering the ingredients for long-term stability. This is certainly something that the students of this province deserve. It's something they haven't had for the last number of

years—the last eight, to be exact, or 26 million school days lost to the students of this province; three times as many as the two previous governments combined. It simply was something that the Legislature can't give back, but we would be really, fundamentally in error if we did not learn from it.

So there's an overall approach of the government that is about maintaining an atmosphere of peace and stability, about extending an outlook of respect to teachers, education workers, the people who do the essential service of education in this province, but in a fashion that allows the flexibility that local arrangements can be there.

We have 72 school boards encompassing the province. It's vital that we take the right steps here in this House, the right kind of leadership and direction, but that it matches the local leadership and direction that is going to be the determining factor. It is what they're saying across the province. They want the stability. They want the ability to move forward, to focus on their challenges within education and not have them undermined by some initiative of the government of the day. What they want is this vista that we're offering in this bill, which is the flexibility to have two- and four-year agreements.

1850

What the amendments to the Education Act are about is simply allowing to have happen what the people in education, the people who support education, which I think is a vast swath of this province, want to see, which is strengthening publicly funded education. It can't happen by itself. This House, as has been shown in the last eight years, can have a tremendous negative effect if it either neglects or overemphasizes its role in education. Getting it right is what this bill is all about.

It is not in isolation. We're bringing this bill forward in the context of having begun the restoration of publicly funded education in this province: \$1.1 billion of investment from a government that has been very strapped by the obligations they've had to meet on behalf of the previous government, which didn't have the disclosure and the fiscal probity to be able to meet their obligations before they left office. We've carried that forward, but we have decided that students can't wait. It's what I ask each member of this House to not let happen: that somehow students again get taken hostage to some other debate. I don't know, and I can't explain—it may take members of the caucus opposite to give us the full idea as to why education was turned into such a battlefield in recent years, why that was such a priority for the govern-

ment, why they spent taxpayer dollars and so on. They may wish to do that. They may wish, as their leader has, to say that that wasn't their fault, that they don't want to do that any more, that they're turning a new page. This is the time to show it. This is an example that they can set. If they want to be part of the new era in education, they can be part of changing the terms and making them the kind of terms that will help within education to get the flexibility that's required.

We have made an investment that has had some very specific enabling effects within education; for example, \$165 million to help low-income families, to help the children and students who come from families of recent immigrants, from single-parent households. Those are households that have the potential for every bit of the success of any other household, but we've learned that there needs to be some assistance from the school systems at the very beginning of their academic careers. If we can do that, we are giving them the best chance of unlocking their potential. But those kinds of investments and the other kinds of things that we've done won't take root unless we can allow the undisturbed, going-forward progress that comes with longer-term arrangements, and that's what this bill is. It is about future peace and stability. It is about the will of this House being expressed in terms of how exactly we want that peace and stability to be maintained.

So I put forward this bill in the hope that it is something that every member of this House will see as a new future going forward. When we have offered the kinds of support that we have, I think everyone would agree that it behooves this House to make sure that all of the elements are there. Some of it is about funding; some of it is about what that funding does. For example, our elementary schools today, some 1,400 of them, have reduced class sizes because of our initiative to add teachers. Some 1,100 new elementary full-time-equivalents have managed to ameliorate the size of the classes. It is possible, in those schools—and soon in many more, if we're able to achieve the overall atmosphere that we're looking for—that children will no longer get lost in the crowd. It has happened in too many places across the province, and it is time for this House to take a stand on their behalf. It is an insight that we think will pay for itself by the time those students graduate and go on to their further studies, because it is something that allows teachers and the other support staff to help students at the earliest possible time in their academic career. It's something that would not be possible if we didn't provide the stability that this bill entails.

In addition, we have tried to extend an atmosphere of respect. We have, with the support of this House, eliminated the professional learning program, which was brought out, I think, in error. I think even sections of the previous government understand that it was a provocative bill, not necessarily intended to bring out professionalism but quite the opposite. It was really meant, instead, to undermine a profession that was quite capable of working with the system to produce a very good system that I

think we will be able to show in the months ahead will allow teachers to develop. Teacher development is a very important asset to any education system that wants to have excellence, but it can't be imposed, if you subscribe to the idea that we should respect teachers as professionals. The only way to do that is to make sure that they are part and parcel of how these things get developed.

We have, at virtually no cost to the government, established an education partnership table. We have not stood in our place here and said, "We know everything that there is to know in education," and we've not sought to impose that. Instead, we have invited the principals, the school boards, the teachers and the parents to be represented at a partnership table that reviews the different policies of this government before they come into the Legislature, because we want to bring forward the strength of a very significant sector, a sector that, some seven and eight years ago, was winning awards across the world, recognition for having excellence in education, something we have not been able to accomplish in the last recent number of years, but for which we still have the basic know-how, we still have the basic insight, and we still have a tremendous amount of accomplishment to build on. But we have to make up for those eight years, and we need the help of this House to be able to do that.

Bill 167 will accomplish that. It will be one part of the puzzle of making sure that there are stable long-term agreements between the employees of school boards and the sector itself. And more than that, it's another way to send a signal of respect, to say, "Here is an ability to reach arrangements." For the first time, there is guaranteed funding to school boards. If they're able to enter into four-year arrangements, the funding goes with it. Quite apart from the kind of funding that happened in the past, it actually is what it purports to be: It's 2% of the actual salaries that the boards are responsible for. It isn't an artificial or abstract amount that causes boards to cannibalize some other part of their program simply to be able to meet the costs of the day.

We've done that across the board. We've paid not just for an increase in salaries going forward for four years; we've paid for all the other costs that face school boards. In fact, for the first time since the funding formula was brought in at the provincial level in 1998, there has been recognition of increased costs. I think people realize that in the absence of that, the school system starts to eat itself; it starts to become consumed by those other costs and isn't able to provide the textbooks, the environment and so on. We're not saying that the system is rebuilt simply because of the \$1.1-billion investment by this government; just that we are in the process of that, and this bill is another part of it.

In terms of the dialogues that we're having right now, the provincial government is working on behalf of students with our federations of teachers, with the school board associations and hopefully with the representatives of other employee groups to find a way that provincial policy can make local agreements happen. And this is one of those. We need some certainty and we need the

long-term horizon. This is asking the House for that permission, to be able to offer a longer horizon, also the flexibility, in case it's needed, for two-year agreements. But overall it's saying that this House is prepared to do what needs to be done to make sure education is no longer a battleground. That is something that each of us needs to search for in terms of our priorities in the last number of years.

We have invited the members of this House to visit schools, to be part of—I think it is fair to say that we are now part of the education system; we are playing a significant role. I don't think we have fully grown into those shoes in terms of exercising that, sometimes rhetorically, sometimes by policy that isn't fully thought through, sometimes simply in the way that things from this House have been conveyed to people who work in the field, who have to do the job for us. There is more than a smattering of education experience on all sides of the House, and it isn't going to get exercised unless the insights of this House are translated into the confidence, the feeling of respect and the feeling of goodwill among the workforce. And we accept that responsibility.

With the support of the rest of this House, we are saying to the people in the province that we do accept the responsibility for setting the tone for education. And that tone has been latterly one of peace and stability, of some signs of progress on the academic front, of signs of progress in terms of innovation happening, and coming back within the system, of programs that were erased being replaced, and of new resources coming back in.

We are at the beginning of what I think is a consequential development of a new day in education, and I implore every member of this House to treat it that way, to give it some respect. If they have disagreements, by all means bring them forward, but let this new era find some expression in our schools. And this bill is simply about that: to give the students of this province the peace and stability they need for their future.

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): Listening to the Minister of Education on this issue, I'm somewhat disappointed, because he knows he laid the law down to the teachers of Ontario. In fact, if you look at Ian Urquhart's article today, it's this high-handed attitude that seems to prevail today with all of their people or the stakeholders who don't agree with the government. What they're basically saying here is well capsulized by Emily Noble, president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation. I quote her here from this article from today's Toronto Star. She says, "All I know is that my members have not seen much movement by the boards in terms of negotiations."
1900

What he's done here is to sort of divide and conquer. What he's doing here is characterizing the teachers, as he said, or as they're suspecting: "Education Minister Gerard Kennedy, who has laboured to cultivate good relationships with the various teachers' unions, did not attempt to conceal his dismay last week when the work-to-rule campaigns began even though negotiations are progressing, in his view."

My wife is a teacher, and I know they work hard. They have been activated recently through various issues. I suspect that what the minister's really doing here is trying to characterize the boards on the one hand, and on the other hand he's arbitrarily assigning them the need to negotiate a two- or four-year settlement. He has not given them any certainty or any confidence in the funding that goes along with that. He knows full well—if he doesn't, he's not paying attention to their main issues. The Elementary Teachers' Federation wants to be equal in access to preparation time. Preparation time is something that has a cost to it. He knows that. He has not advanced any cost. We're waiting for the budget. But clearly, the minister is arbitrarily overruling the board's independence. That, to me, is overarching, not just in terms of this particular legislation, Bill 167, but earlier today, Mr. Speaker, in Bill 136—and you spoke on it when you were here in your normal spot. I like it when you're in the chair, because you're silenced then.

What I really noticed here is that they seem to have the right answer to every question. It's this attitude that underscores my frustrations with much of what the government purports to be doing but is not providing the money for. We see it in Bill 135, in Bill 136 and Bill 167, which is being debated here. Now, to force and to ram this through, they've time-allocated the bill. In Bill 167, it should be remembered—

Interjection.

Mr. O'Toole: The member from Northumberland should pay some attention. I'd be surprised if he has read the bill. It's two pages, so it's a long read for him.

My sense here is that this wouldn't be before the House if it wasn't for the work of our critic, Frank Klees. Frank Klees stood in this House and challenged the issue of the day some time ago—on November 29, I think—"that the government would guarantee funding for four-year collective agreements. The directive from the minister was given without the requisite legislative authority, thereby instructing them to conduct their business in a manner contrary to existing legislation...."

That's the point here, that Mr. Klees stood and said, quite honestly, under the Education Act, under the negotiations, that they're provided with the autonomy, as school boards, to negotiate their local agreements. It would appear to me that the Minister of Education is doing nothing more than legislating boards, under his wishes from the Dalton McGuinty central party here, to arbitrarily mandate that they have an agreement of two or four years. That would be fine if he provided the funding. But, as in all things, there's no funding attached to that mandate for them.

I have to bring this up now. I may get time to speak later on; I'm not sure what the time here is at the moment. During the pre-budget hearings of the finance and economics affairs committee—which you, Mr. Speaker, were a member of, and you have a dissenting report—we filed a dissenting report. We heard from the teachers' federations—a valid, viable negotiating agent

on behalf of teachers in both elementary and secondary panels—they're very concerned.

In fact, if you look at the impact in the budget, they know full well—and I'm just flipping through here—from Minister Greg Sorbara's own numbers, that for every 1% in salary increase for the schoolteachers of Ontario—there are 180,000 staff members in Ontario—it means about \$120 million a year annualized. I think that is an important, valid and worthy contribution to the Ontario standard of living. I understand that. As I said before, my wife is a teacher. When you look at what he's doing here, it's one thing to assign the two- or four-year contract, which is all politics, but he's not assigning the money. So what it means is fewer custodians.

Now we see in the clippings today from Ian Urquhart that there is concern. Ian Urquhart in the Toronto Star says today that there are disruptions in the educational system today, and it's primarily being forced on the system by a minister who said, and I'm quoting from this article, that "the teachers fell into the 'ingrained habit' of working to rule or striking under the previous Conservative government...."

"I'm disappointed in the sense that I have not been able to get more of a metamorphosis here."

That means agreeing with him. It's code language for, "Agree with me or you're on the outside."

I understand that the minister is arbitrarily imposing his wishes further on the autonomy of the independent school boards of Ontario, with no consideration for the parent councils that have issues across Ontario. I think of my riding of Durham, and I know that in my riding, I met with the teachers, the principal and the vice-principal in the Newcastle school just recently. It was reading week—it was literacy week, actually—and I did meet on one of the discussion papers. I think Ms. Wynne was carrying that issue for the government. They said they felt ostracized. They felt ignored.

Imagine how the boards are feeling now when they are arbitrarily being assigned a collective bargaining deal, and he outlines the amount of money that should be expected. He says here: year one, 2%—that would cost \$238 million; year two, another 2%, \$480 million; year three, another 2.5%, \$790 million; year four, \$1.17 billion. I am surprised that, if they want to say that school boards must settle, these are the terms. There's no recognition of the prep time moving to 200 minutes for elementary teachers. Arguably, I probably support their need to have more prep time. They handle all the subject areas, by and large—secondary schools have the 200 minutes today—and they have less preparation time in elementary. When they're handling more subject areas, arguably, they need more preparation time. The total cost of their imposed agreement is about \$2.6 billion.

We're looking forward to a budget here, and they've committed to no more money, no more tax increases. I put it to you, they've put the teachers in a box and they've put the boards in a box. They have no solution. The consistent message I get from the government is this: They have no plan and they can't manage the fiscal

resources they have. They know they're going to have a larger deficit. They have no choice but to raise taxes or to reasonably negotiate at the board level with the teachers of Ontario. I can tell you that the teachers are waiting to see the harmony they said the teachers would have during the election, yet, at the same time, they're disagreeing with them.

There's nothing in this bill that I can support. It is a disgrace, actually.

Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Let's be very clear about what we're debating this evening. It's a time allocation motion. You may recall that the Liberals promised they weren't going to do things the way the Tories did. The Liberals promised there was going to be a fundamental change in how bills proceed through this Legislature. The Liberals promised they were going to nurture democracy. The Liberals promised they were going to embrace wide-ranging debate. What do we get by way of keeping that promise? We get yet another time allocation motion from the Liberals, another betrayal of the people of Ontario, another condemnation of teachers to yet more jackboot, strong-arm tactics from Queen's Park.

1910

Make no mistake about it: This bill doesn't only cut off debate on second reading; it ensures that there will literally be no debate—none, zero, not a minute—on this bill in third reading. Furthermore, there won't even be a token committee hearing. The government today—Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals at Queen's Park are ensuring that not one teacher, not one parent, or, for that matter, not one kid, is going to be able to come to Queen's Park or any other place that committees might sit and express their views on this piece of legislation and on the right of teachers to freely collectively bargain their agreements with boards. That's really what the bill is all about.

The bill is direct interference with free collective bargaining. The bill ties the hands of both boards and teachers. The bill shuts the door on creative solutions that might be and, I assure you, have been in the past, arrived at at the bargaining table. The bill is nothing about which this government should be proud and, quite frankly, it's clearly nothing about which this government is proud. Hence their desire, their passion, to rush it through this process, to rush it through second reading and then deny it committee hearings and third reading by way of yet another time allocation motion.

I did want to mention something to you, though. You will remember that last week I talked about the folks down at Gord's Variety on Hellems Avenue in Welland. I was in there again on Saturday because I was in next door at Lee Wah picking up laundry for this week, and Gord's Variety is right next door. You will recall that I talked to you about how Hellems Avenue has been the victim of the sewer project from hell down in Welland; months and months of a street that has been impassable. More than a couple of small businesses have gone belly up. A couple of young entrepreneurs, very impressive

people, have made a major investment in this variety store. It's down at the corner of Hellems and Regent. I talked to you about them before: Marta Bilyk and her partner, John Mscichowski. They are bright and hard-working. These young people are eager to work 16 and 18 hours a day, and they do. But they are going to be forced into bankruptcy if folks in Welland and even places beyond don't drop by and pick up something, whether it's a loaf of bread, a jug of milk, a bottle of mineral water or some lottery tickets, because the incredible construction crisis on Hellems Avenue has attacked this small business with a miserable blow.

The sad thing is that if this small store shuts down, four people are going to lose their jobs. Becky is a Niagara College student. Stephanie is a student at Centennial high school who works there 15 hours a week. She's in grade 12 now, and it's helping her get ready for college or university. There's Alisha, a mom, and Pam, yet another woman. These four workers are going to lose their jobs just as sure as its owners are going to lose their investment if folks in Welland don't drop in at Gord's Variety at the corner of Hellems and Regent, right beside the old Lee Wah Laundry. Lee Wah has been there for a million years; everybody knows where Lee Wah is. I'm encouraging people to drop in there at 237 Hellems Avenue, Gord's Variety. Drop in and just pick up whatever it is that you happen to need, but make a little special trip in Welland to go down to Gord's Variety at the corner of Hellems and Regent.

I'm serious. These people need a break right now. I promised them that I would drop in as often as I could, and I have. I encouraged them to call upon city councillors in Welland to drop in because city council, at the end of the day, is supervising, monitoring this sewer project from hell. I told them, any chance I had on the floor of the assembly here, if folks happened to be watching, I'd encourage them to drop in on Gord's Variety and help these people survive this horrible scenario in their young entrepreneurial lives, and also help four workers keep their jobs, because if there's no variety store there, those workers won't have a job. That's at Gord's Variety, 237 Hellems Avenue, at the corner of Hellems and Regent, right beside Lee Wah Laundry.

A time allocation motion: who would have thought, in the midst of the puffery around democratic renewal this afternoon? Oh, man, did a load hit the floor of the chamber today. The old manure spreader was revved up, by God; all engines were running full blast. Democratic renewal, and then on the same day—the Attorney General marches in here and he stands up, all of him, and, with as much drama as any member of this chamber could ever muster, he declares a new era for democracy in Ontario, authored by Michael Bryant, Attorney General for the people. Phooey. The bill he introduced this afternoon ain't nothing to write home about.

The lack of commitment by the Liberals to any democratic renewal is illustrated by this time allocation motion right here and now. Had it been the sole occasion that the

Liberals have used time allocation, one might be a little more forgiving.

Early on, the government House leader tried to do his little alchemy bit, and he concocted a deal with the official opposition called—what was that called, the housekeeping motion, Mr. Runciman?

Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leader of the Opposition): Housekeeping motion.

Mr. Kormos: Well, housekeeping motion be darned. It was a time allocation motion on consent. I give credit to the official opposition for this: They haven't been sucked into one that again. Fool me once—what is the line? Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. The official opposition didn't get sucked into that one. You can fool them once, but they're pretty smart, that official opposition. They're sort of getting quick. They know when they've been had. They know when they've had their pocket picked. They know when they've been mugged, rolled, grabbed by the ankles, turned upside down and had every last nickel and dime shaken out of them. They got hoodwinked; they did, a little bit of quacksalvery going on with that one. Do you like that one, “quacksalvery”? I've been waiting for a good chunk of time for the appropriate moment.

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce): Is that a word?

Mr. Kormos: “Quacksalvery,” you bet your boots. That's what we witnessed here, and it wasn't a pretty sight. The Tory House leader grimaced, survived it and, I suspect, said, “You know, I'm going to learn.” Really, it's a fool who doesn't learn from his or her own errors. The then official opposition House leader, trust me, was no fool; as prone to or capable of modest errors in judgment as any in a moment of weakness. I suspect he might have been trying to curry some favour with the government. It didn't get him very far, though.

1920

Mr. Runciman: That's always a mistake.

Mr. Kormos: That's right. Payback is rare and scarce, and the payback days are few and far between.

In the province of Ontario, back in 2003, teachers and their families and their friends and their neighbours voted for change; they did. They had become pretty darned exasperated by eight years of the previous governments and their heavy-handed dealing, their bullying, their vilification of leaders within the teachers' associations and among teachers' unions. Teachers, their friends, their families and their neighbours voted for change in 2003. And just like every other Ontarian, they voted for change but got more of the same, just like we've got here tonight—a time allocation motion, a government that is abruptly cutting off debate and a government that talks a big game about democratic renewal but, I tell you, ignores the standing orders. There are a whole bunch of newly elected people here who don't know what third reading is because they haven't seen it since they've been elected.

As a matter of fact, when I witness—Mr. Runciman may well speak to this. He is one of the senior members of this chamber. He's one of the elders of Queen's Park.

He's good for another 15 or 20 years; he told me so himself. I tell you, as an elder of Queen's Park, he'll know what I say when we observe, over the course of elections past in the last decade and a half, a tendency to have sweeps and these huge majority governments. Do you know what? It's one thing to be elected in a sweep—that's not hard at all; it's another thing to be elected when the tide has turned against your party. That demonstrates some skill and commitment.

I want to say to government backbenchers here: Some of you will be back in 2007-08. Some of you will be; I have no delusions about that. Trust me. Some of you will be re-elected. Not all of you; that's a certainty, and you know it as well as I do. There are going to be casualties. When you are re-elected and sitting over here in the third party zone, turf—

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: Well, take a look at the history over the last 15 years. Let's not be naive about this. When you're back in late 2007-08—or mid-2008, or late 2008, because, quite frankly, I don't believe that the government is any more interested in keeping its October 4, 2007, promise than they are in any other promise that they've made. When Liberals are sitting over here as third party members, and when they're squealing—remember that? What was that movie? Deliverance. When they're squealing about—

Mrs. Mitchell: That's a little over the top.

Mr. Kormos: It's an old movie. When they're squealing about the government of the day not showing enough heed or concern or care for the standing orders, I might be inclined to pick up a copy of the standing orders and say, "Why didn't you read the standing orders back in 2005? Why didn't you explain to your House leader?"—

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: You've got a rather feckless point of order over there, Mr. Speaker; you'd better tend to it.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Mississauga West.

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The subjects of duelling banjos and points of order aside, interesting as they are, may we respectfully request that the member for Niagara Centre address the topic under discussion, pursuant to standing order 23?

The Acting Speaker: I have to say, I don't think that's a point of order. That's precisely what he was talking about: the standing orders and the subject of debate. Please proceed.

Mr. Kormos: Thank you, Speaker, for as wise a ruling as this chamber has ever heard, and I know we can expect more.

As I say, in late 2007, maybe mid- or late 2008, when Liberals see bills for third reading, it will be like history for them. It won't be part of their reality or their personal experience.

There's a reason for this. I know that from time to time bills get sent to committee after first reading. I think most of us understand the reason for that. But we know that in

the traditional order of things, after second reading debate—because, don't forget, there's no first reading debate—bills go to committee. Quite frankly, what this bill does is seriously interfere with the ability of teachers to negotiate their contracts with local boards, just like it interferes with local boards and their ability to negotiate contracts. Trust me, this bill will serve neither teachers nor boards well by forcing them into a mould. And when teachers and boards aren't served well, kids aren't served well.

This government talks about peace in our educational system. I tell you, with this bill and its chronic underfunding of education in this province, this government will surpass the last in its ability to generate unrest. Already we've got a board talking about work to rule. Is that the climate of peace and stability the Minister of Education says he's provoking? He's provoking all right; he's provoking work-to-rule campaigns.

Teachers will not, nor should they have to, accept the responsibility for shouldering the burden of a deficit they didn't create, certainly a deficit they didn't deceive anybody about in the course of the last election campaign. Teachers want to be treated fairly too, because so many of them have seen themselves at the end of the line for too long.

It is a sad day here at Queen's Park when Liberal backbenchers, who want to wrap themselves in the cloak of democratic renewal, don't stand up to their own little corporate bosses over there: the House leader, the deputy House leader, the deputy deputy House leader and the deputy vice-assistant House leader.

There's the House leader's staff making notes, keeping an eye on the Liberal backbenchers. There's the House leader's staff, the little rat patrol. No backbencher is going to get away with speaking up against this government, not as long as the House leader—look, I'm not being critical of them. They're doing their jobs. They're here conducting the surveillance that House leader's staff are compelled to do. So I tell you what, House leader's staff: Why don't you leave for five minutes and see if your absence will nurture some courage amongst these Liberal backbenchers, so that if only one of them stands up and condemns this bill for the bad legislation that it is and, more importantly, condemns time allocation for the jackboot style of parliamentary conduct that it is, they'll earn themselves a re-election in their own right. Step out of the room for five minutes. Give these people the luxury and the liberty of being able to conduct their business here in this chamber without the threat of coercion or retaliation from their House leader's office.

But no, the minions don't leave. They're not paid to turn a blind eye. The minions are paid to take notes. The minions are paid to keep records. The minions are paid to report back. The minions are paid to detect any little spark of independence promptly so it can be quashed, so it can be dampened with buckets of cold water. Not much when it comes to democratic renewal, is it, Speaker? Not much at all.

Time allocation from a government that only a few hours ago tried to generate some spin and hubbub. Take a look

at the evening news. I haven't seen it yet; it's on at 10 o'clock and 11 o'clock. You read the morning papers tomorrow—Mr. Bryant's effort at spin bit him on the butt like one of those nasty, mean pit bulls he's been chasing for the last three months.

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Trust me; there was no pickup, there was no take out there in the scrums for this democratic renewal—a couple of rehashed right-wing policies that have become dated in their own right. Then, at the end of the day, less than straightforward, less than candid, less than realistic but for lip service when it comes to democratic renewal and the right of individual members to stand up and be counted.

By the way, I'm not going to support this time allocation motion. I'm going to be voting against this time allocation motion. I have never been partial to time allocation motions—never. The job of people here, among so many other things, is to stand up and be on the record in telling folks where they stand. Time allocation is an opportunity for Liberal backbenchers to stand up and let their folks back home know that they, as individual members, as representatives of their communities, expect this place to be a place of debate, expect this place to be a place of consultation, expect this place to open its doors to the public so that members of the public can participate in the committee process and have their views about a particular policy or piece of legislation heard.

Unfortunately—and I'm still looking—if the search for a courageous backbencher were a Diogenic search, that lamp would be burnt of its fuel in short order, let me tell you. Just think about it, because that old Diogenic search for the courageous person would be a long time pacing back and forth. The light would start to flicker, dim and then the flame would go out entirely.

What are the public expecting of this government? The problem is they expect less and less. That's one of the problems. They've been burned over and over again. The broken promises become the norm rather than the exception. It's no longer news. It's the old dog-bites-man, man-bites-dog syndrome.

The news story, the headlines in the province of Ontario, would be: “Liberals Keep Promise—Hallelujah!!!” “Liberals Keep Promise—People of Ontario Amazed, People of Ontario Struck, People of Ontario Delighted, People of Ontario Relieved.” If only that were the headline, because it's not even news any more that the Liberals have broken another promise, is it? It's not news at all. It's become the mundane, it's become the tedious, it's become the irrelevant, and people have grown increasingly indifferent.

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: OK. One of the opposition members here raises a by-election that's going on right now, a by-election that's scheduled for March 17, St. Patrick's Day, right? That's a pretty good test of the government, I suppose.

I expect that Dalton's been out in that riding of Dufferin. I expect the Premier's been out there regularly. I suspect the Premier has been out there and that he's put

his personal stamp—is there a Liberal candidate in that by-election?

Mr. Runciman: That's the rumour.

Mr. Kormos: I don't know.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): The guy's name is Duncan, son of Dwight.

Interjection: It's Bob Duncanson.

Mr. Kormos: Dalton McGuinty is who people are going to be voting for or against.

Mr. Dunlop: It's Dwight Duncan's son who's running up there.

Mr. Kormos: I want to say to the voters in that by-election that if you want more of the same, if you want to see democracy stifled, if you want to see free speech quashed, if you want to see Parliament brought to a halt by jackboot tactics, by members of a Legislature who have no idea what a third reading is because they've never sat through one—

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: Well, think about it. Think about committee work here since October 2003.

Again, Mr. Runciman is much older than I am, or at least he has been here much longer than I have. His history here surpasses mine by darn near a decade—it does.

Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Who's in better shape, though?

Mr. Kormos: Mr. Runciman is.

I say there are members here who have never witnessed a third reading debate, who have never witnessed real committee hearings, who have never seen a committee literally, actually, in reality, bona fide, in good faith, sit down, hear from people, make notes, consider the submissions and then, by God, introduce amendments or vote for amendments that are in conformity with constructive criticism made by any number of members of the public.

I saw it on the last committee I was on. I saw it on Bill 132, the pit bull committee. There was some brilliant stuff put forward by some high-priced expertise that didn't cost the people of Ontario a dime. The best experts in the world offered their expertise to the committee around the area of controlling vicious dogs. One of the propositions was to require, by provincial statute, the spaying or neutering of all dogs that aren't show dogs or breed dogs. When I heard it, not just from one expert but from several, it made eminent good sense. Quite frankly, the minister's own staff, when they appeared, understood—

Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Kormos: You've got another pathetic point of order. You better take care of it, Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Cordiano: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member's reputation precedes him, so I want to understand what it is we are debating here this evening, which bill, because he has gone completely wayward, as he is wont to do on most evenings.

The Acting Speaker: The point is well taken. He's straying a little. I would ask you to get back toward the bill. It's motion 317.

Hon. Mr. Cordiano: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would point out that the member does this quite often. Again, where is he going with this debate?

The Acting Speaker: I have already ruled that it is a point well taken, and I've asked the member from Niagara Centre to please stay on the issue.

Mr. Kormos: Far be it for me to challenge the Chair, and I'm not going to, but for you to suggest I'm straying only a little might imply moderation in my maturing years, and I dispute that in its entirety. One should never do anything by small measures. Go big or go home. It has served me well for a significant chunk of time.

What the government members are doing tonight is being lured into voting for a time allocation motion that they promised they'd never bring—not the first one either and, I tell you, not the last one. This is a hoodwinking yet again of the people of Ontario. For government backbenchers, in the vote that will flow upon completion of the time-limited debate, in and of itself, on the time allocation motion—for one to stand up and be counted would be worthy of applause. For two to stand up and be counted would be worthy of a headline on page 3. For three or four to stand up and be counted would be good for a column in every one of the major Toronto newspapers within the next five days.

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I'd love to see some courage among Liberal backbenchers. I'd love to see some backbenchers say, "I don't care about the pay I get for my perk job." To the minion from the House leader's office, tell Dwight Duncan to take his perk job, like the old country and western song goes, because "I can't be bought."

I want a Liberal backbencher to stand up and say, "I can't be bought with a crummy position as vice-chair or vice-vice-vice-deputy House leader whip," or something. I want someone to say to the government House leader, "Take your perk positions, take your phony payola and your grease, Dwight Duncan, and put it where the sun don't shine. I'm going to stand up and I'm not going to be whipped. I'm not just a little, wimpy house dog. I'm something of substance."

It would be nice for one of these Liberal backbenchers to stand up and show that they're something other than merely paper trained—some independence, some courage of their convictions, some real enthusiasm for democracy. It would be a delight.

We're going to be blessed with some comments, in short order, by the leader of the New Democratic Party, Howard Hampton. I'm going to cede the floor to him, because he was eager and enthusiastic to speak to this time allocation motion. I look forward to the vote, because I know where I am on muzzling democracy: I'm against it; have been, will be. I'm voting against this time allocation motion. Fair-minded members of this Legislature will join me.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex): Good to see you in the chair, Mr. Speaker, as always. You're really getting into the role now; I can just tell.

I find it somewhat strange to follow the member from Niagara Centre. He talks about people with conviction. He talks about a person like me, who is a member of the backbench of the governing party, saying, "You must have conviction. You must vote against this motion."

I remember that the former member from Perth, Karen Haslam, who was a minister of the crown in the NDP government, quit her position as a cabinet minister when it introduced the social contract, gave up the money, gave up the limousine, because she believed in her convictions. Others in the NDP rump did not. For them to come into this House and preach to us that somehow they are holier than thou and that they have always held themselves to the highest standards—none of them now is proud of the social contract. I've been to meetings where they've said, "Well, that was a mistake. We shouldn't have done that." Karen Haslam had the strength of her convictions, but others did not. So I find it odd to be lectured to.

I just wanted to talk about my friends in the "progressive chameleon party." I'm reading here—I want to talk about this; it has to do with education and with the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I know the member from Durham, who is also on the committee with me, was there. He tells us that the "progressive chameleon party" issued a dissenting report. I just want to quote their report: "For example, as recently as the 2004 fall economic statement, the Liberal government acknowledged that there exist significant wage pressures in Ontario that must be resolved in the coming months."

Here is where we get to the good part—

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): Who said that?

Mr. Wilkinson: This is just the dissenting report.

Did you know that, "The official opposition condemns the Liberal government's attitude toward our valued public sector employees"? What was that? They thought they were "valued public sector employees"? Did I miss something in the last 18 months?

"We recognize that government must continue to find ways of offering services that the people of Ontario depend on and deliver these services in an efficient and effective manner." Oh, that's interesting. I think that could be interesting.

"This job cannot be accomplished without the partnership of the professionals and experts who work for the government's public service partners. Whether they be doctors, nurses, teachers or one of the thousands of dedicated individuals working in the Ontario public service, these are the individuals who ensure that the delivery of government service is effective, efficient and in the best interest of the average Ontarian."

Who said that? Who wrote that? The "progressive chameleon party," who spent eight years running down the public service in this province, treating them like the enemy. That's who writes the report now. My God, John Tory is fostering a revolution throughout the right wing

of this province. He goes on. I see a bit of a theme here, a theme of amnesia from the new leader, who has obviously influenced this:

"It is the responsibility of elected officials to work hand in hand with the public service and make them willing partners in the government's efforts to deliver core services to Ontarians who need them the most. The Premier himself has recognized this as a matter of great concern." He said, "To protect and improve public services, to protect existing jobs and add more jobs, we are asking our public sector partners to be reasonable and responsible at the bargaining table. We've got to do more than just increase wages. We've got to be able to find a way to hire more nurses, more doctors, more teachers, and create more training opportunity for skilled trades people." My God, they're actually quoting my Premier now in their dissenting report. I find that quite odd.

Friends in Ontario, this gets even better. "As the government moves forward, it must ensure that any investments made into programs such as health care, education and social services, are targeted directly at the delivery of these services, and not to overinflated salaries and governance. This does not mean that our public service partners must not go without reasonable increases to their wages and benefits, but our province cannot afford increases that are not kept in line with the rate at which our financial base is growing."

Well, well, well, haven't we seen the light. Who exactly came up with the 22% cut? Who decided to cut ODSP? Who decided to cut Ontario Works in this province? It wasn't our party; we're increasing it. Now the Progressive Conservative Party—

Interjections.

Mr. Wilkinson: Yes, yes, just help them out there. I'm sure there's a Liberal to help you out. That's been raised with you guys. Frozen solid for eight years. That was after the previous NDP government, who of course had a big heart and decided that the people on ODSP needed to have a break.

I find it passing strange that we have to come into this House and be lectured by a party that caused the problems that we are trying to fix. We had dissension in our schools. Our children were in war zones. The government of the day decided to get elected by going after people: by going after teachers and saying that the teachers were the problem, that the unions were the problem, that somehow there were only some people in Ontario who counted, and the other people were the enemies of the state. What they bred was dissension. I distinctly remember that former education minister with very little education who decided that they were going to, in his own words, "create a crisis." Our children were in those schools where they were creating that crisis. We're the ones who have inherited the problem.

I am proud of the Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy. I am proud of him because of the work that he is doing. He has worked and is working so hard with all of those in the education sector to try to bring about peace and stability. Now, I know some people in the

other two parties would be eager for us to fail. Nothing would make them happier than if we were to fall right on our face and if the children in our province were to be subjected to more lost days, as happened in the previous governments. But we're not going to fail, because Mr. Kennedy has a vision. The Minister of Education has a vision for this province about education. He talks, and he walks the talk, about respect.

You talk to the leadership in the public school board and the Catholic school board, you talk to parent groups, you talk to teachers, and they know that the channel has changed. They know that the minister respects their opinion. We may not always agree. That is the nature of democracy. But to say that the Minister of Education has changed the dynamic from one of dissension, rancour and strikes to one where we're offering our time and our best efforts to work together and to put those precious resources into the education system: I think that goes without question.

I don't think there's anything wrong with peace and stability in the school boards. I'm a parent. I have three school-aged children. I think peace and stability is actually quite nice. Last time I checked, it was conducive to good education.

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I just find it really very difficult to stand here, as someone who was elected, and see other parties change their stripes, to watch the NDP go on and on about how somehow we are, I think the term was "jackbooting" our way through democracy, and this from the party who imposed the social contract. Last time I checked, I don't think that just went through in a cakewalk around here. I thought that was quite contentious, and I thought the government had to whip all of its members. But there were some brave souls, like Karen Haslam, the former member from Perth, the former NDP cabinet minister. She had the strength of her convictions, because she felt it was wrong. I disagreed with her, but I respect her for what she did. She had the strength of her convictions. The good people of Perth decided not to re-elect her, and other members in this House have been re-elected. And I give them credit for whatever their political skill is, to be able to change their stripes in the middle of a debate and try to find their way back into this House.

To be lectured by that party, particularly to read, with such interest, the current position—you know, I was on the committee with Mr. O'Toole. I say to the member for Durham, I remember your comments; I remember the comments of Mr. Flaherty. Somehow, I don't see your style and your comments in committee really being reflected in this dissenting report. I see Mr. Tory's fingerprints all over this. It sounds to me that maybe you must have some boys in the centre. Maybe their whiz kids have come back and decided, "Oh, let's just go back to saying whatever we need to say to get re-elected. Let's just oppose whatever the Liberals have to do."

I rise today because I think it's time to get on with this debate. I think it's time that we have peace and stability. I'm for the Minister of Education, I'm backing our party,

and I'm proud to do it. I urge all members to turn the page from the past, and let's move ahead.

Mr. O'Toole: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm disappointed by the member from Perth–Middlesex, who failed to mention Bert Johnson, who stood always for democracy—

The Acting Speaker: I'm sorry. This is not a point of order.

Further debate? The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Runciman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my congratulations to you in your new role as a Speaker of the House. I know that you will do an excellent job, based on your past performance.

I am not rising with a lot of enthusiasm to participate; I am going to take a few moments. Certainly listening to the member from Perth–Middlesex and knowing the tone of the debate from government members—

Mr. O'Toole: It's discouraging.

Mr. Runciman: It is, as my colleague says, discouraging, because if you've been around here for a while, we've all heard it before. It's not something that gets us all enthused.

I understand where government backbenchers are coming from with respect to this kind of time allocation initiative and their support for whatever government initiative might come to the floor of this place, without reservation. We've been here about a year and a half. I think we know that those who aren't members of the executive council aspire to be members of the executive council. We suspect that mid-term there will be a cabinet shuffle of some sort this summer: Some people will leave cabinet; a number of new people will move into cabinet roles. Then those who have either been moved out or have not had the call from the Premier's office will finally realize that they are where they are, and that is not going to change unless there is some sort of a significant crisis where a minister or two have to be moved out of their roles. Perhaps that will encourage a bit more openness and frankness and willingness to take issue with some of the initiatives of this government and some of the breaking of significant promises that we have seen occur in their first year and a half in office.

The member from Niagara Centre was speaking earlier about seeing members of various governments of all political stripes failing to speak up and failing to take a position because they hoped they had career opportunities, or they felt that it was the right thing to do. Even if it was something they strongly disagreed with, that their constituents strongly disagreed with, they stood in their place when they were asked to vote in support of whatever measure might come before the House.

I want to point out that the member from Niagara Centre is one of those folks who will have been here for 20 years by the time the next election rolls around, and whether you agree or disagree—and I frequently disagree—he has had the courage of his convictions. The social contract—we've heard that tossed around the assembly on a number of occasions this evening during his comments, but he stood in his place and voted against the

social contract. In a week or so, I will have been here 24 years, and I can go back to my first term and being in a committee with one Stuart Smith, who used to occupy this seat, and some of you will remember Stuart Smith, a fine man. He came into committee as the Leader of the Opposition when the government of the day had decided that it was a good idea to buy a significant interest in an oil company, Suncor.

As a small-c conservative, I was sitting in that committee, and after Smith had made his contribution and expressed his concerns and called for a review of the documents that substantiated this significant decision by the government, I put my hand up and said: "I think the Leader of the Opposition is making good sense and that all of us as members of the assembly should know what the criteria were for making this kind of significant decision for the people of Ontario to be spending over a quarter million dollars to buy an interest in an oil company. We have the right to know." I said that as a government backbencher. And the member indicated it caused quite an uproar—there's no question about it—with respect to the media. They don't see it happen too often. But I stood by my convictions, and I like to think that I've been able to do that throughout most of my career, and I'm still here.

The member mentioned Ms. Haslam, who did stand by her convictions, and unfortunately, she didn't survive. I think if more of us did that on a regular basis, there would be more respect for all of us in this place, more respect for this assembly, if we had more of that freedom to actually stand up for what we believe in, what our constituents want us to stand up for, what we believe is right. Regrettably, I don't see that on the early horizon.

I have hopes with our new leader, John Tory. I believe he is quite sincere in terms of wanting to see a new sense of civility around this place in terms of the way House business is conducted, and a greater degree of freedom, not just for government members, but for all members of this assembly, in terms of how they vote on issues, how they vote in committee, how they conduct themselves around this place, and the role we have to play as members of this assembly, and not participate in debates which for the most part—as with what we're doing here this evening—we sitting on this side of the House know are not going to have any impact in terms of the end result.

The government has made a decision to cut off debate. What they're doing here—for those folks who are watching and don't quite understand time allocation—is bringing in a bill to limit debate on a piece of legislation which will allow them to bring in four-year contracts for teachers across the province of Ontario. They want to limit debate; they want to get on with this business.

Mr. O'Toole: Shut down democracy.

Mr. Runciman: My colleague says "shut down democracy," and I think that perspective could stand up to scrutiny: no committee hearings, very little opportunity for the public—let alone the people who are going to be directly impacted by this legislation—to have any

real impact on the decision-making process. That is truly regrettable. I certainly can't say that it has been the sole purview of this government. Our government used time allocation in a significant way; there's no question about it. There were other reasons for that, but I don't want to get into that this evening. The reality of what we are talking about here tonight is a promise made by the Liberal Party of Ontario when they were running for election, one of 231 promises, many of which have been broken, discarded, amended or played around with. And this is another one with respect to democratic reform. We heard fine words from the Liberal Party when running for office, but once in office—and I saw a comment from I think Ian Urquhart, in the *Toronto Star*, in a column about the independence of members in this place, saying there's less independence. Certainly his paper was very critical of the former Conservative government in terms of the ability of members to have a role in deliberations, but this Liberal government is even more restrictive. He could not recall and I cannot recall one single member of the Liberal Party standing up to vote against a government initiative since they've been in office, a year and a half. Certainly in our case, we did have members of an independent stripe or streak—

Mr. Kormos: You've still got them.

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Mr. Runciman: And we still have them and will continue to have them. We've encouraged them. That hasn't happened in the Liberal Party of Ontario, despite their promises to the people of Ontario.

We saw an example of the kind of shabby approach to this, which I don't believe the people of Ontario will buy: the Attorney General standing here today, talking about bringing in legislation with respect to real-time delivery of the names of donors to political parties—this, after significant pressure from the opposition parties and from the media and, I suspect, from the public with respect to a \$10,000 secret soirée that was held at the residence of the Minister of Finance's brother that may have had an impact on the drawing of the boundaries of the greenbelt. We don't know that for sure because the Premier and his friends will not release the names of those individuals. But certainly one of the men who attended that event and paid \$10,000 indicated in a letter today that indeed there was some favouritism shown. He may have benefited to the tune of at least \$15 million.

What's the impact in terms of the public of Ontario? We've all talked about cynicism. Premier McGuinty, when he was Leader of the Opposition, talked about getting people re-engaged and involved in the political process, caring about what happens in the Ontario Legislature. We've seen what's happened since. The number we have is about 40 broken promises out of 231. An SES poll done a month ago for Sun Media indicated that when people were asked what their first reaction was to Premier McGuinty, 41%, unprompted, reacted with one word that starts with "L"; it's unparliamentary, so I can't use it. I think that is a pretty clear indication of what's happening.

I only have a minute to go, but I want to talk very quickly about the farming community in this province, rural Ontario and what's happening. When they look at what's happening here—the Premier getting \$48 haircuts, living in a taxpayer-subsidized mansion in Rosedale, taking a limo to go one block, taking a plane at \$700 an hour to go to Peterborough, having \$400 million to pour into a Liberal riding in Windsor to build a casino hotel, while our farmers, our rural community, are significantly suffering—what's the priority of this government?

And you force-feed through this Legislature a time allocation motion, which takes away the freedom of the teachers across this province to negotiate collective agreements. It's another shameful indication of the lack of sincerity on the part of the government, on the part of the Liberal Party of Ontario, with respect to the very important promises they made to the people of this province 18 or 19 months ago. It's truly regrettable.

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): I'm pleased to be able to take part in this debate. I want people at home to know why we're here tonight, what's going on. In fact, this is a time allocation motion, otherwise known as shutting down debate, where the government uses its majority to limit the amount of time that can be spent debating a particular bill. There's some irony here because, before the last election, members of the McGuinty government said over and over again that they believed in open and transparent democracy and that time allocation would not be used, that time allocation would never be used. Yet here we are. And this is not the first time the McGuinty government has used time allocation, but this is part of the long list of times when the McGuinty government has used time allocation to shut down debate. You could say I take delight in pointing out this irony, that 19 months ago it was all about open and transparent democracy and not using time allocation, and now the government can't wait to use time allocation.

Why is the government using time allocation on this bill, though? What is in this bill that's got the government a bit embarrassed? I think people at home deserve to know that. You see, the Conservative government, wanting to avoid the collective bargaining process or collective bargaining altercations with teachers potentially in an election year, passed legislation which they called the Stability and Excellence in Education Act in 2001 that said that all teachers' collective agreements had to extend until August 31, 2004. In other words, the agreements had to be for three years. The government of the day decided that they would, for the time being, simply step outside the boundaries of free collective bargaining and set an artificial date. They wanted the collective agreements to expire after the next election, or at least outside the boundaries of the next election.

What I found interesting were the comments that many members who are now members of the McGuinty government had to make about the Conservatives when the Conservatives brought forward this legislation. For example, there was the member for Parkdale–High Park, Mr. Gerard Kennedy, who is now the Minister of

Education. This is what he said during debate in 2001: "Today, they'll say, 'We demand there be a three-year contract. We demand that that happen so there are no untoward activities around the time of the next election.'"

Then he goes on to say, "You think you're going to fix problems in education, many of them of your own making, by ordering people around. You're going to boss them, you're going to make them do things and, in this case, you're going to get three-year contracts just because you say so."

The member for Parkdale–High Park, to say the least, was quite critical of the Conservative project to extend collective agreements for three years. He was very critical. In fact, he referred to that legislation with scorn, with disdain. He couldn't be more critical of it.

So what do we have in this piece of legislation, Bill 167, the Education Amendment Act, put forward by the McGuinty government? What do we have? We have the McGuinty government doing exactly what the Conservative government did. We have the McGuinty government doing exactly what the now Minister of Education, then McGuinty education critic, used to scorn and disdain.

Somewhere, someone said, "Choose change." I think that was during an election campaign. Someone said, "Choose change." But what I see here is the McGuinty government duplicating exactly what they were scornful and disdainful of when the Conservatives were doing it. The McGuinty government is doing it, the same thing, except when I read this legislation, it looks to be more draconian, more directive, shall we say, more manifestly almost—I won't use the word "totalitarian." But it interferes with collective bargaining even more than the Conservative bill. It interferes with collective bargaining even more than the bill which members of the McGuinty government used to scorn when they were in opposition, because this bill says that all new contracts must be either two years or four years in length. This means that all contracts will either expire August 31, 2006, or August 31, 2008. Then it goes on to say that any negotiated contract that does not expire on one of those two dates will be deemed to do so. Anything under two years becomes a two-year agreement expiring in 2006; anything over two years becomes a four-year agreement expiring in 2008. This is even more directive than the Conservative legislation of 2001.

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What was very interesting were some of the apurtenances that went along with this legislation and the announcement of it by the Minister of Education. Because before he even introduced the legislation in the House, he wrote a letter to the boards directing the boards that the collective agreements would have to be either two years or four years and also saying—this is the letter of November 29, Mr. Kennedy's letter to the boards laying out exact terms for all school boards in upcoming labour negotiations and ordering the negotiation to be either two- or four-year contracts. The letter informs boards that they will not receive funding for any teacher salary increase above 2% a year for the next two years. If

boards sign four-year contracts, they can offer a 3% raise in the final year. When would the final year be? Let me think. Oh, the final year would be after the next election campaign. Now that is interesting. So the letter informs the boards they will not receive funding for any teacher salary increase above 2% a year for the next two years. If the board signs four-year contracts, they can offer a 3% raise in the final year, after the next election.

It's worth noting that while the government says this to elementary and secondary teachers, the government not long ago signed a collective agreement with college teachers for a 3.65% increase. Something seems terribly lopsided here.

What is very interesting, though, is that the Minister of Education's letter warns the boards that if they increase salaries beyond those guidelines, they will be forced to file a public report—a public flogging—detailing where they got every penny. They will also be penalized by not receiving funds designated for teacher development.

The letter offers no relief for boards struggling with inadequate salary benchmarks in the funding formula. Later on, after this letter was sent out, the minister said he was going to put up an additional \$10 million to deal with some cost issues, but that is a fraction of what experts say is needed.

I just want to point out that in its impact, this legislation and the letter that went along with it are going to be very discriminatory to some teachers. I met with some representatives of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association just a few weeks ago. What they pointed out to me is that, overwhelmingly, the teachers who are going to be harmed the most, hurt the most and affected in a very discriminatory way are going to be teachers of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association. They are asking: "Can we just bargain? Can we bargain because our boards want to make some arrangements with us to make up for our disadvantaged position? We would like to bargain this." But under a government that said they would never impose time allocation and under a government that said they would not impose collective agreements, they are doing exactly that, and it's got a very discriminatory effect.

I just want to spend the final eight minutes of my time talking about the other embarrassment the government is trying to hide here, the other embarrassment that is at the root of this. You see, before the election, Mr. McGuinty and his education minister, Mr. Kennedy, were heard to say across all of the province that a McGuinty government would fully, properly and adequately fund education, and numbers in excess of a \$1-billion increase to the funding formula were trotted out. That hasn't happened.

In fact, Mr. Kennedy used to speak of the Rozanski report. The Rozanski report was commissioned by the former Conservative government to look at funding of elementary and secondary schools to determine if there was an adequacy of funding with elementary and secondary schools, and that was an exhaustive report. It looked at school busing and school maintenance. It looked at teachers' salaries and school staffing. It looked

at special education, rural schools and urban schools. It looked at English as a second language. It was a very detailed, exhaustive report setting out exactly where education was being underfunded.

Economist Hugh Mackenzie has done an update of the Rozanski benchmark, because you have to factor in inflation and you have to decide where it's at two years later. Looking now at the current McGuinty government and using the Rozanski benchmarks, he concluded that areas are still seriously underfunded. For example, he concludes that foundation teachers' salaries are underfunded to the tune of \$396 million, that foundation non-teachers' salaries are underfunded to the tune of over \$100 million, that foundation benefits are underfunded to the tune of \$196 million; salaries and benefits underfunding totals \$693 million.

Now just to do some quick math, let's round off the \$396 million to \$400 million, \$500 million, \$600 million. There's over \$1.2 billion of underfunding under the McGuinty Liberal government two years into their mandate. They haven't done anything about Rozanski. The underfunding that was there under the Conservatives still exists under the McGuinty government. Despite all those platitudes about adding over a billion dollars in funding to the system, about properly and adequately funding elementary and secondary schools, the underfunding still exists.

I think that's why we're dealing with time allocation tonight, because the more this debate continues, the more the public gets tuned in, the angrier some members of the public become, and it becomes apparent that the government that advertised itself as the education government and the Premier who advertised himself as the education Premier have no clothes. The emperor has no clothes. That's what's really going on here.

Just one example: I remember when Mr. Kennedy was opposition education critic for Mr. McGuinty. He and Mr. McGuinty used to travel the province visiting schools slated to be closed and promising that those schools, many of them in rural areas, would not be closed, promising those rural communities that their school would not be closed, and this is a critical issue. When you have a community of 1,000 people, 500 people and you close their school, you're literally taking the heart out of the community.

I've had some interesting conversations with real estate agents who tell me that trying to sell a home in a community where there is no school is probably one of the hardest things that you can do. People do not want to locate in a community that does not have a community school.

2020

Mr. Kennedy and Mr. McGuinty travelled from one end of the province to the other end of the province saying that under a McGuinty government those rural schools would not be closed. Well, what's happening? Despite the McGuinty promise to save small schools, they keep closing. They're closing everywhere. Some boards are closing faster than the public can keep count.

For example, the Lakehead District School Board in Thunder Bay, absent the money to fund small rural schools, absent the money for foundation teacher salaries, for foundation non-teacher salaries, for foundation benefits, for salaries and benefits overall, absent the money for maintenance, absent the money for school operation, has announced that it will close 14 schools over the next two years, many of them small rural schools, where, when you close them, you tear the heart out of the community. You essentially are saying to the community, "That's it. Your days are over." Many of these children are going to spend not 15 minutes on a bus, not half an hour on a bus, not 45 minutes on a bus, but an hour on a bus, in some cases, an hour on a bus on country roads with no lighting, in wintertime, when it's 30 and 40 below and when it gets dark at night at 4 o'clock. This is apparently now progressive policy by the McGuinty government. But I think people in Thunder Bay will remember when Dalton McGuinty and Mr. Kennedy came to them over and over again and said, "If a McGuinty government is elected, these schools won't close." Now what is happening?

Further to that, the McGuinty government said that they were going to reinvest in school transportation, that they were going to ensure that busing and school transportation was adequately funded. But then when we saw their allocation of transportation funds, it's not equitable at all and it's not fair at all. In fact, what's happening is that more than 30 boards of education will lose funds for busing and transportation in the year 2005-06. In the Durham District School Board's case, 600 to 1,000 families will have at least one child being cut from bus service.

Finally, there's one other thing that I think this government wants to avoid, one other piece of embarrassment. When they were in opposition, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. McGuinty used to accuse the former government of trying to micromanage the schools, of trying to run all the schools from an office tower at Queen's Park, of trying to run schools in northwestern Ontario, northeastern Ontario, rural Ontario, Windsor and downtown Toronto all from central direction. Well, what do we see in this bill and what do we see in the letter from the Minister of Education? Micromanaging worse than the Conservatives. That's why we're here tonight and that's why this is being time-allocated: because the McGuinty government is being embarrassed by their broken promises once again.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington): Thank you, Speaker, and welcome to the Chair.

What are we here to debate tonight? We're debating a motion on time allocation of Bill 167, An Act to amend the Education Act. First of all, I'd like to deal with the time allocation. We've heard a lot of holier-than-thou statements about how awful it is that we're doing time allocation. I'd like to tell you what the then NDP Minister of Natural Resources, now leader of the third party, had to say during an NDP debate when they brought in time allocation: "I would like to speak in support of the

government's motion that asks this House to set time allocation for third reading of Bill 171." Then of course we have the Conservatives, who had time allocation so often that everybody lost count; we don't even need to check the record there, it was so appalling. So much for the holier-than-thou act.

Bill 167: What does it really do? It's a very simple bill and what it requires is that collective agreements in the school board sector with teachers be for either two years or four years. The accusation is that this is so we can somehow micromanage the system and avoid labour unrest during the next election campaign.

Now, let me tell you something. I've done a lot of school board collective bargaining, and if you choose to have a two-year collective agreement it will expire at the end of August 2006. Any union negotiator worth their salt can take a collective agreement that expires in August 2006 and arrange to have a work-to-rule or a strike in June 2007 or September 2007. If you doubt my words, the current collective agreements all expired in August 2004 and now, in spring 2005, things are starting to heat up. So you can disabuse yourself of the notion that this is all about avoiding labour unrest during the next election.

What's it really about? Let's talk about school board collective bargaining, which is something I did for a very long time. Back when school boards used to have taxation power and boards and teachers were really doing free, unfettered bargaining, the natural pattern of things was that school boards and teachers reached multi-year collective agreements—multi-year. Why did they do that? For two reasons, basically. First, it provided stability in the system. You got a multi-year agreement, and then you could go away and you weren't going to have to go through this again. Collective bargaining is stressful, and people don't like stress. In particular, they don't like stress in schools, where we have a lot of little kiddies. So multi-year agreements provide stability. Secondly, they allow the parties, both the boards and the teachers, to focus on positive things like making sure that little kids learn. That's why boards and teachers, left to their own devices, did multi-year agreements.

What happened? The Conservatives came in and took over the funding system, so there was no longer free funding but one-year funding of the system. What happened was that we ended up with one-year collective agreements, and that led to instability in the system and a lack of focus on things we wanted to focus on—i.e., educating little kids—and instead, a focus on the incessant education wars. Having lived through that, I can tell you it was not pleasant and is one of the major reasons I am standing where I am standing here today.

Even the Tories figured out that this really wasn't working, so they brought in an act that said you have to have three-year collective agreements. Their wording was inept and it didn't really work, because people like me, who were bargaining, found out ways to get around it and keep on doing one-year agreements. And why did boards and teachers keep doing one-year collective

agreements even though the legislation nominally said, "You have to do three"? Ignore Mr. Runciman's remarks about, "We don't want to restrict their freedom to choose how they bargain." The Tories tried; they just didn't get it right.

The reason it didn't work and that people looked for escape clauses was three-fold. First of all was the fact that there was chronic underfunding of the education system. We identified a \$1-billion gap in funding, which was eventually confirmed by Dr. Rozanski, and in the face of chronic underfunding, boards were unwilling to strike multi-year collective agreements.

Secondly, and specifically, there was the problem of something called the salary benchmarks. The funding for salaries in the funding model totally underestimated the true cost of salaries. That meant that in this new regime, where the province funds the collective agreement but somebody else negotiates it, the money that was set to fund salaries was woefully underestimated.

Finally, there was a lack of a long-term funding commitment. If you want people to negotiate multi-year agreements, you have to tell them what funding they're going to get for multi-years, and the Tories refused to do that.

2030

It might come as a surprise to Mr. Klees, who keeps on making motions about how it's a terrible thing that the minister would suggest multi-year funding, but in fact the Conservatives tried to do something slightly similar. There was a certain Minister of Labour who at one point sat in the chair in which you are now sitting, Mr. Speaker, who one day convened some phone calls. First of all, he called up all the management-side people on a conference call—that would include me—and said, "I'm going to tell you what it is you're going to negotiate for the next three years." He laid out a percentage for the first year, a percentage for the second year and a percentage for the third year.

Do you know what we asked him? We said, "Well, are you going to guarantee that you will provide the funding and the salary benchmarks to support that?" And do you know what he said? "No, but that's what we want you to bargain." Who is going to bargain long-term collective agreements absent the funding?

So what's different about what we are proposing? First of all, we are giving boards some flexibility. Yes, we want them to have long-term agreements, because that provides stability, but we are giving them some choice between two years and four years. But more importantly, we are addressing the long-term, chronic underfunding. In fact, contrary to what you have been told, 80% of Dr. Rozanski's recommendations have been addressed this year, and by the end of next year we are on track to have 100% of those recommendations addressed. We are addressing the chronic underfunding.

Secondly and specifically, money has been put aside to address the salary benchmark problem. We are adjusting the salary benchmarks so that they reflect the real

salaries boards are providing and not some mythical salary that the Tories pulled out of the air.

Thirdly, we are committing to long-term funding. That's what this letter from the minister is about. It tells the boards what it is that we're committing to in terms of long-term funding. The minister has said that the salary benchmarks will be increased by 2% in 2004-05—already done—2% in 2005-06, 2.5% in 2006-07 and 3% in 2007-08. The minister is not bargaining. The only thing the minister can do is commit to the funding level.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Member from Durham, if you are going to heckle, you should at least be in your seat.

Mrs. Sandals: He's changing seats.

Let me reiterate that the only thing the minister can do is commit to the level of funding. It is then up to the boards and the teachers to negotiate the salary levels within the way the law is structured. Minister, we need to get on with this; the parties are negotiating, and they need to know what the law says. I support this allocation.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): I'm pleased to join the debate tonight on the time allocation motion on Bill 167. We've heard, time and time again, from the previous opposition parties and their candidates in the past election, how they decried the use of time allocation, how wrong it was. I heard how the leader of the third party quoted the now Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy, on what he had to say about the use of time allocation and how he found it disgraceful and distasteful and wrong in this House. Yet, on his bill here now, that's exactly what we get: a time allocation motion.

We get this sanctimonious drivel from the Liberals about how we've got to move on with this because it's the right thing to do. They want to talk about how the previous party, the Conservative Party, used time allocation, or how the NDP used time allocation. In the first 18 months of this government, they have used time allocation many more times than the previous government did in their first 18 months, and you can check the record on that. So they're off to quite a start for a party that said, "We oppose this. It's wrong." They campaigned on it, and here they are, bringing in time allocation motions at a rate never before seen in this House.

You know, it used to be first reading, second reading debate, vote on second reading, off to committee, time for some sober second thought, time for some people who really have some interest and some stakeholders to have an opportunity to make comment and to have involvement in maybe making some sensible amendments to a bill. Then you come back for third reading debate and the bill passes in its amended form. The new Liberal way is first reading, second reading, time allocation; good night, nurse. And we roll that all up together and package it in a beautiful democratic renewal blanket—you know, a little baby blanket. Democratic renewal: Here's the baby, delivered by Michael Bryant: democratic renewal. This is what we get: time allocation.

Well, I'll tell you, I can stand here in this House and say that I have never supported or voted for a time allocation motion, and I don't believe that any member of the government side can say that—

Interjections.

Mr. Yakabuski: Never, not once. If I could have some more of that water, Jason, that you're passing out. Thank you very much.

Earlier on, the member from Niagara Centre spoke very eloquently about his sadness with the way that this government is behaving, and I tend to agree with him. He predicted that the numbers would shift very dramatically October 4, 2007, or some day after that, depending on whether the Premier has his courage that day. I do suspect that will be one promise that the Premier will keep, because when he does go to campaign, he wants to be able to go to the people and say, "Look, we kept the promise." They'll say, "What promise was that, Mr. McGuinty?" "Well, we promised we'd have the election on October 4, and here it is." "Oh, yes, you did keep a promise. Boy, and we thought you couldn't keep any promises." Well, they'll have broken every other one, and at a rate that would make your head spin. They just don't believe in keeping promises, but I think they're going to keep that one.

Before I get too far off the track, I want to talk about something in my riding. They talked about school closures and how they want to get stable funding to keep schools open. Well, there was a meeting that was supposed to go on tonight in my riding to discuss the potential closure of seven schools. The meeting didn't go because of a terrible snowstorm up in my riding, but it is rescheduled. These will be the first closures in the public board in Renfrew county since 1993. So that's what this government's great support for rural schools is all about: "Sure, we support you. We're going to close you. That's how we support you." That's the kind of funding model that they've got in place for rural schools in my riding.

I want to talk about the Barry's Bay Bantam Grizzlies hockey team. They were in a tournament yesterday, and it was interesting, because they defeated a team from Nepean, my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, John Baird's riding. Then they went on to defeat a team from Carleton Place, in my colleague Norm Sterling's riding. Then, in the finals, they defeated a team from South Grenville, in my colleaguein my colleague Bob Runciman's riding. So it was quite a day. I was wondering why maybe some of my colleagues weren't their normal, jovial selves with me today; I guess they may have gotten that news.

2040

I want to congratulate the team, because they entered six tournaments this year—it's a bantam house league team—and in every tournament, they went to the A championship, and they won three of them. I want to congratulate the members of the team: Adam Blaskie; Travis Brodofski; Willy Budarick; Brandon Dombroskie, the goaltender; Sean Kaufeldt; Josh O'Connor; Stephen Pecoskie; Nicholas Pecoskie; Sebastien Recoskie; and my son, Lucas Yakabuski. They also had—

Interjection: Are they all related to you? They all end with “s-k-i.”

Mr. Yakabuski: No, Josh O’Connor—no “s-k-i” there.

They also have three affiliates that they use from time to time: Nick Jessup, Nolan Dombroskie and Francis Pecoskie.

I want to give a whole lot of credit to Eugene Bloskie, the head coach; Brian Pecoskie, the assistant coach and trainer; and Nick Dombroskie, the trainer. I’ll tell you, they’ve got these boys percolating this year like never before. I want to give them a great deal of credit for doing such a great job on Base Petawawa yesterday, winning that tournament in such a dramatic fashion. And they were overmanned in every game: Nine skaters is what they’ve got, nine skaters playing against the Nepean team, for example, that had 17 skaters. But the boys played well, and it was tremendous. I was able to see the final game yesterday at about 4 o’clock, and it was great stuff.

Mr. Dunlop: You’ve got about a minute left.

Mr. Yakabuski: A minute?

I do want to get back to the time allocation motion. As I’ve said, I have never stood and supported a time allocation motion. I’m on the same page as the member for Niagara Centre here. I won’t be supporting this one either. I did hear him say that he was going to vote against it, and I’m going to be in the same corner with him on that one.

I will not be supporting that motion, because I think it is quite sad—quite sad—that this party ran on a platform that has been totally washed away like the tide, just washed away. Everything that was a Liberal promise: “Just forget about it, folks. You know we didn’t mean that. We had to get elected. We could never get elected telling you what we really believe and what we were really planning to do. So we had to sell you a bill of goods, get ourselves elected, and now we’re hoping against hope that somehow in four years you’re going to forget all about what we did and didn’t do.” As the member for Niagara Centre said, they’re not going to be forgetting about it.

I want to talk about the farmers, too, a little bit.

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): No, it’s time.

Mr. Yakabuski: OK. They’re going to be visiting here again on Wednesday, and they’ve got a lot of concerns. This government is not doing enough for farmers and is doing nothing for rural Ontario. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’ve been told that my time is up.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham): Thank you, Speaker. Congratulations on your appointment to the Chair.

I’m happy to join in the debate tonight. I want to start by commending the Minister of Education for bringing back peace and stability to our schools after years of war and casualties. Yes, very heavy casualties, and guess who suffered? Of course, it’s the students and the parents.

I think it really goes without saying that it’s absolutely essential to have the type of stability that Bill 167 aims to

achieve in order for our students to be able to learn well and to achieve the results that we want them to achieve. It is really a fact that this approach means that schools and boards can better plan for costs, because it’s only when you have a longer term in terms of planning that you can start to focus on these projects and these initiatives that would take at least three or four years to implement.

I want to talk about something extremely important, and that is genuine partnership. It’s important to have very genuine partnership within our educational community, because I know that this is happening in the last year and a half. I’ve been to a number of schools in my riding. I’ve been to the 50th anniversary of the Markham District High School, as well as to a number of events with respect to Asian Heritage Month in May of last year and the Chinese New Year just a couple of months ago.

I went to Parkland Public School in Markham, and this is a special school that’s very dear to my heart because that’s the school that my daughter Daphne went to. Daphne is now in grade 11. I went to Parkland Public School a couple of months ago for the very first time that they organized a celebration for Chinese New Year. They did an excellent job and the teachers were very enthusiastic about the event. But it’s really mind-boggling that this school has been around for many years.

Of course, when they were fighting with the former government, they just did not have the heart to do anything of that sort. And that is my point. It really is showing in a big way that teachers now feel a lot better and that is why they can contribute better. They are in an extremely enthusiastic and upbeat mood to organize these extracurricular events, and that is why a genuine partnership is of the essence.

I want to also say that this is not only a bill in and of itself, when we talk about what we’re trying to do in our education system; it is a package. It is a package because there are many provincial initiatives. I’ll just give you an example of benchmarks for funding salaries. Not only have we made changes in benchmarking, but we’ve also put in \$10 million to supplement the increase in salary just with respect to the benchmarks that were announced earlier this year.

Another aspect is that we’ve made investments to support students and teachers for the 2004-05 school year, including \$19 million as a first step in reducing primary class size. I want to give you some examples as to what this could do and what this has done. Look at the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board. They received about \$1.2 million and the board has hired 18 teachers. One of the Catholic schools has reduced class size in grade 2 from 28 to 19. Another example: Peel District School Board received \$6.7 million and the board hired about 84 teachers. A school has reduced the kindergarten class size from 29 to 22. That is significant. With the Halton District School Board, which received slightly over \$2 million, one of the schools had their grade 3 class size cut from 28 to 18. Of course, there are

many more examples, but I don't have time to read them all.

I now want to talk about another important aspect, which is achievement and success. This is extremely important because students can only have achievement and success without disruption, and what they got in the former government's years is exactly that disruption. I have talked about how devastating this is, especially to new immigrants, but I want to maybe say a bit more. When people come to this country from a different culture, oftentimes their children are not conversant in English and they don't know about a lot of the subject matter, although they're not unintelligent. They're very intelligent school kids; it's just that they're not used to this new system and they need the time, they need the patience of the teachers to teach them so that they can learn well.

A lot of the parents who suffered through the disruptions through the former Tory years said to me, "Tony, what is wrong with this country? Why is it that the schools were closed for so many days and we had to somehow take care of our kids?" They found it very difficult to take care of their kids because many of them had to work. So they had to take time off and then their kids would have to stop learning, and this is extremely devastating. I told them, "There's nothing wrong with this country;" there was something very seriously wrong with the then provincial government, because they took a confrontational approach. They wanted to pit one group against another. They wanted to blame it on the teachers, and therefore they could get the parents' votes. But no, people are not that stupid. They saw right through that and that is why we are where we are today and they are where they are today.

I think we all understand that it is really of paramount importance that we have our students go through extremely intensive training to be internationally competitive. We all know that this is the information age and that skills are extremely important. We've all heard about low-paying jobs going to China and India, and this will happen whether we like it or not. The key, of course, is for us to train our students so that they can become highly skilled to continue doing those high-paying jobs. This can only be done by a total lack of disruption and an extremely peaceful environment.

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We all understand that when serious damage has been done to our system, we need to repair it, and I want to give you some facts.

We know that under the Tories, Ontario's kids lost 25 million school days, and this is intolerable. We also know that a government-commissioned study on the performance of high school students by Dr. Alan King of Queen's University estimates that close to 30%—30%, which is close to 50,000 high school students—are at risk of not graduating from high school. We add that to another fact: that the unemployment rate for 15- to 24-year-olds who don't have a high school diploma is 22%, which is a lot higher than the 15% unemployment rate of

high school graduates. That's why we understand that high school graduation is so important; education is so important.

There's good news on the way now. The good news is that our government has invested more than \$18 million in 100 innovative projects in school boards across the province. Another fact is that, even when faced with a deficit, our government is proposing to increase salary benchmarks, as my colleague indicated earlier, by 2%, 2%, 2.5% and 3% for the next four years in a four-year contract.

Another fact—

Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean–Carleton): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to ask that the doors be closed and the question be called and that division be allowed with no bell, so that it would be held just with those members in the House right now.

The Acting Speaker: I don't believe that is a point of order.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: You're not on the floor.

Mr. Baird: I'm asking for unanimous consent, for agreement that that take place.

The Acting Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no. Please continue.

Mr. Wong: Another fact is that more than 7,500 elementary teachers are beginning the year with specialized training in reading and math instruction as part of the government's effort to boost student literacy and numeracy in all important early grades. Another fact: More than 1,300 schools have smaller classes in the primary grades. I can go on and on.

I do not accept a confrontation, and I am going to vote for student success and achievement. I'm going to vote for genuine partnership.

Mrs. Munro: Thank you for allowing me to take the next few minutes to speak about the time allocation motion we are debating here this evening.

Looking at the bill that we're looking at time-allocating requires a little bit of explanation because the key to the bill is extending the time of teacher contracts from three to four years. It does allow for other possible variations, but the main thrust of the bill is to be able to provide four-year contracts. While it might seem somewhat innocuous to think in terms of only going from three to four years, one might question what the difference is. There are a couple of things that I think are important to understand in moving from one to the other.

One of the things at the heart of this in terms of questions regarding this bill is how it's going to be paid for. Normally, government is looking at budgeting on an annual planning process, and it's rather interesting to look at what happens when the possibility of a four-year contract is laid out. In the first year, the government has suggested a 2% increase, which would be the equivalent of \$238 million. Year two would be another 2% on top of that, which would cost \$480.76 million; year three, another 2.5%, which would equal \$790.279 million; and year four, another 3%, which is \$1.171 billion.

So you can see from this the kind of cost that is being laid out for us in looking at this particular bill. I think that it demonstrates a concern that we can see in other initiatives by the government, where, by laying out a scheme of payment or support for a particular initiative, the government is essentially handcuffing itself and any future government in terms of the ability to provide any kind of fiscal planning when you've allocated monies in this manner.

It also speaks to another issue, and that is the question of the historical role of the school boards. Historically, of course, the boards have hired. They have negotiated their own contracts with local negotiating teams. They've had the influence of what's happening across the province, but they've also been in the position of being able to negotiate on local issues. None of those things are possible with this kind of bill.

The minister has referred to the importance of this bill as bringing stability and peace to the education system, but there are a number of partners who don't quite see that. The OSSTF has referred to the fact that it demonstrates an unfair labour practice. They have been clear about that criticism. The Elementary Teachers' Federation has looked at the kind of reaction amongst their members, where there has been a 96% vote in favour of a strike.

Mr. Baird: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: First, I want to apologize to my colleague the member for York region, who's giving a wonderful speech. I have a huge amount of respect for the member for York region.

I would like to ask for unanimous consent—I have it in writing, and I'll send it over to you. Could I get an usher over here? It is Jesse, my favourite usher.

Hon. Mr. Caplan: From the great riding of Don Valley East.

Mr. Baird: From the great riding of Don Valley East. Is that true?

Mrs. Mitchell: Page.

Mr. Baird: Usher. She's not a page. Pages are in grade 8. She has actually been known as a student usher leader on various occasions. Is that all right, Jesse? Carol, you should apologize and resign.

Mrs. Mitchell: I do.

Mr. Baird: I would like to ask for unanimous consent:

- (1) That the doors be tiled;
- (2) That the question be called;
- (3) That division bells be limited to one moment; and
- (4) That a recorded vote be held forthwith.

The Acting Speaker: We have a motion seeking unanimous consent—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker: Dispense.

Is it agreed? I heard a no.

The member from York North can resume the floor.

Mrs. Munro: As I was suggesting, there has certainly been some criticism of this initiative, and I think that people need to understand some of the issues that are implied here.

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I also want to take the couple of minutes that I have remaining on the fact that this bill is another example of the kind of centralizing of power that we are seeing at Queen's Park with a variety of bills being put forward by this government. It's something that people need to understand when you start looking at all these different initiatives across various ministries, all of which tend to centralize power at Queen's Park.

During the election, the Liberals had promised that they would look at the Ontario Municipal Board, for instance, as something they felt took away from the power of local municipal governments. With the introduction of the new Planning Act, in fact what we saw was a significant departure, not just the question of changing the power of the Ontario Municipal Board, but in fact bringing that power to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He is able to declare a provincial interest, and then inject himself into the process that would normally be carried out by the Ontario Municipal Board. He's able to do that without a public forum, without a public disposition of reasons. It could be a personal decision that he is just going to inject himself into that.

When we look at bills like the greenbelt, we have a bill that has no appeal process. Again, the only way to make any changes is through the power of the minister himself. And again, when we look at Bill 136—the bill dealing with growth—we are looking at the same thing: the power of the minister.

You might wonder that I have chosen examples from one particular ministry, but we can look at other areas as well: We have a Minister of Education who is now an arbiter on junk food; we have a regulation that deals with how hot your water heater can be. This bill falls into the same area that these others do, and that is the concentration of power that we are looking at. Time allocation means that there are no committee hearings, that it is just steamrolled through. I think it's important to see it in the context of some very significant centralizations of power that fundamentally are anti-democratic. This fits into that description.

Mr. Baird: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I ask for unanimous consent:

- (1) That the doors be tiled;
- (2) That the question be called;
- (3) That division bells be limited to one moment; and
- (4) That a recorded vote be held forthwith.

The Acting Speaker: First of all, I'm not sure of the clarity of the motion. What does "ring the bells for one moment" mean?

Mr. Baird: At your good discretion, sir.

The Acting Speaker: Well, is it like 15 seconds? All right. We have a motion for unanimous consent. Is it agreed? I heard a no.

Further debate.

Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie): Wait till John Tory gets here; he'll straighten you guys out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on your appointment to the Chair.

It's my pleasure to speak to Bill 167 and the time allocation motion this evening. Certainly I have no problem supporting both the bill and the time allocation motion this evening. This means peace and stability in education, and we are trying to move forward with that peace and stability in education. I guess the opposition parties are not interested in peace and stability in education; we have seen ample evidence of that in the past, and in fact I heard the member from Beaches—East York just last week, as well as the member from Kitchener—Waterloo, say that the discussion and lengthy, protracted debate with respect to Bill 167 is simply a waste of time, that we need to move on and discuss other issues such as health care and the like. And here we are today hearing opposition members stand up, opposed to this—for whatever reason, I'm not quite sure.

The residents in my community, in Sault Ste. Marie, in 2007 when I go to their door and they say to me, "We're happy with the things that have happened in the riding over the last four years, we're happy with the reinvestment in health care, with the \$2 million for the new CT scanner, the reinvestments in home care and long-term care, the investments in education, smaller class sizes, improved test scores, fixing our schools, raising the minimum wage, ending the 60-hour workweek"—all the commitments that we made and are moving forward on. I doubt very much I'm going to hear a resident in my community say, "We'd like to vote for you, Mr. Orazietti, but that time allocation motion seemed to get in the way of all the good things," in terms of our agenda that we have been able to accomplish over the past four years.

I have no hesitation in moving forward with this particular motion as well as moving forward with our bill, Bill 167, because I support peace and stability in education. I know that's something that is difficult for the opposition members to grasp, given their history with respect to the education sector.

Overall, our agenda on education is fairly clear. We're going to work collaboratively with our education partners—parents, students trustees and the like—to create open participation and development of strategies to improve our education system, one that has been sorely lacking in this province. We are going to work very hard to rebuild the trust in the education system with our education workers.

I want to commend Minister Kennedy for his work to date with respect to the education sector and the many meetings and hours that he has put in meeting with parent groups, teachers, education workers, administrators, trustees and the like to rebuild that trust in the education sector, because it has been something that has been beaten up and abused over the past decade or more. It's something that I think the people in this province respect and admire with regard to our policies in education. So I want to commend the minister for his effort in this regard, because I think he has made incredible strides in rebuilding that trust.

Our Premier's commitment toward education has been unequivocal: to reinvest in education and to make education one of the cornerstones of our government's policies in terms of moving forward here. We know there is going to be an incredible strain on the health care system in the coming years, and we need each person in this province to reach their maximum potential. So I fully support the Premier's direction with respect to reinvesting in our education institutions and in the people of this province, our future, the young people of Ontario.

Just to spend a few brief moments recounting some of the past experiences in the education sector, I have spent 10 years in education myself. I became a new teacher in 1993 and began in the education system under the NDP government at the time and lived through that social contract. For a government that was out there professing to be the party of labour, the party to be the friend of public services in the province, at the first opportunity they turned their back on labour and they ripped up our collective agreements. That's the kind of vision that they had for education in Ontario. I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but as one of those individuals who had my contract ripped up, on behalf of those hundreds of thousands of teachers in the province of Ontario, it was a shame.

Then we had a government that came into office with an education minister, Minister John Snobelen, who said, "We are going to create a crisis in education," and that tape just plays and plays. You talk about betraying the trust of Ontarians and undermining the relationship in the education sector—when you have those kinds of comments from someone who is entrusted to lead the province, to protect the young people in our province to ensure they have the best education possible and to ensure they are going to reach their potential, having a Minister of Education come in and say, "We are going to create a crisis," is disgraceful.

Interjections.

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Mr. Orazietti: I know the opposition members don't want to hear this, but you're going to have to take your medicine here.

The private school tax credit: another example of sucking money out of the public system; a commitment that we made in the election campaign to eliminate, and that was eliminated.

Taking over boards of education: That's not the kind of relationship that we're building with our education partners. I recall the past government taking over Ottawa, Hamilton and Toronto.

The PLP: one of the most punitive pieces of legislation introduced to teachers. That was something that failed miserably in terms of its objective and in terms of professional development, and we're going to be working with our teachers in this province to rebuild their trust as well as to improve the professional learning programs.

Interjections.

Mr. Orazietti: I think we're hitting a couple of nerves here. That's unfortunate because that's the kind of crisis

that was created in education by the past government. You're not going to see our Minister of Education ripping up the collective agreements of thousands of teachers, and you're not going to see the Minister of Education in our government saying that he's going to create a crisis in education. Mr. Kennedy will not be ripping up the education contracts of thousands of teachers.

Let's talk about some of the improvements: \$1.1 billion in new funding in education since we've become government. Mordechai Rozanski completed his study and indicated that \$1.8 billion in new funding was required to sustain the education system in the province of Ontario. We are achieving those goals. We are in fact going to exceed Rozanski's recommendations: \$90 million to reduce class sizes, \$160 million to help the students who need it most, and \$280 million for school renewal, which will leverage \$4 billion in school renovations and renewals. Because it's time boards had to stop making choices between whether or not they are going to buy students—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Excuse me. I think the member from Nepean–Carleton should withdraw the statement.

Mr. Baird: If I said that, I withdraw it.

The Acting Speaker: Continue.

Mr. Oraziotti: I think it's fairly clear that the kind of investments that we're making in education are going to go a long way in improving the success rates of our young people, which is our overall objective. We're going to increase the percentage of young people who graduate from our schools, achieve a high school diploma and are able to go on and reach their potential, whether it be in a skilled trades area, a profession or the world of work.

I am very proud of our government's achievements to date. We are rebuilding trust with the education sector. I encourage all members to support Bill 167. I think this is a great opportunity in the coming years to actually see those investments put to good work.

Mr. Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise this evening and talk a little bit about time allocation and democratic renewal. It's interesting that we would have a time allocation motion to end debate on second reading and no third reading debate whatsoever, on a day when the minister for democratic renewal brought in a piece of legislation. It has to be embarrassing to the government to treat this assembly this way.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Mr. Minister and the member from Nepean–Carleton, please. The member from Simcoe North has the floor.

Mr. Baird: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I want to apologize for heckling and will accede to your good judgment, sir.

Mr. Dunlop: As I said, it's becoming the norm for this government. Even in this very short winter span, we've seen a time allocation motion, completely not necessary, on this piece of legislation. There's no reason that we couldn't proceed on March 29, after the two-week break, and have third reading debate and maybe

some committee meetings. What is the rush on this piece of legislation? Why are we time-allocating this and trying to complete this bill during this small winter session? It's difficult for me to believe, especially for a government that bragged that they would never have time allocation and that it would be a thing of the past.

I'd like to speak for a second about Rozanski and the Rozanski report. I've heard a lot of numbers being floated around here tonight. They talk about fully implementing the Rozanski recommendations. If I can remember correctly—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Nepean–Carleton, this isn't the first time, but I'm going to warn you that if there is a further outburst, we'll have you removed.

Mr. Dunlop: The Rozanski recommendations were to be implemented over a three-year period. If I remember correctly, Premier Eves and the education minister took steps immediately after the Rozanski recommendations came out in the fall of 2002 and immediately implemented \$900 million, I believe, with the balance to be implemented over a two-year period. Now I'm hearing that the money will still not be implemented even in this year.

I heard the member—I believe he is from Sault Ste. Marie—talk about a bunch of the investments that the government had made. I would like to ask the government members here tonight, what happened to the TERI funding? That's the technical education reinvestment in industry. That money was to flow—\$90 million. The first amount of money flowed in 2002-03, and the balance—I know a number of the boards today are asking for about \$22 million for this fiscal year, which ends in another two weeks. I'm curious where the money is. I have had a number of technical education teachers phoning my office and asking me, "Where is the money?" It's a commitment from the government; it's for technical education.

We're talking about a year when the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities is expecting an investment in education, and here we have, right in our high schools, money that was allocated by the previous government and that this new government committed to. Now we're asking for the funding to be forwarded, and we haven't seen it. Again, there are only three weeks left in this year. I would be very disappointed if the government did not flow money into technical education in our secondary schools. What I'm seeing and what I'm hearing is that the money is not flowing this year and that basically the government has given up on this. They're making another bunch of fancy reannouncements, but the money for technical education is not flowing. I'd like to see the government make that commitment and flow that money before the end of the year, because the schools need to actually purchase the equipment before the end of June.

I've got a couple of minutes, and I'd like to say something about another closure, not time allocation this

time. It's about the Huronia Regional Centre in my riding of Simcoe North. You've been hearing the petitions being read here all week and for the last couple of weeks. This is a terrible disaster, as far as I'm concerned, in the province of Ontario. There are 680 people employed in the Huronia Regional Centre. They represent a payroll of \$29 million to the Orillia area. There are also 351 clients who are very, very severely handicapped and disadvantaged. The government, under the Minister of Community and Social Services—without consultation with the parents, by the way; she has not attended a meeting yet; she's never visited the site—is planning on closing this facility. The first people apparently will move as early as July, August and September of this year. We're asking the minister to reconsider this decision. We think that the previous ministers did not make the decision to close it because we are talking about the most severely challenged people in the province. They're represented here in the Huronia Regional Centre, in the Southwestern Regional Centre and in the Rideau Regional Centre up in Smiths Falls.

I wanted to put that on the record. It's a terrible disaster for our area.

Mr. O'Toole: It is sad.

Mr. Dunlop: But what's even sadder, as the member from Durham is saying behind me, is that there hasn't been a consultation with the parents. The minister has met with a couple of parents here at Queen's Park, but the parents she has met with have not represented the bulk of the people. That's why we keep reading petition after petition into the record, because we want the Ministry of Community and Social Services—we don't know if the minister is actually running the ministry or not, but we want that ministry to take a second look at these regional centres across the province, because suddenly they believe that the community living organizations can look after these folks like the folks they have in the community living facilities today. I don't think that's possible. I'm no expert in this area, but I can tell you, I've talked to a lot of people from the medical community, a lot of people in our community and a lot of the people who work at the Huronia Regional Centre. Although they're afraid to speak out against the minister because they're afraid of losing their jobs prematurely, we have a terrible disaster on our hands.

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I wanted to put that on the record tonight. I'm hoping the minister will reconsider this; I hope the ministry will reconsider it. I think there should be at least 1,000 beds left in the province of Ontario to look after the most severely challenged people in our society. They are very disadvantaged, and they need a lot of medical attention, a lot of medical treatment, a lot of supervision and a lot of care. It's something that their parents cannot look after very easily.

With that, I believe that the member from Nepean—Carleton would like to say a few words. I've got about a minute left to give him, so I'll pass it over to my colleague. Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you so much for this

opportunity to say a few words on this time allocation motion.

Mr. Baird: Because of the comment of the member from Sault Ste. Marie, I move that an amendment be forwarded that line 11 of the time allocation motion be amended from “10 minutes” to a 43-minute bell.

The Acting Speaker: Mr. Baird has moved that, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 43 minutes. Is there unanimous consent?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Sorry, the floor is back to Mr. Baird.

Mr. Baird: I would like to move an amendment to the amendment, that “any proceedings” be amended to “all proceedings.”

The Acting Speaker: Mr. Baird has moved—I hope I've got the right one—that, in the case of any division relating to all proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes. That's what he has moved.

The time for debate has expired, so I'm going to first call the question on the amendment to the amendment, which is that, in the case of any division relating to all proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

Mr. Baird: To 43 minutes.

The Acting Speaker: No, it's to 10 minutes. It's the amendment to the amendment.

Is it the pleasure of the House that this motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The main motion—

Mr. O'Toole: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: We are in the middle of a vote. What is your point of order?

Mr. O'Toole: The question before the members is that we extend the time for the bells. Is that it?

The Acting Speaker: That's it. The next one is the 43 minutes. I'm just looking for it.

Mr. O'Toole: Is that motion debatable?

The Acting Speaker: No, there's no debate. The time for debate is over.

The amendment, as amended, will read “that, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 43 minutes.”

Is it the pleasure of the House that this motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it. The motion is defeated.

On the main motion, moved by Mr. Caplan, motion 317: Is it the pleasure of the House that this motion carry? I heard a “nay.”

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 2124 to 2134.

The Acting Speaker: Mr. Caplan has moved government motion 317. All in favour of the motion will please rise.

Ayes

Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bountrogianni, Marie
Brown, Michael A.
Caplan, David
Colle, Mike
Cordiano, Joseph
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Di Cocco, Caroline
Duguid, Brad
Fonseca, Peter

Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoy, Pat
Kennedy, Gerard
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Marsales, Judy
McNeely, Phil
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol
Oraziotti, David

Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Smith, Monique
Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wong, Tony C.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will please rise.

Nays

Baird, John R.
Dunlop, Garfield
Kormos, Peter

Munro, Julia
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Runciman, Robert W.
Scott, Laurie
Yakabuski, John

The Deputy Clerk (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 34; the nays are 9.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes being 34 and the nays being 9, I declare the motion carried.

It now being past 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 2136.

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Alvin Curling

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Brant	Levac, Dave (L)		
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Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Chatham–Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener–Waterloo	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
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Elgin–Middlesex–London	Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
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Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ottawa–Vanier	Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L) Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Parkdale–High Park	Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Toronto–Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (L) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances
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Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Sarnia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L) Minister of Energy, Chair of Cabinet, Government House Leader / ministre de l'Énergie, président du Conseil des ministres, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough–Agincourt	Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement		
Scarborough–Rouge River	Curling, Hon. / L'hon. Alvin (L) Speaker / Président		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs		
St. Paul's	Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique		

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

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

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: John O'Toole
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco, Andrea Horwath,
Cameron Jackson, Kuldip Kular, Phil McNeely
John Milloy, John O'Toole, Jim Wilson
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Finance and economic affairs /
Finances et affaires économiques**

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Toby Barrett, Mike Colle, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,
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General government / Affaires gouvernementales

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vic Dhillon
Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,
Linda Jeffrey, Jean-Marc Lalonde,
Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: Tim Hudak
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Andrea Horwath
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Michael Gravelle,
Andrea Horwath, Tim Hudak,
David Oraziotti, Ernie Parsons,
Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,
Joseph N. Tascona
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Justice Policy / Justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Bob Delaney
Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,
Shafiq Qadri, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco
Donna H. Cansfield, Bob Delaney,
Ernie Hardeman, Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,
Norm Miller, Tim Peterson, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

Public accounts / Comptes publics

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro
Laurel C. Broten, Jim Flaherty, Shelley Martel,
Bill Mauro, Julia Munro, Richard Patten,
Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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

Chair / Présidente: Marilyn Churley
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong
Gilles Bisson, Marilyn Churley, Kim Craitor,
Kuldip Kular, Gerry Martiniuk, Bill Murdoch,
Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Social Policy / Politique sociale

Chair / Président: Mario G. Racco
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal
Ted Arnott, Ted Chudleigh, Kim Craitor,
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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