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(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 14 November 2005

Lundi 14 novembre 2005

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 14 November 2005

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 14 novembre 2005

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

BULLYING AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): This week is designated as Bullying Awareness Week across Ontario. For the past two years, parents and advocacy groups have been asking this Minister of Education to assume his responsibilities by ensuring that every student in this province knows that their hotline for protection from intimidation and bullying is their principal or the nearest teacher in their school.

Teacher training needs to include practical methods for detecting and dealing with bullying. Principals need to know that they will be held accountable for what is going on in their schools.

Student-to-student bullying is the face of this issue. However, we need to be aware that teachers, education workers and parents are also victims of bullying. The problem is significant and it isn't going away.

The excellent work being done by the 200-member London Anti-Bullying Coalition was the subject of a newsmagazine by TVO's Studio 2 entitled *Battling Bullies*. It has been nominated for a Gemini Award, in the best news magazine segment, to be awarded later this week. It profiled the devastating consequences of bullying, the role of the Internet, which is the latest method of bullying, as well as examining the behaviour of bullies.

We owe a thank you to the London Anti-Bullying Coalition for their determination in bringing this issue forward. They are part of a growing network of parents and educators who want real solutions to this very real and dangerous problem that plagues our schools and our communities, and threatens the right of every student to a safe and supportive environment.

AGRICULTURAL AWARDS

Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): Last Wednesday, I attended the annual rural-urban dinner hosted by the Chatham and District Chamber of Commerce. I was honoured to have the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of five exceptional individuals.

Dennis Jack was the recipient of the Agriculturalist of the Year Award. He has served and belongs to numerous

agricultural organizations. Dennis is chair of the Ridgeway College Agri-Food Foundation, which is responsible for the fundraising efforts for the Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre. I am proud that the McGuinty government has made a \$3.5-million commitment to this worthwhile project.

Dave and Brenda Baute received the Agriculture Innovator of the Year Award. They operate Maizex Seeds and have introduced several innovations to hybrid corn seed production. They market over 60 grain and silage corn hybrids across all growing regions in Canada and the northeastern United States.

Kelly Snobelen is the female 4-H Member of the Year. Kelly received many awards, both in competitive and non-competitive clubs, and participated in 4-H association events and fundraisers. Mitchell Pool is the top 4-H male. He has competed in 4-H competitions locally, regionally in London and internationally at the Royal Winter Fair. Both Kelly and Mitchell have exemplified the "Learn to do by doing" motto of the 4-H program.

Through their hard work and dedication, these five individuals have made tremendous contributions to the betterment of agriculture and the quality of life in our rural community.

FREDERICK BANTING HOMESTEAD

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey): Sir Frederick Banting was born on this day in 1891. In recognition of his contribution to humanity, today is also World Diabetes Day.

Canadians connect Sir Frederick Banting with the discovery of insulin. For this outstanding medical discovery, Banting was awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1923, Canada's first.

A noble man, he did not seek to profit from his achievement. Instead of applying for a patent, Banting transferred the rights for his life-saving serum to the University of Toronto for \$1. This magnanimous gesture ensured affordable insulin for millions of people suffering from the metabolic disorder known to us as diabetes. His contributions to medicine were so immense that CBC viewers and listeners selected him as one of our top 10 greatest Canadians.

At the Legislature this afternoon, I joined Bob Banting, a descendant of Sir Frederick Banting; his wife, Trudi; former New Tecumseth Mayor Larry Keogh; and Alex Wright to meet the Queen's Park press galley. Our message is to encourage all members of the Legislature

to support my private member's bill, the Frederick Banting Homestead Preservation Act. The purpose of the bill is to preserve Sir Frederick's memory by safeguarding the buildings and property where he was born. The home and buildings on Sir Frederick's Alliston farm are deteriorating. I'm sad to say that the homestead is in ruins, largely because of the inaction of the Ontario Historical Society.

This significant piece of legislation will be voted on this Thursday during private members' business, and I encourage all members to support it.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Last week, I met with representatives of a number of Anglican parishes in my riding. They wanted to talk to me about the need for affordable housing. They visited me as part of a campaign organized by the Anglican church in Toronto. As part of this campaign, members of many parishes around Toronto and the surrounding area are visiting their MPPs to discuss housing issues in their ridings. Some of you may already have talked to them during constituency week.

Members of these congregations are concerned at the lack of truly affordable housing for the poorer members of our community, and they want to find ways of working together to bring about some action on the construction of new affordable and supportive housing units.

My advice to them is that they need to continue to put pressure on members of the governing party until the McGuinty government keeps its promises not just to build more affordable housing but to amend the Tenant Protection Act. The Tenant Protection Act is also an issue for my constituents. Just this morning I had a call from a lifelong Liberal in my riding who asked me to convey a message to Mr. McGuinty. The message was: Keep your promise to fix the Tenant Protection Act, or in the future she will be voting for the NDP.

McMASTER BASKETBALL V. BULLYING EVENT

Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West): On October 24, over 10,000 middle school students, 500 volunteers from McMaster University and Mohawk College, members of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, Toronto Raptors, McMaster Marauders and McGill Redmen, and players from the Youtheatre Ottawa, alongside delegates from Vancouver, Saskatoon, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, and Rochester, New York, all gathered at Copps Coliseum in downtown Hamilton.

It was not a sporting event or a pep rally. It was not a concert or a convention. This formidable gathering of people was for the third annual McMaster Basketball v. Bullying event, an assembly of people from all walks of life who have one thing in common, and that is to reduce bullying.

Tracy Vaillancourt, an assistant professor at McMaster University, believes that bullying is becoming increasingly evident in schools. It has come to the point where even the teachers feel they are victims of bullying by their own students. Ms. Vaillancourt decided to be proactive and to address this trend by organizing the basketball v. bullying event to promote awareness and to encourage an attitude of sportsmanship that she hopes will carry on into every aspect of our lives. This wonderful event finished off with a university basketball game that demonstrated the type of sportsmanship Ms. Vaillancourt would like to promote.

I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to Ms. Vaillancourt on this very successful rally in downtown Hamilton.

TORONTO POLICE SERVICE CONFERENCE

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I was very pleased last Saturday to attend the ninth annual Toronto Police Service Community Police Liaison Committee conference, which was held here at Queen's Park. The theme of this year's conference was Community Engagement—Emergency Preparedness.

I was one of the sponsors of the event, and I was pleased and honoured to take part in the opening ceremonies with Minister Kwinter, Chief William Blair of the Toronto Police Service and Dr. Alok Mukherjee, chair of the Toronto Police Services Board.

1340

I'd like to take this time to thank Mr. James Sneep, staff inspector with the Toronto Police Service, for acting as MC; he did an excellent job during the day. I'd also like to thank the organizing committee: May Chow, chair of 52 division CPLC; Lorrie Ming-Sun, chair of 32 division CPLC; Adrian Richter, vice-chair of 53 division CPLC; Frank Sword, chair of 22 division CPLC; Jeff Paulin, chair of 55 division CPLC; and Staff Sergeant Steve Clarke, Constable Candace Paul and Sandra Farrell of volunteer resources with the Toronto Police Service.

In the end, what we tried to do in this particular conference was draw as many people together as possible to deal with emergency preparedness. I just want to thank all the people who took part in that particular conference. It was an excellent day. We need to know that we can count on our volunteer services within our province.

MEDEC

Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex): It's with great pleasure that I rise in the House today and offer words of welcome to representatives of MEDEC, the national industry association representing Canada's medical device and diagnostic companies.

Representatives from the association and 16 member companies are here today to promote innovations in medical device technologies, as well as the good work

this important sector does for communities right across Canada.

Through their strong and valued partnerships with health care professionals, patients, hospitals and governments across the country, MEDEC members are key drivers of innovation aimed at improving health outcomes and the quality of life for patients in Ontario and across the country.

Throughout today, MEDEC members will meet with MPPs and political and public service staff to learn more about government and legislative processes. They will also share their views on how patient access to innovative and safe medical device technologies can advance health care, and how the medical device industry can contribute to enhancements in quality and delivery of care and a robust economy.

MEDEC will be hosting a reception in the legislative dining room today from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., where political and public policy-makers will have further opportunities to speak directly with company representatives from across Ontario and take a look at just some of these important technologies. I'd encourage all members to attend.

I'd like to once again extend a warm welcome to MEDEC and their member companies represented here today and wish them a very successful day at the Ontario Legislature. I know many of the members are here in the gallery. Welcome.

ESTHER AND CHARLES MULLI

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville): It is not Mothers' Day, but today we do have the opportunity to recognize a guest in the assembly whose work as the "mother" of over 1,400 Kenyan street children is well worth celebrating.

Esther and Charles Mulli have used their private resources to build a series of orphanages in Kenya dedicated to rescuing and raising street kids. Many of these children are AIDS orphans or substance-dependent.

I had the opportunity to join them in Kenya this summer and witnessed first-hand the incredible results that these entrepreneurs-turned-foster-parents have been able to obtain in their orphanages.

The children raised in their homes graduate with top marks. They have embarked on some incredible sustainable agricultural projects that feed and provide business opportunities for the kids, and they are making tremendous strides in both health care and education for the children.

I think we can learn a lot from the Mullis and their orphanages in Kenya. Tonight, all members of the assembly will have a chance to meet and speak with Charles and Esther Mulli at a reception in committee rooms 228 and 230 at 5 p.m. I hope to see you there.

It's an honour today to introduce Ms. Esther Mulli, who is in the members' gallery. She is in Ontario to talk about her and her husband Charles's work in the Mulli Children's Family Orphanages in Kenya.

BY-ELECTION IN SCARBOROUGH-ROUGE RIVER

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): I had the honour of serving on the former city of Scarborough council and on Toronto city council for nine years with one Bas Balkissoon, our Liberal candidate in the upcoming by-election in Scarborough-Rouge River.

I must say I'm very impressed by the strong support Bas and our campaign have been receiving at the doors. I know that Bas has both the talent and the integrity to serve Scarborough very well in this House. It's my understanding that these sentiments were shared until very recently by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, who contacted Bas earlier this fall, writing—and I suggest all members listen very carefully to this because they may get a kick out of it. The Leader of the Opposition wrote, "I wanted to drop you a note to tell you how enthusiastic I would be about discussing your possible candidacy for our party in the Alvin Curling seat just vacated." This is a direct quote. "I have always been impressed by your strong commitment to accountability in government and some of the great leadership you have shown in that area."

Wisely, Bas turned the Tories down and opted to run for a party that understands and cares about the needs of the constituents in his riding. The Tory caucus has resorted since then to petty digs at Bas's credibility in order to prop up what is fast becoming an increasingly desperate campaign. The man that the Tories were too quick to woo is now the target of the PC Party's unabashed and undeserved scorn.

For a politician who loves to wax eloquent about the importance of being straightforward and accountable to voters, John Tory has some accounting to do of his own for this duplicity.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

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

Bill 24, An Act to regulate the spreading and storage of sewage sludge and biosolids / Projet de loi 24, Loi réglementant l'épandage et le stockage des boues d'épuration et des matières sèches biologiques.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may have a brief statement.

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): I'm reintroducing this private member's bill for two fundamental reasons: first, to focus our attention on this important matter of protecting our environment; and second, to respect the

ongoing work being done by Deb Vice and members of the Protect the Ridges organization and a study that's ongoing in Durham in this region to resolve this matter.

GRAVESITES OF FORMER
PREMIERS ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005
SUR LES LIEUX DE SÉPULTURE
DES ANCIENS PREMIERS MINISTRES

Mr. Brownell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 25, An Act to preserve the gravesites of former premiers of Ontario / Projet de loi 25, Loi visant à conserver les lieux de sépulture des anciens premiers ministres de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

The member may have a brief statement.

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh): This bill has seen two previous incarnations at the hands of the now Honourable Steve Peters. If passed, this bill would require the Minister of Culture to mark the gravesites of our former Premiers with, at minimum, an Ontario flag. It would be within the minister's power to recognize the gravesites of our former Premiers with further markers such as plaques or signs. When Minister Peters tabled his variants of this bill, it received support from all parties, who recognized the great importance of acknowledging the 18 Premiers who led this province. I hope this bill can again count on all-party support.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private member's public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Mr. Bradley is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding private members' public business. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr. Kular, Mr. Lalonde and Mr. Zimmer exchange places in the order of precedence such that Mr. Kular assumes ballot item 59, Mr. Lalonde assumes ballot item 15, and Mr. Zimmer assumes ballot item 12.

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I move that the following amendment be made to the membership of a certain committee: Ms. Mossop replaces Mr. Brown on the standing committee on justice policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): I move that, pursuant to standing order 9)c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, November 14, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1352 to 1357.

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

Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Rinaldi, Lou
Baird, John R.	Hoy, Pat	Runciman, Robert W.
Bentley, Christopher	Jeffrey, Linda	Ruprecht, Tony
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Klees, Frank	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Smith, Monique
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smitherman, George
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Sterling, Norman W.
Caplan, David	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Tascona, Joseph N.
Colle, Mike	McNeely, Phil	Tory, John
Craitor, Kim	Miller, Norm	Van Bommel, Maria
Crozier, Bruce	Mitchell, Carol	Watson, Jim
Delaney, Bob	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilkinson, John
Dhillon, Vic	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Di Cocco, Caroline	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dombrowsky, Leona	Parsons, Ernie	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	Peters, Steve	Yakabuski, John
Flaherty, Jim	Phillips, Gerry	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Qaadri, Shafiq	
Fonseca, Peter	Ramal, Khalil	

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

Nays

Chudleigh, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Churley, Marilyn	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Hardeman, Ernie	Martel, Shelley	
Horwath, Andrea	Murdoch, Bill	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 61; the nays are 10.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

1400

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): This past Thursday I had the opportunity to make an announcement of which I'm extremely proud. More importantly, it was an announcement that will have a profound effect on the health of people and communities throughout Ontario. Allow me to share this good news with all members of the House.

Last week, our government announced the largest-ever expansion of our province's community health centre network. We are investing \$74.6 million over the next three years to enhance services at all existing community health centres and to create 22 new CHCs and 17 new satellite community health centres. That's a 60% increase.

As impressive as these numbers are, what's even more impressive is the breadth and distribution of these new CHCs and satellite community health centres. Once this expansion is complete, we will have 76 full CHCs and 27 satellite community health centres, and they will be located in every part of this great province.

Mr. Speaker, as you and many members of this House know, community health centres are a tremendously effective and important part of this government's efforts to reform primary health care. They offer an interdisciplinary approach to health care and healthy living through a team of health care professionals working together. They provide both front-line primary health care services as well as community health programs. They're community-focused and cost-effective, and they are particularly oriented toward those who face barriers such as poverty, homelessness or language barriers. In short, they're one of the most effective tools we have to address health issues. By "health issues" we don't just mean treating people when they're sick; we mean the entire range of factors that contribute to healthy lives and healthy communities.

Please allow me to quickly list the communities that will be receiving full community health centres over the next three years: Woodstock; Fort Erie-Port Colborne; Malvern, in Scarborough; Cornwall; Prescott-Russell; Sudbury East; Kapuskasing; Chatham-Kent; St. Thomas; St. Catharines; Bramalea; Belleville; Minden; Brock township; Markdale; Brantford; Niagara Falls; Vaughan; Port Hope; Collingwood; Midland; and Sturgeon Falls.

Those are just the full community health centres. As I said, we are also creating 17 new satellite community health centres. Satellite community health centres are smaller centres, just as important as full CHCs but tuned more specifically to the needs of their communities. Satellite community health centres are going into Shelldale, Smiths Falls, Nepean, Thunder Bay, Wallaceburg, Malton, Pickering, Napanee, Trenton; and here in

Toronto in Crescent Town; at Jane and Finch; in James-town in Rexdale; at Kipling and Dixon; at Mount Dennis in Weston; at the Peanut Plaza at Don Mills and Finch; at the Junction triangle in the west end; and in York Centre.

I can see members on all sides of the House struggling to contain their enthusiasm and applause. But the real winners are the people of Ontario. Once this expansion is complete, every community identified in the Strong Neighbourhoods report prepared by the city of Toronto and the United Way will be serviced by a community health centre or the satellite of a community health centre. We know that they're especially effective in urban areas because they do much more than provide health care. They offer programs to combat violence, they help young people with education and training, they offer support networks to isolated individuals and they help new Canadians with ESL. That is precisely why this government is investing in one new community health centre and eight new satellites for Toronto neighbourhoods.

This dramatic and historic expansion of community health centres is the right thing to do, and this is the right time to do it.

SECURITIES LEGISLATION

Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services): I rise today to update members of the House on the progress made since the standing committee on finance and economic affairs tabled its report on the five-year review of the Securities Act just over a year ago.

The Securities Act provides for regular legislative review. A committee chaired by Mr. Purdy Crawford conducted the initial five-year review. That committee's report was tabled and referred to the finance committee, which reviewed the report and held hearings last year. Based on its findings, the legislative committee issued a unanimous report with 14 recommendations to the government a year ago.

We have completed many of the recommendations and have made significant headway on many others, from implementing civil liability in the secondary market to advancing the design of a common security regulator. We have proposed a number of changes in the Budget Measures Act, 2005 (No. 2), introduced by my colleague on November 2, that respond directly to the standing committee's recommendations.

Of particular interest to the members of the House, the bill proposes a new mechanism to strengthen the Legislative Assembly's oversight of the OSC by having its annual report referred to a legislative committee. Other amendments in my colleague's act would, if passed:

- give the OSC broader rule-making authority over corporate governance matters;

- allow the OSC to make rules to give shareholders more flexibility to communicate with each other during a takeover bid; and

- give the OSC authority to make rules to require an investment fund, such as a mutual fund, to establish an

independent governance body to oversee specified activities of the fund and the fund manager.

In addition to these amendments, I would like to outline some additional significant accomplishments to date. We are the first government in Canada to give secondary market investors a statutory right to sue public companies for misleading disclosure and failure to make timely disclosure. These new investor rights take effect December 31, 2005, just over a month from now. We have also amended the Securities Act so that the next review committee will begin their work in May 2007, and subsequent reviews will take place every four years. We've made consistent changes, as well, to the Commodity Futures Act. We've listened carefully to the legislative committee and, as recommended, we have not given the OSC basket rule-making authority, nor the power to make blanket rulings and orders.

As for other report recommendations, we have made significant progress on a number of important regulations. Considerable effort and I think steady progress is being made toward a common Canadian securities regulator. There have been significant developments in the last year: The work of the Crawford panel, a panel that we appointed, is well underway to design a more detailed proposal for a common regulator. We expect the panel's report shortly, within the next few weeks. In late September, for the first time ever, provincial, territorial and federal ministers responsible for securities regulations met to discuss a range of capital market issues and securities regulations. At that time, I apprised my colleagues of the work being done by the Crawford panel and offered to circulate a copy of the panel's report when it is available. Ministers have agreed to a follow-up meeting; the panel's report is one of the items we will discuss.

The legislative committee recommended separating the adjudicative function of the OSC from other functions if substantial progress within 12 months toward a single regulator is not made. We believe this issue is especially relevant to the structure of a common regulator. Steady progress has been made over the past 12 months toward establishing a single regulator. In the context of a goal that has been proposed since the 1960s, that progress is significant. We have asked the Crawford panel to look at the structure of the adjudicative function in the model they develop, and I look forward to their recommendations in the next few weeks. In the meantime, it's important to remember that the independent Fairness Committee headed by the Honourable Coulter A. Osborne found no evidence that the OSC hearings have been biased or unfair.

I would like to now talk about some of the legislative committee's other recommendations.

The 2005 budget announced that we will introduce updated securities transfer legislation later this year. We plan to do that very shortly. We are working toward establishing a task force to review the role of self-regulatory organizations, and we are exploring timely and affordable ways for wronged investors to seek restitution.

Finally, I would like to welcome Mr. David Wilson as our new chair of the Ontario Securities Commission,

effective November 1, 2005. We are looking forward to Mr. Wilson's contribution to ensuring Ontario's capital markets are strong and healthy, and have the confidence of investors and publicly traded companies alike. Mr. Wilson is an outstanding individual, and we are pleased that Mr. Wilson has agreed to lend his talent and expertise to this important role.

In closing, our government continues to work and ensure that our capital markets continue to be attractive to investors, that investors are well protected and that Ontario remains a great place to invest.

1410

DIABETES

Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):

Today, November 14, has been designated by the International Diabetes Federation and the World Health Organization as World Diabetes Day, in an effort to promote global awareness of the complications of diabetes and to celebrate the lives of those who cope with the disease every day.

November 14 has been chosen because today is the birthday of Ontario's Sir Frederick Banting, the co-discoverer of insulin at the University of Toronto. As the honourable member for Simcoe-Grey pointed out, we have members of Sir Frederick's family, his descendants, with us in the gallery, and we very much welcome them to the Legislature.

Diabetes is a serious public health issue in Ontario, and one that is of great concern to this government. As this government works to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage by improving the health of our population, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you some facts related to diabetes:

—In Ontario, approximately 800,000 people suffer from this potentially debilitating disease, and an estimated 200,000 may be completely unaware that they have diabetes;

—Diabetes accounts for one third of all heart attacks and strokes, 43% of heart failures, 51% of new dialysis patients and 70% of the amputations done in this province; and

—Diabetes and its complications cost Ontario's health care system \$1 billion annually.

The approach this government has adopted is that the best health care system seeks to prevent illness in the first place. That's the kind of system we're trying to build in Ontario, and what my Ministry of Health Promotion is all about.

As well as the services and assistance this government provides to diabetes patients, it's important to know that the McGuinty government is taking action to prevent the risk factors that lead to diabetes. My ministry is directly addressing the need to increase the level of physical activity in Ontario through our Active 2010 program and through our communities in action fund.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, under the leadership of my colleague George Smitherman, pro-

vides diabetes education and assistive devices programs to help those who have diabetes cope with their day-to-day challenges.

In co-operation with our aboriginal communities, we have developed diabetes initiatives that improve access to programs and services for our First Nations people.

As Minister of Health Promotion, and using World Diabetes Day as the format, I'd like to encourage all Ontarians to increase their awareness of this disease. I'd like to remind everyone of the potential that exists to prevent diabetes.

Just this morning, here in Toronto, I was pleased to join Sobeys and the Canadian Diabetes Association in launching a new Smart Options initiative that highlights healthy foods. Innovative partnerships like this one will help us make progress in avoiding this disease.

I also want to thank Michael Howlett, president of the Canadian Diabetes Association, all the men and women of the CDA and the thousands of volunteers who work tirelessly to raise funds and help diabetes patients and their families for the CDA's great work. I had the pleasure this past weekend, for instance, of kicking off one of the races for the cure in Ottawa and want to congratulate Melanie Estable-Porter and other volunteers for a wonderful event.

Our government places a priority on improving the health of the people of this province. They can take comfort in knowing that this government is taking steps to address diabetes in a concrete and meaningful way.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Responses?

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): I am pleased to be able to respond to the statement in regard to community health centres today. I have always—as has our government—certainly supported health centres. I did find it very interesting that the minister made the announcement last week in the riding of Scarborough–Rouge River, which happens to be having a by-election this month. It was a rather political announcement, and I know there were a few people who questioned the location of the announcement and whether this was really about improvements for people. The other question that has been asked is about concern over the amount of money that is going to be provided for existing community health centres. There was no information whatsoever provided, and there's certainly concern.

The other concern is the timeline for funding. It's very unclear and very vague.

I think we also need to take into consideration the fact that this government often makes health care announcements, and a lot of it is hype and rhetoric. We all know about the family health team announcements which have been made. I think it's important to note that despite the fact that about 69 have been announced, about 50 of those were former family health networks which our government had set up, and only one family health team today is fully operational as a family health team. So this government makes lots of announcements, but we see

little action and little impact on changing health access for people in the province of Ontario. This government does a much better job of making sure that people are asked to pay more in the form of a \$2.4-billion health tax and yet get less, because today they don't have the same access to optometry or physiotherapy or chiropractic services. We also know this is a government that has fired 767 nurses. So as far as improved access to doctors, nurses and health care, that's not the case.

SECURITIES LEGISLATION

Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford): I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Government Services. The minister says that they're doing everything they can to ensure that investors are well protected. But I would say to the minister, you're not doing enough, and your Attorney General is standing in the way of protecting investors in this province. He has been asked on more than one occasion to protect small investors and seniors from financial fraud, to increase the time limitation period from two years to six years, because the financial complaint system just doesn't work to allow small investors and seniors to put their claim forth in a period that would not be within the two-year period. He knows that we have to extend the period from two years to six years.

So I would ask the minister to try to convince the Attorney General, who in Bill 14, under schedule D, made sure that his Bay Street friends would get an increase. They have an agreement that they can extend the time limitation period so they're not subject to the Limitations Act. Convince your Attorney General, under schedule D of Bill 14, to ensure that small investors and seniors across this province can have fairness and investor protection by increasing the time limitation period from two years to six years, Minister.

DIABETES

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton): In response to the minister, with regard to World Diabetes Day: Our fight to control and our fight to cure diabetes, of course, knows no political boundaries. All members of the House are interested in forwarding the agenda with regard to this terrible disease. We have had in this Legislature a private member's bill from a backbencher on the Liberal side, Bill 55, which died on the order paper, which allowed people to access additional care. Many of us in this Legislature voted for that bill and would like to support that bill for insulin pumps to be available to all those in need.

More importantly, we have a bill that we're going to debate this Thursday, Bill 20, the Frederick Banting Homestead Preservation Act, put forward by Jim Wilson, the member for Simcoe–Grey, to preserve the birthplace of Dr. Banting. I urge all members to support that. I would look that we could pass second and third—and final—reading this Thursday, and celebrate this wonderful day for Mr. Banting's tremendous contributions.

SECURITIES LEGISLATION

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): In response to the Minister of Government Services: The problem I have with the statement you have made today is that the separation of the adjudicative function was the cornerstone of the reform put forward by the all-party committee. A whole year later, virtually nothing has been done. The honourable Coulter Osborne argued persuasively against the current system, not, as your statement said today, in support of it. His statement was that justice not only must be done, but it must be seen to be done appropriately. It's clear that there is no movement. It is clear that given the glacial speed at which federal-provincial relations seem to be going, on everything from the labour market to immigration and now to this, that we can expect only more of the same. It is time for you to move this process along as speedily as possible to protect those investors in Ontario who are desperately in need of protection.

1420

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): In response to the statement made by the Minister of Health, the question is, how long have New Democrats been urging this government to fund CHCs? The answer is: For two long years since this government was elected, every time the minister got up and talked about primary care reform, I said in response, why doesn't the government move forward on this effective model of primary care? That's what our government did. We recognized that it was a good idea to have health care providers on salary, that it was a very good idea to have a full range of health care providers—doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, mental health workers, social workers—providing care to patients, that it was a good idea that the focus shouldn't just be on illness, prevention or treatment but on health promotion initiatives as well keeping people healthy longer, and that it was a very good idea to have local boards determine what the direction of those CHCs would be so that they could be responding to the health care needs in those communities. That's why our government funded 21 new CHCs and nine aboriginal health and wellness centres in the depths of a recession.

The real question is, why did it take the government so long to deal with the some 80 applications for CHCs that were at the ministry the day the Liberals arrived as the government? Over the past two years, because the government hasn't responded, many communities have lost opportunities for primary health care because this government didn't move on this effective model.

This brings me to the point of a CHC in my own my community, Le Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury, which operates two satellites in Rayside-Balfour and Valley East in my riding, primarily francophone communities. In the fall of 1995, under the Conservatives, the then assistant deputy minister, Mr. Szende, wrote to the president and promised that \$1 mil-

lion in capital funding would be made available to two or more satellite clinics in the outlying communities where it was clear there was a need for services to francophones. Since that time, the Conservatives, and now this Liberal government, have refused to provide the funding to Le Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury to expand the satellites in Rayside-Balfour and Valley East, and that is a shame. It is clear that if those satellites were funded, then francophones would move to the centre and become patients of the centre, and many doctors who now service those francophone patients would have space available to treat anglophones.

It is wrong for this government to deny funding to the centre because the government insists that the services be bilingual. Francophones in this province have a right to French-language services under Bill 8, and that includes those francophones who live in Rayside-Balfour and in Valley East. This government is going to end up with its own Montfort Hospital—the day is coming—because francophones in our community are going to challenge this decision to deny funding to this centre.

I say to the minister, do what is right; do it now. Provide funding so that francophones in Valley East and Rayside-Balfour can get access to health care services in their own language, like they deserve.

DIABETES

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): With respect to the statement made by the Minister of Health Promotion, I wish the minister would have stood today and said what his government was going to do in response to the presentation that was made by the Canadian Diabetes Association during the pre-budget consultations in February of this year, when they came before that committee and urged this government to expand its Ontario monitoring for health program to include those diabetics who don't qualify now because their diabetes is controlled by oral medication; to have the program pay for needles, syringes and insulin pumps; and to increase the reimbursement cost of these supplies because the current reimbursement cost doesn't cover the full cost of supplies. Has this government responded to any of these needs? No, they have not.

Finally, poor Mr. Gravelle, a member of the government side, introduced a bill to have insulin pumps covered in April 2004. His bill was passed unanimously at second reading and sat in committee for 16 months before it finally died when this government had a new session of Parliament. Why don't you at least pass—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Acting Premier. I'm sure you're aware

of the tragic circumstances involving 37-year-old Lori Dupont, a nurse who was stabbed to death at the Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital in Windsor on Saturday. I think I speak for all of us here in extending our heartfelt sympathies to her family, and especially to the eight-year-old daughter that she leaves behind.

According to media reports, Ms. Dupont applied for a restraining order against her former partner, a doctor who worked at the hospital, in April and she was told that the next available court date to have that application for a restraining order heard would be in December. That is an eight-month delay. Without asking you to comment specifically on the details of any case, can you inform the House as to how an eight-month delay is possible for anyone, anywhere, any time in Ontario in the justice system for which your government is responsible?

Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General): It is a terrible, terrible, terrible, tragic thing that has happened, and we certainly add our voices to that of the leader of the official opposition in offering our condolences to her daughter and to her family. As the member said, the matter is subject right now to a criminal investigation, so we cannot get into the specifics of it. Certainly I am in the process of determining exactly who knew what and when, and at the same time doing so without in any way interfering with the criminal investigation that's underway.

Mr. Tory: Carrying on in that regard, according to the Windsor Star this morning, the hospital where Ms. Dupont worked had been providing security guards to help her to her car. The hospital helped her in preparing the restraining order and reserved a parking spot for her next to the security office at the hospital, so it's clear that the hospital took precautions to help ensure her safety. Where the system seems to have fallen down was Ontario's justice system, for which you have ultimate responsibility. Are you prepared to use your offices to find out how many of these kinds of applications are pending across the province, the kinds of delays they are experiencing and the reasons why, and to let all of us know—the public and this Legislature—the results of those inquiries on a timely basis?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: There are indeed some questions that need some answers, and I agree with the member that we need to determine what the facts are. I recognize that the member is relying upon media reports, and of course the police are in the process of their own investigation. I don't wish to do anything to interfere with that. But certainly we need to determine, on both the criminal and civil sides, whether or not we need to be making any changes and assess the situation immediately. In a further supplementary, I can speak to some actions that have been well underway since this government took power to address these fundamental issues and protections when it comes to protecting women from becoming victims of domestic violence.

Mr. Tory: Of course, I was dealing with the question of process, and I remind the Attorney General that I had asked him whether he could give us a list and a number

as to how many of these kinds of applications are pending across the province and the kinds of delays they are experiencing. I think our interest here is to ensure that no woman, no partner in a violent or potentially violent situation should be made to wait until it's too late for justice. I think we all agree in this House that that is just not acceptable. As the government of Ontario, you have the responsibility to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure this doesn't happen again.

We have here an instance in which a person was murdered while waiting for a date to have a hearing with regard to a restraining order. Can the Attorney General immediately cause, or can the government immediately cause, through the Attorney General's office, to be issued whatever directive it would take to ensure that in applications of this kind an eight-month delay is declared and stipulated to be unacceptable and that urgency is to be the rule, as opposed to any exception at all? Can you give us that undertaking?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: Well, it's true that urgency is the rule. That is why we launched the Ontario domestic assault risk assessment tool. That is a tool that involves police, crown prosecutors and others who assess the risk in abusive situations. They have a series of tests and a checklist to go through to determine where there are urgent situations and assure that the matter is given the highest priority. That is something this government launched. It is a tool that had not been available before, and it is a tool that we are continuing to pursue to try to prevent tragedies from taking place.

1430

SENTENCING

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): It's a bit frustrating, because I asked for a list of these incidents and a directive to be issued.

My new question is for the Attorney General. You issued a report to your federal counterparts last week asking for tougher sentencing, but didn't offer any suggestions or any specifics as to what an appropriate sentence might be, an appropriate mandatory sentence for crimes involving the use of a firearm. The federal minister was equally non-specific. For certain offences today, the minimum stipulated in the Criminal Code is one year. You have said that is not acceptable.

Can you share with us exactly how long you think a sentence should be for someone convicted under the current provisions, how long we should make the sentence? And for some of the new offences that I think you've correctly suggested should be created, can you suggest to us some specifics here so we know exactly what you are advocating to the federal government as to minimum sentences for the commission of a crime involving guns?

Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General): The highest constitutionally appropriate sentence that can be brought down to express Parliament's extreme denunci-

ation of these horrific gun crimes and to ensure that appropriate punishments and deterrents are in place.

Mr. Tory: Well, the problem we all have here is that that, of course, is not a specific answer either, and the federal minister didn't help us either.

In any event, we'll move to another area that you have more direct responsibility for. It's something else you just haven't addressed, and it has been going on for some time: the issue of the kind of two-for-one and three-for-one deals, the sentencing credits for convicted criminals. Police officers have shared cases with me, as I'm sure they have with you, where they have arrested someone, the person is charged, the person is convicted, and the very same day that their sentence is pronounced upon them, they walk out of the courtroom because your crown prosecutors have made a three-for-one deal to give people three days' credit for every day they've served before trial.

Ontarians instinctively know this is wrong. Will you take immediate steps to ensure that these two-for-one and three-for-one let's-make-a-deal arrangements are not bought into by your prosecutors and are not something your prosecutors agree to? Will you take that step?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: We're actually a little bit ahead of that, I say to the leader of the official opposition. Last week in Whitehorse we achieved quite an historic accord. We had all provinces agree, firstly, to immediate changes to bring forth increases in mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes, new offences to reflect the supply of legal guns into the illegal gun market, and also an agreement federally and provincially that in fact the federal government would work upon the recommendation made by Ontario and Manitoba such that we would have a reverse onus put into place so that if it was a gun crime and a violent offence that was involved, the onus would be—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Mr. Tory: I actually asked about the two-for-one and three-for-one deals, which we never got to.

But having said that, my final supplementary is also to the minister. What's needed here in some cases is immediate solutions, a sense of urgency about these things, whether it has to do with mandatory minimum sentencing or whether it has to do with these let's-make-a-deal, two-for-one and three-for-one deals.

Another area where you've overpromised and underdelivered is on the 1,000 new police officers on the street. This morning, your colleague the Minister of Community Safety claimed that 400 of these officers have already been hired and are to be paid retroactively to 2003. Exactly when—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Stop the clock.

Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Tory: Exactly when can the municipalities expect to see the cheques totalling \$28 million for your share of these officers, and since you obviously know right now which police services, if you can come come up with a precise number of 400, will you commit to bring the list

to this House, to this Legislature, of exactly which communities have had how many new officers hired, and have the cheques been sent to those communities to cover the costs of those officers?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: I want to congratulate Monte Kwinter, the Minister of Community Safety, for putting 400 new officers on the streets and 1,000 to come.

We welcome the agreement of all provinces and the federal government to bring forth new mandatory minimum sentences and new gun crimes. In fact, although I understand he doesn't understand the answer, I'll speak slowly. Bringing forth a reverse onus for bail for gun crimes means that we are going to be requiring that everybody who is before the court involving a gun crime and involving bail has to themselves prove that they ought not to be in jail. Between the guns and gangs task force, the 1,000 more police officers, the additional 26 police officers announced two weeks ago, the additional crown attorneys brought forth, an agreement by the federal government to have a federal-provincial guns and gangs task force, sir, that's not like the stuff that you used to do when you were in government: all talk. We are all action when it comes to gun crime.

PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Acting Premier. Today there is no local medical officer of health standing guard for ordinary families in one third of Ontario's local health units. In Brant, Chatham-Kent, Elgin, Haldimand, Lambton, Oxford, Simcoe, Muskoka and Timiskaming there is no medical officer of health. Why? Because the McGuinty government refuses to come up with the money so that health units can carry out basic services.

My question is this: Will you commit today to hiring full-time medical officers of health for every health unit in Ontario without delay?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): As the honourable member will know if he wants to, the situation concerning having full all of the rolls of medical officers of health in our province is something that, quite frankly, has eluded us for well over a decade. That's a circumstance that has been ongoing while all parties in this House were governments in Ontario. That is an explanation; it is not an excuse.

Accordingly, we're working very hard to revitalize public health in this province. That has involved an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars to date. Public health units in this province this year received not only an increment increase where the province took back a share of costs, but also a 9% increase for growth. This is a reflection on the commitment that our government continues to make. Under the leadership of Dr. Basrur and schools like McMaster, we're working hard to produce the future medical officers of health, but I will acknowledge to the honourable member that this is a piece of work that we have more to do on.

Mr. Hampton: I'm surprised at the Minister of Health's response, because it wasn't that long ago that

someone named Dalton McGuinty said that not having medical officers of health in place was a violation of the law—not just an administrative problem but a violation of the law.

Here's what the Ontario Medical Association says: Ontario is not prepared for a pandemic like avian flu because the McGuinty government has underfunded public health, because local public health units don't have the resources for even basic tasks like inspecting restaurants, and because we don't have enough local medical officers of health to stand guard for ordinary families' health. Then they say, "A public health emergency could strike at any day."

A simple question, Minister: Will you hire the eight medical officers of health who are not in place today, which your Premier describes as a breach of the law?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The member is choosing, as normal, to be rather selective in his analysis of the circumstances at hand. There is plenty of evidence—it abounds, in fact—of the investments and the initiatives that our government has undertaken with respect to rebuilding public health. There are interim medical officers of health acting in every one of the public health units in the province of Ontario.

With respect to planning in our province related to the challenges, those known and unknown, we've done a tremendous amount of work. We have a public health agency in our province that's coming to life next year. There's active work on its role. We've increased quite dramatically the funding for our public health units, as I alluded to in my earlier answer. We've established a provincial infectious disease advisory committee that's working hard, and new software, IPHIS, that we spent tens of millions of dollars developing, along with the 180 infectious disease officers that we're fully funding in these public health units. These are just some of the initiatives that we've taken to protect the health of Ontarians.

1440

Mr. Hampton: I repeat the words of Dalton McGuinty: He described interim medical officers of health as a breach of the law; part-time medical officers of health as a breach of the law. That was your Premier.

I want to quote again from the Ontario Medical Association. They say that Ontario's public health system should be second to none, but they then say that Ontario's public health system is "the worst of all the provinces." Dr. Greg Flynn, the president of the Ontario Medical Association says, "Our public health system is broken. It remains unprepared for challenges we know it must meet."

It was Dalton McGuinty who said to the people of Ontario, "Choose change." Tell me, Minister, where's the change when the Ontario Medical Association calls Ontario's public health system the worst of all the provinces?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: On the issue of responsibility and accountability for words, I believe the honourable member would be doing a better service to Ontarians if

he stood in this place and acknowledged that it was the leadership exerted by his government which has resulted in some of the chronic challenges we have with doctor shortages in our province. Public health, we all acknowledge, is one of those areas in our health care system that was allowed, especially under the previous government, to diminish.

Accordingly, since arriving in office we've worked very, very hard and contributed considerable new resources to enhance the quality of our public health system. On this idea that has been advanced today by the OMA, of course it's appropriate to call for areas where there's more that can be done; but I think it's inappropriate, particularly as there is no objective way to measure the quality of our public health system—I think that we've worked very, very hard, and Ontario's capacities are growing every day. This is important news for the people of Ontario.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): Again to the Acting Premier: Your hydro rate policy of driving electricity rates through the roof is proving more expensive for ordinary Ontario families. In community after community your policy of driving electricity rates through the roof is shutting down factories, mills and plants, killing jobs and hurting entire communities. On Friday, Ontario Power Generation, the company you control, reported an extraordinary profit of \$181 million for one quarter. That's not their money; that's the people's money.

My question: Will you instruct Ontario Power Generation to roll out a rebate and return that \$181 million to the people who are already paying too much in Ontario?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): Thank you to the honourable member for his question. In fact, after the 5%, Ontario Power Generation's profit goes to pay the stranded debt, so in fact it does go back to the people of Ontario—to all the people of Ontario.

Mr. Hampton: As we see paper mill after paper mill close, as we now see the steel industry threatened, I don't think anyone is going to find any solace in that answer.

I want to quote from Adam White, the president of the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario. He says, "It's unconscionable that Ontario Power Generation should be reporting record profits while high electricity prices are causing plant closures and layoffs, and people are worried about finding money to pay their power bill."

We know that the money has come from the people and it has come from Ontario industries. Will you instruct Ontario Power Generation to return that \$181 million to the people today through a rebate? Yes or no, Minister?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: Thank you again for the question. I state quite emphatically that the OPG is permitted to keep the 5% return and the rest goes to pay down the

stranded debt, which, by the way, is \$20.9 billion. That's money that people have to pay anyway. This way they actually get to reduce that amount of money. I find it interesting as well that the concern is—in fact, we have just brought in over \$700 million to the province in renewable energy projects and \$3 billion in new projects in future generation that are currently underway or in the process of being underway. So in fact we are contributing to this economy, sir.

Mr. Hampton: The minister says the McGuinty government is contributing to the economy. Here's the reality: Ontario has lost 42,000 manufacturing jobs, most of them casualties of the McGuinty government's policy of driving electricity rates through the roof. The forest industry is in crisis, with 12 mills, 7,500 direct jobs and 17,500 indirect jobs at risk. That's what's happening out there because of your policy of driving electricity rates through the roof, and now we know that Ontario Power Generation took \$181 million out of the pockets of Ontario consumers in the last quarter alone.

Minister, how many jobs is the McGuinty government prepared to kill? How many communities are you going to decimate before you realize that your policy of driving electricity rates through the roof is a destructive one? Will you return the money now?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: The money has been returned. It has gone to pay down the stranded debt.

It's fascinating: When I was doing my reading, a little bit of homework, this was the government that I think purchased land in Costa Rica for a rain forest. I think there were other governments involved in purchasing or paying for a yacht.

We've actually put the money back into the stranded debt. Five per cent is the amount they're able to keep and the rest goes to pay down the stranded debt. I don't know, but \$20.9 billion, to me, is a lot of money. Maybe it isn't to the honourable member.

Mr. Hampton: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wish to give notice of dissatisfaction—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): You can do that by filing with the table. New question.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): My question is to the Minister of Education. Sexual harassment, forcible confinement, criminal harassment, sexual assault: Those are the charges against a 16-year-old following what Christie Blatchford in the *Globe and Mail* today noted as a "campaign of terror" against a young teenager over an 18-month period of time. That campaign of terror took place in one of our public schools in this city, apparently without a teacher or a principal knowing that it was taking place. Minister, what do you have to say about that?

Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education): I'm sure that anyone in this House apprised of the details of that story extends the greatest of sympathy to the person affected.

Of course, we are constrained in this House not to discuss the details of an individual case like that. What I will say is this: We are, this week in fact, going to be strengthening the protections we have within the system, to make sure that for the first time in Ontario there is a comprehensive approach to activating every person—not just the teachers but every person on school property in terms of prevention of bullying. I would say that the kind of terror that is described in that article goes to the heart of why we—all of us—bear a responsibility to make sure that that finally happens.

Mr. Klees: Minister, this should be a wake-up call to you, as Minister of Education, to note that there's a serious supervision problem in that school. It should be a wake-up call to you that if it's happening in that school, it is probably happening in others.

My question to you is this: Will you now take seriously a warning that was issued to you by the Ontario Principals' Council following your negotiation of a collective agreement that strips supervision time from contracts throughout the province?

They said in that letter, and I quote: "Supervision is an issue that has been an ongoing concern for us, since a decrease in supervision time has a direct and negative impact on our ability to keep our schools safe. We are therefore alarmed to learn that school boards across the province appear to be negotiating this limit on supervision time without regard for the preconditions established in the memorandum."

Minister, will you undertake to ensure that supervision—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The question has been asked.

1450

Hon. Mr. Kennedy: I'm sure the honourable member opposite is not trying to link, in the juxtaposition of his questions, problems experienced by principals in some schools as the start-up of a new kind of arrangement at some schools where there is an absolute override that no compromise can be made to school safety or, indeed, to the cost to the board or the government. He knows that. And I'm sure the member opposite is not trying to link that at the commission, on anyone's part, with the tragedy in the article in the paper today because, if he is, he is linking a situation in which he does not have the facts—and we are constrained to deal with the facts in this House—to administrative things that are being worked out.

I've met with the principals' association. I've met with a number of the people involved. We have a provincial stability commission addressing that directly. What we need is what hasn't happened under the administration of the gentleman opposite and didn't happen in the previous government: a serious approach to detecting, preventing and stamping out bullying in our schools. It didn't take place under that previous government. I'm happy to tell you that this week we'll give you details on how it will take place under this government.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth): I have a question for the Attorney General. I want to follow up on the question by the Leader of the Opposition.

Lori Dupont, a nurse and single mother of an eight-year-old girl, was stabbed to death on the job at a hospital in Windsor. Ms. Dupont had feared for her safety for some time. The hospital took her concerns seriously but the justice system let her down. She applied for a peace bond against a former boyfriend and co-worker in April, but it was contested and the hearing was delayed until December, eight months later.

I want to ask you again, what is your government doing to ensure a prompt hearing in a situation where a woman's life is in danger, and to ensure that this never happens again?

Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General): I say again, as Mr. Hampton would have said when he was the Attorney General, that I can't speak to the specifics of the matter because a criminal investigation is underway.

A restraining order can be obtained as a civil remedy under family law. A person can get one from a court without the named person knowing about it. A peace bond, which was sought here under section 810 of the Criminal Code, is a criminal remedy available to anyone and, as such, the criminal process then takes over.

We are asking the very questions that the member is asking right now, to determine who knew what and when. I can assure the member that I share her concern, and I think every member of this Legislature shares her concern, to find out what happened and to see if there is anything that we can do to prevent it from happening in the future.

Ms. Churley: Minister, Gillian Hadley, May-Iles, and on and on—the very nature of the application was because she feared for her safety. Lori Dupont asked for a peace bond restraining order in April. She never got it, and now she never will.

Women are dying, and unfortunately your government seems more interested in saving money than in saving these women's lives. For years, women have asked for and recommendations have asked for standardized risk assessments in determining bail for better enforcement of restraining orders for action on the court backlogs that leave women waiting for peace bonds. And all we have are pilot projects.

How many more women are going to have to die before your government takes action and makes these pilot projects permanent? When, Minister, is it going to happen?

Hon. Mr. Bryant: Mr. Speaker, I am going to refer that supplementary to the minister responsible for women's issues.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues): It's very difficult to sit and listen to such a question when this member herself was at yet another announcement at the expert training panels on domestic violence this morning. She knows better than any that

this government has done more on this issue than any in history. We have an extremely large and all-encompassing domestic violence action plan. One of the largest pillars of this is the justice sector. While we are working diligently to review restraining orders so that they're done in a consistent way, in this case, the most tragic of all, in my own hometown, when I had to know about a nurse who was killed on the job, and you would suggest for a moment—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Order. Order. The member for Toronto–Danforth will come to order. I will name the member for Toronto–Danforth.

Minister.

Hon. Ms. Pupatello: All of us in this House know that one of the significant pillars of our action plan is the justice sector. What we know happened over this past weekend, those kinds of—

Interjection.

The Speaker: I name the member for Toronto–Danforth, Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley was escorted from the chamber.

PRIX D'EXCELLENCE

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell): Ma question s'adresse à la ministre de la Culture.

Au début du mois, vous avez participé à la remise des Prix d'excellence pour les subventions bien méritées de la Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario, édition 2005. Parmi les finalistes éligibles pour obtenir un prix était le spectacle l'Écho d'un peuple de Francoscénie, qui a eu lieu dans ma circonscription lors des deux derniers étés. Madame la Ministre, pouvez-vous partager avec nous quels sont les Prix d'excellence, et comment Francoscénie est-elle venue à être nommée finaliste pour un de ces prix?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones): Premièrement, je voudrais remercier le député de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell pour sa participation à l'événement, et aussi tous ceux et celles qui ont participé. Alors, un gros merci.

Lancés en 2002 par la Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario, les Prix d'excellence pour les subventions bien méritées rendent hommage aux organismes qui ont su profiter des subventions octroyées par la fondation pour créer des retombées au sein de leur communauté et pour l'ensemble de la population ontarienne. L'édition 2005 des Prix d'excellence présente de magnifiques exemples de subventions ayant servi à promouvoir davantage la mission de la Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario, qui est de favoriser l'épanouissement des communautés saines et dynamiques en Ontario en investissant dans des initiatives communautaires qui renforcent les capacités du secteur bénévole.

Les Prix d'excellence pour les subventions bien méritées sont décernés dans les quatre secteurs de financement de la fondation : arts et culture, environne-

ment, services sociaux, sports et loisirs. Les finalistes des Prix d'excellence pour les subventions bien méritées ont été choisis parmi 3 800 bénéficiaires. Je suis—

Le Président (L'hon. Michael A. Brown): Merci. Thank you.

M. Lalonde: Merci, madame la Ministre. C'était en effet un prix bien mérité pour un spectacle très éducatif sur l'histoire des Franco-Ontariens. Pour la population de Prescott et Russell—oui, je dis la meilleure circonscription de l'Ontario—l'Écho d'un peuple de Francoscénie est plus qu'un spectacle musical à grand déploiement qui célèbre 400 ans de présence francophone en Amérique du Nord. Lancée en 2004, l'Écho d'un peuple est la plus importante réalisation artistique de la région. Cette production a attiré plus de 30 000 spectateurs durant sa première saison, puis elle a remporté le prestigieux prix Trille Or de l'Association des professionnels de la chanson et de la musique, décerné au meilleur événement musical en 2005.

Comment la Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario a-t-elle contribué au succès de Francoscénie et de l'Écho d'un peuple, ainsi qu'au succès des organismes qui ont bénéficié d'une subvention de la Fondation Trillium?

L'hon. M^{me} Meilleur: Oui, en effet, comme j'ai dit tantôt, Francoscénie a remporté le Prix d'excellence dans la catégorie arts et culture. Francoscénie a reçu de la Fondation Trillium en 2005 une subvention de 30 000 \$. Les retombées de la production musicale ont atteint plus d'un million de dollars dans la région de Prescott-Russell. Les bénévoles ont bâti la scène, ont préparé le spectacle, et sont montés sur les planches soir après soir.

Cet argent a servi également à faire la promotion du spectacle. Ce spectacle, une vitrine sur l'histoire des francophones de l'Ontario, est maintenant un outil d'enseignement dans les écoles de langue française. L'Écho d'un peuple témoigne en fait de l'esprit d'une communauté, la communauté francophone de Prescott-Russell.

Je voudrais féliciter tous ceux et celles qui, de près et de loin, ont travaillé à la réalisation de ce spectacle extraordinaire. Merci.

1500

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): My question is for the Minister of Health. On October 17, Suzanne Aucoin from St. Catharines and 21 other cancer patients attended question period. I asked a question seeking your support for their cancer treatments in Ontario. Since then, Suzanne Aucoin has been rejected twice by your government. It took your government two days to reject her application for out-of-province coverage for life-saving intravenous chemotherapy treatment. She is maxing out her Visa card to simply stay alive to receive these treatments near Buffalo. My question to you, Minister: Why isn't your ministry working with this young woman to help save her life?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): The government of Ontario, through

its agency Cancer Care Ontario, is working actively every day to save the lives of people with cancer. This has included, of course, significant new investments in regional cancer centres and a more than 1,000% increase in new cancer drug funding. These, I think, speak of our commitment to addressing issues that people have related to cancer.

There will be circumstances when people seek treatments that are made available in other parts of the world. In accordance with that, the Health Services Appeal and Review Board is involved to offer appeals on any decisions related to out-of-province coverage. It has always been the case that there are treatments available in the world that the government of Ontario is or has not been in a position to fund. As we rely on scientific evidence as the basis for these decisions, I continue to rely on people like that for advice.

Mr. Jackson: I think Suzanne Aucoin came to Queen's Park today, as she is in the gallery, trying to seek support from her Minister of Health. You see, her application for out-of-province coverage, containing some 25 pages, also included an article in the Mississauga News of July 13, wherein one Mario Codispoti is getting treatment—the exact same treatment for the exact same cancer. He's having it paid for by your ministry, and yet Suzanne Aucoin's was rejected.

This is what the Codispoti family said about this process: "The whole process is absolutely disgusting and criminal. What the government is doing is deciding if people live or if they die."

Minister, we know of four cases where you're paying for treatment in Buffalo. We would ask you again, why are bureaucrats in your ministry deciding that Mario should live and that Suzanne should die?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: I suppose it's very nice to offer some suggestion that it's bureaucrats. But the honourable member, who served as an associate minister in this very same ministry, understands the process well. He knows that the process is one that, like in many other ways related to the delivery of health care services, involves scientific advice. Accordingly, not all treatments are well suited to the same individuals, not all presentations are identical, and science is used to determine these very, very difficult circumstances. I'm very happy to take up the suggestion that the honourable member offers to try to help determine if that's the case, as I believe it is. But I do think that it has been a long-standing circumstance in our province that we have depended upon clinical advice to guide us in these very, very important decisions. That is the case that has been followed in this circumstance, but at the honourable member's suggestion, we will take it up again.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a question to the Minister of Health. Last Monday, staff at Bluewater Health in Sarnia were told that 10 of the 13 security personnel will be laid off in April 2006. These job losses relate directly to your demand that the hospital

balance its budget by the end of this fiscal year. Management and front-line staff are very concerned about how these job cuts will impact on the safety of patients, staff and visitors who access the hospital sites. My question is, how will you guarantee the safety of everyone who uses Bluewater Health in the face of these cuts?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Bluewater, like all other hospitals in the province of Ontario, has received significant new funding this year, as they have in each of the past two years that it has been our privilege to offer funding to Ontario's hospitals. At the same time, Bluewater is obligated to be a hospital that operates well in comparison to its peer hospitals. It had started out a process that included peer review with the active engagement of a CEO from a local hospital, with a view toward trying to help Bluewater get its cost basis in a fashion that is consistent with its peer hospitals, which is appropriate.

This is a community where we wish to make a significant new capital announcement. Accordingly, I can confirm that the local community and the peer reviewer from a local hospital have been working through solutions to address these underlying concerns. We believe in community-based governments, and accordingly, we have been supportive of the actions of the board to address the underlying fiscal circumstances there.

Ms. Martel: The question concerns security at the hospital. You see, Bluewater Health now has 13 full-time security staff 24 hours a day at the two hospital sites. The cuts mean that there will not be full-time staff at the Norman Street site, where Alzheimer's patients reside. Those cuts are in addition to the eight to nine orderlies who are also going to be laid off at the Alzheimer's unit in January. Nurses who work in the methadone clinic have also expressed concerns that if things go wrong in the clinic, they will not be physically able to restrain patients. Management, for its part, is suggesting that dietary, housekeeping and custodial staff be trained to respond to code white situations involving violent patients. I think that response is unacceptable.

I again ask the Minister of Health: These cuts are happening because you have demanded that the hospital balance its budget, so what are you going to do to protect the safety of the staff, the patients and the visitors who access these sites?

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: The honourable member is suffering from the same malady as her colleague in the front row, which is limited memory, because the circumstances are such that the honourable member asking the question was part of a government that brought forward a multi-\$100-million cut to hospitals. There are only two parties in this Legislature that have done that, and they're both on that side of the House.

We continue to support the efforts that local hospitals will make because we fundamentally believe in community-based governance, that people closer to the action will be in a position to make those decisions.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: I'm heckled by the former Minister of Health. She was part of a government that

was often very used to installing supervisors to take over hospitals.

We believe in community-based governance, and accordingly, we have supported the actions that Bluewater Health has taken to get their hospital in a circumstance where it compares favourably to its peer hospitals, which we think is appropriate, not only in that community, but in all other communities as well.

STUDENT DROPOUT RATE

Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale): My question is for the Minister of Education. When our government came to office, we promised we would improve the education system in Ontario. Specifically, we promised to address the rising dropout rate experienced during the previous government's mandate. My constituents are happy that there is a new tone of co-operation between teachers, school boards and the Ontario government, but they want to ensure that our government is accountable when it comes to education. They want tangible proof that our plan is really working. Minister, how do we know that our government's plan is producing real, tangible results?

Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education): I want to thank the honourable member for his question. There is no doubt that it is important that we have a climate, for the first time in probably 10 or 15 years, that is actually one of co-operation between the different sectors within education, but it does only set a platform for progress. I'm pleased to report to this House that we have already seen some increase in terms of graduation rates. The legacy of the previous government is a 56% four-year graduation rate, compared to 80% in some other provinces: We have that up to 60%. The five-year graduation rate was 68%; it's now up to about 71% or 72%.

Those are numbers. What really matters is that there are 6,000 students who now have a better future, people who have a diploma and access to what to do. Those are results that we hope will be held to account for every initiative that the government has, that students are materially better off and have better access to their future because their education, finally, is working for them.

Mr. Zimmer: While the decrease in the dropout rate is good news for my constituents, I'd like to know how our government plans to bring down the dropout rate even further and provide pathways for at-risk students in my riding of Willowdale.

Hon. Mr. Kennedy: There's the critic from the third party laughing on the other side of the House when there are still 45,000 students who need access to a better future. It will take a considered initiative, and it deserves the support of the member opposite. It deserves the support of all members in this House. The high school graduation rate needs to be based on the accomplishment of a high standard for a lot more of the students we have. This is not a reflection of their potential. It may be a reflection of the commitment from previous govern-

ments—that may be possible—but I wouldn't even ascribe it completely there.

This fall there are student success teachers in every school in the province. They are providing individualized attention, as they should, to every struggling student. In addition, we're soon bringing forward legislation that will help create a framework for success. But most importantly, there are programs to bring students into success in the different courses we have in high school, to make sure they have the best chance possible—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Thank you.

1510

METIS NATION AGREEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. A few short weeks ago, when speaking about Kashechewan, both you and the Premier said that you wish the federal government would honour its agreements with aboriginal people. Minister, why are you now breaking your agreement with the Métis Nation of Ontario?

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): I'd like to say to the member that the Metis are hunting in the vast majority of the land base of Ontario, probably up to about 85% of it. This is an area where we recognize the historical connection of the hunt and to communities, as was spelled out in Powley Supreme Court decision two years ago. What we've entered into is a four-point framework agreement that we carry on the research together to ensure there is that historical connection in the rest of the province.

Mr. Miller: Minister, you didn't answer my question. I know about the four-point agreement. That's why Tony Belcourt, president of the Métis Nation of Ontario, and Gary Lipinski were here at Queen's Park today doing a press conference, because you, the Premier and the Attorney General, according to Tony Belcourt, were personally involved in negotiating this four-point agreement, and they like the agreement. It's very specific, it's responsible, it's limited and controlled, it has a maximum number of 1,250 harvester licences and it's in their traditional areas.

The question is, you made this agreement with them; why are you not honouring it? Why are you not keeping your word and fulfilling the agreement you made? Why are you forcing them into the courts now? Who will benefit, other than lawyers, from this court action?

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: As in most agreements, the difference here is how one interprets that agreement, and we have a difference of interpretation with this agreement. I think the member must understand, like other members of the House, that nobody in the Ontario Legislature or the government of Ontario can confer rights upon anybody in this province. That is something the Supreme Court would do or the Parliament of Canada through constitutional amendments. Therefore, we have to work under the letter of the law, which in this case is the Powley decision from the Supreme Court.

We are, quite frankly, interpreting that decision very generously in our agreement with the MNO. We continue to work with them and certainly ask them to come to the table and continue to work with us.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): My question is to the Minister of Energy. On Friday, Metal Technologies in Woodstock announced it was closing its doors and laying off 160 employees. The plant, which is a fixture in Woodstock, has been in operation for over 100 years. It makes automotive castings.

Metal Technologies is not alone, though. This year alone, 42,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in the province of Ontario. From steel to forest products to auto casting operations, the McGuinty hydro policy is killing jobs.

Minister, what are you going to do to stop the damage being done to the Ontario manufacturing sector due to your job-killing hydro policy? How about listening to the association of major power users and return OPG's \$181 million in profits to Ontario families and manufacturing companies?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): This is the same party that not long ago was condemning these corporations for X number of things—taxes, and doing all sorts of things to the public—and now you've become some sort of saviour. I find it absolutely fascinating.

I think I said earlier that in fact 5% is a recoverable amount from OPG that goes to their base earnings and the rest of it goes to pay off the stranded debt.

We also are conveniently forgetting that Woodstock is going to get a new green plant at Toyota and the fact that DMI has just come into Fort Erie with a new wind turbine plant.

Ms. Horwath: Unfortunately, the number of jobs leaving the province of Ontario in the manufacturing sector far, far outweighs the ones we're gaining.

At that point in time, that company had already invested, in 2004, \$8 million in a capital retooling project and was doing everything it could possibly do to be competitive. But in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario, energy-intensive companies in forest products, steel and auto casting just can't make it because of your another-one-bites-the-dust, job-killing energy policy.

The association of major power users is asking your government to return to the people and businesses of Ontario the \$181 million in profits that OPG pocketed because of this summer's long heat wave. I'm asking the same of you, Minister. I'm asking you to give back OPG's summer bonus bucks that they gained over three months this past summer. Will you take the advice of the Stelcos, Dofascos and Alcans of Ontario and rebate the \$181 million? Will you at least do that?

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: I don't know how many times I have to say this: OPG retains 5%. The rest of the money goes to pay down the stranded debt. It does not go into anybody's pocket.

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): So everything's OK.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: Well, what has happened, as a matter of fact—

Interjection.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: It was OK when you lost 1,000 jobs a week in the previous government?

Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): You, 1,000 a week.

Hon. Mrs. Cansfield: A thousand a week. The fact of the matter is, it's a \$20.9-billion debt. It has to be paid down. All Ontarians benefit from this when that debt is paid down. You may not like it, but the fact of the matter is that \$3 billion in new money has come into this province with the new generation, both renewable and non-, in the last while. That is a fact.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex): My question is for the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. Municipalities are strapped for cash and face significant challenges to invest appropriately in their important and much-needed infrastructure projects. This government is creating and improving viable tools for municipal governments to build, renovate and finance their local infrastructure needs. One of those tools is the Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority, or OSIFA. Minister, could you tell us more about this innovative tool for municipal infrastructure financing?

Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader): I want to thank the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex for the question. The Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority, or OSIFA, is a tool that we created to allow municipalities to access low-cost, long-term and fixed-rate financing to meet critical municipal infrastructure projects.

Back in the 2005 budget, the finance minister announced that OSIFA is being broadened to support provincial infrastructure initiatives in the university sector and in municipal tourism, culture and recreation. OSIFA's infrastructure renewal loan program for municipalities is currently helping more than 160 Ontario communities meet their infrastructure investment objectives. Pooled financing through OSIFA enables our government and, more importantly, our public sector partners to renew critical municipal infrastructure, long-term-care homes, universities and housing infrastructure projects. I'll have more in the supplementary.

1520

Mrs. Van Bommel: I want to thank the minister for his answer. I know that municipalities in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex are looking forward to using and applying for this excellent infrastructure financing tool. The municipalities of North Middlesex and Adelaide-Metcalf have already received approvals of loans for \$12.8 million and \$420,000 respectively to

renew their public infrastructure. The municipality of Chatham-Kent and the counties of Lambton and Middlesex have already qualified for substantial loans. This financing program is helping municipalities in Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and all across the province tackle their infrastructure deficit. The expansion of this program exemplifies the way in which OSIFA and this government are working with Ontario's communities to maintain a strong working relationship and a prosperous future. Minister, can you please tell the Legislature and the people of Ontario how the program is helping their communities meet their infrastructure objectives now and in the—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The question has been asked. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Caplan: I'd like to share what a success story OSIFA has been with all members of the Legislature.

Speaker, you'd be interested to know that a majority of municipalities, in fact fully 88% of those borrowing from OSIFA, are smaller communities, with populations of less than 100,000 residents. Smaller communities, especially smaller rural and northern communities, achieve significant savings by borrowing through OSIFA.

But that's not all. Larger communities are also benefiting from OSIFA's low-cost, long-term, fixed-rate financing. All municipalities, large and small, urban and rural, can secure low interest rates for the entire life of the loan. To date, OSIFA has committed to provide more than 160 Ontario communities with up to \$2 billion in low-cost, longer-term loans for over 1,000 local infrastructure projects. OSIFA's infrastructure renewal loans are making a real difference in communities right across Ontario—

The Speaker: Thank you very much. New question.

COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRES

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): My question is for the Minister of Health. Despite the rhetoric about democratic renewal and public consultation, there has been no consultation with health stakeholders in this province about the new agenda in health, which many consider to be a hidden agenda, which includes the LHINs. We now learn that the government plans to reduce the number of community care access centres from 42 to 14. Minister, can you confirm that you will be reducing community care access centres from 42 to 14?

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): Quite to the contrary of the honourable member's suggestion, there has been an extensive amount of consultation, not only involving me personally, but my deputy minister has been doing a very, very extensive round of consultation.

We are working very hard in the ministry at the moment on a piece of legislation that will be forthcoming before the end of this session. I can't confirm for the honourable member all of the contents of that, but I can

assure her that as it moves forward, we'll be looking for the opportunity to bring it to the House, to have a debate here in this chamber, and presumably as well for the bill, with all-party support, to go out for some further committee work. I would just want to let the honourable member know that that's forthcoming. And in keeping with our tradition to date, the honourable member will mostly certainly be briefed in advance of the presentation of any such legislation.

Mrs. Witmer: Despite what the minister says, we do know that health stakeholders are increasingly becoming more concerned about the government's secret agenda. It all started with Bill 8, the attempt to eliminate hospital boards. I can also tell you they have now been informed that CCACs are going to be reduced to 14.

This minister talks about consultation. Consultation, for the Ministry of Health, involves someone getting a letter or someone getting a phone call, and, more often than not, being asked not to talk about it publicly.

I would ask the minister: If you are going to reduce the CCACs to 14, have you conducted an independent analysis of the cost of CCAC consolidation? Have you submitted this cost in submissions to cabinet, and if so, can you tell us how much this decision is going to cost, because there are going to be severance costs, legal costs—

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): The question has been asked.

The Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: There would be, of course, with any significant changes to health care, one-term costs associated with it. But I want to return to the issue that the honourable member raised, which I really think is very, very unfair and quite unfortunate too. She speaks more specifically about a lack of consultation in the context of community care access centres. Obviously, you have some connection to these people, since you put many of them in place after you took away the responsibilities and powers of communities to appoint their own boards to community care access centres.

It was a steaming day in July or August in room 247 when I had all of the leadership of community care access centres here for a consultation. It was only two weeks ago that I spent quite a long period of time on a conference call with those same organizations. So to suggest, as the honourable member had, that there is no dialogue going on, that there is no consultation going on, that our affairs are being conducted in a private fashion, is regrettable and erroneous.

PETITIONS

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads:

“Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent on the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community.”

I affix my name with full support.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition that has been sent to me by Mr. Charles Plourde of North York, Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

“Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

“Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

“Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new ... drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of patients.”

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): I have a petition here from a group of people in Brampton, Mississauga and Oakville to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario regarding access to trades and professions, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario enjoys the continuing benefit of the contributions of men and women who choose to leave their country of origin in order to settle in Canada, raise

their families, educate their children and pursue their livelihoods and careers; and

“Whereas newcomers to Canada who choose to settle in Ontario find frequent and unnecessary obstacles that prevent skilled tradespeople, professional and managerial talent from practising the professions, trades and occupations for which they have been trained in their country of origin; and

“Whereas Ontario, its businesses, its people and its institutions badly need the professional, managerial and technical skills that many newcomers to Canada have and want to use;

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

“That the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the other institutions and agencies of and within the government of Ontario, undertake specific and proactive measures to work with the bodies regulating access to Ontario’s professions, trades and other occupations in order that newcomers to Canada gain fair, timely and cost-effective access to certification and other measures that facilitate the entry, or re-entry, of skilled workers and professionals trained outside Canada into the Canadian workforce.”

I affix my signature to this petition and ask page Stephen to carry it for me.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I have a petition here from the staff at Simcoe Community Services in Orillia and Barrie. It reads:

“Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent on the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community.”

I’m more than happy to sign this, and I’ll pass it over to Nathan to present to you.

1530

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls): I’m pleased to present this petition on behalf of the riding of Niagara

Falls, signed by a number of people, including Yvonne and Bruce Walker. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet), there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered.

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

“There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment costs for this disease are astronomical for most” individuals “and add a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance” plan.

I’m pleased to sign this petition in support.

FREDERICK BANTING HOMESTEAD

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Sir Frederick Banting was the man who discovered insulin and was Canada’s first Nobel Prize recipient; and

“Whereas this great Canadian’s original homestead, located in the town of New Tecumseth, is deteriorating and in danger of destruction because of the inaction of the Ontario Historical Society; and

“Whereas the town of New Tecumseth, under the leadership of Mayor Mike MacEachern and former Mayor Larry Keogh, has been unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the Ontario Historical Society to use part of the land to educate the public about the historical significance of the work of Sir Frederick Banting;

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

“That the Minister of Culture and the Liberal government step in to ensure that the Banting homestead is kept in good repair and preserved for generations to come.”

I have signed, and agree with, that petition.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition that has been signed by 160 people and sent to me by Shirley Cornes of Aurora, Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

“Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exemption under the Ontario drug benefit plan, with no such exemption policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

“Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the

willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

“Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new ... drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exemptions to meet the needs of patients.”

I agree with the petitioners, and I have affixed my signature to this.

PROSTATE CANCER

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): I’m pleased to stand and support my seatmate, the member for Niagara Falls, in this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s health insurance plan does not cover the cost of the PSA (prostate specific antigen) test as an early method of detection for prostate cancer in men;

“Whereas mammogram tests for women are fully covered by the Ontario insurance plan for early detection of breast cancer, and the PSA test for men is only covered once the physician suspects prostate cancer,

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

“We support Bill 201. We believe PSA testing should be covered as an insured service by the Ontario health insurance program. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canadian men. At least one in every eight Canadian men is expected to develop the disease in their lifetime. Some five million Canadian men are currently at risk in their prostate-cancer-risk years, which are between the ages of 45 and 70. For many seniors and low-income earners, the cost of the test would buy up to a week’s worth of groceries for some individuals.”

This is a very powerful petition. I’m pleased to affix my signature to it and to ask page Kumail to carry it down for me.

GAMMA FOUNDRIES

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas all residents in the town of Richmond Hill have the right to enjoy their homes, property, neighbourhood and to breathe clean air; and

“Whereas Gamma Foundries, a division of Victaulic Co. of Canada Ltd., is clearly the identifiable and documented source of noxious fumes and odours in the Newkirk Road area of Richmond Hill; and

“Whereas Gamma Foundries has persistently failed to respond to the legitimate concerns of the community regarding these odours and emissions; and

“Whereas Gamma Foundries has refused to initiate engineering solutions to these issues as identified in a report by EarthTech and as ordered by the Ministry of the Environment; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has specifically directed Gamma Foundries to initiate engineered controls to address the adverse effects of these pollutants;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario and the Minister of the Environment to take all measures possible to enforce the provincial officer’s order issued on November 3, 2005, and to ensure that residents are afforded the right to enjoy their property and neighbourhood as is their right under law.”

I’m pleased to affix my personal signature to this petition, and I trust that the wishes of the residents will be adhered to.

IMMIGRANTS’ SKILLS

Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls): I’m pleased to introduce this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario enjoys the continuing benefit of the contributions of men and women who choose to leave their country of origin in order to settle in Canada, raise their families, educate their children and pursue their livelihoods and careers; and

“Whereas newcomers to Canada who choose to settle in Ontario find frequent and unnecessary obstacles that prevent skilled tradespeople, professional and managerial talent from practising the professions, trades and occupations for which they have been trained in their country of origin; and

“Whereas Ontario, its businesses, its people and its institutions badly need the professional, managerial and technical skills that many newcomers to Canada have and want to use;

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

“That the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and other institutions and agencies of and within the government of Ontario, undertake specific and proactive measures to work with the bodies regulating access to Ontario’s professions, trades and other occupations in order that newcomers to Canada gain fair, timely and cost-effective access to certification and other measures that facilitate the entry, or re-entry, of skilled workers and professionals trained outside Canada into the Canadian workforce.”

I’m pleased to sign this petition.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the federal Income Tax Act at present has a minimum amount of medical expense for which a

taxpayer is entitled to claim a non-refundable income tax credit;

“Whereas the” tax “and medical expenses of every citizen in the province of Ontario, great or small, affects their overall net income;

“Whereas the Ontario Liberal government moved in their 2004 budget on May 18 ... to delist publicly funded medical services such as chiropractic services, optometry examinations and physiotherapy services,

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

“That the Income Tax Act remove the present minimum amount of medical expense for which an Ontario taxpayer is entitled to claim a non-refundable income tax credit.”

I'm pleased to sign this in support of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

“Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

“Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors,

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community.”

I have also signed this.

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): It's my pleasure again to support my seatmate, the member for Niagara Falls, in this petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, which reads as follows:

“Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet), there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry) that are not covered.

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

“There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment costs for this disease are astronomical for most constituents and add a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of

sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program.”

Speaker, it's a very powerful petition. I'm pleased to affix my signature to it and to once again ask page Kumail to carry it for me.

1540

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET MEASURES ACT, 2005

LOI DE 2005

SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 31, 2005, on the motion for second reading of Bill 197, An Act to implement budget measures / Projet de loi 197, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures budgétaires.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): I'm pleased to join the debate on Bill 197, the Budget Measures Act. That is what we're talking about today, correct? Thank you very much. It took me a little off guard there. I wasn't sure that I was on the roster right now.

So, the Budget Measures Act—yes, I guess I would ask just what this budget had—

Interjection: Just say it's a great budget.

Mr. Yakabuski: Who said that? I wish I could say that. There used to be great budgets in this House, but that was at another time—a better time.

What is in this budget for hard-working families, seniors, fixed-income people and businesses trying to keep their heads above water? What is in this budget for them? Nothing. It just simply is one of this government's—it goes back to last year. There's no credibility; none whatsoever. In fact, there's a poll out: They're rating the Premier. How many people believe he's unbelievable? And I don't mean “unbelievable” like, “That shooting star was unbelievable.” He is a falling star; there is no question about that. He is a falling star, falling rapidly, and he is viewed as being very unbelievable by an amazing 21% of the people polled in this province. That is a scandalously high figure for a Premier in the middle of a term. And why has he reached those kinds of numbers? Because you can't believe a word he says. You simply can't believe it. The people have accepted that this man does not keep his promises—

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Clearly in this House either we have a rule that you can't say that somebody's misleading or not telling the truth, or you don't have the rule. If the rule is that you can, then I'll do that later on. But if it isn't, the member just violated that rule—

The Deputy Speaker: I'll listen more carefully. I didn't hear those words, but if the member said them, I give him the opportunity to withdraw. In other words, you can continue as well.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If I said anything unparliamentary, I withdraw it, even without being asked, because that would certainly not be my intention. I'm simply trying to articulate the feeling of the electorate out there when it comes to their opinions on how much they can depend on the word of this government and this Premier.

In the Premier's own words, I guess whatever he says would be OK because he has admitted to the people of Ontario—finally. It took a long time for this act of contrition, but he did say in early October, "Yes, I broke my promise. I told the people of Ontario that I would do certain things, and I didn't do that." Some people would say that when you say you're going to do something and you don't do that, they could categorize you as being something unparliamentary. I'm not going to say that, but apparently the Premier has characterized himself as that kind of person. Those were his own words to the press in early October, that he didn't keep his promises. In fact, he didn't keep over 50 promises.

One of those such promises was, "I won't raise your taxes." He has admitted that he wasn't dependable on that promise; he didn't keep his word on that. Other promises, such very important ones—you see, he stood in front of the television cameras, in front of reporters with pen in hand, and they wrote it down verbatim, as Dalton McGuinty, then opposition leader, stood in September 2003 and said to the people of Ontario, "I won't raise your taxes." Plain and simple; no need for an explanation: "I won't raise your taxes." As a matter of fact, only four weeks before they tabled the first budget, he repeated that he would not raise your taxes, and now he is on record as having admitted that he did not keep that very significant promise.

But what did the breaking of that promise mean? It may have been something that the Premier took months and months to finally build the gumption to come out and admit. You see, everybody in the province knew that that was the fact anyway. He wasn't hiding anything any more. Everybody knew that he was a promise-breaker. That's what they called him. But what did those broken promises mean to the average family in this province? What they have meant is over \$2,000 out of their pockets as a result of the inability of this government to manage its affairs and keep its promises.

If you look at the revenue of this province, it has gone up substantially, because this government really doesn't want to manage the finances. It just wants to revert back to that old Liberal way, the easy way: "Let's just take as much money as we possibly can out of the pockets of hard-working families, of fixed-income seniors, of dedicated, committed business people in this province. Let's just take whatever we can out of their pockets and we will spend it as we see fit, because we are Liberals. We know better than anyone. No one is better positioned to

make the decisions for the people in the province of Ontario than us, the Liberals." That's exactly the philosophy they live by, so they've got to build those revenues.

If I can go off topic just for a moment here—not off topic. I wouldn't do that. But you see that same Liberal practice coming out of those hooligans in Ottawa.

Interjections.

Mr. Yakabuski: I withdraw that.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Yakabuski: I think there's actually a bar in Ottawa called Hooligan's, but anyway, that government in Ottawa—it's a disgrace to be running up the kinds of surpluses that they have run up on the backs of Canadians, and much of that surplus has been on the backs of Ontarians. The current government is embroiled in all kinds of scandals and nefarious acts, spinning it any way they possibly can to try to get something positive out of it, but what it comes down to, again, is that they have that same philosophy of just take whatever you can get out of the people, and then, when there's a problem, they just take the position, "We can fix it because we're going to spend some money on it." Of course they can spend money on it, because they've taken every red cent that people have in this country, and primarily out of the people of the province of Ontario.

1550

Getting back to Ontario now, you know what one fellow said to me? A constituent of mine said to me, "You know, every time I turn around, Dalton McGuinty has got his hand in my pocket. He is not going to be happy until finally he's going to reach in there and all he's going to get is lint. That's all he's going to get out of my pocket. He's going to get lint, because he's taken everything else that I've got, that I've worked for."

This was the province of opportunity, where you had unlimited potential to be whatever you wanted to be: to be successful, to be prosperous, because the opportunities were there, because government saw that this province had a tremendous potential to grow and rely on the expertise and the ingenuity of its people. This government has decided, "You know what? We're going to make all the decisions. We're going to make the world better."

You know one of the ways they think they're going to make the world better? Of course, when they were on this side of the House, they derided the former government for spending money on lawyers, private sector lawyers, when there are over 1,000 lawyers employed by the government.

I couldn't really believe it, but it's true; I have the documentation right in front of me: The current Attorney General—and this is from the Ottawa Citizen, a very reliable paper. I'm sure that the member for Ottawa-Orléans has a subscription to that, and he would concur that you could depend on this. "The former law firm of Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant and the firm where his wife is employed were among the highest-paid private firms retained by the ministry last year." Oh, they

were so against this practice. “Shame” on that former government, they shouted and screamed. Attorney General Michael Bryant was one of the loudest complainers that this was absolutely unacceptable. Do you know how much his former firm received from the province last year?

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): How much?

Mr. Yakabuski: Almost half a million dollars. You know what that would mean in people’s pockets in Renfrew county, people who are struggling to get by? Half a million dollars—\$487,000. I don’t want to exaggerate, so I’ll give you the exact amount: \$487,000. That was the fourth-highest bill for the ministry.

Lo and behold, coming in sixth place at a paltry \$442,000 is the Attorney General’s wife, Susan Abramovitch, a partner at Goodman and Carr, the sixth-highest total at \$442,000.

Look at this: More than 60 lawyers, including 15 from his former firm, McCarthy Tétrault, were among the individuals who made political contributions to Mr. Bryant’s mid-town Toronto constituency association in 2004.

The total paid to private lawyers: \$12 million. Contrast that to the amount being paid to rural Ontarians if they were to get their fair share of the gas tax, which this government does not pay to anyone except a municipality that has a public transportation system. Contrast that \$12 million to the figure that rural municipalities are getting as a result of their gas tax rebate. That would be zero; \$12 million, zero. I wonder if anyone out there sees some inequity there.

Another thing that’s a big concern to Ontario taxpayers is not just this \$12 million that they paid out to law firms—and a huge amount of that is friends of the Attorney General—but what about this Ontario municipal partnership fund that this government was so proud of when they brought it in last year? You know, when you go around the province and you balance the winners and the losers, they tell you all about the winners, but they don’t tell you about the losers and they don’t tell you the absolutely desperate situation they’re going to be putting these municipalities in over the next five years as this agreement flows forward to its conclusion. They’re not talking about that. I suppose there are a lot of municipalities out there that are very concerned—I know they’re concerned about it—but perhaps they’re hoping that the terms of this agreement will significantly exceed the life of this government, because they’re going to need a real plan that addresses the needs of municipalities, in particular, rural municipalities, in Ontario.

What about agriculture? We’ve had one of the worst farm income crises that farmers have ever dealt with in the last couple of -years, and what does this government do in this budget but whack the agriculture budget by 23%, reduce it by 23%. It’s lurching from crisis to crisis. They have absolutely no plan about how they’re going to deal with agriculture and food producers in the province of Ontario. They love to keep them dangling and hanging and praying that something will come out just before

desperation absolutely sets in. But they’re not interested in sitting down and working with people in the agricultural community to ensure that our food suppliers, who provide a tremendous amount of the economic activity—it’s the second-largest industry in this province. But the individual farmer is hurting significantly. Instead of addressing that, they prefer to lurch from crisis to crisis, and may ensure that farmers get action when they show up on the lawn of Queen’s Park. I would prefer to have our farmers working, increasing their productivity, supporting their families, as opposed to having to run down on their tractors to Queen’s Park to get some action out of this government.

A \$2.4-billion health tax: That was one of the biggest taxes, along with the other taxes, a hydro increase that they promised. They absolutely promised that they would maintain that hydro rate at 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour through 2006.

Interjection.

Mr. Yakabuski: It’s the promise we’re talking about, my friend, and they couldn’t break that soon enough.

What you really have to ask yourself, and this goes to the meat of the poll and the credibility of the Premier himself: Is this what we have gotten to in politics, that there was absolutely no intention, in any way, shape or form, for this party and this government to keep those promises? If that is what the plan was all along, then it’s no wonder that people have lost faith in politics and politicians.

1600

There is a committee doing its work right now on electoral reform, and there’s talk out there that we have to change, we have to improve the situation. They think that somehow they’re going to improve the situation by changing the way that people get here. That is not the problem facing government or the people in this province or any other democratically elected group under the British parliamentary system. The problem and the reason there’s a lack of confidence is because of what they see from governments once they are elected. There doesn’t seem to be a connection between what people say to get elected and what they do after they’re elected. If you want to restore confidence in the hearts and the minds of people, you have to accept and understand and commit that what you say when you’re campaigning for political office must match exactly what you do once elected.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I want to focus on these two points that were made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: One was the hydro rate cap, that broken promise; and the health tax, that broken promise.

You see, as one who was here at the time the Conservative government brought in the rate cap in the first place, because after deregulation and privatization of hydro, rates were going through the roof and there was a crisis—in November 2002, before the election, and I might have my dates wrong, the former government was

then forced to bring in the rate cap because it was clear that deregulation wasn't working. As a participant in the debate at the time, it was very clear that the government was being forced to subsidize the 4.3-cent rate cap. It was clear in the media and it was clear in discussions that went on in this House that that was not going to be sustainable. But what was interesting is that both the Liberals and the Conservatives voted together to implement the rate cap, even though it was very clear at the time that the government of Ontario was going to have to subsidize that significantly. So I'm always a little bit amused when I hear Liberals now talk about the fact that the reason they broke that promise was because it was just so expensive and the government was going to have to pay so much. We knew that. We knew that at the time the legislation first came forward under the Conservatives. It was very clear when we went into the election that that was going to continue if the Liberals were going to maintain their promise. So it was very clear it was a promise that really they had no intention of keeping.

Secondly, with respect to the premium, when the Conservatives were going through their leadership where Mr. Eves was elected, a number of Conservative leadership candidates were talking about the need for a premium. Mr. McGuinty was interviewed about this at the time. He said very clearly that Liberals would never bring in a premium, that it would force people to pay three times—once through their taxes, once through their pockets for other services, and once through the health care premium itself—and that was something that he would never do. Yet after the election, the Premier was very quick to reverse that. One of the first new taxes that came out, in fact the biggest tax, was this new health tax. I don't think they ever had an intention of keeping that promise either.

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): I listened very carefully to the comments of my friend from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, but let's hear what real people are saying about things in Ontario today. At the recent economic summit that was held, and I'm reading from a Toronto Star article of October 22: "David Naylor, president of the University of Toronto, who lavished praise on the Premier for pouring money into post-secondary education 'after years of neglect' and for emphasizing research and innovation in his policies.

"And after the speech, McGuinty was thanked by Buzz Hargrove, president of the Canadian Auto Workers ... who complimented the Premier for helping out the auto sector. 'The approach you are taking causes you to stand out,' gushed Hargrove. 'I'm absolutely honoured to thank you today.'

"Business leaders in the audience were also impressed by McGuinty. 'Quite frankly, he scored some points with the audience here,' said Len Crispino, president of the chamber of commerce.

"There is a sense that he is listening and trying to understand the issues that the business community is facing."

It also went on to say, "When Mike Harris was Premier, he never had the variety of connections that

McGuinty has. Harris had ties to the business community, yes, but not to academia. As for labour, forget about it."

When you look at sections of Bill 197, it's about building the foundation for the future. It's about investment in post-secondary education, an historic \$6.2 billion over the next four or five years. It's about education, providing more child care spaces, smaller classes and peace and stability in our school system. In health, it's about more doctors and nurses, shorter wait times and keeping people healthy. It's building a strong economy. When you look at the investments by Toyota and in other key sectors across the province, there is indeed good news; in fact, a measuring stick that's used quite often. The deficit has now been slashed in half through a sound budgeting process and the managerial talent that this government has.

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I'm pleased to add some comments to the speech by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to do with Bill 197, which is the budget bill. He started by talking about the poll that came out today showing that a full 21% of the people polled feel that the Premier is unbelievable, and that certainly is not surprising, I would say, based on the 50 broken promises the member listed that have happened in the last couple years, the most spectacular one, of course, being when the Premier said he wouldn't raise taxes and then brought in this \$900 health tax. We've been counting, and the increase in taxes and fees is now \$2,000 for the average family.

I'd like to talk today, though, about another commitment being broken by this government. I was at a press conference of the Métis Nation of Ontario—Tony Belcourt, the president, and Gary Lipinski, the chair of the negotiating committee—here at Queen's Park this morning. They negotiated an agreement with this government back in July 2004. I've seen lots of letters and the details of the four-point interim harvesting agreement. It's very specific—four points. It's only for those who have a harvester card; it's regulated; it's only in traditional areas. It was an agreement, as they said at the press conference this morning, that the Premier, the Attorney General at the time, Michael Bryant, and the Minister of Natural Resources were all personally involved in making, and now they're not honouring the agreement, so another broken promise, forcing the Métis Nation to come to Queen's Park and hold a press conference and go to court to fight this. I say, who's going to benefit in court? The answer to that is, no one other than the lawyers involved.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I want to dwell for a moment on the issue of truth that the member raised, because it's always an interesting one.

You know, I watched a budget in this—no, it wasn't in this House; it was outside of this House. I watched the coverage on television. It was held at an auto parts plant instead of in the House for the first time in the history of the province of Ontario, contrary to the advice of many sage people in politics. On that occasion, the minister of

the day said Ontario was projected to have a balanced budget. That was the last year of the Conservative government.

Everyone who was planning and putting together platforms and proposals for the future based them on the fact that the previous government was going to have a balanced budget. Lo and behold, when an independent arbitrator, in this case the outgoing Provincial Auditor, looked at the books when the new government assumed office, he found a \$5.6-billion deficit. We now have the interesting situation where Conservatives are saying, "Well, you shouldn't have believed us when we said we had a balanced budget. Foolish people: Didn't you people in opposition say you didn't believe us?" That's their defence. The defence is, "You shouldn't have believed what we said on that occasion." That is the problem that exists when new governments come in. You have a situation where they're basing it on the honesty of the previous government—the honest statements of the previous government—and we find out that the facts are different.

We, as a government, have brought in legislation that will make it mandatory for the Provincial Auditor, before the election, to state what the books of the province are, what the financial situation is. We may have our reward only in heaven for doing that, but I think that is a very positive step in the system of government that won't allow what happened with the previous Conservative government.

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, you have two minutes to reply.

1610

Mr. Yakabuski: I hope I see some of those folks in heaven. Anyhow, I would like to thank the members from Nickel Belt, Peterborough, my colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka and the government House leader from St. Catharines.

What people are experiencing in this province under this government is one heck of a tough situation: higher taxes—significantly higher taxes—higher electricity rates and health taxes that they were promised they would not be subjected to. And this government does it all under the guise of improving services and going to fix things. We know that in the health care field there have been none of the improvements that they talk about. As a matter of fact, there is a real mess going on with these LHINs and the replacing of the health councils. They talked about giving power to the people, but now they want to reduce the number of CCACs.

It's all about centralizing power in the minister's office. This whole government is all about centralizing power: taking everything you've got, controlling the situation and making all the decisions—the Liberal way. As far as the member from St. Catharines talking about 2003, the people of the province of Ontario have not forgotten the unusual, catastrophic events experienced by this province in the year 2003, something that this government has not had to deal with in any way, shape or form. It's been moving along smoothly for them. Revenues are way up, but what do they do? They squander it.

Rather than invest it in dealing with some of the situations that we have, they just continue to rake more off the taxpayers and not deal with the deficit in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Ms. Martel: It's a pleasure for me to participate in the debate on Bill 197, the budget bill, this afternoon. I'm going to focus on three issues: firstly, the P3 hospitals; secondly, hospital cuts; and thirdly, autism funding.

Let me begin with the P3 hospitals, which I have a particular interest in of course, because a privately financed hospital has been announced in my own community, a community where construction on phase II of the Sudbury Regional Hospital has now been stalled under the Liberals for as long as it was stalled under the Conservatives. Hopefully, there might be some construction that will actually proceed, finally, in 2006.

But you see, I would like Dalton McGuinty to live up to the election promise that he made with respect to new hospitals and redevelopment of hospitals, the promise that he made before and during the last election, because Mr. McGuinty was very clear that if elected, it was his intention as the leader of the Liberals to publicly finance the construction of new hospitals and the redevelopment of Ontario hospitals. That was his commitment.

It's probably worth putting on the record one more time some of what he said about this very issue. Before the election, on May 28, 2003, the Ottawa Citizen—the reporter was one Rod MacIvor—said the following. This is a quote that he attributes to Dalton McGuinty, and I put quotations around it: "What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing (of health care)." The article continues. In brackets again—these quotes are attributed to Mr. McGuinty: "Mr. McGuinty warned recently that if the Liberals are elected in the provincial election now expected in the fall, they will stop private sector financing of hospitals, the so-called P3s, which the Conservative government is pushing as the way of the future." Third quote, same article, attributed to Mr. McGuinty in the Ottawa Citizen: "Mr. McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements."

Now, that was before the election. But then during the election, Mr. McGuinty had some more to say about private financing of hospitals. He said this, again to the Ottawa Citizen, Wednesday, September 24, 2003. There were about 10 days to go before the end of the election, so it's right in the middle. Dave Rogers is reporting: "Ontario Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty has said the Royal Ottawa Hospital expansion will go ahead because Ottawa needs a new psychiatric hospital, but a Liberal government would cancel the deal with the private consortium because public-private partnerships are a waste of money."

You know what? Dalton McGuinty is absolutely right. I agree with what Mr. McGuinty said before the election and during the election: that public-private partnerships

are a waste of money, and that these partnerships would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements.

Why is that? Traditionally, in major infrastructure projects like hospitals, colleges, universities and schools, the government goes out and borrows the money from a financial institution for the construction that's going to take place. And because it's the government that goes out and borrows the money, they get the best interest rate on the amount of money that is borrowed. Government always gets the best interest rate on the amount of money that is borrowed. Government has traditionally paid that amount of money off over a 25- to 30-year period. With the changes that have taken place in the reporting of financing in this province, it is very clear that this government would have only had to show on the books the debt that was accumulated in any given year for the amount of money borrowed for a specific project in that year. There would not have been a tremendous addition to the debt of the government, because all that would appear on the province's books is exactly the amount of money that has been borrowed and used for construction purposes in the said fiscal year.

The second reason why it's much more expensive to privately finance this hospital, or these hospitals, is because the private sector is in this game to make some money. That's why they're stepping up to the plate. When government goes and borrows the money, the government is not interested in sticking it to the taxpayers and making a profit off of these huge construction projects. That's not the role of government, nor should it be. So the costs increase when the private sector goes to the market to borrow the money for these construction projects, because the interest rate that the private sector gets to borrow money is higher than the interest rate that the government would ever pay, and secondly, added in to the cost is that profit margin, 15% or 20%, that the private sector consortium is wanting to make off of that project.

That's why Mr. McGuinty was right, before and during the last election, when he said so clearly that these public and private sector financing arrangements cost more money.

Isn't it interesting, though, that after the election he forgot what he said? After the election, with respect to Brampton and with respect to the Royal Ottawa Hospital, Mr. McGuinty moved right along and signed those deals for private sector financing of both of those projects. Do you know that with the case of the Brampton hospital, which has an estimated cost of about \$550 million for that important project, the additional cost to the taxpayers of the province because of private financing is another \$175 million? That's \$175 million more that the taxpayers are going to pay to complete the Brampton hospital because it's privately financed instead of publicly financed. You know what? That's \$175 million that could have been used for front-line patient care, for programs and services to benefit patients in our hospitals, or for programs and services to enhance community ser-

vices, or for new programs and services in health care for the people of Ontario.

The problem is, that's only one project. That's the estimated additional cost to the taxpayers of the province of Ontario: \$175 million for only one project. But this government, through the budget, has gone forward and announced, I suspect, at least a dozen if not 15 other communities that will now have to have their hospital projects privately financed, driving up the costs in those communities too. Imagine how much more the taxpayers of the province are going to pay for each and every one of those privately financed hospitals. Imagine how much we're going to pay as a cumulative total to complete those projects.

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These projects should be publicly financed, just like Dalton McGuinty promised in the last election. That was the commitment he made to voters, specifically to voters in his own community. The reason they should be publicly financed is because government gets the best bang for the buck. After all, we're talking about bucks that go back to the taxpayers of the province of Ontario. If we publicly finance these hospitals like we should, like Mr. McGuinty promised, then that's a whole lot more money that would be freed up for programs and services in health care, be they in the hospital system or community-based.

Now, it's interesting that in Sault Ste. Marie, where one of these privately financed schemes has also been announced, one of the outlying municipalities has just sent a letter to the Ministry of Health. I've got a copy of it, dated November 8. It's a resolution that was passed at a regular council meeting with respect to this P3 proposal or, as the Liberals like to call it, alternative financing procurement strategy—the same deal as the Tories, privately financed, just a different name. Here's what council and the mayor agreed to and sent as a resolution to Minister Smitherman:

“Whereas the province of Ontario has announced funding for the new Sault Area Hospital under the alternative financing and procurement strategy; and

“Whereas the alternate financing and procurement strategy is a mechanism where private funds are used for the construction of the new hospital; and

“Whereas the province is expecting a percentage of the funding to be provided by the city of Sault Ste. Marie and surrounding municipalities; and

“Whereas the surrounding municipalities are being asked to provide a \$5-million contribution with no clear formula for calculating individual municipalities' percentages; and

“Whereas the AFP strategy is unclear and our fear is these privately funded hospitals will in fact cost more to construct than publicly funded hospitals; and

“Whereas we believe that health care should be publicly owned and publicly funded; and

“Whereas we are not opposed to the construction of a new hospital in Sault Ste. Marie, only the mechanism in which the government is choosing to build it, which in

the long run will be more expensive and ultimately cost the taxpayers more money; and

“Whereas we refuse to make any contribution of funds to the new hospital fund until we are convinced that the AFP strategy is the best option for the construction of this hospital and that the new hospital, once construction is completed, will be turned over to the public and become a publicly owned and publicly run hospital where our health care should be;

“Therefore be it resolved that the township of Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional request the province of Ontario to reconsider the alternative financing and procurement strategy for the new Sault Area Hospital until it is very clear that it is in fact the best option for the construction of the new hospital in Sault Ste. Marie.”

I don't think this council is going to get any reassurances from the government that it is the best option, because if you look at the Premier's words before the election, he said it would cost more, and it will. I think the government is making a huge, huge mistake in going down the road of private sector financing in the same way the Conservatives did before, when the Liberals used to criticize that, because it will cost taxpayers more. We will see a draining of money, that should go into health care services in the community and hospitals, actually go to pay for increased additional costs because of the private financing. That's the wrong way to be doing this. We should be funding these hospitals through public financing.

Secondly, the budget also talked about funding and financing for hospitals: operating funding. I raised a question today in this House about Bluewater in Sarnia, because Bluewater in Sarnia is a victim of this government's demand that its deficit be balanced by the end of the fiscal year. Bluewater has about a \$12-million deficit. Bluewater Health has been making some very difficult decisions about cuts, and they have been doing that with the full consent, approval and knowledge of this government right from the get-go. You see, it was this government's demand to balance the budget by the end of fiscal year 2006 that has resulted in the crises that Bluewater is facing. It was this Minister of Health who set in place the seven-point plan, the seven-point process that hospitals were to undertake to balance their budget. It was this minister, this government, that also established a peer review process for Ontario hospitals that were facing specific challenges, and Bluewater is one of them. It was this minister, this government, that actually appointed the peer review leader and had a Ministry of Health representative on the peer review team. It was this government that received the recommendations from the peer review team about the cuts to be made, and this government that approved in writing to the board of Bluewater Health those cuts that have to be undertaken in order for Bluewater to balance its budgets.

Over 100 full-time-equivalent positions are going to be lost as a result of this process, and that's through all forms of health care providers in the hospital system.

Today I raised a specific case about security personnel: 10 of 13 full-time security personnel who are going to lose their jobs as a result of the cuts that this government has said Bluewater has to make. I can tell you that the staff and the administration themselves are very concerned about the cuts to security, because they know that they do need to guarantee to patients, to staff and to visitors to the different sites at Bluewater that they will be secure when they come to the hospital to access programs, to come through the emergency ward, whatever. The front-line staff are saying very clearly that this plan isn't going to work. One site will lose full-time staff—it's the same site where the Alzheimer's unit is located—and those cuts to the security are in addition to the eight or nine orderly staff who are also losing their jobs at the Alzheimer's unit, only they are losing their jobs in January.

The nursing staff have come forward and said they're very concerned for those who work in the methadone clinic, that if something goes wrong in that clinic, they will be physically unable to restrain some of those patients—physically unable to do that. Who's going to look out for the health and safety and the security of those nurses in that unit if something happens? Who's going to look out for the folks in the Alzheimer's unit if an altercation occurs between patients and staff? It's going to be impossible for the hospital to maintain security when they lose 10 of their 13 security personnel. The only response the hospital can bring forward—because the ministry has approved these cuts—is that the hospital is now going to try to train their custodial and maintenance and housekeeping staff, to try and have them respond to code blue circumstances where there's a violent outbreak somewhere in the hospital system. That's unacceptable, from my perspective. Somebody needs to be looking out for the security of the staff and the patients and the visitors at this hospital.

I'm not satisfied with the response I got from the minister today, to somehow indicate that it was Bluewater Health, all on their own, making these terrible cuts. These cuts are being made because this government has said to this hospital and others that they have to balance their budgets by the end of the fiscal year, and it doesn't matter what programs they cut; it doesn't matter what staff are lost; it doesn't matter what security issues are raised as a result. There is going to be a significant problem at Bluewater Health when there is no security to deal with some of these issues. The police locally have already said it's not their job to be at the hospital dealing with security. They'll do what they can in an emergency, but it's not their job. Someone's got to take a serious second look at what's happening in Sarnia at Bluewater to ensure that the health and safety and security of patients, of front-line staff and of visitors is protected at these sites in Sarnia.

The third issue that I want to deal with very briefly has to do, of course, with the promise that Mr. McGuinty made before the election to parents of autistic children, when he said the following on September 17, 2003, to

Nancy Morrison, who at that time had a son, Sean, who was five and who had autism. He said, "I also believe that the lack of government-funded IBI treatment for autistic children over six is unfair and discriminatory. The Ontario Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six. We are not at all confident that the Harris-Eves Conservatives care to devise any innovative solution for autistic children over six—especially those with best outcome possibilities that might potentially be helped within the school system with specially trained EAs." That was the promise that was made during the election campaign to the mother of a five-year-old autistic child.

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After the election campaign, the discrimination practised by the Conservatives carried on under the Liberals. This government did nothing—nothing—to end the discrimination against autistic children over the age of six, so that those same kids who turned six and who before would have been cut off under the Conservatives were now being cut off under the Liberals. The government has done absolutely nothing to ensure that funding and special education in our school system are targeted to bring in IBI therapists to the classrooms so that they can continue to work with those children whom they are working with outside of the school system—nothing.

Of all the broken promises, this is absolutely the hardest one for me to bear. I've got to tell you that in working with these families, in seeing the financial struggles that they've had, in seeing the financial ruin that many of them have come close to, this was the worst promise that the government broke, because these are families, many of whom voted for the Liberals on the basis of this promise, that have been let down. And now this government is going to go to court in December and is going to fight these families one more time, because they got a successful ruling. This government is going to spend taxpayers' dollars that should be better used to pay for treatment for these kids, instead fighting these families one more time, despite the election promise that was made, despite the commitment that was made to extend IBI past the age of six and bring it into the school system so that therapists would work with kids there.

I sure hope these families win. But I've got to tell you that I think it's a bloody disgrace that this government would use my money and other taxpayers' dollars to fight these families one more time, especially in view of the promise that Mr. McGuinty made to the mother of an autistic child before the last election. That's just wrong. I wish the government would really reconsider that decision.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce): It is certainly my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill 197, the McGuinty government's second budget.

What I can say to you is how we are evolving in the riding of Huron–Bruce, which I have the honour and privilege to represent. The government's key commitments certainly reflect the concerns and the progress that

we are making in my riding: health care, education, building a strong economy. When we invest in the people of Ontario, which clearly is demonstrated in this bill, we know how prosperous our province will be. We know they are the foundation of our success, the hard-working people of Ontario.

Post-secondary education is the tool that is required to provide the mechanisms for our young people to go forward. When I have the opportunity to go into the classrooms, one of the concerns that I hear is how they will be able to afford to go on. They are positive, they are optimistic, and the future looks bright for them. And in my riding, we have just made an announcement: over 1,500 new jobs in the riding of Huron–Bruce, trade jobs.

I tell the members in attendance that the optimism that is in my riding is so positive. They have a renewed sense of worth, and a direction is in place. They know that the future is bright and the McGuinty government has made that future secure.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I would like to compliment the member from Nickel Belt for her comments on Bill 197. I wanted to just touch on one thing that the member brought to our attention once again in this House. I know we just heard some fancy comments coming from the member for Huron–Bruce on all these jobs and this great atmosphere out there in Huron–Bruce, and I really do hope—

Interjections.

Mr. Dunlop: I bet you they weren't farming jobs, because we know what you've done to the farming community, we know what you've done to the industrial community and we know what you've done to the average family in the province of Ontario, because they are paying about \$2,000 more a year in taxes since you took over.

I'll be looking forward to your comments on Bill 197 when you should stand up in a few minutes and actually tell us what Bill 197 has done, how those 1,500 jobs have impacted that community and where they have actually been created. I'd like to know where they've been created. I'd like you to give us some more details, not the kind of answer we got today from the Attorney General when we asked him where the 400 new cops were and he completely avoided the question altogether.

Back for one second to the member from Nickel Belt: She was completely correct in her comments on autistic children. There has been nothing more cruel in this province ever, as far as I'm concerned, than how Dalton McGuinty promised those families complete treatment for those autistic children, complete IBI treatment, and is now taking them to court. If you can believe it, he's taking the people to court to whom he actually promised treatment. How cruel can it be? How many people have lied to autistic children? How many people do you know in this province who have ever done that?

The Deputy Speaker: I'd like you to use different language than that, please. You'd like to withdraw that, I'm sure.

Mr. Dunlop: I will withdraw that, Mr. Speaker, but I'm going to have a lot more to say on it.

Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans): The Budget Measures Act, 2005, has shown that this government, the McGuinty government, has shown leadership under difficult conditions. We spend \$23 billion more in this province than we get back—that gap, that \$23 billion. Many of the ministries have been flatlined.

But this budget was good news. There's money for education, there's money for health and there's money for economic development. The \$5.6-billion deficit that was left in 2003 from the former government is now down to about half, and that's in year two of this government.

This government is investing in our youth—primary, secondary and post-secondary education. That \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education is going to make a big difference in this province. That's what we heard when we went around this province last year. All the colleges, universities and training institutes were coming to us and saying they didn't have the dollars to do the right job in Ontario and we were last across this country. The investments have been the right investments for Ontario and they're continuing with this budget.

In my own area, Ottawa, we were 14th out of 14 for the longest waiting times in this province. We've got two new MRI machines. We're running the MRI machines a lot longer.

Interjection.

Mr. McNeely: We have. We've gone from the Baird-Harris days to today, when we are offering 52% more MRI exams than just two years ago—52% in just two years. We're showing that the investments this government is making are making a difference in people's lives.

I'd just like to say that the alternative financing and procurement method—it is not correct that this will cost us more money. The risks will be put on the private sector. We will not have these large overruns that we've had in the past.

I think this is an excellent budget.

Mr. Miller: I'd like to make some comments on the speech from the member from Nickel Belt on Bill 197. She started out by talking about what is a very popular item around here, and that is the broken promises of this government.

I didn't have time previously to go through a situation we had today, and that is, we have the Métis Nation of Ontario coming here to Queen's Park and holding a press conference this morning. Why are they here? They're here because this government is not honouring a promise.

To give a little history: On September 19, 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that the Metis people existed as an aboriginal people and have existing harvesting rights. So, from that point in 2003, we have the Minister of Natural Resources, with the Premier and the Attorney General, negotiating a four-point agreement that was signed July 7, 2004—very specific, very controlled, to allow for some harvesting in traditional areas for a maximum 1,250 harvester cards respecting seasons for fishing, the spawning periods. It's quite detailed, this four-point agreement. They made that on July 7, 2004,

with the personal involvement of the Premier, the Attorney General and the Minister of Natural Resources. Now what's happening? Well, they're here at Queen's Park holding a press conference because the government is not keeping its promise.

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I'll read from the press release today: “The government of Ontario has failed to uphold its clear promise to us that our people would not be charged in exercising their constitutional right to hunt and fish for food in their traditional areas in Ontario, and that is deeply troubling,” said Tony Belcourt, president of the Métis Nation of Ontario.”

Also, Gary Lipinski, who was the negotiator: “At a meeting on October 25 with Premier Dalton McGuinty, Minister Ramsay, Métis Nation of Ontario leaders ... ‘it is important to honour agreements.’ We now call upon the Premier and his government to honour its agreement with the MNO....”

This government seems to continue to have difficulty fulfilling its promises.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Nickel Belt has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Martel: I'd like to thank all the speakers who did reply. Again, I just go back to what Mr. McGuinty said in the Ottawa Citizen right in the middle of the election: “A Liberal government would cancel the deal with the private consortium because public-private partnerships are a waste of money.” I think I outlined clearly how that is in my remarks.

Let me read you an e-mail that I got from Nancy Morrison this weekend. Finally, they got government-funded IBI treatment, but not before their family made a significant investment until Sean was actually accepted.

“We have DFO, direct funding. We receive about \$8,200 every three months, but that's to pay for 20 hours per week of ABA. The supervision is done by a psychologist and a senior therapist and is mandatory. Our costs per month are about \$3,800. We must spend \$11,000 to receive \$8,200. Our funded program still costs us over \$900 a month. After all the debt we incurred waiting for ABA funding, we are still finding it hard to carry the funding. Some families can't afford that, so to speak. We have in total spent in the last three years \$104,000, and less than \$40,000 has been funded. We have carried the burden of the remainder and continue to pay over \$900 a month to continue our funding”—\$104,000, of which only \$40,000 was paid by the government.

I've heard the government say that the reason they're taking these parents to court again is because the court shouldn't decide public policy. Well, do you know what? Justice Kiteley found that the government of Ontario is violating the charter rights of autistic children because it discriminates against these children on the basis of their age and their disability, exactly something that Dalton McGuinty said he was going to end; and secondly, that the Ministry of Education is violating the Education Act by refusing to provide autistic children with the programs

and support they need to learn. Dalton McGuinty promised that the supports and programs autistic children need to learn would be in the school system if he was elected. The court decision follows from promises that this government made and has never kept.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate? The member for Whitby–Ajax.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: I'm sorry; I should have looked for rotation first. The member for Whitby–Ajax.

Applause.

Mr. Jim Flaherty (Whitby–Ajax): Thank you for the thunderous applause from the member from St. Catharines, who is no doubt applauding because of my intention to leave this place when the federal writ is issued. They love you when you're leaving, don't they?

It is a privilege to speak to the Budget Measures Act, particularly since I've had the opportunity in government to deal with budget issues. I can tell you that this weekend I had the opportunity to speak to people in a new subdivision in the town of Whitby. These are homes that MPAC now says are worth about \$215,000 or so and that people bought for a little bit less than that. What I heard from these people, aged 25, 30, 35, with young children—a lot of toddlers—is that their property taxes are going up, the insurance rates on their house and their car are high, that Mr. McGuinty charged them another \$2,000 per family that they have to pay out of their so-called disposable income, that they're worried about interest rates going up, because they've got mortgages and car loans, and they need at least a car or two to be able to get to work or even get down to the GO station so they can get to work. More and more people are using transit, and that's a good thing, but the reality is that in the GTA a lot of people need to commute from Mississauga to Richmond Hill, Richmond Hill to Whitby and from Whitby and Oshawa into Newmarket, Scarborough and different places that aren't easily or conveniently served by public transit. That's what I'm hearing.

I'm not hearing satisfaction with a government that continually increases spending, when the people who support the government, who pay the taxes to the government, don't have that option. They don't have the choice, at the end of the month, of going to their boss and saying, "I need more money now because my property taxes have gone up and Mr. McGuinty has increased my taxes, when he said he wouldn't, by \$2,000 a year." These are families with two people working, many of them earning \$60,000 and \$70,000 a year—good, middle-class Ontario families, the families that Premier McGuinty, when he was in opposition, used to call working families, when he cared about working families, when he thought it through, about what you're doing to people who are the backbone of Canadian and Ontario society. The burden is inordinate, and it's getting worse and worse.

This winter is going to be a difficult winter for people in Whitby and Oshawa and Ajax and all across the province of Ontario as these home heating bills come in,

no matter how you heat: if you heat with electricity, if you heat with natural gas, or fuel oil, whatever. And then, of course, there is putting gasoline in the cars. This government is out of touch when it comes to budgeting and the problem comes—and I remember well preparing budgets in the province of Ontario. You have to control spending, just like the people of the province of Ontario have to control their own spending. They do a pretty good job at it and they work hard at it, but they're working half the year for the government: the government of Ontario, the government of Canada, their municipal government. And it's getting worse. Instead of the burden being lightened by government, this government gets elected by saying, "We won't increase the burden. We won't put more weight on the shoulders of the hard-working people of the province of Ontario." It gets elected and then flips right around and says, "Oh, yeah, not only will we; it's going to be big-time," and it looks like it's permanent. It will be permanent, because they don't know how to control spending.

Spending in this province, in round numbers, from 2001 to now, in four years from when I did the budget to when they've done the budget, has gone up about \$20 billion, from \$65 billion to \$85 billion—a staggering increase in spending. The federal government has gone the same way with these deals they made with the NDP in the spring. Federal spending is up around \$200 billion. But Canadians are fair-minded if there is value for money: if we can sit in our homes in Durham region or anywhere else in the 905 or the 416 or other parts and we can say, "Boy, our hospital is running a lot better now"; "Boy, we have a lot more family doctors in the province of Ontario now, so that we can all get access to a family physician"; "Boy, our criminal justice system in Ontario really works well with those young offenders, with those 14- and 15-year-olds with guns, loaded firearms in our communities"; "Oh, our infrastructure is much better; you know, that 407 has been extended through Durham region"; "Our Durham region courthouse, that we've been waiting for for years; is being built." None of that is happening, of course. So what people are saying is, "Why are we paying these high taxes when we actually see our services deteriorating?" The Premier's answer will be, "Well, you're going to have more MRIs." More MRIs? We already had more MRIs. Yes, they were publicly funded in our universal public health care system, but yes, some of them were operated privately, just like the Shouldice Hospital for hernias, just like the Homewood hospital in Guelph, which helps many people with addictions—it has been there for years and years and years. But this ideological problem that the Premier has, and that I guess other members opposite have, that you cannot have a publicly funded health service delivered privately—despite what's happening in Quebec, despite what's happening in Alberta, we're going to punish the people of Ontario because of our hare-brained ideology, our mistaken ideology. Not only will service get worse, but we're also going to charge them more for the service. What a deal for the taxpayers

of the province of Ontario. That's what's wrong, fundamentally, with the budget process that we're witnessing here in this bill and in the budget that has been brought forward.

If you don't know where you're going, it's easy to get lost along the way. Thank goodness this government has less than two years of life left in it, because the spending, by the time they leave, will probably be \$90 billion or \$95 billion. Is the Ontario economy that strong? My goodness, it's going to grow at 5% and 6% over the next couple of years, so these guys can keep increasing spending 5%, 6%, 7%, 8%, unsustainable spending increases in health care and education? Is the Ontario economy growing like that? Nope. Their own predictions have the Ontario economy at around 3%, 3.2%, 2.9% going forward, and they overpredicted last year.

1650

The private sector forecasters are being increasingly cautious in their predictions, for lots of reasons, with respect to the Ontario economy. One of them is productivity. What is this government doing to increase productivity? Increasing taxes—just the wrong thing to do. If we want to be a more competitive jurisdiction, if we want to hold our place as a prosperous place in the world, just what we shouldn't do is increase the tax burden on individuals and businesses, but that's exactly what we're doing. All those entrepreneurial people—I was privileged to be the economic development minister for a while—if you study it, you know. I know the member for St. Catharines, and other people who have studied it, know that the backbone of our business, of our employment in the province of Ontario, isn't the big guys. General Motors actually doesn't grow much in terms of employing people. But the people in our communities whom members here know, who start their own businesses, who mortgage their homes to start their own businesses, who start perhaps just with the husband and wife in the business or a couple of other partners or one of their kids or whatever, and grow it into five people and seven people and 10 people: That's the backbone of the Ontario economy. That's where the growth is: the people who take the risk. Why would they take that kind of risk when their reward at the end of the year is, "McGuinty is going to take another \$2,000 from you"?

Where is the impetus for people who are working at hourly rated jobs to work overtime when their marginal tax rates when they work overtime are way up here? Where's the encouragement to people in Ontario to aspire to work harder, to do better for their families when you keep increasing the burden on them? It makes no sense. Then the government says, through the Minister of Economic Development, "We want more productivity." Well, if you want more productivity, to encourage people to work, how do you encourage people to work and take risks? You reduce the burden on them, that huge tax burden that is put upon them in the province of Ontario. So that's important. The productivity issue is vitally important.

The government has dropped the ball on the energy issue, which is a very serious matter. We have businesses

now making decisions for the future, deciding not to expand in the province of Ontario, deciding to locate their business elsewhere, and we're not just talking about competing with Americans here; we're also competing within the great country of Canada. We're competing with Alberta and British Columbia, which are prosperous places. They're reducing their tax burdens, they're running surpluses, they're controlling their spending: the fundamental rules that don't come from some fancy book at some fancy university; it comes from what parents have to do in their own homes at the dining room tables and the kitchen tables of Ontario, when they have to sit down and figure out what they can afford for the year. And surely people are entitled to ask for the same fundamental discipline from the people they elect: that they would, at the very least, sit down at their cabinet table and do a little figuring about what is affordable and what isn't, and plan ahead and get their priorities right.

If we don't get the productivity issue right in this province, if we don't get the energy issue right, this government will have left a legacy to the people of Ontario that will be remembered vividly, sharply and very negatively five and 10 years from now, because that's when the loss of manufacturing jobs that we're already seeing in the province of Ontario will accelerate. We'll look back at this time as the time of lost opportunity, when the government of the day, the Liberal government of the day led by Mr. McGuinty, chose to let spending get out of control, and their way of dealing with their uncontrolled spending was to increase taxes, and let the energy issue get out of control so that businesses decided not to locate here and not to expand here. Those are fundamental issues in which the government has dropped the ball.

The government is doing one thing right, and they should get credit for it. Despite the fact they campaigned against public-private partnerships and said they would not do any in the province of Ontario, I congratulate the government on abandoning that promise. I promise that I will not criticize them for that. I think it's a good idea. They've wasted two years and two months or so dithering and trying to go, "What are we going to do? This public-private partnership is actually the only way we can build the infrastructure we need in the province of Ontario on a timely basis, but we don't want to do that because it's a Conservative idea." It was Margaret Thatcher's idea 20 years ago. It's been done in the United States, Australia, New Zealand and other places successfully. It was done through the SuperBuild corporation in the province of Ontario successfully under the Progressive Conservative government here. It took them two years and a couple of months to say, "You know, actually, we have to do this." But congratulations: It's the right thing to do. Now get on with it.

You've recreated the SuperBuild corporation; you're calling it something else. That's fine. You've recreated public-private partnerships; you're calling it something else. That's a mistake, actually, since there's international understanding of the term "public-private part-

nerships.” There are lots of precedents and contracts and legal and business understanding around the world of what that term means so it’s actually a mistake for the government to call it something else, but I’m hopeful that it will be communicated well enough that people will realize what it is.

I also hope that on public-private partnerships, the government of Ontario of the day will not be so unwise as to put out too many projects at once, because that will create an undersupply of bidders in the marketplace. They have to be careful about that in terms of looking at the world marketplace for infrastructure capital available for public-private partnerships—not just here but around the world—and make sure that they prioritize what they do, that they get the most important projects out there early and on a timely basis, not competing at the same time with other large projects demanding capital and private partners. That’ll help control the costs as well. This is a sophisticated endeavour. Once you get into public-private partnerships, I hope that the government will be careful and be mindful of those fundamental cautions.

I hear again about social services, and I regret this. I hear it in my own community from our children’s treatment centre. I recall, as the Minister of Finance in 2001, that when the children’s treatment centres came in to see us in the pre-budget consultations, they needed an extra \$20 million that year. That’s what they asked for; that was to catch up. That was all 19 children’s treatment centres in the province of Ontario. In that budget, we provided that funding for the children’s treatment centres.

It has slipped again. I know that Minister Bountrogianni, when she was responsible for this issue, was conscious of this, and I know that she was very well-intentioned on this issue, but I encourage the government that when you’re spending all this big money on big-budget things, don’t forget those parts of our social fabric, our social services, that actually work and have proven themselves. When we’re talking about children with disabilities and babies born with disabilities, we should ensure that the children’s treatment centres are fully funded, because six months in the life of a baby with disabilities is six years or 60 years in the lives of other people. That’s fundamentally important, that we are aware of those aspects of our social services that are clearly effective and make a difference in the long run for babies and for our economy, because we can help people contribute and use their abilities in our society to their fullest.

The MaRS project has gone ahead—medical and related sciences. That was something our government funded and made the capital decision about. It was opened recently by the Premier. I was pleased to be there; it’s a brilliant idea. It’s good that the government is continuing it; they need to do it. If Canada and Ontario are going to be prosperous going forward—that means a standard of living that we’re accustomed to, and hopefully better each generation, and a quality of life that

we hope for our children and our grandchildren—then we have to be smarter. We’re not going to be able to build \$10,000 automobiles in the province of Ontario, and we don’t want to. We don’t want to ask people who build automobiles to work for low wages, as is done in China and in other jurisdictions. What we want to do is be smarter and do more of the design and engineering and technological work. That’s fundamental to economic growth. It’s fundamental to the ultimate success of the auto sector, which is a huge sector of the Ontario economy. It is fundamental to the plastic sector. It is fundamental to our manufacturing sector in Ontario. So we need to invest in skills training.

1700

I will give you a very practical example. Durham College has a skills training centre at Thickson Road and Highway 401. It’s on Champlain Boulevard in Whitby. It’s the old Cadbury plant. Some people will remember that, driving along the 401, right there. It’s full. I just went through the skills training centre again in the last couple of weeks. There are students clamouring to get in. This is true in other places in the province too. This is great news, that students and their families have recognized that in the skilled trades you’re likely to end up earning more money than your supervisor, that these are great jobs. Well, it’s there; it works. I hope that when the government is analyzing needs and where it’s going to spend money, like spending it on children’s treatment centres, will spend it on the successful community colleges that have invested in skilled trades. You don’t need to reinvent the wheel, but you need to provide sustainable expansion funding for those things that actually work to make a difference in the province of Ontario. So I commend those initiatives as well.

On infrastructure, this is a crisis situation in Ontario. As I’ve said, the government has dithered for more than two years on this. We have to expand the GO train system. We have to permit the GO buses to have some priority. There is a ridiculous situation that I see regularly, where GO buses are stuck in traffic, whether it’s on the Don Valley Parkway, on the 401, on the 427—wherever. It doesn’t make sense that the government on one hand says, “We want people to take public transit,” and on the other hand makes it inconvenient to do so and of little advantage in some situations, where you get a public transit vehicle stuck in traffic with vehicles with single occupants in them. This is just fundamental planning that we need to have in the province if we’re going to grow our economy.

We need skills training. We need to take care of those persons with disabilities. We need to help them early in life to emphasize their abilities. We need to reduce the tax burden on the entrepreneurial people of Ontario and on small businesses in the province, so they can grow and invest and say, “I want to stay in Ontario. I have a great future in Ontario. I want my family to stay in Ontario. Our standard of living is going to be higher generation to generation, and we’re going to have a high quality of

life.” We need to see progress in the infrastructure area, and it needs to be done quickly.

If I may say this finally, having talked about some of the substantive issues relating to budgeting, we need to improve our processes. This province is process crazy, when you do an environmental assessment that takes three and four and five years to build a highway. We need environmental assessments, but for goodness’ sake, they can sit on weekends, they can sit at night, they can expedite it. Government is supposed to serve the people, not the stakeholders—I don’t even like that term—but governments get captive of these stakeholders. Think about the people being served. They don’t have four or five or six years to wait for more GO trains, more highways and better infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): I listened carefully to the contribution to this debate by the member for Whitby–Ajax. We are certainly going to miss him.

Mr. Flaherty: How much?

Mr. Kormos: We’re going to miss him a whole lot, once that federal election is called and when Mr. Flaherty begins running in his riding federally. If I weren’t a New Democrat, I’d be encouraging people to vote for Mr. Flaherty. But I can say this: In this riding, there are really only two choices. My first choice, my druthers, is for folks to vote for the NDP candidate, but if you’re not going to vote for the NDP candidate, you might as well vote for Mr. Flaherty, otherwise all you’re going to be doing is encouraging the bad behaviour of Liberals in Ottawa. It would be just incredible—because people have choices. If they have a right-wing perspective—and Lord knows, there are a few of those folks around—they should vote Tory. If they’re progressive people, if they believe in public health care, publicly funded education and social justice, they should vote for New Democrats.

I look forward to this federal election, because I think the choices are oh, so simple. Clearly, people don’t want to re-elect the Liberals, so that makes it a choice of one or the other. I’m voting for a New Democrat down where I come from. I want New Democrats to vote for New Democrats where they come from. But for the life of me, I can’t see them voting for the Liberals. Can you, Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I almost don’t know how to follow that last one. I never thought I’d hear the member for, as we used to say, Welland–Thorold, and now Niagara Centre, recommending that people vote for a right-wing Conservative. But something new happens all the time. I’ll give him his credit.

There’s a great dilemma for Mr. Flaherty, because here’s what happens. Every day in the House, his leader and other members in the caucus get up and ask the government to spend more money. They want to spend more money on hospitals. They say we’re not spending enough on agriculture. They want us to spend money, as we should, on autistic children. They want us to build more roads and expand public transit. They want us to

spend money on water treatment, because of course the situation was brought to light about the very difficult circumstances that the aboriginal people in Ontario were facing, and the opposition want us to spend money there.

The member says the children’s treatment centres, and I think they’re great and we should be spending money there. They want more money for courts, more money for the police, more money for new arenas and more money for courthouses. They want to keep the hospitals open for the developmentally disabled, and I understand that as well. They want more money to go to municipalities to assist. They don’t object to the post-secondary education investment that this government has made, which is unprecedented. There’s a substantial investment in public education being made. Of course, to speed up the environmental assessment it would be required to invest more money.

So the dilemma, it seems to me, for my friend from Whitby is that his leader, John Tory, who emerged victorious in the contest—though some days I wonder if his philosophy actually won, but I know he emerged victorious—is at odds with him. So I can understand why he wants to move to a new venue with a new leader whose views are probably closest to his. I wish him well personally, if not in the election.

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I want to underscore the very strong points that have been made by my colleague from Whitby–Ajax, who had a distinguished record as the Treasurer for this province and who brings to the House a lot of depth, analysis and participation in this debate.

I listened intently to the member from St. Catharines, and I want to give him a couple of quick examples of what my colleague from Whitby was talking about.

Just taking the issue of cancer treatment and the fact that we are spending hundreds of millions of dollars for treatments outside of Ontario that could be done at less cost in our own province, this was something that our government understood with the repatriating of brain-injured residents. I remember raising it in this House with Elinor Caplan, who said, “No, no, no,” and we spent all this money in the United States for private clinics. But it took a Conservative government to bring in the program here. Not only are we doing it more cost-effectively, but we’re also reaching more Ontario residents.

The same with cancer treatments: If we start those cancer treatments here in Ontario when the drugs are available, it would be less costly. But the problem with the Liberal government is, nowhere in their budget are they expressing any real understanding of these opportunities to provide more effective programming at less cost.

Last week, we opened a program for anorexia in our community. I found out that today in Ontario we’re spending upwards of \$80,000 to send young women from this province to Arizona. Will we come up with money to provide the program here in Ontario? No. Will we trust our hospitals to develop good programs? No, we won’t. Why? Because it’s easier to spend more money and ship

Ontarians to the United States than to roll up your sleeves and find efficiencies in Ontario's health system, as we could in a budget certainly different from the one we have today.

1710

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh): It certainly is a pleasure to have a couple of minutes to speak and to respond to the comments from the member from Whitby–Ajax.

As I listened to the debate this afternoon and many of the members of the opposition speaking, it seems like doom and gloom from this bill and this budget. But I can tell you, speaking from experience back in my riding, I have carried for a couple of weeks now, hoping to get an opportunity to speak and to have a reply, a postcard from a young fellow from my riding who, through some obstacles in his getting to university, approached my office and had help from our government. He writes, "I am up at Carleton now, studying aerospace engineering. I didn't think I would be able to get here, but I did. Thanks to your help. We are all grateful." I know his parents are grateful, but when he says, "Thanks to your help," he means thanks to the help of the government that I am honoured and proud to serve. We know what we have in this budget to serve the young people of this province and the young people of my riding whom I have had many opportunities to serve in the past as an educator. That's why I think it's not all doom and gloom.

I'll move on to my local hospital just a couple of weeks ago in unveiling a new CT scanner at the Cornwall Community Hospital at a cost of \$1.4 million to replace an aged CT scanner that really wasn't functioning very well. But to have reported that we've had a 30% increase in the output, that's speaking to what we are going to do with this budget.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Whitby–Ajax has two minutes to reply.

Applause.

Mr. Flaherty: Thank you. Another resounding ovation from the member for St. Catharines. I appreciate that. It's the first time ever that that has occurred in his many years here, and my many years here as well.

I thank the member from Niagara Centre for the endorsement. I only regret that Sid Ryan won't run in Whitby. You know, Sid lives in Whitby, and Sid's OK.

Mr. Kormos: —a side location?

Mr. Flaherty: I'll ask Sid for a side. Maybe if I use your quote, the member for Niagara Centre, I'll get a side out of Sid. But if Sid runs in Oshawa—he wants to run in Oshawa, and I think he's going to run again over in Oshawa in the federal election, so we'll see how that turns out for Sid Ryan.

I thank the government House leader for his remarks, which fell short of a full endorsement, but they were personally kind, in any event.

I hold those members in some affection, of course—less affection than members like Mr. Sterling here, who's been a long-term Progressive Conservative member of the Legislature.

Mr. Yakabuski: He's older than dirt.

Mr. Flaherty: "Older than dirt," according to the member from the Ottawa Valley.

I'm not pessimistic. The member for Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh says we're pessimistic, that we're doom and gloom. We're not at all. I think what Canadians and people in Ontario are saying is, we can do better than this. We can have a better criminal justice system. We can have a better young offenders system. We can properly fund our children's treatment centres. Mrs. Bountrogianni is here, and she knows this subject well and is empathetic to it.

We can do better in our health care system, but we've got to get away from this ideological thing that I mentioned earlier about closing MRIs because they're being run privately but funded publicly. We've got to get away from that because Ontario is in danger of squandering the opportunity that it has to be one of the wealthiest, most prosperous, best places in the world to live and to raise a family. Those are some of the fundamentals that we have to get right, and this government is not getting that right by increasing the tax burden on working families in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Kormos: I'm pleased and proud to join in this debate on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus here at Queen's Park.

In addressing the issue of this government's budget, I feel compelled to refer to events of Saturday past. I'd been to the Watsons' 50th wedding anniversary over at the Croatian Hall, and later on in the evening was at the Casa Dante hall for their Italian night. But at 2 in the afternoon, I was over at a very special event at the Ukrainian Labour Temple on Ontario Road. The Ukrainian Labour Temple not only has a noble and honourable position in the history of Crowland and the city of Welland, but it's been a part of my life and my background for so many years. When I was a young person, the Ukrainian Labour Temple was to me what the Mine Mill Hall in Sudbury was to Jim Bradley. I was at the Ukrainian Labour Temple on Ontario Road because it was finally being acknowledged by LACAC as an historic site, as a heritage site. The hall, if you've ever been there, has some great significance, because it is the first Ukrainian Labour Temple in this part of the country. It was first built back in 1917 on Sixth Street and then moved to Ontario Road.

These folks, these people, these Eastern Europeans, many of whom had no education in their own language, never mind in the language of their new country of Canada, all of whom obviously spoke only their mother tongue when they came to this country—there were no settlement programs for them, no English-as-a-second-language course. The hall was full. That small Ukrainian Labour Temple was standing room only. I think I can safely say that I knew every single person in that room. I grew up with them. They were my parents' and grandparents' generation, but as a kid I had been welcomed in that hall, welcomed in their homes.

I'm grateful, of course, to Marnie Swayze, one of that team of LACAC members that worked hard to ensure that the labour temple was declared a heritage site and was appropriately plaqued.

I was grateful for the commentary of Ron Boyer, for instance, an old, long-time friend, a good trade unionist, and a retired worker.

I'm grateful that Nick Petrachenko was there. Nick's getting on in years. Nick was there with two of his sons sitting in the front row. Nick doesn't move as fast as he used to, by any stretch of the imagination, but heck, Nick's been around a long time.

People like Mike Bosnich, who spoke: Mike was a UE, a united electrical workers' business agent, elected in that position in 1947 after he came back from four-and-a-half years serving overseas. He pointed out the modest row of medals on his chest. Mike Bosnich served in the army during the course of the liberation of Belgium and Holland, amongst others. Mike Bosnich spoke about how he, like so many other young immigrants or children of immigrants, went to Europe to fight that war as Canadians, but they came back and fought another war. They fought the battle against poverty. They fought the battle against exploitive and abusive bosses. They fought the battle for social justice. They built trade unions. They fought for good contracts, they fought for pensions, and they fought for safer working conditions and better wages.

But as I greeted people in that Ukrainian Labour Temple hall and reflected on how I had known them when they were young and strong and virile and their gait wasn't in any way stiff, nor were their backs stooped. They were the hardest-working people you could ever find. And if you go along those streets in that part of Welland, in old Crowland, where the Ukrainian Labour Temple stands: street and avenue after street and avenue of homes built by hand by these same immigrants. I, for the life of me, don't know how—look, I've been to the places in Europe where these people came from, where my own family came from as well. They didn't have two-by-four construction in those little villages; they didn't have asphalt shingles. For the life of me, I don't know how these people came from those places in Europe and, without literacy skills, without Bob Vila videotapes, knew how to build two-by-four frame construction—and build them good, because they're still standing.

Let me say this: Those wonderful people, those great people, people like Clara Babiy and her family and her folks—I know her folks well—these people worked hard all of their lives, they sacrificed, they did without, they saved; many of them never got to elementary school, never mind high school.

1720

I talked to one woman. She was reflecting on the fact—as a matter of fact, I talked to her because she told me that her audiologist said she should get into our office to talk about workers' comp, her WSIB claim, because she has lost most of her hearing. She worked in the Wabasso cotton mill. She started working when she was

13. Because you see, when she was 13, the choice she had to make wasn't which high school she was going to go to—was she going to go to the Catholic school or the public school. Her choice was, which knitting mill are you going to go work in? But I'll tell you this: Her kids all have college and university degrees, and they're enjoying, of course, a level of affluence that their grandparents never dared dream of and their parents wished only for their children and not for themselves.

I talk about these people because I want to tell you what these people's fears are in the year 2005, after lifetimes of hard work and sacrifice and contribution to their communities, selflessness. I'm talking in the year 2005 to folks who are fearful about not being able to continue to live in their own homes, the homes that they've paid for at least once, sometimes twice, if they financed kids' college and university educations. It's straightforward: the burdens of ever-rising property taxes, increasing electricity costs, fuel—natural gas prices. You, like I, know you can't tell old folks to turn the thermometer down another few degrees to save a few dollars. When you're in your 80s-plus—

Mr. Yakabuski: It's cold.

Mr. Kormos: It's cold. You've been in either your folks' home or some of your constituents' homes and the heat is cranked up and you're just sweltering, and they're putting on another sweater and they're asking you if you're OK, if you don't find it too cold. Isn't it a tragedy that folks who have worked hard all of their lives, who have sacrificed so much, who have been given so little, have to in their most senior years now confront the fear of literal homelessness—not because some catastrophe has destroyed their home; no hurricane, no flood, no tornado, but because Ontario in the year 2005 is simply not very hospitable to a whole lot of its residents, to a whole lot of its citizens.

I listened to and have listened to, and I suspect I'll continue listening to, the government's spin around its budget. But the question that has to be posed is as simple as this: Is life better for these people now or was it better 10 years ago; has life gotten better or has it gotten worse; have things gotten easier or have they gotten tougher?

I drive the QEW like others drive their respective highways to their own homes. I'm not talking about the guys and gals in the Mercedes-Benz S500s. I'm talking about hard-working folks who have lived lifetimes walking with that black lunch bucket to and from Union Carbide, old Electro Metals—it's not there any more—to and from Atlas Steel—it's not there any more; gone under Dalton McGuinty's Ontario—to and from—

Interjection.

Mr. Kormos: Listen, I've given this speech more than once, Mr. Flaherty—armies of workers walking to and from any number of drop forges, but not any more because they're not there any more; armies of workers walking to and from knitting and textile mills, except they're not there any more.

The largest single employer in the city of Welland, a long-time steel town, is a call centre. Believe me, I don't

begrudge those jobs. I don't begrudge them for a minute, because when you're desperate for work, like so many folks are in so many parts of this province, you take any job you can; that's the whole point. But, you see, call centres—and again, I have the highest regard for people who work in those places because that's hard work, too. You sit there and a computer is feeding you calls, another computer is monitoring you and Big Brother is watching you, and you've got to work. It's not easy work; it's hard.

Forgive me for such a Luddite position, but I have a dial-up service provider on my home computer, and from time to time there's a problem with the connection, so I call the 1-800 number. In times gone by, I'd call the 1-800 number and the call centre was somewhere in the southern United States, either Oklahoma or Texas, and I'd describe the problem. These are these young—I presume they're young people; they've got to be young people because nobody else would be that smart and brainy and whizzy around computers. By the time you got through the problem and got it fixed, it would be, "How's the weather in Canada today?" I'd say, "Fine. How's it down there? Where am I calling?" and they'd say, "Texas," or wherever.

But the last time I called that same 1-800 number—it's a call centre that does the service work for this ISP, I suppose is what they're called—to report a problem with the dial-up, I talked to a person who again was as whizzy around computers as you could want, but who said, "What's the weather like in Canada right now?" I told them, "It's quite nice; it's fall." I said, "Where am I calling?" and he said, "Have you ever been to the Philippines?" You see, those call centres in so many communities that have been deindustrialized have the capacity to move across the world a thousand times faster than any industrial site ever did.

Mr. Yakubski: Almost as fast as a broken Liberal promise.

Mr. Kormos: It's like that; it's like a snap. So it causes me some great concern when communities like mine have become increasingly reliant upon call centres as sources of employment and I learn both anecdotally, as I've explained, as well as by what you read that that call centre in your town could be in India next month, or the Philippines or China. It was remarkable that Dalton McGuinty had to travel halfway around the world to realize and acknowledge that we've lost 42,000 to 45,000 industrial, high-wage, value-added manufacturing jobs here in the province of Ontario, and to acknowledge that it wasn't a very nice thing to happen.

It was remarkable. I read the press report. Poor Richard Brennan, following the Premier, finally gets him to acknowledge that, yes, we've lost 40,000 to 45,000 industrial, value-added manufacturing jobs. Those are wealth-creation jobs. When I listen to this Minister of Economic Development in his expensive suit stand up—

Interjection.

1730

Mr. Kormos: I hear heckling from the member for Huron–Bruce. I presume, then, that she knows that

they're cheap suits. Look, when I see the Minister of Economic Development stand up in his expensive suit—although the member for Huron–Bruce insists they are cheap ones.

Mrs. Mitchell: No, I did not.

Mr. Kormos: I saw the receipt. It was filed. It was with his riding association's filing. Trust me. If it was a cheap suit, he would have bought it himself, right?

Mr. Flaherty: I don't think he got it at Moore's.

Mr. Kormos: That's right, or Studio 267. Remember Studio 267 down on Yonge Street? I used to love that place. I don't know where they went. They moved. It used to be 267 Yonge Street. It was incredible. Three pairs of pants, two jackets: 50 bucks. If you wanted new ones, you had to pay more, but I never saw any reason.

But any time I hear the Minister of Economic Development in his expensive suit stand up and say, "We've created thousands of new jobs in Ontario; indeed, in the hotel industry alone"—go talk to some of those people working in the hotel industry, those women on their hands and knees scrubbing other people's filth from toilets and bathtubs for minimum wage. Do you want to know something? You don't send kids to college and university on what you make as a cleaning person in a hotel.

The Premier has got to understand that we have a job crisis here in the province of Ontario. It's a job crisis that not only impacts those young people who are finishing their schooling and going out there looking for ways to meaningfully participate in the economy, but it's a job crisis that also clearly has had an impact on their grandparents, folks like the good people at the Ukrainian Labour Temple on Saturday. Those chairs have been used by those people for Lord knows how many decades. You could smell the cabbage cooking in the basement. It was wafting up through the oak floorboards, because that's what the ladies were doing. It was the ladies; that's just the way it was. That's what they were doing while others were—and how many speeches did I listen to in that labour temple hall, with the smell of cabbage cooking coming up through the basement? Those people are worried about themselves, as 70- and 80- and 90-year-old Ontarians, and they're even more worried about their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren, who find themselves without the high-wage jobs that have sustained a strong economy that has paid for public education and public health care. It has paid for roads and the sort of things we need to keep our communities safe.

This government has abandoned that economy. This government has abandoned high-wage jobs. This government has abandoned those senior citizens. This government has abandoned their grandchildren. This budget doesn't address that abandonment.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington): I'd like to respond to the comments of the member from Niagara Centre. First, with respect to the issue of jobs, because I live in a town, Guelph, where the primary employer is the auto parts sector: I need to tell you that the folks in

my town are absolutely delighted that our government has invested in the auto industry, because in investing in the auto industry—in auto parts, auto manufacturing and auto assembly—we are in fact investing in good, value-added industrial manufacturing jobs that my friend from Niagara Centre has just described. That is one of the outcomes of this government's financial plan. The people in my town are very grateful for that.

I also thought I might do something rather novel, which is to talk about what's actually in the bill, because there are a number of items in the budget bill that are not immediately apparent. One of them is the inclusion of Ontario's universities in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This has never happened before. I need to tell you that my university, the University of Guelph, has been quite supportive of the inclusion of universities in the freedom of information act. We will obviously make sure that proprietary research is protected and that things like exam questions are protected and not subject to freedom of information, but generally we have good support from my university on this. We're also going to deal with private career colleges and bring some accountability to that sector, where things have been sadly lacking.

I think that for my community, this budget is very good news.

Mr. Yakabuski: I'm pleased to respond to the member from Niagara Centre. It was quite an interesting story, but nonetheless a somewhat alarming story. This is what people in this province are sensing and feeling now under this government: all that effort and blood and sweat and toil that they have contributed to this province and this economy over those many decades—they're now asking themselves, what for? So that this government can pile and pile on us, for their political purposes and their reasons, unbeknownst to the woman who went to that textile plant or that man who carried that lunch pail to Atlas Steel—again, as you say, gone. Many people from my riding were employed at Atlas Steel over the years, and came down to this area because this is where the jobs were. But are the jobs, the great and good industrial jobs, there in Welland and Hamilton any more? This government is killing them with their taxation policies, their energy policies.

On top of that, the average family is being hit with over \$2,000 in fees and taxes as a result of this government's political policies. So that the family the member was talking about—I certainly can empathize with what they're experiencing and what they feel about the future of this province. What they're wondering is, is this going to present the opportunities for our grandchildren down the road, under current government policies? They're asking that, and answering it themselves: No.

Mr. Jackson: I want to commend the member from Niagara Centre. I've listened to him raise important issues over many years, and today is no exception. I must say, though, as someone who shares Ukrainian ancestry with several members of this Legislature, that I have

visited the hall in Welland. It's a magnificent place, and I concur that the cooking that goes on there is extraordinary. I too will be attending St. Mary's Ukrainian hall bazaar this Saturday from 10 o'clock until 2 o'clock, and I will be getting my share of golubtsi and perogy, and all those wonderful things my grandmother taught me how to make and that I never have time to make, but I certainly eat them.

Also, the last time I was at the church hall—just last week, as a matter of fact—many of the seniors came up to me and expressed similar concerns: that they have seen nothing in the last two years that would clearly demonstrate that the government understands the fiscal plight that seniors face in this province, such as the delisting of certain of their health services which this government did. For the first time in Ontario's history, this government is now charging an OHIP premium to persons over the age of 65. In fact, this government is charging an OHIP premium—or a health tax, rather—to persons in nursing homes for the first time in Ontario. To my knowledge, I don't think any other province does this.

1740

There was the attack on seniors and their ability to remain independently in their homes when this government retroactively cancelled the education property tax credit brought in by the previous government that would have provided financial relief for tenants and for seniors who are house rich and income poor and are having a hard time coping.

Nothing in this budget seems to address those needs for seniors.

Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion): I'm pleased to speak just for a moment or two on my support for this budget. It really offers a contrast between what the previous government's priorities were for the community and what our priorities are. I can speak as a representative from Ottawa West-Nepean of those contrasts. The previous government closed Riverside Hospital. They closed the Grace hospital. They tried to close the CHEO cardiac unit. They tried to close Montfort.

Today, two years later, we are in the process of doubling the size of Montfort. We've given a 21.5% increase to the Queensway Carleton Hospital's operating budget—its largest increase ever. We've saved the CHEO cardiac unit. In fact, just last week our health minister was announcing that the natal screening clinic is going to be located at CHEO.

Quite frankly, I think we've turned the ship around in this budget when it comes to health care as a result of the investments we're making. What worries me and what worries my constituents—I happen to have the largest number of senior citizens per capita of any riding in eastern Ontario, and I've been to lots of bazaars and bake sales. I was at 10 of them last weekend. People say I'm a little bizarre going to these bazaars, but they're great to keep in touch with people and support local charities and churches and synagogues. The fact of the matter is, people are worried about John Tory's plan to gut \$2.4 billion out of the health care budget. What does that

mean? Does that mean they're going back to the old Tory ways of closing the hospital? Are they going to close the Queensway Carleton Hospital? That \$2.4 billion represents the closure of approximately 11 community hospitals.

The people of Ottawa West–Nepean and eastern Ontario were not happy with the previous government and the slash-and-burn approach to health care. I'm proud of what our government has done to improve the health care of our seniors and all citizens in our community.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Niagara Centre, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr. Kormos: I appreciate the minister of fitness introducing that particular issue because, look, where I come from, and I suspect it's the same across the province of Ontario, if you don't have family attending to you in the hospital, in the extended care or long-term-care facility, if you've got Alzheimer's and you don't have family to assist the staff of that institution in caring for you, you are in deep, deep trouble. I, like so many other people, have been to places in the world—impoverished places, Third World places—where families camp out in the hospital room or out beside the hospital room to make sure that their family member is fed, that their family member has dressings changed, that their family member has the basic needs that they require. The nurses I know and I see in hospitals across Niagara are run ragged, let me tell you—run ragged. They're doing double and triple duty, but like so many Third World countries, families are in those hospital rooms tending to their family members. If you've got a family member with Alzheimer's who needs institutional care, you'd better hope that that person has kids or a spouse or in-laws or somebody living close enough by that they can attend to help them with daily needs.

People don't have physicians, and it's not just about supply; it's about retention. This government has persisted in creating a doctor-hostile environment in this province. We can graduate all the new doctors you want, but if you maintain the Dalton McGuinty, never mind George Smitherman—who's going to be a "terrorist" next? Obstetricians? Pediatricians? George Smitherman attacks optometrists, who are trying to engage in a very legitimate debate about the need to have optometry, as fundamental health care, covered by OHIP. How does Smitherman respond? "They're terrorists," and he doesn't negotiate with terrorists. Shame.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Dunlop: I'm pleased to take part in the debate today on Bill 197, An Act to implement Budget measures. Of course, this follows up on the introduction of the budget last spring. We've heard a lot of comments from across the House from different members on Bill 197. I hear the Liberals—I've got to say, Mr. Speaker, and I hope I'm not out of order in saying this, but it's interesting when they only comment in the questions and comments and they're not taking part in the debate. If you're so proud of the budget and so proud of the actions

of the government, I can't understand why you don't take part in the 20-minute rotations. I was looking forward to hearing some comments this afternoon from the government. I know a lot of you are in China; you're over there on the trade mission. I suppose Dalton will try to hide over there as long as he can. But I'm surprised that you're not taking part in the budget measures debate here. Two minutes at a time is simply not enough.

Hon. Mr. Watson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: If the honourable member would give me some of his time, I'd be pleased to take part in the debate right now and talk about some of the good things we're doing in health care.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Order. That's not a point of order.

The member from Simcoe North.

Mr. Dunlop: That's interesting. The Minister of Health Promotion would like to take part in the debate. Maybe you could talk some of your colleagues into it; for example, the gentleman sitting beside you or some of the other 11 or 12 members who are here today. It is disappointing when you want to just kill debate and you've got 71 members. It's disappointing to the citizens of Ontario when they see that their government doesn't want to debate its legislation.

I'm glad the minister made that point of order, because I wanted to bring up something. I got your fancy little catalogue. I thought you weren't going to have government advertising. I thought that had come to an end. It was interesting to see a beautiful coloured brochure of you and Mr. Fonseca in that Ministry of Health Promotion catalogue. I thought we had brought that to an end. It's basically government advertising.

Interjection.

Mr. Dunlop: I don't know why you had to have a picture of yourself and Mr. Fonseca in the catalogue if it wasn't needed.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Do you mean like this one here?

Mr. Dunlop: Exactly that idea. I thought I heard the Premier and Mr. Phillips, the Chair of Management Board, say, when he brought in that legislation, that there would be no government promotion, no government advertising. In fact, it's happening all over the place now, and that's disappointing, because it is another broken promise; I understand you haven't proclaimed that bill yet.

I want to speak on a number of issues today, on some of the activities that are occurring with the government. Of course, my critic's position is with the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. We've seen, in a case there—in fact, what we've seen in most government ministries is a lot of announcements. You're really great at announcing. You get the minister in front of one of those big red and white billboards, and whatever the ministry's title is, they put a fancy logo behind him and keep making announcements.

As I said earlier, and as I think our leader said today, we've announced 1,000 new cops for the province of Ontario seven times now, and yet when our leader today

asked the Attorney General where those 400 police officers were and how much money they had flowed to those municipalities where the police had been hired, we were given—well, there was no answer at all. He completely refused to comment on that question.

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I've heard a lot of comments today in the House on the automotive industry. I don't know how many people in this House have talked to car dealerships lately. I've talked to a number of them, and I'm concerned. When they are standing here bragging about the Toyota announcement, what they're not hearing is from our Big Three auto manufacturers right here in North America: Chrysler, GM and Ford. It's my understanding, when I've talked to car dealerships, that they've given out so many bonuses to try to sell the cars that they are at their limit on how much more they can offer the public in bargains, because car sales, of course, have dropped off substantially in a number of areas, particularly in rural Ontario. People in rural Ontario, the farming communities, simply cannot afford to buy new vehicles any more. They can't afford to buy new pickup trucks. I know a number of car dealerships that in the past have sold a lot of half-tons and three-quarter-tons and four-wheel drives, and they're not selling right now. They're not making any money.

We've seen this government—we know you don't care about rural Ontario. That has been fairly predominant from day one with this government. But quite frankly, when the guys in rural Ontario aren't buying trucks and rural Ontario citizens can't afford to purchase new automobiles, it will have a very, very negative effect on the manufacturing plants in some of the large urban areas. I compliment anybody who can help bring a new automotive plant here, and I do hope that we can get Toyota up and running, because there are spinoff jobs to those particular communities and to the province. But the building is not up and running yet, and that is the concern I've got.

The other thing I think we've got to worry about is the reliability of jobs today and how many people have confidence in the future with their jobs, particularly manufacturing jobs. We've heard our leader here a number of times in the last couple of weeks, and one of the areas we've concentrated on and we've certainly discussed and brought to the attention of the public is the jobs that have been lost in Simcoe–Grey, in Jim Wilson's riding. He named off, I believe, seven or eight large manufacturers in the Collingwood area that have decided to close their doors. That is not a good sign for that part of the province. That is an area of the province that historically, over the last 10 to 15 years, has shown good growth. It has been an exciting part of the province to see develop, and now we're concerned with that as well.

I want to bring to your attention something that I read into the record today, and it boils down to the amount of money that government, the province or the Ministry of Finance, is flowing to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ms. Papatello's ministry. We had a

number of petitions read in today. A lot of the community living organizations or associations dropped these petitions off to us in our constituencies last week in constituency week. They were all signed by the staff who work in community living associations across the province. I think Mr. Murdoch read one in, and I know that Mr. Ouellette did as well. The folks who work in the associations make about 25% less than people working in comparable jobs with the province. They're asking the government to flow money to those associations. What is even more remarkable is that while these people are underfunded in their salaries—they are saying they need at least 25% more—at the very same time that they're asking for this money, we're seeing that the province made what I consider to be a very poor decision last year on September 9 when Minister Papatello announced the closing of the three remaining regional centres. That was very disappointing. The Huronia Regional Centre, in the riding of Simcoe North, amounts to a payroll of \$29 million for the 760 people who work at the Huronia Regional Centre. They're maintaining the lives of some of the most vulnerable physically and mentally challenged people in our province. There are about 331 people remaining in that facility, and the minister has announced that that building will close by 2009.

Now we're going to ask these community living associations to take on the added responsibility of some of the most severely challenged people in our society today. Of the people who are in the group homes today, in the community living organizations, there are some who are severely challenged. But these last 1,000 people who remain in Southwestern, in Rideau Regional Centre and in the Huronia Regional Centre are some of the most severely challenged we've ever seen. Some of them require constant medical attention, 24 hours a day. If the community living organizations are already asking for money to come up with a 25% increase in the salaries allocated to those folks, we don't know where the money will flow to look after the many, many more people who will be required. The minister has said that if the facilities are closed, they will retain the same level of service in the group homes. If we haven't got enough money now for the salaries in the existing facilities, and it's my understanding there is already a shortage of 3,000 spots, my question to the ministry is—maybe someone from the government can answer this in some of the Q and A—where will we find the help, where will we find the money to look after some of the most severely challenged people?

I'm opposed to this process. I think we should retain 1,000 beds in the province of Ontario. I think we should keep them open, because they are living in their own communities today. I find the fact that the government has gone ahead on this decision will be detrimental. Once they're closed, they're closed forever. Trying to find the quality of life and the same level of service, I believe, will be very, very difficult for the community living associations unless substantial money is flowed in their direction. That would mean, at the minimum, \$100 million a year, the cost to run the three remaining regional

centres. On top of that, we would have to have tens of millions of dollars for salary increases and for training of the folks to look after the remaining 1,000 people. It will have a very detrimental effect in my riding.

I know we didn't discuss it in the budget. I know it wasn't one of your election platforms, but today I'm saying here in my time that as we look at a strong economy, as we look at a budget here in the province of Ontario, this decision to close down the Huronia Regional Centre in north Simcoe will have a very negative effect on the city of Orillia and the area. The payroll there is \$29 million, and my belief is that the purchasing power of that \$29 million amounts to somewhere around \$100 million a year to the economy of the area. That will be gone by 2009 if this decision continues on.

There have been some court challenges to it, and I'm assuming the minister won't even respond to any questions now because of the court challenges. But as I talk to people in my riding, they're not very happy with Dalton McGuinty on that decision. We felt that it was rushed. It was rushed because Minister Papatello was trying to make a strong impact on the community living organizations, and now that we're on this path we think that it will be very difficult to turn this process around. Maybe a couple of more years would have helped before the closure was done, because there was a long-term plan

for it, but 2009 is simply too soon without all the supports being put in place for these 1,000 people who remain in Ontario.

I know I'm coming to an end. Mr. Speaker, am I going to be able to go the full 20 minutes or are you going to cut me off here?

Interjection.

Mr. Dunlop: OK. With that, I think I will wrap up. I actually would like to use my last five or six minutes at another point. Can I do the six minutes now or will you—

The Speaker: You will have the floor for six minutes when we come back.

Mr. Dunlop: Pardon me?

The Speaker: Next time we debate this, you will have six minutes.

Mr. Dunlop: I guess the question is, are you going to cut me off right now? OK. So I will have the other six minutes remaining then.

The Speaker: I'll help you here. It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45 of the clock this evening.

The House adjourned at 1800.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

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Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
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Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)	Stoney Creek	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and the minister responsible for francophone affairs / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Culture et ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
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Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
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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 Craiton,
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 Craiton,
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O.Wynne
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

Electoral reform / Réforme électorale

Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,
Kuldip Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O.Wynne
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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