



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 38th Parliament

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de l'Ontario
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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 13 February 2006

Lundi 13 février 2006

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 13 February 2006

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 13 février 2006

*The House met at 1330.
Prayers.*

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SAM CICCOLINI

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): I'm pleased to rise today to congratulate Mr. Sam Ciccolini on being named a member of the prestigious Order of Canada. This deserving designation is in addition to his many recognition awards for service to his community and country, including the Order of Ontario, with which he was honoured in 1999.

The president of Masters Insurance, a company he started with his brother Frank in 1968, Sam Ciccolini serves on boards and committees representing hospitals, disaster relief efforts, churches, municipal initiatives, sports groups and social agencies.

Mr. Ciccolini credits his success in life to the hard work ethic his family brought to Canada. He was 12 years old in 1956 when he, his mother and four brothers landed at New York's Ellis Island before travelling to Toronto to join his father, who came to Canada three years earlier.

He and his younger brother Max soon found work delivering newspapers in the early morning before heading off to school. At night, the brothers worked at a pharmacy. When asked if it was tough to hold down two jobs and go to school, Sam's response is simply, "We had no choice. You did it; that's all. It really gave us a good upbringing, a solid foundation."

It is on that solid foundation that Sam Ciccolini has built his exemplary life of service to his country. Mr. Ciccolini has said he was honoured and humbled to be named a member of the Order of Canada. We, his friends and colleagues, would say to him that this honour is well-deserved and rightly bestowed.

OTTAWA DAY

Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans): I rise in the House today to thank my esteemed colleague Minister Watson and his incredible staff for organizing what was, in my opinion, the best event of the year at Queen's Park.

Last Monday I had the privilege of attending Ottawa Day at Queen's Park. On February 6, a delegation of the leaders of the Ottawa business community came to

Toronto to speak with cabinet members about Ottawa's thriving economy and to ask our ministers about the issues that concern the people of Ottawa. The delegation included his worship Mayor Chiarelli, representatives from Ottawa Tourism, the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, the Ottawa Life Sciences Council as well as the presidents of three institutes of higher learning in our city.

The business community had quite an extensive delegation as well. To name a few of them, we met with Gail Logan, the president of the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce; Tom MacWilliam, the president of the Eastern Ottawa Chamber of Commerce; and Cyril Leeder, chief operating officer of Scotiabank Place and the Ottawa Senators—the best hockey team in the world, as you know.

I thought that Ottawa Day was a huge success and was a tremendous opportunity for the leaders of our great city to come to Toronto to meet the leaders of our great province. The Premier, Minister Bentley, Minister Bradley and Minister Dombrowsky devoted a significant amount of their time to meet with members of the delegation in small breakout groups to talk about issues that affect Ottawa today; namely, in the fields of innovation, post-secondary education, tourism and agriculture. I would like to thank all of the cabinet members, Minister Watson's staff in particular, and all of the delegates from Ottawa who helped make this day a true success.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant): It was less than a year ago that this Legislature welcomed thousands of farmers to the doorstep, and now forces are gathering again for what I count as the seventh in a series of large farm rallies held over the past year. The rural rallies and the lobbying have every reason to continue. Farm protests continue because this government refuses to listen. Cash crops, beef, tobacco and horticulture all continue to wait for action on proposals tabled with the minister months ago. Deer, elk and dairy heifer farmers also need help.

Don't pass the buck. Farmers can't wait for yet another federal election. It was during the October estimates meetings that Ag Minister Dombrowsky acknowledged that, "CAIS has not worked well for grains and oilseeds." That's why we didn't sign it.

That quote was last October, five months ago, and still no action to fix the problem. There has been no unilateral

action on the Ontario government's part. The McGuinty Liberals continue to turn their back on farmers and rural Ontario. One year, seven tractor rallies and zero action: Quite simply, for farmers and rural Ontario it just doesn't add up. I do encourage all legislators here today and their staff, and I encourage ministry staff, to meet with farmers tomorrow.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): Black History Month in the city of Hamilton is in February, and it's a very important and impressive occasion every year. At our community's annual John C. Holland awards dinner, we celebrate the best of the best. We learn of the incredible achievements that the people of African Canadian heritage contribute as volunteers, academics and luminaries from business and the arts.

As a member from Hamilton who is extremely supportive and proud of Black History Month, I have been concerned to hear some people suggesting that maybe we shouldn't commemorate such a special month anymore. They say, "Teach black history in schools and you won't need to mark or celebrate a designated month."

I believe that Black History Month, first designated in Canada by the federal government 10 years ago, should continue as a strong Canadian tradition for all time. African Canadians have a heritage in this country spanning more than 300 years. They explored, built, worked for and served Canada in the face of incredible barriers, not the least of which was racism. By all means, let's bring forward a curriculum that teaches black history, but let's not lose the advantage that Black History Month presents us to honour our incredible black achievers and role models. They represent excellence in all the various disciplines, people like the local recipients of our John C. Holland award on February 4: Nancy Di Gregorio, Evelyn and Denrick Musgrave, Valan Sarjeant and Winston Tinglin, and youth recipients Stephanie Laryea, Samia Omar, Tarryn O'Sullivan and Christine Oluwole-Aina. We congratulate them.

Black History Month is an event that should be here to stay. It's an opportunity for all of us to make a strong statement about the valued contribution of all of the black cultures to the broader Canadian mosaic. I invite everyone in Hamilton to celebrate the great Black History Month activities that our city has to offer.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce): On January 20, at the new Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre in Southampton, members of the Saugeen Shores Chamber of Commerce enjoyed a presentation by Kevin Flynn, the member from Oakville and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour. The member was on a province-wide tour promoting workplace health and safety.

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I can tell you that there was a great deal of interest in this subject. The CEO of Bruce Power, Duncan Hawthorne, also took time from his numerous responsibilities and spoke about the importance of workplace health and safety as well, and also about young people starting their first jobs. The message that safety must be a part of the workplace culture, and that a healthy and safe working environment leads to success, was stressed.

The government has set an ambitious but achievable goal of reducing workplace injuries by 20% by 2008. I am pleased that this government recognizes the importance of this issue. By supporting workplace health and safety, we are building strong communities in the province of Ontario.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): The BF Goodrich tire factory, located in the Kitchener part of Waterloo-Wellington, announced 11 days ago that it will close its doors this summer; 1,100 jobs are being lost as a result of the company's decision. I want to say to all the BF Goodrich employees and their families that all in our community share your disappointment. We are behind you, and we want to do whatever we can to help. My thoughts are also on the negative impact this will have on our local economy. Even though Waterloo region is home to one of the most dynamic and thriving local economies in the whole country, the loss of 1,100 jobs is a massive blow.

The same day that I received the news about the closure of the BF Goodrich tire plant, I spoke with Wayne Samuelson, who used to work there and now, of course, is president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, to discuss the situation. What employees and their families need is a signal that there is hope that well-paying jobs will be created in this province to replace the ones that have been lost. What they see instead is Ontario's manufacturing jobs disappearing in droves.

Statistics Canada recently reported that 145,000 Canadian manufacturing jobs disappeared in the last year. We know that most of these losses have occurred in Ontario, because we are still the main industrial engine of the country. An incredible 33,000 jobs in Ontario were lost in the month of January alone.

Last May, I introduced a resolution in this House calling for a public discussion of the economic competitiveness of Ontario's manufacturing industries, which would lead to a jobs action plan. My resolution was supported by a number of industry groups. The Ontario government needs to take immediate action and begin the work to restore hope and opportunity in this province and enact my resolution.

YOUTH SERVICES

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): Yesterday, in the heart of Thorncliffe Park, Premier McGuinty

announced a new \$15-million youth challenge fund, which will create opportunities for young people who are at risk of making the wrong choices. This announcement is one part of our government's larger plan to revitalize communities, keep kids in school and prevent violence before it begins.

In Don Valley West, we've established a community safety round table that is working on the kind of local initiatives that we believe are needed to support youth engagement, youth employment and community mobilization. I'd like to recognize some of the community members involved in that initiative: Mr. Ali Baig, Mr. Abdul Madhani, Mr. David Lemire, Mr. Abdul Ingar and Mr. Mohammed Dahnani, who are here in the gallery with us today.

Over 200 people from Thorncliffe, Flemingdon Park and from across the riding of Don Valley West joined the Premier, Coach Mike "Pinball" Clemons, provincial ministers and MPPs to challenge communities to come together to create programs and initiatives that will allow youth to realize their potential. As the Premier said, "If we give our young people the right opportunities, they will make the right choices." This fund is about creating opportunity and community safety from the ground up by providing local support for youth where it matters most: in our neighbourhoods.

The neighbourhoods of Don Valley West are unique, but they share the desire of communities across this province for opportunity for the children and youth living in them. We look forward to working with the new board of the youth challenge fund to make this province a place where every child can achieve his or her potential.

LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): I rise today to highlight the McGuinty government's progress in health care. I'd like to highlight the progress we've made through the establishment of local health integration networks.

When we came to office, we knew that the health care system was in need of reform. The Tory government's slash-and-burn approach left Ontario with a health care system in disarray. They closed 28 hospitals, fired nurses and fired doctors.

We've taken a different approach: investing in community-based health care. We know that health care is best planned, coordinated and funded when it is integrated with local communities. Minister Smitherman, who is here with us today, knows that Ontario communities are in the best position to determine our local health needs and priorities.

That's what LHINs are all about: delivering more responsible, accountable, transparent health care. This kind of progressive policy allows us to deliver health services more efficiently, which in turn will help ensure there is money available to invest in the future of health care.

Although there is always more to be done, this kind of progress reflects the hard work, determination and progressive thinking that the McGuinty government has brought to the health of Ontarians. This government has a mandate to transform our health care system. We're determined to succeed, and LHINs will be an important step forward in accomplishing that goal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CORNWALL

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): In early January, the Leader of the Opposition paid a visit to Cornwall, a city facing some tough economic times due to job losses. He met briefly with city officials, suggesting that the current government has not helped the city. Cornwall mayor Phil Poirier thanked the member, who for the moment, is representing Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey, for his interest, and then indicated that the McGuinty government has in fact taken a number of steps to assist the city. These steps include the provision of job counselling and re-employment services for the displaced Domtar employees and funding for a coordinator to manage community support systems. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade is working with the community to develop a competitive economic development strategy.

This work started back in the summer of 2005, when Minister Cordiano came to my riding for a round table meeting with municipal and business leaders. It would have been laughable had the esteemed member criticized this government's health care assistance for the city if the bitter taste of false promises from the last Tory government were not so fresh in the memory of Cornwallites.

The McGuinty government has a real plan based on real, achievable timelines to give the city one of the best health care infrastructures in the province. Construction will begin shortly on a new community health centre as well as on the redevelopment project at the St. Joseph's continuing care site, where the shovel was recently put in the ground to start construction. A planning grant for the main hospital project has already been announced, as an early consolidation project.

I am proud of what our government has done for Cornwall, and I shall continue to work with Premier McGuinty on a plan for the city.

REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): I beg to inform the House that on January 4, 2006, the report of the Integrity Commissioner responding to the request by John Tory, leader of the official opposition, for the Integrity Commissioner's opinion on whether the Honourable Harinder Takhar, Minister of Transportation, had breached the Members' Integrity Act or parliamentary convention, was tabled.

ANNUAL REPORT,
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): On January 17, 2006, the 2005 annual report to the Legislative Assembly of the chief medical officer of health was tabled.

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a copy of the order in council appointing Robert Runciman, MPP, as a commissioner to the Board of Internal Economy, appointed by the caucus of the official opposition in place of Elizabeth Witmer, MPP.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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

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

Bill 27, An Act to amend the Arbitration Act, 1991, the Child and Family Services Act and the Family Law Act in connection with family arbitration and related matters, and to amend the Children's Law Reform Act in connection with the matters to be considered by the court in dealing with applications for custody and access / *Projet de loi 27, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1991 sur l'arbitrage, la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille et la Loi sur le droit de la famille en ce qui concerne l'arbitrage familial et des questions connexes et modifiant la Loi portant réforme du droit de l'enfance en ce qui concerne les questions que doit prendre en considération le tribunal qui traite des requêtes en vue d'obtenir la garde et le droit de visite.*

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

Mrs. Jeffrey: I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

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

Bill 206, An Act to revise the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System Act / *Projet de loi 206, Loi révisant la Loi sur le régime de retraite des employés municipaux de l'Ontario.*

The Speaker: Shall the report be received and adopted?

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 1350 to 1355.

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

Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Duguid, Brad	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Duncan, Dwight	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pupatello, Sandra
Bentley, Christopher	Fonseca, Peter	Racco, Mario G.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Gerretsen, John	Ramal, Khalil
Bountrogianni, Marie	Hoy, Pat	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Brotten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldip	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Watson, Jim
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Wilkinson, John
Craitor, Kim	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wong, Tony C.
Crozier, Bruce	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David
Dombrowsky, Leona	Patten, Richard	

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Marchese, Rosario	Runciman, Robert W.
Bisson, Gilles	Martel, Shelley	Scott, Laurie
Hardeman, Ernie	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Horwath, Andrea	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Hudak, Tim	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Klees, Frank	O'Toole, John	Yakubuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 56; the nays are 21.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton): Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, December 14, 2005, I beg leave to present a report on the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Sterling: Yes. The public accounts committee dealt with the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee with regard to the auditor's comments. Of particular concern to the committee was the location of the heirs of people's estates for which the guardian and trustee was responsible. As you know, the guardian and trustee is responsible for the estates of incompetent people. It was felt by the committee, and by the auditor, that the public trustee and guardian had not made sufficient efforts to locate the heirs of these estates. That was one of the major concerns of the committee. In fact, there are still

400 files that predate 1996 with regard to estates where heirs have yet to be found.

1400

The other area of concern to the public accounts committee related to the tendering by the public guardian and trustee of investment counsellors: investment people who were taking care of estates. It seems that in the past, the public guardian and trustee paid no attention or little attention to the record of the people who were taking care of these incompetent people's estates.

Therefore the committee has made the unusual recommendation in this particular report to ask for a reply to four of its six recommendations within a period of 30 days, whereas the committee normally gives the respondent 120 days. This is because the committee felt in this case that immediate action was required in order to protect the interests of these heirs and of these incompetent people for whom the public trustee is responsible.

With that, I would move adjournment of the debate.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

VISUAL FIRE ALARM SYSTEM ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 SUR LES SYSTÈMES D'ALARME-INCENDIE À AFFICHAGE VISUEL

Mr. Arthurs moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 59, An Act respecting visual fire alarm systems in public buildings / Projet de loi 59, Loi sur les systèmes d'alarme-incendie à affichage visuel dans les édifices publics.

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

Does the member have a brief statement?

Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge): Very briefly, the act proposes that fire alarms in municipal and provincial public buildings be visual as well as auditory. This would ensure that the deaf and the hard of hearing would be able to perceive a fire alarm and exit those buildings safely.

MOTIONS

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 certain committees: On the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, Mr.

Balkissoon replaces Mrs. Cansfield; on the standing committee on public accounts, Mr. Milloy replaces Ms. Broten.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Mr. Bradley has moved that the following amendments be made to the membership of certain committees: On the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Balkissoon replaces Mrs. Cansfield; on the standing committee on public accounts, Mr. Milloy replaces Ms. Broten.

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

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 members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): 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: Ms. Marsales, Mrs. Van Bommel and Mr. Racco exchange places in the order of precedence, such that Mr. Racco assumes ballot item number 19, Ms. Marsales assumes ballot item number 27 and Mrs. Van Bommel assumes ballot item number 54.

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

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I move that, notwithstanding order 96(g), notice for ballot items 18, 19 and 22 be waived.

The Speaker: 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, February 13, 2006, for the purpose of considering government business.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 58. 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 1407 to 1412.

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

Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Qaadri, Shafiq
Balkissoon, Bas	Hudak, Tim	Racco, Mario G.
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Ramal, Khalil
Bartolucci, Rick	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramsay, David
Bentley, Christopher	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldip	Runciman, Robert W.
Boutrogianni, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Scott, Laurie
Broten, Laurel C.	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Bryant, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Smitherman, George
Cansfield, Donna H.	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Caplan, David	Matthews, Deborah	Sterling, Norman W.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Tascona, Joseph N.
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Tory, John
Craiton, Kim	Meilleur, Madeleine	Van Bommel, Maria
Crozier, Bruce	Miller, Norm	Watson, Jim
Delaney, Bob	Milloy, John	Wilkinson, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duncan, Dwight	O'Toole, John	Wong, Tony C.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Patten, Richard	Yakabuski, John
Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve	Zimmer, David
Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry	
Hardeman, Ernie	Pupatello, Sandra	

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

Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Martel, Shelley
Horwath, Andrea	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 79; the nays are 6.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

YOUTH SERVICES

Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services): I rise today to send a message to all of Ontario's young people. It's a message that was delivered by our Premier yesterday. It's a message I'm pleased to reaffirm in this House today. Our government's message is this: We believe in our youth, and we believe that given the right opportunities, they will make the right choices. We're working hard to ensure that youth who live with circumstances that may present them with significant challenges have every opportunity to succeed. That's why our government has announced a new youth challenge fund.

This fund will support local community initiatives on the ground. It will make good things happen for children and youth in their neighbourhoods, and it will create meaningful opportunities, because this fund is about

creating opportunities by providing supports and programs for youth where they need them most: in their neighbourhoods.

We are challenging the private sector and individual contributors to match our \$15-million investment. We will then match private sector contributions up to an additional \$15 million for a potential total investment of at least \$45 million over the next three years.

Finally, we are challenging our young people to seize the opportunities provided by the fund to reach higher and to fulfill their potential.

While our government believes strongly in this grass-roots approach, we also recognize that it requires a guiding hand. So we are putting together a board that will work with our communities, the city of Toronto and the United Way, to choose and support the ideas with the greatest potential to make the most significant impact. I am pleased that the Premier has asked me to be a member of this board. Argos coach Mike "Pinball" Clemons has agreed to chair the board, which will be comprised of youth, community leaders and private sector leaders who will work hard to ensure meaningful results for our youth.

The doctor and writer Deepak Chopra once said, "There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in." Our government is working hard to give our kids more than one moment of opportunity. We want to open as many doors as we can to a future filled with opportunities and achievements, and we are confident that as these doors open, Ontario's children and youth will pursue every possibility and seize every opportunity. The new youth challenge fund is just one illustration of our government's commitment to our youth. This fund joins a list of other initiatives already on the way, and there are more to come.

HEALTH CARE

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): It's with great pride that I rise in my place today to speak about our government's efforts, and they are successful efforts, to increase Ontarians' access to doctors and nurses. As my colleagues know, this is one of our three main priorities in health care, the other two being healthier Ontarians and shorter wait times. It is by focusing on these priorities that we are going to realize the vision of the health care that we share with Ontarians: a system that helps keep people healthy, gets them good care when they are sick and that will be there for future generations.

We are increasing the supply of doctors in several ways:

We've more than doubled the number of training spots for foreign-trained physicians—international medical graduates, as we call them. There are so many qualified people who have, until now, had their dreams of practising medicine in Ontario frustrated, and we're giving them a chance to make their dreams come true and give us some badly needed help in the process.

We established a program with the College of Physicians and Surgeons to repatriate doctors practising outside Ontario who would like to work here.

1420

We've also increased the number of family residency positions in our medical schools. By 2008, we will have produced an additional 340 family doctors, providing care to some 400,000 Ontarians.

I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention a recent report by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, which stated that the number of medical licences issued in the province has nearly doubled in the past 10 years, reaching—and get this number—2,747 in 2005, the highest number in the last 20 years. Furthermore, international medical graduates received 39% of the licences issued, more than for Ontario graduates and more than double the number for IMGs from 10 years ago, all of which is to say that our efforts are paying off.

As my colleagues also know, one of our signature initiatives as a government and one of the most positive steps we are taking to improve access for health care for Ontarians and to improve the quality of that care is the creation of family health teams. We've created 100 so far in communities around the province, with another 50 to come by 2007-08. Family health teams are a model of health care delivery that experts like Roy Romanow have been calling for for years. They bring together doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and many other kinds of health care professionals in teams providing around-the-clock care to patients in their communities close to home. Fifty of these new family health teams are located in communities considered to be underserved in terms of family physicians, meaning that thousands of former orphan patients will have access to a whole team of health care professionals working together on their behalf.

On the question of better access to nurses, our government has worked tirelessly on this file for more than two years. It should go without saying that nurses are the heart and soul of our health care system. We have a responsibility to increase the supply of good, full-time nursing positions, and we have. Just two weeks ago, the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario was commending our government's effort in this regard, saying that there are 4,500 more nurses in Ontario than when we took office. We have also introduced several initiatives to make the job of nursing safer and more fulfilling.

Late last month we created a \$40-million nursing retention fund to ensure that nurses can expand their expertise and stay in the profession and that hospitals can continue to meet the needs of patients in their communities. Just last week we announced the Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner program, which is going to increase the supply of nurse practitioners across the province. The idea is to target health care agencies that have funding for nurse practitioner programs but have been unable to fill those positions for at least a year. There are at least 100 of those vacancies. Agencies like community health centres, family health teams, long-term-care homes and aboriginal health access centres will

now be able to use their operational funding to support registered nurses who want to train as nurse practitioners, on condition that when they become nurse practitioners they return to work in the agencies and communities where the vacancies existed. In this way, we will ensure that these extremely valued health care practitioners are plying their trade in places where they are most needed.

There is one extremely important initiative undertaken by this government that I have not yet mentioned, and that is a significant increase in the number of doctors we are training in our medical schools. On that subject, I know that we all look forward to hearing from my friend and colleague the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

PHYSICIAN TRAINING

FORMATION DES CHIRURGIENS

Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I am pleased to tell the House today about another step the McGuinty government is taking to improve access to health care across the province.

Last week, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable George Smitherman, myself and many of my colleagues visited communities across the province to announce an expansion in first-year medical spaces. In our spring budget we said we would add 104 first-year undergraduate positions in medical schools by 2008-09. We are fulfilling that commitment. In fact, when you add the 56 new spaces in the Northern Ontario School of Medicine that the Premier opened in the spring, the McGuinty government will have created 160 new spaces.

Trente-deux étudiantes et étudiants ont démarré en septembre; 72 autres viendront s'ajouter au cours des trois prochaines années. L'Université d'Ottawa comptera 20 nouvelles étudiantes et nouveaux étudiants pour répondre aux besoins de la collectivité et de la communauté autochtone, et pour assurer la formation des francophones. L'Université Queen's recevra pour sa part six places, les autres allant à McMaster, à Western et à Toronto.

Over the next three years, Windsor, Mississauga, Waterloo region and St. Catharines will become home to satellite medical school campuses. The University of Toronto will establish a new medical campus in Mississauga for 30 first-year medical students in September 2007; McMaster University, in partnership with the University of Waterloo, is establishing a medical school campus in Kitchener-Waterloo in 2007 for 15 students; it is establishing a second campus in St. Catharines for another 15 students; and the University of Western Ontario is establishing a new satellite medical school in Windsor with 24 students in September 2008. Bringing medical education to four communities that do not now have it with these satellite campuses will mean more doctors in places where they're needed. Studies suggest that students tend to practise where they are trained.

To ensure that our students receive the best-quality education, our government is more than doubling the support for spaces created since 2002, from \$22,000 to \$49,000 per student per year. This funding amounts to \$12.4 million in 2005-06 and will grow to \$17.4 million in 2006-07.

Congratulations and thanks should be extended to the medical schools, the universities and the communities that have worked so hard to help expand the reach of medical education. The hospitals and the faculty linked to our medical schools are essential partners in providing a top-quality clinical education to our medical students. I want to recognize their important role in the success of our expansion plans in all of these communities.

Expanding medical school spaces is part of our government's comprehensive plan to increase access to doctors throughout Ontario. That plan, as you've heard, includes 150 new family health teams, the new OMA agreement, increased residency spaces, more than doubling the IMG program for foreign-trained physicians and increased medical school spaces.

Last spring, our government announced Reaching Higher, the McGuinty government plan to invest an extra \$6.2 billion in Ontario's post-secondary system, the single largest multi-year investment in colleges and universities in 40 years. Reaching Higher confirms our goal to offer more opportunities to our students so they can aspire to, prepare for and, if qualified, exercise their choice to pursue post-secondary education. Strengthening our health care professions is a key component of our government's historic Reaching Higher plan.

Increasing the number of medical school spaces will increase the supply of doctors. That means greater access to health care for Ontarians. The new satellite campuses will bring medical education closer to the communities the doctors will eventually serve. More doctors, better access, improved health care—this initiative will benefit all Ontarians.

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

YOUTH SERVICES

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I rise to respond to the statement made by the Minister of Children and Youth Services, really repeating for good measure the announcement made by the Premier yesterday. I welcome the announcement, albeit late in coming. I think what it does is confirm the wisdom of the communities in Toronto and elsewhere that we consulted so broadly over the course of 2005 with respect to what was needed to help, not only to address the problem of crime and guns and gangs but also to address the problem that affects so many of those communities in terms of marginalization of people and lack of opportunity for young people.

I also endorse, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party, the selection of "Pinball" Clemons as the chair. He's someone I know well. I worked with him well when I was commissioner of the Canadian Football League and at other times. The challenge for him—and it

will be a particular challenge for him working with this government—will be to establish the balance between two of the comments he himself made yesterday: one, talking about the urgency to act and to make sure that we get on with actually providing opportunity and providing programs for these young people and for these communities; and the other, talking about the need to get it right.

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I think that too often on matters of this kind, the government has taken too much time to act, too much time to move, and then got bogged down, as I hope they will not in this instance, in the process of picking a board and finding offices and buying furniture and hiring consultants. I'm sure there'll be an ad campaign involved somewhere, because there just couldn't be a program without an ad campaign. I think what we have to do instead is to move much more quickly to engage these communities now, to engage now the people and the leadership who live in these communities. That includes—but is not limited to, by any means—the people who are represented here today from one particular community. It includes the leadership of the black community, who I think are people that we have to get involved in a very detailed way.

What worries me is that I wrote, just to pick an example, to the Premier on August 10, 2005, and talked about "a youth strategy with a focus on coordinating and replicating programs for children and families that works. Your government and other local governments and agencies such as the United Way have supported some programs for children and families, which seem to be achieving some good results. My own conversations suggest, however, that there is really no coordination of all of this, nor is there an attempt to replicate the most effective programs in more neighbourhoods."

Now, there is hope. I live in hope that that is what the announcement of yesterday and today is indeed going to do: not get bogged down in bureaucracy, but instead actually replicate some of the successes that this government, the United Way and other organizations have achieved. I want to reiterate as well, at this point in time, the offer from myself and the PC caucus, made to the Premier and to the government, to work together with "Pinball" Clemons and with the Premier and the government to try and address this. I think it's the kind of issue we should work on together.

I had the privilege of addressing the Canadian Club last week, and when I mentioned this very challenge—issued it from the podium—I had several corporations respond on the spot, saying they would have internship opportunities within their companies. I think that's how this is done. It's not through bureaucracy or paperwork or forms; it's done by issuing the challenge to people to become involved, to work with all of us to make sure we address a problem that needs to be addressed. I know—from my work with the United Way, from my work with "Pinball"—and I live in hope that the government can take full advantage of what those people have to offer

and make sure we can make these programs a success. It's our duty to do so.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo): I'm pleased to respond to the announcement made by both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. First of all, I think the announcement today about any increase that we might have seen in the way of physicians and nurses certainly confirms the fact that the plan that we put in place when our government was in office is working.

If this government recalls, we had an eight-point plan to reduce the barriers to registration, assessment and training for international medical graduates. We also had a plan and we put in place the initiatives in the development of the northern medical school on the two sites in Sudbury and Thunder Bay. We also had a plan to increase medical school enrolment by 30%. It appears that those initiatives are indeed working.

Also, as far as nurses are concerned, we invested \$375 million annually, in response to the request from nurses, to create more than 3,800 nursing positions in the province, to invest in continuing education for nurses. And of course, our government, on the advice of the nursing profession, particularly RNAO, did create the nursing practitioner position.

However, the minister talks about the family—

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

YOUTH SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): In response to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, while some may say that this announcement is a welcome first step, it certainly doesn't absolve the government of its further responsibilities on this file. We really aren't kidding anyone here. This is one-time project money. It's not a comprehensive strategy. It's not going to fix the systemic problems that contribute to putting our youth at risk, susceptible to violence and to the creation of crime in our cities.

One can argue that this announcement in fact is a bit of a letdown, because really the solutions need to be far more widespread than this announcement provides. Most of the money is coming from the private sector, but it's the government, not the private sector, that is responsible for finding real solutions to poverty, to the lack of affordable housing, to the lack of affordable child care and available child care, to ending things like the national child benefit clawback and to creating real opportunities for our youth across the province. We need to give young people hope instead of leaving them hoping for corporate donations. The McGuinty Liberals simply are not off the hook with this announcement.

The fund provides some investment in Toronto neighbourhoods, but Hamilton and Niagara regions, for example, also experience serious problems that call out for

comprehensive solutions, not one-offs. I'd like to see an all-encompassing strategy announced by the government that's going to help youth in crisis right across the province. Give them hope; give them a stable environment so they can grow and thrive into the bright future that they so rightly deserve in this province.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): In response to the statements that were made on health today, I'd refer members to a submission that was made by the Ontario Nurses' Association to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. Just recently, on February 2, 2006, under the heading "Government Progress on Nursing Job Creation" it says, and I'm going to read this into the record:

"The government is more than halfway into its four-year mandate but only about a quarter of the way to meeting its promise of 8,000 more nurses by October 2007." The health ministry "says the government has created 3,062 full-time nursing positions so far: 1,202 in hospitals, 375 in long-term care to date, 485 in home care and 1,000 new graduate positions.

"But, a closer look reveals the 1,000 new graduates are, in fact, three-month temporary contract positions in hospitals. The government obviously has much more work to do and it must happen quickly.

"In addition, newly created nursing positions in hospitals are being compromised by layoffs announced in order to balance hospital budgets by March 31, 2006. Here are a few examples: Data from the nursing secretariat show that Bluewater Health created 11 new full-time positions, Lakeridge Health created nine new nursing positions, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton created 12 new nursing positions and Sault Area Hospital reported 20 new nursing positions were created.

"At the same time, however, over the course of 2005, Lakeridge announced layoffs of 39 full-time RNs and 57 regular part-time RNs; Sault Area Hospital announced a layoff of 25 full-time RNs and 10 regular part-time RNs. Bluewater announced a layoff of 28 full-time nursing equivalents and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton announced 18 full-time and 10 part-time RN" layoffs. "These layoffs more than negate any progress being made in recruiting new nursing positions using funding that was targeted for that specific purpose.

"Nurses cannot continue to deliver quality patient care in this endless cycle of hiring and layoffs."

Then, of course, it goes on to be very critical of LHINS, as they were during the public hearings. What else has been said about nurses recently? Here's the London Free Press, February 2, 2006:

"Job Cuts Will Drive Nurses Away, Union Warns." I'm going to read this into the record as well:

"Nurses are frustrated and looking for a way out of the profession in the wake of the announcement by London hospitals that 117 full-time and part-time jobs are being eliminated.

“‘It makes for a very frustrated, disheartened workforce,’ said Dawn Blenkhorn-Bax, local coordinator of Ontario Nurses’ Association Local 100, representing about 1,600 London nurses....

“Many of the 117 cuts will be done by not filling current vacancies and through attrition.” She “said it remains unclear if any nurses will be handed layoff notices.

“But by not filling vacancies, hospitals will be increasing the workload for the nursing staff....

“‘We are working at bare minimum staffing as it is,’ she said.”

What’s worse is that this is only phase 1. The hospital still has a \$30 million deficit. So if this government forces them to deal with that deficit, there are going to be significantly more layoffs. She said that “it’s difficult for nurses to be told in one breath the province wants to hire 8,000 more nurses and then be told vacancies will go unfilled and layoffs could be on the horizon.” That’s the situation.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Today in the Speaker’s gallery we are joined by two very distinguished guests: Seated with his grandson, Sebastian Smith, is former Speaker of the Legislature David Warner, who served from November 1990 to September 1995.

Applause.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

OMERS PENSION FUND

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier. Could you please give us your best estimate of the total cost of your OMERS reforms? I would expect that on a matter of this importance you would have your own numbers that you might wish to share with the taxpayers of Ontario.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): It’s great to be back, and I welcome the opportunity to speak to what has developed into a very important issue.

The commitment that we have made is to devolve responsibility for this pension plan, which really doesn’t have much to do with the province of Ontario, to those people who are most affected by it: the employer group, the municipalities and the employees. The second commitment that we made was to ensure that police and firefighters in particular would have the opportunity to negotiate new benefits that would, among other things, allow them to retire at an earlier age. We think it’s important to recognize that their job responsibilities often entail great risk and danger, and it’s only fair that they have that opportunity.

With respect to the question raised by the leader of the official opposition, I look forward to delivering more regarding that at the supplementary.

Mr. Tory: Part of the problem we’ve seen here is that a good many of the people to whom you want to devolve the responsibility, as you indicated, have real problems with the way in which you are doing this. Now, I asked a very simple question which had to do with the cost. We have a bill here, Mr. Premier, that is about to enter third reading. I think it is reasonable that you should know the cost of the changes that your government has put forward, your best estimate of the cost to the taxpayers of Ontario. There seems to be quite a dispute out there about whether the cost is one number or another number, and I’m asking you to try and give us some estimate. Surely, when you’re making changes to a multi-billion dollar pension plan like this and a series of important matters such as the ones you were discussing a moment ago, you could give us your best estimate and that of your government as to how much this is going to cost taxpayers. Can you clear the air for us?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The leader of the official opposition is effectively asking me if I can predict with absolute certainty what the outcome of negotiations will be. I cannot do that. But what I can say is that this particular bill, if passed into law, will not allow the negotiation to begin in earnest for at least two years. It then provides that it will take a minimum of nine years for full implementation of negotiation of new benefits.

From the municipal perspective, I have every confidence in our municipal partners to come to the table and bargain strongly and fairly on behalf of their constituents; I have every faith in the municipalities managing that. On the other side, when it comes to employee groups, I can say that they will do the very same thing. So I have confidence in the process that we are putting in place and I have confidence on both sides of the negotiations.

Mr. Tory: I think it’s very hard for the people of Ontario to believe that when you are making changes to a multi-billion dollar pension plan like this, whether it’s two years or nine years, you wouldn’t have some estimate as to how much this might cost taxpayers. It’s funny: Everybody else can come up with an estimate, and they disagree with one another, but you can’t come up with one at all, and you are the person prepared to put forward these changes.

Now, let’s try this another way: The mayor of Sarnia, Mike Bradley, says his city “will be hit with a \$1.6-million bill;” Mayor Poirier of Cornwall says, “If this legislation goes through, it could add to our tax bill 3%;” Mayor Miller here in Toronto says, “We would hope they would withdraw it even at this late stage;” and Mayor Di Ianni says, “Hamilton has already told the government it objects to the legislation because it will increase municipal pension costs dramatically.” If all of these people are wrong, then please stand in your place and tell the people of Ontario what calculating, what estimating you have done that any responsible government would do before you introduce changes of this kind to a multi-

billion dollar pension plan: It's the least people have the right to expect.

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The reason that there is such a broad divergence in the numbers is because they are all speculative in nature. Again, what the leader of the official opposition is asking me to do is predict with certainty the outcome of the negotiations.

I think it's important to understand that when the city comes to the table to bargain with police and firefighters, for example, they're coming to the table with a certain amount of money. If the police and firefighters want to spread that over pay and existing benefits and supplementary benefits, they can do that, but I don't think it's going to require that the city bring any more money to the table.

The other thing to keep in mind is that when it comes to the police and firefighters, they've got to put in 50% of any increased costs. So I don't think you're going to see a huge outpouring among workers in the province of Ontario saying, "Yes, I want to put all kinds more money into this new supplementary plan." So we are convinced. We have had extensive committee hearings on this. We have had an opportunity to improve the quality of the legislation by listening to the opposition—both sides—and we look forward to moving ahead with the bill.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): My question again is to the Premier. Why have you allowed Minister Takhar to remain at his post as Minister of Transportation after the Integrity Commissioner described him as having displayed "negligence, being "egregiously reckless" and concluded that in his conduct he violated the Members' Integrity Act?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): I just think it would be fairer to all concerned if the leader of the official opposition were to quote from the Integrity Commissioner's report in its entirety. He chooses to be very selective in terms of those parts.

There's another part that I think is very important, and it's found on page 30 of the report. I'll quote from the Integrity Commissioner. He says, "I have to recognize that the minister did not go about intentionally trying to short-circuit the system." He then goes on to conclude, "I think it would be unfair to sanction the minister beyond issuing a reprimand...."

I don't think it's fair to pick and choose those parts of the Integrity Commissioner's report on which you intend to rely. I think we have to look at it in its entirety.

Mr. Tory: Let's talk for a minute about picking and choosing the Integrity Commissioner's words. In a letter I sent to the Integrity Commissioner just last week to clarify whether he had in any way inferred or recommended, as you repeatedly have suggested he did, that the minister should stay at his current post or that you as Premier should keep him there, in his reply, which I will send over to you now, he indicated to me some words

that are very interesting from a former Integrity Commissioner, the Honourable Gregory Evans. He said, quoting Commissioner Evans, "Whether a member of the executive council remains in cabinet is not a matter of my office. It would not be correct to draw any inference that my recommendation that no penalty be imposed has any relationship to a member's status as a member of the executive council." Justice Osborne then goes on to say in his letter to me, which you now have a copy of, "I agree with this conclusion. I do not have jurisdiction to advise the Premier or make recommendations as to who should sit on the executive council."

Now there's nothing to hide behind. Why will you not ask this minister, who has been found to have breached the act and found to be guilty of egregiously reckless conduct—

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

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: Not being satisfied with the original Integrity Commissioner's report, the leader of the official opposition is now seeking unilaterally to amend it in some way.

I accept and fully support the Integrity Commissioner's report. I think that, again, it's important not to lose sight of the facts here. We're not talking about a case of releasing confidential health information. We're not talking about a case of hiding expenses through crown corporations. We're not talking about expenses related to hotel rooms and expensive steak dinners. The taxpayers' interests in all of this were in no way, shape or form compromised.

I can tell you that the Minister of Transportation has learned a very important lesson. He should not have had that meeting at that particular place of business, and I stand with the Integrity Commissioner—

The Speaker: Thank you. Final supplementary.

Mr. Tory: I would point out to the Premier that it is not I who invoked the words of a former Integrity Commissioner; it is the current Integrity Commissioner himself who adopted those words, said he followed them and said he passed no comment whatsoever on a decision that is up to you to set and to make with respect to the standard of conduct you expect from your ministers.

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I think the people of Ontario are wondering exactly what it takes to lose your job in this government. You and only you are responsible for setting the standards of behaviour, for deciding what is going to be accepted and what is not in terms of ministerial behaviour. Can we now assume that if the Integrity Commissioner has found the minister guilty of "egregiously reckless" and negligent behaviour, that is a standard of conduct that is appropriate for a member of your cabinet, based on the Integrity Commissioner saying it is you and you alone who sets that standard? Is that the standard you're going to stick to for your ministers?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The whole issue of accountability in government and government integrity loomed very large in the recent federal election. I think it's really

important for Ontarians to understand where I am coming from on this issue, and it's important for them to understand the nature of the facts behind this. The Minister of Transportation had a meeting at a former place of business. He shouldn't have had the meeting there; he should have had the meeting elsewhere. Beyond that, what the Minister of Transportation did, even though there was no rule specifically prohibiting this, is that his relationship with his trustee had changed, and he really should have put the Integrity Commissioner on notice.

It's important for Ontarians to understand that this does not involve, in any way, shape or form, any effort to compromise the interests of taxpayers. The Minister of Transportation did not enrich himself in this particular matter. Just so we're clear, in my estimation, given those facts, I am keeping the Minister of Transportation in my cabinet.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): My question is for the Premier. In your third year of government, you have now made quite a mess of Ontario's electricity system. You are lurching from crisis to crisis, trying to make policy up on the fly, like your \$40-billion nuclear power boondoggle. My question is, how do three days of open houses on your \$40-billion nuclear scheme represent the real and meaningful consultation that you promised people?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): I am also pleased to entertain this question. It too is a very important issue. We have before us a real challenge for all Ontarians, and that is to ensure that we take the necessary steps, sooner rather than later, that will ensure that we have a reliable supply of electricity in 2015 and beyond. That's really the issue that is before us.

The leader of the third party asks about consultation, and we are pleased to engage in consultation with Ontarians on this issue. The Ontario Power Authority was the first to make some consultations over the course of the summer. When it came out with its report, that was posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights website. We have extended the normal period to allow more Ontarians to access that and provide us with their best advice. There is now ongoing consultation in 12 cities throughout the province. The Ministry of Energy also has made their site available for advice with respect to the Ontario Power Authority's recommendations.

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

Mr. Hampton: In the last year, Ontario has lost 100,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs in the forest sector and other manufacturing sectors; 33,000 jobs in the month of January alone. The major reason? Because of your policy of driving electricity rates through the roof. Now you have a \$40-billion nuclear scheme, which works out to about \$13,000 per household, which means even higher electricity rates. You promised people mean-

ingful consultation, and what do they get? Three days of open houses.

Premier, before you commit Ontario to another \$40-billion nuclear fiasco, will you keep your promise: Hold full environmental assessment hearings, the meaningful consultation that you promised?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I know that the leader of the NDP would not want to leave Ontarians with the mistaken impression that the economy's not performing well, and I'm pleased to report that 15,600 net new jobs were created in January.

Again, the OPA itself had consultations. There was an opportunity to register your advice with the Environmental Bill of Rights website. We are conducting consultations now in 12 different cities. There is access available to the Ministry of Energy website, again for Ontarians to register their concerns or advice. I can also say that whatever happens, whatever the outcome might be, it will be the subject of an extensive environmental assessment process. The leader of the NDP understands that. I know it's a difficult question for all of us to come to terms with, but we will be moving forward.

Mr. Hampton: Premier, you don't have to repeat the nuclear mistakes of the past. I can remember when yourselves and the Conservatives used to rail about our electricity system's \$20-billion debt. It's all a nuclear debt. There are real alternatives. There are good strategies in energy efficiency, energy conservation, which your government only talks about and never does.

Here's what it amounts to, Premier: You have superficial ads on television talking about energy efficiency, but no programs, no strategies. Meanwhile, you want people to swallow \$40 billion in new nuclear plants. I'm simply asking you to keep your promise. You promised real, meaningful consultations before adopting a nuclear power plan. Here's a \$40-billion nuclear power scheme. Will you hold now the full environmental assessment hearings and the full, meaningful consultation you promised?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The leader of the NDP may not have heard me, but we're into our third round of consultations right now. There will in due course be a full environmental assessment. Just so we're clear, we are exploiting every possible alternative. We have the most aggressive jurisdiction in all of North America when it comes to getting electricity from renewables. We have recently learned—this is great news—that there is going to be a new plant going into Sault Ste. Marie where they're going to manufacture the steel for those turbines which support the electricity that we draw from wind. So there are some really good economic upsides to be associated with our plan for energy. We will, each and every step along the way, be providing opportunities for Ontarians to have input, and we look forward to hearing from them this very week.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River): To the Premier: Nowhere is your misdirected electricity

scheme more obvious than in Toronto. The mayor of Toronto has said to you, "We want to focus on energy conservation and energy efficiency." City councillors have told you they want to focus on energy conservation, energy efficiency. The head of Toronto Hydro has said they've already saved 140 megawatts; they can save 200 more. But what is your strategy? You want to build a natural gas megaplant without even trying energy efficiency and energy conservation. Premier, why is the McGuinty government policy all about mega-nuclear, mega-natural gas, without giving energy efficiency and conservation even a chance?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): In truth, the city of Toronto proposal called for, I believe, 200 megawatts of conservation. Our proposal calls for 300 megawatts of conservation.

Just so we understand what we're talking about here, in the 1960s Toronto had half the population it has today and 1,200 megawatts of supply within the city. Today, with double the population, we have almost no supply within the city. We have put forward a proposal which we think is the best in the circumstances. It is faster than the Toronto proposal, because an environmental assessment has already been completed. It is less expensive; there is no need to buy out a private sector interest, as there would be in the city of Toronto proposal. I would also argue that it is better for the environment; there is no temporary generation involved. And as I mentioned a few moments ago, we're looking for 300 megawatts of conservation as opposed to 200.

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Mr. Hampton: Premier, people hear your speeches, they see the photo ops, but they haven't seen, after three years, anything that even approaches an energy-efficiency strategy. Someone living in Manitoba can get a \$5,000 low-interest loan to buy energy-efficient appliances, to put in energy-efficient windows, to put in insulation so they use less electricity. If they live in Quebec, they can do the same thing. But what do they find in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario? They don't find any strategy. They find superficial television ads.

When are we going to see energy efficiency and conservation rather than nuclear megaplants and natural gas megaplants, Premier?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The leader of the NDP will know that we've already brought on close to 3,000 megawatts of new generation. He will also know that we have another 10,000 megawatts of supply in the works. By the way, that 13,000 megawatts is very balanced—in fact, extraordinarily so. A quarter of that comes from refurbishment of nuclear generation; a quarter of that—and this is extraordinary in North America—comes from renewable sources; and the balance comes from natural gas and other. I've also been working as hard as I can, together with the Minister of Energy, to ensure that we can in fact buy electricity from Manitoba and from Newfoundland; we've been working with the province of Quebec on that as well. It would have been better had the NDP not

cancelled that contract with the province of Manitoba. It was very affordable, clean and reliable electricity. That's in part what put us behind the eight ball, but we are moving ahead.

Mr. Hampton: Premier, you want to talk about purchasing electricity from Manitoba. I just want to remind you of what the energy critic for the Liberal Party said in 1992: "We can't afford to purchase electricity for Manitoba. It's too expensive." And who was that energy critic? Dalton McGuinty.

So, Premier, this is more of your on again, off again. I want to ask you again, Premier: People are looking for meaningful energy efficiency. The people of Toronto are not interested in a natural gas megaplant, just as many other people across the province aren't interested in \$40 billion of nuclear power. They want to see real energy efficiency, real energy conservation, not superficial television ads.

When is the McGuinty government going to stop talking about energy efficiency, stop talking about energy conservation and actually do some energy conservation and efficiency, rather than meganuclear—

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

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: The leader of the NDP is always passionate about these issues, and I do not for a moment doubt his sincerity. I wouldn't go that far.

I can tell you again, in terms of our commitment to conservation, that the city of Toronto proposal for the waterfront generation project was looking at 200 megawatts of conservation. We've upped that to 300 megawatts of conservation. We have put in place a new chief conservation officer, the first of his kind in Ontario. We're putting smart meters in 800,000 homes. We have established for the first time a 5% target, province-wide, for energy conservation and a 10% conservation target for the Ontario government. So we have in place some huge efforts to drive conservation. We want to see those move more quickly, and what we've done now is put a very important advertising campaign on TV, which is helping to enlist Ontarians more and more to the cause of conserving electricity.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I'd like to come back to the Premier on the subject of Mr. Takhar. Again, when the Premier talked about this being just about a meeting to discuss something and so forth and so on, he was conveniently overlooking the fact that the Integrity Commissioner, whom we, the Legislature, appointed to look into these matters, found the minister's conduct to be, and I'm using his words, "negligent and egregiously reckless"—not just reckless but egregiously reckless. Seeing that you've chosen to ignore us and the representations we're making on this today, as well as the Integrity Commissioner, maybe we could share with you some other opinions that have been rendered on this:

"Premier Dalton McGuinty should reconsider his earlier defence of Takhar and remove him from

cabinet ... McGuinty is wrong to argue that the reprimand by Osborne is 'significant' and enough punishment." Toronto Star.

"Mr. Takhar should not be in the cabinet. Mr. McGuinty should have booted him out as soon as Commissioner Coulter Osborne delivered his devastating report." Globe and Mail.

Premier, this is not about any one minister; it's not about any one Premier; it's not about a debate in the Legislature. It's about respect and integrity for the government, for the Legislature and for people in public life—

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

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): The question has been asked many times, and I've had the opportunity to answer it many times as well. The answer to that particular question is no.

In terms of making the government more accountable, I want to tell you about some of the progress we've been making as a government. We introduced and have passed into law the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act, which is going to make sure the Auditor General signs off on the books before an election so that no government ever again can hide a \$6-billion deficit. I'm somewhat surprised to learn that the Conservative Party voted against that bill. We've also brought the freedom-of-information law to bear on OPG and Hydro One, which had been sheltered from that particular legislation by the Conservatives. We gave the Auditor General more powers to audit school boards, hospitals, colleges and universities. We have banned partisan government advertising in the province of Ontario. We've opened up universities to freedom of information. We've brought in real-time disclosure for political donations. I could go on. We are doing more and more every day to ensure that our government is held up as accountable.

Mr. Tory: We could debate each and every one of those things, but it's about your standard today. May I remind you of what you said on June 25, 1997. You said, "The report we obtained today leads us to one overwhelming, overriding conclusion: that the minister, Al Leach, is in breach of the legislation, that he has broken the law and that he should resign."

Adding to the mountains of opinion: Christina Blizzard, Toronto Sun: "He can't keep a minister in cabinet who has breached the integrity rules." Murray Campbell of the Globe and Mail: This "is the Premier's power alone. He should use it to protect the integrity of the political system."

Why, when there has been a law broken here, a rule violated, when there has been a finding of egregiously reckless conduct, when there has been a finding of negligence and a reprimand under the Members' Integrity Act, will you now not exercise your judgment and say, "That kind of standard of behaviour, egregiously reckless and negligent, is not acceptable in the cabinet of Ontario," and that you are not going to accept it as Premier of this province?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I've answered this several times now. The leader of the official opposition doesn't like the answer, but perhaps he does not have the benefit of context. Through no fault of his own, he was not here at the time that Conservative government ministers were in breach of the Members' Integrity Act and suffered the wrath of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. But just to remind him, this does not involve hiding expenses through crown corporations; it does not involve an abuse of taxpayers' money through expensive hotel rooms and steak dinners. Minister Takhar did not in any way enrich himself; he did not in any way abuse or was even seen to attempt to abuse taxpayer dollars. So I think what we have here is clearly a difference of opinion, and I've expressed mine.

OMERS PENSION FUND

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East): Speaker, as I rise to ask the question, Rosario Marchese is dropping off some letters sent by—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Order. Members know that demonstrations in the Legislature are out of order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Hamilton East may have a question.

1510

Ms. Horwath: Premier, with each passing day it becomes more and more clear how badly you've botched the OMERS pension legislation. Thanks to the incompetence and poor choices you've made, the vast majority of both employee and employer groups are livid. You know that it wouldn't have been hard to get this legislation right. You could have treated everybody equally, offering at least the same rules for everyone. Basic fairness could easily have been achieved in this bill. Why wasn't it?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): I want to thank the member for the question. I want to register an objection on the part of Mr. Ryan, who is here, because I know he wanted that question to be on earlier. Be careful, Sid, because the next thing you know, you'll be out of the party.

Interjection: No notice.

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: No notice, no debate, no consultation.

There is an important issue here, and I want to in fact welcome Mr. Ryan to the Legislature. We have worked long and hard with all parties concerned to get this bill right. I'm convinced that, taking the best advice we could possibly get, including that coming from the parties opposite, we have improved the quality of this bill.

There is one thing in particular that I want to relay to Mr. Ryan and to the membership, and I'll get this out very quickly: We are doing nothing in here that will in any way, shape or form, compromise the pension plan for—

The Speaker: You may want to get to that in the supplementary.

Ms. Horwath: Premier, your jokes really do indicate the way you've been treating certain members of the unions in regard to this legislation. It's indicative of your lack of concern about their issues. Your bill—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, Minister of Health.

Interjections.

The Speaker: We can wait.

The member for Hamilton East.

Ms. Horwath: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Your bill is so flawed that it was entirely rewritten in committee, and it's still offensive in many ways, particularly in the supermajority processes that are still in there. Continued opposition by CUPE members, municipalities and serious concerns from stakeholders like OSSTF, OPSEU and school boards show that it's still a flawed bill. We're talking about changes to workers' pensions that discriminate against the majority of workers in the plan. That's unconscionable and could be the difference between people retiring in poverty or with the dignity of a secure income.

You have to get this right. What are you going to do to fix this bill?

Interjections.

The Speaker: The government needs to come to order. The treasury bench is no better.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The Minister of Community and Social Services will come to order.

The member for Hamilton East.

Ms. Horwath: Premier, you have to get this bill right. I'm simply asking, what are you prepared to do to fix it?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: As I understand it, one of the concerns shared by Mr. Ryan and CUPE members is whether or not this particular bill, which enables police and firefighters to negotiate additional benefits under a supplemental plan, is going to compromise the pension rights of other plan members.

The NDP in fact put forward a motion which was so good that we adopted it in its entirety. I want to quote from that motion. It's now part of the bill: "No assets of the primary pension plan shall be used for the purpose of paying any optional benefit under a supplemental plan or funding the payment of any other liability of a supplemental plan." We've gone to great lengths, working together with the NDP, to provide CUPE members and all plan members with the assurance that what we do for police and firefighters, in giving them the right to negotiate new opportunities, will not in any way compromise the pension rights of other plan members.

We're doing this in the fairest way possible to devolve responsibility for the plan and at the same time honour our commitment to police and firefighters.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This past week, I've had many discussions with municipal officials

and constituents who are members and contributors of the Ontario municipal employees retirement system—OMERS—pension plan. I understand that the debate on putting the OMERS plan into the hands of those who have contributed to it has been ongoing for more than 10 years. The previous government didn't do an awful lot about that debate. In fact, in these two committee hearings that we've heard after first and second readings, they've submitted two motions and removed two motions from their own suggestions for the pension plan. Right now, the province has to play the sponsor's role of OMERS plan, which includes responsibility for plan design and benefit changes, as well as appointing the OMERS board, but the province doesn't contribute to the plan directly. Minister, what progress have we made to bring OMERS into the hands of those employees/employers who contribute to it?

Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I'd like to thank the member for his question, because I know he's had a great interest in this issue for some time.

Changes to the OMERS pension plan with respect to governance have been talked about by different governments for at least the last 10 years. All we're doing by devolving the OMERS pension plan is giving responsibility to those individuals who pay into it and those individuals who benefit from it. The government's proposed model, as a matter of fact, was recommended by the OMERS board in the year 2002. At that point in time, Howard Hampton, the leader of the NDP said on November 26, 2002, "The New Democratic Party fully supports OMERS autonomy."

With respect to the supplemental benefit plan that we are allowing negotiations to take place on, this plan does not in any way, shape or form affect the main plan as far as the finances are concerned.

Mr. Levac: Minister, there's another major area that needs to be addressed: OMERS retirees, those presently retired. Whether it is through miscommunication or just plain misinformation, I've received phone calls and e-mails from retirees who—and I don't believe this is too strong a phrase—are frightened and angry. It's my understanding that they are actually to receive something in writing that tells them what Bill 206 will do or will not do for them. Because of this misinformation, these retirees have been telling me—and quite rightfully so—that their pensions will be cut and even dumped altogether. Those are some of the things that I've been receiving, and I'm disappointed by that. Because of this misinformation, we're told that they have no voice as to what is happening to their pension. Minister, I think it's outrageous that people who have spent their entire life working, who should now be enjoying their retirement, are spending time worrying about whether or not their pension is secure. It's time to set the record straight: Will you tell us right now exactly what 206 does and doesn't do for present pensioners?

Hon. Mr. Gerretsen: This a very important issue, because we all have received letters of that nature as

well. Let me be absolutely clear: There is nothing in Bill 206 that would change the terms of existing pensions. People's existing pensions are safe. As a matter of fact, the proposed bill provides that retirees get voting representation, for the first time, on both the administration board and the sponsors board. For those members who are currently contributing to the plan, if the bill passes, it will be up to the employers and the employees who are currently contributing to the plan to determine if any of the benefits—the supplementary benefits that were talked about earlier—will be accessible. The cost of that will be borne on a 50-50 basis between the employers and the employees. There is absolutely nothing in the bill that affects existing pensions or pensioners.

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I'd like to come back to the Premier, if I could, on the Takhar matter again. I wonder if the Premier could explain the difference between the Leach case—which he talked about in the Legislature in 1997, where the Integrity Commissioner at the time found the minister had breached the legislation and the Premier at that time said the minister should resign—and the Takhar case, where the Integrity Commissioner has found that the minister has breached the legislation and for the first time ever has reprimanded a minister under the Members' Integrity Act. Could you tell us what the difference is between one case, where you said the minister should resign because he breached the act, and this case where, more seriously, the Integrity Commissioner reprimanded the member and you now think the minister shouldn't resign notwithstanding egregiously reckless and negligent conduct?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): First of all, let me just say that the reprimand in and of itself is very significant. The members opposite may not see it as such, but it's certainly nothing to which any of us on this side of the House aspire. It is very significant. Beyond that, again, the leader of the official opposition chooses to be selective in terms of reading from the original report of the Integrity Commissioner, where the Integrity Commissioner specifically says that it would be unfair to impose any additional sanctions.

1520

Mr. Tory: It's absolutely unbelievable that you would stand here after the letter I received today, of which you have been provided with a copy, where the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario specifically says that he was not making any comment whatsoever about the fitness or lack of fitness of this man to continue to serve in your cabinet. You know from what he has said today that it is your responsibility and your responsibility alone to decide on standards of behaviour for your ministers. I think it is high time that you stood up and at least had the courtesy to the Integrity Commissioner to say that you have been less than straightforward with people in your interpretation of what he said, that you have to set that

standard of conduct and that you are prepared to accept egregiously reckless and negligent behaviour as the standard of behaviour for your ministers. If that's good enough for you, have the courage to get up and say so.

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: I really do appreciate the advice of the leader of the official opposition. As you might imagine, I get all kinds of advice. Some of it I actually seek.

Let me say that I've thoroughly considered this matter, and given the facts and the nature of this particular matter, it was inappropriate for Minister Takhar to hold a meeting at his place of business. He should have held that meeting elsewhere. Even though there was nothing specifically provided by way of rule or regulation that said that you've got to put the Integrity Commissioner on notice when you change your relationship with your trustee, he really should have done that. But again, this does not, in any way, shape or form, involve any enrichment on the part of the Minister of Transportation. It does not, in any way, shape or form, involve any use, misuse or abuse of taxpayer dollars. In those circumstances, I am very comfortable—the leader of the official opposition is obviously not—maintaining the Minister of Transportation—

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

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York): My question is to the Premier, and it's again on this same issue. As opposition leader in 1997, you stood in this House regarding former Minister Al Leach, who found himself in violation of the Members' Integrity Act. I'd like to quote again exactly what you had to say that day. You said that the Integrity Commissioner "said that the minister has broken the law. It seems to me that in those circumstances what the Premier should have done today is he should have stood in his place and said that he has asked for the resignation of the minister, and to that he should have added that he accepted that resignation." That's what you said when you were in opposition, but today, repeatedly, you are saying exactly the opposite. What has caused you to change your mind so much? Is it because it is your member today rather than someone on the other side?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: To be very direct, I stand by this decision. The members opposite may not like the decision, they may want to read more into the Integrity Commissioner's report than is actually to be found there, but I stand by this decision. Given the facts, given the work ethic of my Minister of Transportation, given the absolutely astounding job that he continues to do on behalf of the people of Ontario, I stand by my decision.

Mr. Prue: You came to power promising that you would make tough decisions. You promised that you would be responsible, but you have ducked everything. The Integrity Commissioner has made it clear that he cannot remove someone from your cabinet; only you can do that. Only you can make the right decision. Only you can ensure that there is integrity at the table around you. The people of Ontario are entitled to some modicum of

leadership, the people of Ontario are entitled to some moral courage and the people of Ontario are entitled to some conviction. When are you going to provide it?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: What it comes down to again is that the members opposite are not in agreement with the decision I have made. I accept their disagreement, but it will not influence my decision. I have a responsibility to ensure that we work as hard as we can to inspire confidence in the people we are privileged to represent, and we will do that in every way possible. I've listed earlier some of the initiatives that we have taken as a government. So I am very clear in this matter.

What we're talking about here is a member of my cabinet who held a meeting at a place of business when he should have held that meeting, clearly, in some other place—any place but that place of business. Also, even though there's no rule or regulation requiring him to do so, when he changed his relationship with his trustee, he really should have notified the Integrity Commissioner. Those are important lessons to be drawn from this, but the question the members are asking is, does that make this worthy of an expulsion from cabinet? Clearly, I say no.

PHYSICIAN TRAINING

Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre): My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. In my area, one of the greatest problems is access to physicians, but as everyone in this House knows, it's not an easy problem to address. There's no grand, sweeping strategy. Instead, our government has adopted a series of strategies, such as the recent agreement with the OMA, which serves to retain physicians here in the province and attract some back. We've also had extraordinary work done in terms of training more international medical graduates. We've seen the creation of family health teams—three in my region. However, missing from this long list are the medical schools, and I'd like to ask the minister how he's engaging medical schools in addressing the doctor shortage in this province, and how it will affect areas like Waterloo region.

Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): I'd like to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his advocacy on behalf of his community to address issues of access to doctors. Last week, he and I participated in part of an announcement—an announcement that underlines and supports the McGuinty government's commitment of access, an announcement that delivered 104 new medical spaces for medical doctor education in the province of Ontario. Those, combined with the 56 new spaces created when the Premier opened the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine this spring, mean that we're delivering 160 new spaces. Where are they going? They are going to a community such as Kitchener-Waterloo region, where the member for Kitchener Centre has been advocating for a long period of time that we need more doctors. So we're delivering a new satellite medical school campus to Kitchener-Waterloo in his community.

Mr. Milloy: I'd like to begin by thanking the minister for last week's announcement, which was greeted in the community with a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm. His announcement last week, of course, involved the establishment of satellite medical schools, which is a bit of a novel twist to the whole idea of medical training in Waterloo region. It's of particular interest because the school will be established in downtown Kitchener on the site of the new downtown medical school sciences campus, as part of the University of Waterloo. What I wanted to do was ask the minister why he decided to pursue this idea of satellite medical schools, along with other support that the government will be offering in terms of training physicians.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Working together with my colleague the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and other colleagues in the government, and taking the great advice from members such as the member from Kitchener Centre and my other colleagues, it became clear that in order to extend the reach of medical education, we needed satellite medical campuses. So we've established them. We're establishing them in Kitchener-Waterloo, in Windsor, in Mississauga, in St. Catharines, to ensure that doctors are going to be educated closer to the communities that they're going to be serving.

Among other things, the study suggests that doctors tend to remain in the communities closer to where they are educated. This extends the reach of medical education. For example, in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, the doctors who will be trained there will have some of their training done not just in the Kitchener-Waterloo hospitals but also in hospitals in Guelph—for example, Guelph General and Homewood Health Centre. It's good for the communities, good for the people of Ontario, good for access to doctors and it will all be supported with more—

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

1530

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I guess we'll have one more try here to see if we can get the Premier to follow his own words. He just said in this House a few moments ago, and I agree with him on this, that his job, together with all of us here in this Legislature, is to inspire confidence on the part of the people that we represent in the system that we're a part of in the roles that we fulfill in cabinet, in the Legislature, as Leader of the Opposition, and so on.

Could the Premier explain to me how leaving a man in a senior position in cabinet after he has been found guilty of breaching the Members' Integrity Act—for the first time in history, a minister has been reprimanded, and the words used in finding him guilty and in reprimanding him describe his conduct as “egregiously reckless” and negligent. Could you tell me how that inspires confidence on the part of the people of Ontario, who have already seen quite enough to shatter their confidence in the integrity of politics and politicians? How does this help

in terms of your expressed desire to do that? How is your decision here helping that?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): Again, the leader of the official opposition chooses to be selective in the choice of quotations that he abstracts from the Integrity Commissioner's report. Again, I think that report should be viewed in its entirety. Again, though, ultimately this is something that falls to me. It's up to me, ultimately, to make the decision, and I've made that decision. I am comfortable making that decision.

In some ways, it would be so much easier to send Minister Takhar out of the cabinet, but I think that would be wrong, given the circumstances of this matter. Again, we're talking about a man in cabinet who had a meeting at a place where he shouldn't have had that meeting. We're talking about a man in cabinet who also, even though there was no rule or regulation to the contrary, really should have notified of the change of his relationship with his trustee and put the Integrity Commissioner on notice.

Under those circumstances, I think—

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

Mr. Tory: I say, with respect to the Premier, that he's got this wrong. The easy way to is leave him there and do nothing, and do nothing to establish for all of us, for the process that we're all a part of, a reasonable standard of behaviour that you expect and that we would expect and that, more importantly, the people expect of their ministers.

Now, you having made that decision, as you say—and we live in hope that you might think about this again—could I at least ask you to confirm that you have been repeatedly incorrect in the attribution that you have made to the Integrity Commissioner—because I think at least you owe him that—in using his words to justify your decision not to in any way deal with your minister? He says right here, and I quote, “I do not have jurisdiction to advise the Premier or make recommendations as to who should sit on the executive council.” Are you at least prepared to stand in your place and say that it is not him who gave you any recommendation or advice or comment whatsoever on the matter of Mr. Takhar's fitness to remain in your cabinet: that it is your decision alone?

Hon. Mr. McGuinty: While the leader of the official opposition chooses to luxuriate in this matter to an obsessive degree, I think Ontarians are entitled to know what the Minister of Transportation has been doing.

He has launched a more secure drivers' licence scheme. He has launched the first high-occupancy vehicle carpool lanes on GTA highways. He has launched a new safety initiative for our school buses. He has launched a new program for booster seats for children in cars. He has launched the new Viva transit system in York region. He has launched the new GTA fare card. He has put in place a new northern Ontario highway strategy. He's got in place now a rental truck safety inspection blitz. He has done many, many things which I

believe without any shadow of a doubt will, at the end of the day, stand to his credit when people look back on his history of serving the people of Ontario in this Parliament.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay): My question is to the Premier. The job losses continue in the forest industry. Just last Tuesday, in one week in northern Ontario, we saw the loss of 19 jobs at the Tembec mill in the city of Timmins. On Friday, we heard the announcement made by Columbia Forest Products of the loss of 76 jobs at the melamine plant and the particleboard plant in the community of Hearst.

In those closures, again, the companies are saying a big part of the problem is your energy policy and your fibre cost policy. A very simple thing, Premier, in this whole situation is that your government is doing absolutely nothing to avert these job losses. My question to you is simply this: When are you going to reverse your energy policies so that we stop the job losses that we're seeing across Ontario, but specifically for the north?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation): To the Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): I'd say to the honourable member, he knows that there's \$680 million this government has put forward towards initiatives in the forest products industry of all of this province, not just northern Ontario. The member knows that, and the member also knows that this government announced the extension of the electricity pricing rate cap for another three years, starting at a level of 4.6 cents a kilowatt hour, which is a reduction from what people are paying today, and that will start May 1. The member should also know that as part of the prosperity program there is a lot of latitude in regards to the negotiations between companies and the government in regards to energy projects and how those are funded by this government.

Mr. Bisson: I'm sure what you meant was platitudes, not latitudes, because that's all we're getting from this government. For this government and this minister to stand up and say, “Oh my God, we delivered this great forestry plan to the industry to assist it”—the Ontario Forest Industries Association, the Canadian energy and paperworkers unions, the Steelworkers, the communities all have said the same thing: “It's not working. Dalton McGuinty, would you wake up?” We're losing jobs by the thousands across northern Ontario and across this province because of your energy policies and your inaction on this file. Stop the platitudes. When are you going to announce a reversal on the energy policies of this government?

Hon. Mr. Ramsay: I think the member should be reminded that in January there were 2,300 new jobs in northern Ontario. While this particular industry is having exceptional challenges, I want you to know that Premier

McGuinty, this cabinet, all of us, are working to make sure that this industry gets on to a sure footing. In the last few days, I've been working with the industry on a go-forward basis and discussing what the challenges are going forward, what their immediate needs are. You've heard this Premier say that we are going to do more for this industry, and you're going to hear that in the next few days.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West): I'm happy to ask a question about Hamilton, instead of all the grand-standing.

My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Commuting to and from the ambitious city of Hamilton has certainly taught me a great deal about the congestion on the roads. This experience has also pointed out the need for a very efficient public transit system. Encouraging the use, however, of the public transit system by people will certainly ease congestion, but will also accrue as an important benefit for our environment and, by extension, a benefit to our communities and to our economy.

For the environment, public transit means our roads are less congested. It means a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions are filling up the air and creating smog, which negatively affects the health of Ontarians. However, less congestion is very important for Hamilton because we need to enhance our economic activity. We do not want our future stuck in traffic—

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

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation): I would like to thank the member from Hamilton West for her question. The gas tax was one of our original election platform commitments, and we moved on that commitment in our very first budget. In our first budget, we gave one cent per litre of gasoline tax to the municipalities, and it came to about \$156 million to about 110 municipalities and about 83 to 85 transit systems. This has really paid big dividends for us. It has increased the stock of new buses on the road. They have been able to hire new drivers. They have been able to add new routes.

We are already moving with the second phase, which is about one and a half cents of the gasoline tax per litre to the municipalities. It's about \$232 million, and it will also affect about 110 municipalities. By the way, Hamilton will get about \$8 million, which they should be able to put to good use.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington): Minister, we know that the previous government did not support the expansion and improvement of local public transit systems. In my riding of Guelph-Wellington, we have a large population of students from the University of Guelph and area high schools. I know that they rely on public transit a great deal to get them to and from activities.

Last year, the gas tax transfer to the city of Guelph resulted in a payment of \$1.4 million to my local transit committee, and they used this money very effectively. They added a new route which made the transportation around Guelph much more efficient, much more effective. Historically, we've had a daisy style of transportation: Every route went out and back in to a central point. What they did with the money we added last year was add a perimeter route to connect everybody as they moved around. So we have had an excellent improvement.

Minister, what are we going to be able to do this year for my constituents?

1540

Hon. Mr. Takhar: We are making record investments in transit. This is the first government that has provided stable, long-term funding to the municipalities so they can address their transit needs. The gas tax money alone this year will be \$232 million. Out of that, the share for your area will be about \$2.1 million.

As we have seen with all of the other municipalities, they have put this money to good use, and we look forward to the municipalities making good use of this money as well, making real improvements in transit and adding new routes, new buses and so on. In total, we are also making about a \$900-million investment in public transit.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY 26

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 2000; and

“Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe-Grey;

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

“That the Liberal government stop the delay of the Highway 26 redevelopment and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule, to improve safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe-Grey.”

I want to thank Kim Taylor of ReMax Wasaga Beach for circulating that petition on behalf of the people of my area.

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): I have a petition that 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 cancer 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 am in agreement and sign my name thereto.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): I’m pleased to join with my colleague the member for Niagara Falls in presenting this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“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.”

It’s my privilege to sign this petition and ask page Katelynne to carry it for me.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa): I have a petition that reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Honourable Michael Bryant is minister responsible for democratic renewal;

“Whereas the Honourable Michael Bryant, Attorney General of Ontario, is elected to safeguard our justice system on behalf of the people of Ontario;

“Whereas the Ministry of the Attorney General may not be aware of the serious and important issues facing individuals involved in areas of the justice system even though the Attorney General’s ministry is continually monitoring;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Honourable Michael Bryant, Attorney General, for his in-depth investigation of the Ontario judicial system and to make the public aware of his findings immediately.”

I affix my signature in full support.

PROPERTY TAXATION

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York): I have a petition that reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas property assessment now occurs on an annual basis;

“Whereas the Mike Harris government created the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to deflect criticism of property assessment methodology from the province;

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government promised to create a fair and equitable system of assessment; and

“Whereas property values are not related to the cost of municipal services or to the ability of taxpayers to pay;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to immediately create a new system of property assessment that provides property and business owners with fair and equitable assessments that are stable and transparent that a property owner will clearly be able to understand.”

I’m in agreement and will affix my signature thereto.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington): This petition is from the supporters of Community Living Guelph–Wellington.

“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 pleased to sign this into the record.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

“Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis ... within the school system; and

“Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

“Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

“Whereas, as stated on the website for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, ‘IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development’;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all preschool children awaiting services. We also petition the Legislature of Ontario to fund an educational program in the form of ABA in the school system.”

I'm pleased to add my signature to this petition.

1550

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale): This petition is 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 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 signature on this petition as well.

OMERS PENSION FUND

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): I have a petition from my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. It says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas CUPE Local 1457 is concerned by the Liberal government’s legislation, Bill 206, Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System Act, 2005; and

“Whereas Bill 206 contains a multitude of changes that will cripple OMERS’ ability to manage its \$40-billion pension assets; and

“Whereas Bill 206 makes no provision for oversight of pension funds or accountability; and

“Whereas Bill 206 changes the rules on resolving differences among sponsors, making it harder for CUPE to find a way to improve and protect pensions; and

“Whereas Bill 206 discriminates against women and lower-paid members while providing for special consideration for police and firefighters;

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

“That the McGuinty government abandon passage of Bill 206.”

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls): I'm pleased to introduce this petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls. The petition is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and reads as follows:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration,” known as wet, “and there are other forms of macular degeneration,” known as 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 support this petition by affixing my signature to it.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. John O’Toole (Durham): I'm pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the federal Income Tax Act at present has a minimum amount of medical expenses for which a taxpayer is entitled to claim a non-refundable income tax credit;

“Whereas the health and medical expenses of every citizen in the province of Ontario, great or small, affect 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 ... 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 expenses for which an Ontario taxpayer is entitled to claim a non-refundable income tax credit.”

I am pleased to sign this and support it on behalf of my constituents of Durham.

HANDGUNS

Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):

These signatures were gathered at the Port Rowan outdoors show. It’s titled, “McGuinty’s Handgun Ban is Not the Answer,” and it’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It begins with a quote from Premier McGuinty:

“I think a handgun ban is an absolutely essential component of any intelligent, comprehensive plan to address shootings, especially those that are taking place here in the city of Toronto. I think we owe it to our young people in particular to take guns off the streets, and I can’t think of anything more powerful in that regard than a handgun ban.” (Dalton McGuinty, Hansard, Dec. 8, 2005)

“We, the undersigned, respectfully disagree with Mr. McGuinty and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take action on violence in young people by providing resources for police and fixing the justice system.”

I agree with the sentiments behind these signatures and hereby affix my signature to this petition.

FALLSVIEW CASINO

Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls): I’m pleased to introduce this petition on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Falls Management Group made numerous commitments to the city of Niagara Falls when it was awarded the Fallsview Casino contract in 1998,” by the previous government,

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

“Niagara Falls residents are still waiting for the on-site amenities and the off-site attractors. We believe that the government of Ontario should ensure that all promises made at the time of the awarding of the contract be fulfilled.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature to this petition as well. Thank you.

CROSSWALKS

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln): I’m pleased to present a petition produced by the hard work of Wayne Voakes, a resident of Dunnville, that reads as follows:

“We, the following residents of Haldimand county, hereby request that the crosswalks be painted on the following intersections of Dunnville-Byng, around Grandview school: Rainham Road and Grant Street, Grant Street and Thrush Street, and Second Street and Thrush Street.”

There are several hundred signatures to that effect. Thank you very much.

MACULAR DEGENERATION

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): I’m pleased to join with my colleague the member for Niagara Falls in this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it 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.”

It’s my pleasure to sign this petition and to ask page John to carry it for me.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STRONGER CITY OF TORONTO FOR A STRONGER ONTARIO ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 CRÉANT UN TORONTO PLUS FORT POUR UN ONTARIO PLUS FORT

Mr. Gerretsen moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 53, An Act to revise the City of Toronto Acts, 1997 (Nos. 1 and 2), to amend certain public Acts in relation to municipal powers and to repeal certain private Acts relating to the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 53, Loi révisant les lois de 1997 Nos 1 et 2 sur la cité de Toronto, modifiant certaines lois d’intérêt public en ce qui concerne les pouvoirs municipaux et abrogeant certaines lois d’intérêt privé se rapportant à la cité de Toronto.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Mr. Gerretsen has moved second reading of Bill 53, An Act to revise the City of Toronto Acts, 1997 (Nos. 1 and 2),

to amend certain public acts in relation to municipal powers and to repeal certain private acts relating to the city of Toronto. Mr. Gerretsen.

Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing): I'm very happy to rise today on this very historic occasion for the second reading of the proposed Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act, 2006, and I'm sure the members opposite will agree with this bill.

Ontarians want local governments that are responsive, responsible, self-reliant and accountable. Our government has taken progressive steps to provide municipalities like the city of Toronto with the tools and flexibility needed to more effectively serve their communities.

I should say, Mr. Speaker, that I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough Centre, who has done an awful lot of work on this bill as well.

The Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act, 2006, Bill 53, will enable Toronto to grow and prosper by giving it the authority to make more of its own decisions. It will enable our capital city to determine for itself what's in the best interests of Toronto and its people. The city would have greater flexibility to address its needs and respond to the challenges that it identifies. With the passage and enactment of this bill, Toronto would have more power to control its own destiny. This legislation signifies a new era in the municipal affairs of this province.

1600

It is time for us to carefully examine the new approach for Toronto city government that is proposed in this legislation. It is time to recognize the mature status of the city of Toronto and work toward providing it with what it needs to thrive in the new global economy. The Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act, if passed, would give the city broad, permissive powers to govern the city.

Bill 53 will give the city a more effective accountability regime by establishing the requirement of an effective lobbyist registry, integrity commissioner, ombudsman and its own Auditor General. This will improve the governance and transparency of the city of Toronto.

It will allow Toronto city council more flexibility to delegate powers and responsibilities to committees, boards and its own staff. This could enable the city to expand local democratic participation.

It will give the city expanded authority when it comes to business licensing. Furthermore, the city would have the power to regulate store closings on holidays, in order to create a level playing field for all shopping districts and better reflect the needs of Toronto's multicultural communities.

The city would have greater flexibility to establish speed limits on its local roads.

It will have the authority to control the demolition and conversion of rental housing, and have the ability to provide temporary housing accommodations to address housing emergencies without having to obtain provincial approval.

It would also give general authority to the city to raise revenues, but with limitations such as no tax on personal or corporate income, no tax on wealth or payroll, no capital tax, no tax on gas or hotel rooms; and no sales tax, except for a tax on the sale of entertainment, alcohol or tobacco.

Our government has been a leader in fostering a strong consultative relationship with the municipal sector. We believe that the relationship between the province and our municipalities should be one of an ongoing and reciprocal consultation. This is far removed from the paternalistic approach that previous governments took. Our government is working towards a new kind of relationship with Toronto, based on a true partnership of equals. We believe that it's appropriate to engage in ongoing consultation with each other about matters of mutual interest.

This is landmark legislation for our province's capital city. Our government has provided extraordinary leadership on this issue. It's not just government members who are saying that; this piece of legislation has received unprecedented praise. For example, Alan Broadbent, chairman of the Maytree Foundation, says: "I salute Premier McGuinty for his clear thinking and political courage in recognizing the importance of cities in the 21st century, in particular, the necessity of giving Ontario's largest city more permissive powers. He obviously believes that making Toronto work is in the best interest of all Ontarians. The Premier clearly 'gets it.'"

Toronto's Mayor David Miller, at a ceremony to mark the introduction of this groundbreaking legislation said, "I want to acknowledge the leadership of Premier Dalton McGuinty. Without his clear vision and persistence, this legislation would not have been possible.... The province has put Toronto in a position to succeed and to realize its tremendous potential as a world city."

Members of the business community have also welcomed the stronger city of Toronto act. I quote: "Finally, we're on the road to ... giving Toronto the powers and responsibilities that it needs and deserves." That's a statement from Toronto Board of Trade president Glen Grunwald when Bill 53 was first introduced. He further noted, "Both Queen's Park and city hall deserve credit for political courage and vision in tackling this challenge."

Leaders in the labour community as well have noted that a broad permissive approach is overdue. John Cartwright, president of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, described this legislation as "an important milestone in defining a new role for Canada's largest city. It's been a long time coming."

Bill 53 has also been welcomed by those who are very familiar with the corridors of city hall. Art Eggleton, the city's longest-serving mayor, said, "This is a landmark decision. It's about time and should be applauded." He served on Toronto city council for over 22 years.

Experts as well call this bill far-reaching. Constitutional lawyer David Lidstone says, "If the government's proposals are passed by the Legislature, Toronto and the

Ontario government will be 156 years ahead of the rest of urban Canada in terms of the city's empowerment and self-determination. That would make Toronto's citizens gifted and would make Toronto more of an international player."

Toronto Star columnist Christopher Hume summed up the introduction of this bill and the Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act that was introduced last December as follows: "The McGuinty Liberals have grasped the critical role cities play in 21st century Canada."

Both progressive bills were introduced, you may recall, last December, just before Christmas. On the day Bill 53 was introduced, the Premier said it was time to give the people of Toronto the power to control their own future. Others have made the same observation. David Pecaut, chair of the Toronto City Summit Alliance, says, "The province is proposing to give Toronto increased control of its own destiny and the ability to more fully realize its potential as one of the world's great cities."

There have been many advocates for change. Community leaders, academics and interested citizens have advocated for a new approach to city and municipal government. I'm extremely proud of how we have engaged in a positive and fruitful dialogue with so many people and so many organizations that have contributed significantly to this particular piece of legislation. Our government's relationship with the city of Toronto and with municipalities across Ontario is on a more solid footing because everyone has worked hard to cement the bond.

This bill would lay a foundation for a new, mature relationship between the city and other levels of government. The success of Toronto requires the active participation of governments working together in partnership based on respect, consultation and co-operation. Bill 53 is a critical step in realizing the vision that is shared by governments and the residents of Toronto. Toronto is a culturally vibrant, economically strong and environmentally sustainable city. Our aim in the McGuinty government is to allow Toronto to better compete with other major urban centres across the globe.

If this legislation is passed, it would allow the city to pass bylaws regarding matters ranging from public safety to the city's economic, social and environmental well-being. These future bylaws could also deal with the financial management of the city and the accountability and transparency of city operations. These powers would permit Toronto to promote and support things that it wants to see happen, and to regulate or prohibit those that it doesn't. As I mentioned, the city would be able to prohibit the demolition of rental housing or its conversion to condominiums to better protect affordable housing stock.

1610

The joint review of the City of Toronto Act and other legislation helped bring about this important piece of legislation. Officials from our government and the city worked jointly for more than a year to develop a

framework that would appropriately reflect the interests of both the province and the city, and of the citizens of this city. In order to hear the citizens' views and to gather the best possible input, the work of the joint task force was complemented by unique, jointly conducted public consultation. It was the first time that the province and the city had worked together in a public consultation of this nature and scope. The public consultations held by the joint task force were complemented by discussion sessions that were held by Toronto city councillors and Toronto-area MPPs with their local constituents. On-line consultations provided further opportunity for the public to provide us with valuable input.

Again and again, we were encouraged by the time and effort that our citizens made to get involved in this political process. Indeed, public participation was a monumental aspect of how this legislation evolved. Citizens offered thoughtful and constructive ideas. There is no shortage of views and suggestions on how the province should change the way the city is governed and how the city should govern itself. I expect that we will hear more of these views as we consider this legislation in this House and later on at committee.

Our government is looking to give Toronto the tools to determine and manage its own future and prosperity. The same intention can be found in our collective efforts to reform the Municipal Act. We are continuing to consult municipalities, and I'm confident that the end result will be appropriate powers and suitable accountability for all of Ontario's communities in a new Municipal Act.

We recognize that municipal governments today face many challenges. Our government understands that municipal leaders are in the best position to know what their local communities need to prosper and thrive. That's why our government recognized the memorandum of understanding with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in legislation. We have been consulting with AMO at monthly meetings, and the process is working well. We understand that if our decisions will affect municipalities' bottom line or their ability to get the work done, they obviously deserve to have a say and have effective consultation.

Our government has been working diligently to build important partnerships with municipalities. These partnerships have been essential to implementing positive reforms to the municipal affairs of our province. Our government is also committed to continuing this dialogue with the city of Toronto, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and individual municipalities all across this province. We are well aware of the challenges that the city of Toronto and other municipalities face, including the fiscal challenges that are the legacy of past governments.

I should point out that our government's support for municipalities does not simply end at legislation. For almost a year now, municipalities with transit systems have been receiving a share of provincial gas tax revenues. The city of Toronto received \$91 million in provincial gas tax funding in the year 2004-05. The city's

share of that provincial gas tax this year will increase from \$91 million to over \$130 million. Last year, our government, AMO and Toronto signed agreements with the federal government for the transfer of the federal gas tax funds to municipalities and for additional transit funding without any clawback by the province. Those agreements will bring about \$1.8 billion for municipal infrastructure over five years and, when finalized, another \$310 million for transit over the next two years. This is the highest level of combined provincial and federal transit funding in 25 years.

We also took a historic approach in these agreements by stepping back and letting Toronto and AMO work directly with the federal government to decide the best way to share the federal gas tax revenues, and we certainly hope that this will continue with the new federal government as well.

Our actions here illustrate how our government recognizes that Ontario municipalities are able, accountable and mature levels of government which can represent their needs for the benefit of their residents.

This level of municipal involvement has never occurred in Ontario or in any other province in Canada.

In addition, gas tax funds are flowing from the federal government to local governments without any clawback, as I mentioned earlier, from the province.

The Toronto-Ontario relationship continues to evolve. For example, a massive expansion of quality, affordable child care and investments in children's early development has been incorporated into the new Best Start program.

Rather than impose this program on the property tax base, our government has chosen to waive cost-sharing requirements on child care funding for municipalities. This will save municipal governments more than \$200 million over the next three years.

Our investments in Toronto's hospitals topped \$3.6 billion in the year 2004-05. At the same time, the province has invested well over \$1 billion in operating and capital support for post-secondary education in Toronto-area post-secondary education institutions.

Also in public education, one of the highlights was our investment of over \$60 million in Toronto's schools as part of the government's initiative to improve literacy, numeracy and English as a second language. These are programs that are now available for struggling students. This funding is designed to support students from low-income, single-parent and recent immigrant families.

We are also seeking to promote sustainable community growth through the proposed Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, or Bill 51. If passed, that bill will reform Ontario's land use planning system and clarify the role of the Ontario Municipal Board in the land use planning system.

That legislation will limit appeals before the OMB generally to information and materials that were provided previously to councils. It will also require the tribunal to give greater weight to municipal decisions. Other new tools that would be available include urban design control and zoning with conditions.

The Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act will provide the city of Toronto with additional planning powers to help address its particular needs.

There are tools that would recognize the unique challenges of the largest city in the province. Many of these proposed planning powers are in response to the recommendations of the Joint Ontario-City of Toronto Task Force report.

When it comes to resolving local planning disputes, our intention is to give the city of Toronto the authority to establish, as of right, an appeals body for local land use planning matters—local matters such as minor variances and consent applications in which there is no provincial interest.

Bill 53 also proposes that the city would no longer require the approval of our ministry for certain community improvement plans that contain financial assistance programs. Through its official plan, the city would be able to establish policies relating to sustainable and energy-efficient design elements, such as green roofs.

By setting design policies and operational parameters in its official plan and site plan bylaws, the city will also be able to take greater control in shaping the appearance and character of new buildings and development. This could include, for example, the city having the authority to implement a bylaw regarding the external design of buildings, including streetscape features.

By encouraging more innovation and sustainability in community design, our aim is to produce environmental and public benefits.

The act, if passed, will also give the city broader authority to undertake economic development without seeking the province's approval, and boost Toronto's competitiveness worldwide.

1620

We are proposing a broadly permissive approach in this legislation. With these new powers comes a requirement for greater accountability. I and this government are confident that the city of Toronto is a mature level of government, a city that capably represents its citizens. Our challenge here at Queen's Park is to provide Toronto with what it needs to get the job done.

As the Premier recently said, our government is strongly in favour of doing everything we reasonably can to put the city of Toronto on a stronger footing, and Bill 53 is an important step in bringing this about. We understand on this side of the House that a strong Ontario needs a strong Toronto.

I will now turn the debate over to our parliamentary assistant from Scarborough Centre.

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): Thank you, Minister, and thank you for the incredible work you've done on this file.

As the member from Kingston, Minister Gerretsen has done an incredible job on this file, understanding and really getting it when it comes to the needs of Toronto.

I'm pleased to participate today in the debate on second reading of the proposed Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act. I prefer the "New City of

Toronto Act"; it's a lot easier to say. Actually, I'm more than pleased; I'm honoured and proud to be part of a government led by a Premier who has demonstrated that not only does he get it when it comes to Toronto's challenges; he has the courage to lead us to a better place through this historic bill before us here today.

This is a proud moment for me personally. As many of you know, before the good people of Scarborough Centre elected me just over two years ago to represent them here at Queen's Park, I had the pleasure and honour of serving for nine years as a city councillor in the former city of Scarborough and the newly amalgamated city of Toronto. Frankly, I was happy at city hall. I had the honour to serve on a number of the committees. I chaired a number of the committees. It was a challenging time, it was an exciting time and I was thoroughly enjoying the challenge that was before me there. But while chairing these committees, like the community services and works committee, it wasn't long before I noticed that the damaged relationship between the city of Toronto and the former Tory government was jeopardizing our city's future. Toronto was financially unsustainable, crippled by years of Tory downloading, all but abandoned by a provincial government that did not understand Toronto's challenges and did not seem to care.

I knew that the road back to sustainability and greatness for Toronto could never be taken as long as there was a Tory government at Queen's Park. That's why I made the decision to risk an enjoyable career at the municipal level and run provincially for the Ontario Liberal Party. My primary goal was to work with my colleagues in this House to bring about change here at Queen's Park: change the relationship between Toronto and the province, share the knowledge I had gained through my years at the city, the experience and the love that I had for Toronto, with my caucus and, as it turned out, with the government and with all members of this Legislature here today.

Toronto was losing hope. Torontonians have been losing their confidence.

This bill does not solve all our problems. It will not make Toronto instantly sustainable. It will not make Toronto instantly great again. What it does do is provide our community with the tools we will need to build a city that will be capable of competing with every city in the world.

I believe in Toronto. I believe in our people. I believe that we are fortunate to reside in one of the best places in the world. But I believe just as devoutly that we can do better. What's funny is that it has taken the confidence, courage and faith of our Premier, born and raised in Ottawa, to set us on a path that will ensure that we as a people, a community and a city can once again believe in ourselves and accomplish great things.

The Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act, if passed, would give our city broad permissive powers for municipal purposes. It would provide for a strengthened accountability framework with a more effective lobbyist registry, integrity commissioner, codes

of conduct and an auditor. It will allow Toronto city council more flexibility to delegate powers and responsibilities to committees, boards and their staff.

In its report, the governing Toronto advisory panel speaks at length about the need for Toronto to have a new governance structure. "City council should spend its time on what is truly important," the panel said. "At present, city council ... spends more time debating items that affect only one or a handful of wards, or issues not nearly as significant as the files it must soon address." I have to tell you, I could not agree more. You just have to sit through a city of Toronto council debate on the budget to recognize this. I have had the opportunity to sit through six of them.

I believe a budget must reflect council's strategic plans to tackle the issues most important to the people of Toronto. It must be a visionary document that funds the programs, the initiatives, the work required to move the strategic plan forward over the coming 12 months, ensuring that by year-end we've achieved our goals and Toronto is the better for it.

Unfortunately, a Toronto budget debate breaks down into a complex web of deal-making that knits together enough support to pass a budget through council by funding a hodgepodge of often parochial pet projects at the expense of addressing the most pressing and important issues and challenges of the day, and at the expense of strategically leading the city to a better place.

Unless we embark boldly on the changes envisioned in the city of Toronto act, unless Toronto city council seizes this moment as an opportunity to forget personal and parochial demands, our city will never fulfill our potential, and what I believe to be our destiny, to become one of the greatest cities in the world.

This report goes on to say, "Toronto needs a government that deliberates and acts strategically—at a city-wide level, with a long-term perspective, and through a coordinated policy...."

"We feel strongly that the mayor should be given the tools to provide strategic leadership for city council," the panel says. "A key tool to assist the mayor is an executive committee." The Toronto Board of Trade believes in that, many of our community, social and corporate leaders in our city agree, our Premier agrees and I agree. As the Premier has said, we're confident that the city council will ultimately decide on such an approach. Although Bill 53 makes provisions for the province to act proactively on the governance issue, we remain absolutely confident that such action will not be required.

When we took over this province from the Conservatives, our government inherited a deficit and increasing demands from our health care system. Despite these great challenges, the McGuinty government has recognized that a strong Ontario requires a strong Toronto, and the relationship between Toronto and the province has gone from a disaster under the Tories to a model for all of Canada under Premier McGuinty. We've taken steps to strengthen the city of Toronto in many ways. If you look at public transit, this city, the city of Toronto, is now

receiving the highest level of combined provincial and federal transit funding in 25 years.

I know there are some doomsayers out there wringing their hands in fear of the unknown and in fear of giving more power and even taxing ability to the city of Toronto. To them I say that if we do not act, if we let Toronto continue on its current road, the risk of losing our quality of life slowly but surely over time is all but certain.

Our city needs a bold new vision. Our city needs the autonomy, the powers, the access to alternative source of revenue that other cities have to succeed and meet our destiny. Premier McGuinty has the confidence in us as a people and as a community to use the tools, which this act provides, responsibly. Our Premier believes in us; the McGuinty government believes in us. I say to the people of Toronto, and particularly to the naysayers, that it's high time that we believed in ourselves.

The Premier said to reporters on the day that Bill 53 was introduced, "The people who have the privilege of serving Torontonians on their council understand that" they're "not going to grow a strong economy, you're not going to be able to support a high quality of life, if you tax people out of the community." That's true. I think it should also be said that Toronto is a mature, informed community that will hold its public leaders accountable for what they do. I have confidence that down the road, should any mayor or council abuse or misuse the powers of this taxing authority, the people of Toronto will be more than capable of holding them to account for their actions.

Every so often, a time comes when elected officials have an opportunity to do something or be part of something that will leave a positive legacy for generations to come. This is surely one of those moments for our history in Toronto. This legislation is just a bill. It can't, in and of itself, make Toronto great, but it is historic in that it provides the tools, the authority, the power that we as a people need to build brighter futures for ourselves and future generations. It is not the bill alone that will make us achieve greatness as a city. It's how we use these tools that will help us to achieve that greatness.

I thank the Premier for his courage. I thank the Premier for his leadership on this. I thank the Premier for believing in us, and I call on all Torontonians to join me in a quest to ensure that our city seizes this great opportunity so that together we can dare to dream about greatness again.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate? The member for Simcoe North.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I'm very pleased this afternoon—

The Deputy Speaker: Sorry; my error. It's been a long holiday. We're going to have some time for questions and comments. The member for Simcoe North, you were way ahead.

1630

Mr. Dunlop: That's exactly what I was planning on doing, a two-minute comment. It is my pleasure to make a few comments on Bill 53, the city of Toronto act.

It was interesting listening particularly to the parliamentary assistant and his comments about the naysayers and doomsayers talking about the things that might go wrong with this. In his comments, I heard him reflect upon the previous government. One of the things that I guess he should be educated on, and maybe he hasn't been here long enough to know some of the hard realities and some of the hard facts, is that during the Mike Harris and Ernie Eves governments, over a million jobs were created in Ontario. Many of those were manufacturing jobs. What am I seeing today? I'm seeing, day by day, jobs being driven out of this province by the Dalton McGuinty government. An energy policy: You have no idea what you are doing on it. Each and every day, even our gasoline prices are at an all-time high. I can remember you sitting across the road, complaining about the Tory government. Now look at what we're seeing with just our gasoline price alone.

But the big thing I want to concentrate on is the fact that this government is driving jobs out of the province of Ontario day by day. Was it BF Goodrich a week ago? Just last week, John Deere. The pulp and paper industry in northern Ontario: It's almost a disaster situation there right now, and each and every day. We're standing here today, and he's actually standing here, bragging about this pathetic bill. That's what he's doing today: He is bragging about it, thinking it's really doing something, and he's hoping that no one will abuse the powers of it. But the bottom line is that there's no confidence left in the province because of this of this government, the energy policy and the way they're driving jobs, manufacturing jobs, out of Ontario.

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York): I listened intently to the two people from the government benches debating here today and listened intently to what they were talking about: the city of Toronto. You know, they have great promise in this bill. They talk about how it's going to change remarkably the situation that exists in the city of Toronto, and how the city of Toronto and its politicians and its people deal with this Legislature. Would that that were so. In my own community of Beaches—East York, and in the port lands immediately adjacent to it, there is a community that is intent upon fighting what this government is trying to do around energy. They have the support of their councillors. They have the support of their mayor. They have the support of the waterfront corporation. They have the support of the citizenry.

You know, there was no consultation with this government. This government did not sit down with the city of Toronto and say, "Is this the best use that we can make of these port lands? Is this the best use that we can make of all the plans that were made by Robert Fung?" This is smack dab in the park that we are going to create in the pride of Toronto, in a place where we at one point were contemplating holding the Olympics. Has any of that been discussed? I don't think so. Throughout this entire 100 or 200 pages, many times it talks about consultation. But, you know, there is no consultation. On the very eve

of when we're going to debate this bill, there is a unilateral decision made by this government to take an action which is contrary to the wishes of the people who live there. You know, there's going to be no consultation. I listened to the minister on Friday. I listened to what the Premier had to say in question period today. The decision has been made, and the citizens of Toronto be damned. I think this bill is not going to do what my two learned colleagues claim it will.

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): Currently, one in six Canadians live in an area of southern Ontario that we call the greater Toronto area, or GTA. Bill 53 is an essential step in keeping the "greater" in greater Toronto.

As proud as I am of being a citizen of the city of Mississauga, I view our relationship with the city of Toronto as, to quote the minister, "a partnership of equals." Bill 53 is a big step in implementing a set of recommendations that will keep Canada's largest city great. If Toronto is strong and has governance powers balanced with responsibility and accountability for its plans and its actions, then all of us who live in the band of thriving cities all around Toronto will share in its greatness and share in the prosperity and the quality of life that we all create together.

Toronto is a world-class city, and it needs world-class governance powers to exercise its responsibilities to Toronto citizens. Toronto needs permissive power to pass bylaws in areas like the city of Mississauga can. Toronto needs broader authority in such areas as lobbyist registration and the establishment of an office of the auditor general. Toronto needs to address fiscal issues on an equal footing with other great cities in the world. Toronto should not have to look to the government of Ontario in such areas as housing.

Some on the far right of the ideological spectrum beat the drum of taxation. Ontario's neo-cons think that the people who built Canada's largest city know nothing about keeping that city competitive. I disagree with them. Something like half of all those who call Toronto home have chosen Toronto when they could live anywhere else.

Bill 53 is about good government of the city of Toronto and by the city of Toronto for the people and the businesses of the city of Toronto.

Mr. John O'Toole (Durham): It's an interesting bill, and we'll hear more about it. I think the government is moving quickly to offload certain types of responsibilities, in some way giving them the flexibility to raise taxes. But this is not a new issue. In fact, I'd encourage those listening today and those here to read Jeffrey Simpson's article in the *Globe and Mail*. It's entitled, "Don't Groan, We Need a Royal Commission."

This is a long and very complex issue. I'd say you'd have to look back maybe 15 years. When the Peterson government looked at it, they called it the disentanglement report; the NDP looked at it and called it the Fair Tax Commission; and in our term of government we called it the Crombie report, the Who Does What com-

mission. The whole thing is dividing what revenue should pay for what services. I would say today that what the province is clearly doing by liberating municipalities is saying, "Do it your way and raise taxes," so that they won't take any heat for the raising of taxes. In all honesty, this debate is far too important for our common welfare between the cities, where we live, and the province, where we live.

What it is really lacking here is leadership. I say that without a plan you're not heading in a specific direction. Without leadership, clearly, the ship has no one at the tiller. That's what's missing here. There is really no articulation of a vision, not just for the city of Toronto, but for the province of Ontario—and I could dare say that that's where this thing starts and ends.

This is going to be the template for the new Municipal Act. That Municipal Act is going to raise the responsibilities—and the responsibility to pay—at the municipal level. The biggest single issue that most of us are dealing with is municipal property assessment, the MPAC organization, and the whole issue of assessing properties at current value. Persons who are retired on fixed incomes are struggling, and this isn't going to solve it.

1640

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough Centre has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Duguid: I want to thank the members from Simcoe North, Beaches–East York, Mississauga West and Durham for their comments, and of course the minister for his opening comments on this very historic piece of legislation.

I guess it's not unusual for people, particularly members of the opposition, to look at something that is significant and try to poke holes in it. That's their job, and I respect that. But to suggest that somehow or other there's any comparison between what we're doing here and the work that was done by the previous government is absolutely wrong.

I was there at the city of Toronto. The member for Beaches–East York was there.

Interjection: He'll talk about it, too.

Mr. Duguid: He'll talk about it. We were forced into an amalgamation by the previous government that none of us wanted. We were downloaded on by the previous government to an extent that has made us unsustainable as a city.

This bill is not going to be the panacea that's going to fix all our problems, but it starts that rebuilding process within our city, within our community, to be able to get back on our feet again as a city. Combined with many of the contributions this government has made, whether it be to public transit, whether it be through the uploading of public health, whether it be through many of the other partnerships we've been working on with the city over the last couple of years, the future of Toronto looks bright under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty and this government. It's extremely bright. And you know what? It's a complete reversal from what we experienced

before. This act has the potential to allow the people of Toronto to achieve the greatness they deserve. It gives them the tools, the powers, the authority, the access to alternate sources of revenue, along with measures that ensure accountability to the public that I believe will make Toronto great once again.

I thank you for the time.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): Thank you for allowing me to put a few comments on record here on Bill 53.

Just before I start, contrary to what the parliamentary assistant just told this House, I wish this bill did deal with some of the issues as they relate to who delivers what services. In fact, that's what is basically necessary in order to deal with the problems that we have in Toronto and in all other municipalities in Ontario as to whether the tax base on property is sufficient to pay for the services that municipalities are today being asked to deliver. I'll talk a little bit more about that as we move along, but I think that's a very important thing to remember. There are two things that come into play here. One is the services that are being delivered, and whether the revenue to cover those services is sufficient to deliver them. This government is not willing to talk about the services that are being delivered. They're coming forward with this bill to make it sound like they have a plan to solve the problems, but when we get down to it, I don't believe that's the case.

Let me start by saying what the goals of this act were supposed to be, according to the minister. They were to give the city broad permissive powers commensurate with its size, responsibility and significance to the province; second, to recognize that in order for the city to provide good government, the city must be appropriately empowered; and third was to foster a strong consultative relationship with the city that respects and advances the interests of both governments.

I don't believe this bill accomplishes that, and as we go through this, we have a lot of areas where people of great knowledge in this area have differences of opinion.

Let me start by stating that AMO asked that the changes to the Municipal Act be tabled at the same time as the city of Toronto act. The government has been saying they've been working on this for a long time, both the Municipal Act and the city of Toronto act, and they were going to introduce them at the same time. The rest of Ontario was waiting for them to come at the same time, but of course that didn't happen. It isn't a surprise, because all municipalities were looking for the same revenue-raising abilities and waiting with interest to see how this would play out. Obviously, the city of London, the city of Windsor and the city of Ottawa have similar problems—they may be a different size, but similar problems—when it comes to the finances of their municipalities as does the city of Toronto.

Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre): Absolutely correct.

Mr. Hardeman: I don't believe that's incorrect. They all have problems. They're a little bit different size. The member opposite wants to have a debate, and I'm sure he'll get his 20 minutes.

Mr. Patten: I said you were correct.

Mr. Hardeman: Okay. We appreciate that. I thought you said that was incorrect, but you are correct: The problem is the same and it's universal. I thought the changes to the Municipal Act should have been tabled prior to the city of Toronto act so we could see whether the concern that we had shown for the city of Toronto was going to be the same for all municipalities.

But after the fact, after I reviewed the city of Toronto act, I realized that it really doesn't make any difference, because there are very few changes in this bill other than more taxing powers for the city of Toronto. In some areas that are not really the most significant areas in local government, there are changes that give more authority to the city of Toronto, but we will get to those.

In those areas where more authority is given, if you read further in the act you'll find that the provincial government giveth and the provincial government creates the ability to take away, because in each case, they have, by regulation, that they can change, if they don't like what's happening. That's why I think they have now proposed this city of Toronto act to see how that works, and then hopefully they will be making changes to the Municipal Act, 2001.

It would have been simple, and I think that's so important here—it takes a lot of time to go through the process, but I think it would have been much simpler had the government just taken the Municipal Act, done a review of the Municipal Act as they promised, and then included the things that are in the city of Toronto act. They could have applied that to Toronto and to other cities that have need of the same thing.

So let's get to the purpose of the city of Toronto act, 2006. Its intent is to balance the interests of the city and the province, while giving the city "broad permissive powers." A quote from Minister John Gerretsen on December 14, 2005, in Hansard: "The city would have more power to control its own destiny with the passage and enactment of this bill.... Our government believes that the city of Toronto is a mature government that can ably represent its needs for the benefit of city residents. It is time to move forward and give the city the tools it needs to compete on a global scale." I don't disagree with him, except I see absolutely nothing in this bill that significantly changes their ability to help create their own destiny.

But this does not amount to what the city really needs. The city has reported that they have over a \$500-million deficit leading into this year. The taxes bill is purported to give them—all estimates are around \$50 million. That means there's going to continue to be at least a \$450-million deficit in the city of Toronto.

We keep hearing from the government that the city has matured; the city has now grown up, and they need the authority to be able to govern themselves, create their

own destiny and look after the needs of their own people. It's like when the children grow up in a family, and it's time to say, "You're at the age where you are now ready to start out on your own and become responsible for your own livelihood and create your future for yourself," as your children go out to university. But with this, they just decided to say, "And all the responsibilities you have"—that the parents were paying for, that was coming from the province—"will no longer be looked after. In fact, you're on your own; go get it." And incidentally, "We will allow you to increase taxes in certain parts."

Now, if my opinion is wrong on that—I would just read a quote. Last year and for a number of years, the city of Toronto has been having this problem of being short of money at budget time. Last year, when the budget was being prepared, the *Globe and Mail* reported on February 5:

"Toronto should consider increasing residential property taxes above the already-assumed rise of 3% as a way to close its yawning budget shortfall, Ontario's municipal affairs minister urged yesterday.

"There are municipalities in the GTA whose tax hikes for residential properties are much higher than the self-imposed 3% that the mayor ... put on it,' ... Gerretsen said in a telephone interview from Kingston. 'I don't think it is the province's role to ensure that a local municipal official meets'" their targets and their obligations.

So in other words, last year he cut the traces and said, "City of Toronto, you're on your own. Quit complaining. Just raise your taxes to cover your bills." Of course, that isn't what the city of Toronto wants to do. The city of Toronto needs help in finding out how we can control and arrange our costs and make sure that we are covering the costs that property tax should cover, and then to make their budget meet—because the city, at that point, realized that the taxpayers could not stand the great increase that the minister was talking about.

1650

On December 14, our leader, John Tory, said in Hansard, "Toronto is very much in need of a new relationship, a new series of solutions. I said so many times when I was running for mayor of the city; I said so as one of the founders of the Toronto City Summit Alliance. A lot of good work has been done by many people in many places, and I want to thank all of those involved in the process. But I am concerned that the victory party has begun before that new relationship has really been achieved."

This was when this act was introduced in this Legislature and, in fact, the Liberal government was saying that this was the answer to Toronto's problems, but our leader suggested that this wasn't necessarily going to solve the problems, so we shouldn't have the party yet that all had been achieved. Now, as we read the bill, obviously that's exactly what has happened.

On January 31, our leader said: "It really is quite simple: Increase clarity, accountability and planning, and do more with existing dollars before asking for—or taking—more." This is contrary to Liberal philosophy.

Their answer is, more taxes, more spending will always solve the problem. We think that's wrong. We think that we have to look at who can do what and how it can be done most effectively and efficiently to make sure that everyone is paying for their proper services and he who makes the rules is the one that delivers the service.

Of course, through all this Toronto Mayor David Miller has been pushing for a share of provincial income tax revenues. I guess it's quite clear that's the overall umbrella of revenue coming into the province. Mayor Miller believes that some of that money should come to help pay for social services in the city of Toronto, so he wanted part of that.

If the legislation is passed, the province will give the city the power to levy its own taxes on—and this is interesting—on entertainment, tobacco and alcohol. I guess that's where the \$50-million estimate comes from as to how much we can generate, but in fact that will not generate the type of dollars that are required.

There are also some problems with raising taxes on those three—what we should call—vices. Entertainment, I suppose, is rather a simple tax, not to administer necessarily, but to impose. In fact, you charge a tax on everything in the city that is entertainment. In some cases, I suppose that will work very well. I expect you can put a levy on a ticket going into the dome or the Air Canada Centre, but some of the entertainment venues would go to areas where that tax would not be included, so that would not necessarily help the city of Toronto.

I would suggest that if it's going to be taxed on the venues that are already there, it might be more appropriate just to create an assessment class and actually charge it as a property tax and the city then doesn't need to charge, especially on the tickets, but could do it right through their property tax structure.

Again, tobacco and alcohol are always favourites of government on which to put taxes. But if you put taxes on tobacco and alcohol just in the city of Toronto, I don't think that's going to necessarily increase the city's revenues, because you will see the purchase of those products just on the other side of the line; I think the dividing line on the north end of the city is Steeles Avenue. Likely the areas where you can purchase those products on the other side of the line will start doing a whole lot better, and the city of Toronto would not likely improve much.

It's so important, with all these taxes, to make sure that if they are only for the city of Toronto—and the government has not said they wouldn't put it in the Municipal Act—I think a lot of the traffic will be going out to spend their dollars and consume services and it will not be a great benefit to Toronto.

The other thing that I think is so important is that we need to start looking at what they're spending and how it's being spent, to make sure that we are getting value for money in all the services that the city is providing and that the province is giving money for, and vice versa, to make sure that they're providing the right services and that the answer isn't the Liberal answer, which is always to just tax and spend. I think an example of that was a

quote in the *Sunday Sun* on February 12. This was a quote from Sue-Ann Levy, who was talking about the issue of the fare on the TTC. They were talking of course about the budget shortfall and whether the province was going to come up with more money or whether the federal government was going to come up with more money. The item goes on: "Without giving it a moment's thought, Chairman Howard Moscoe and the four socialist comrades who sit on the TTC with him rammed through fare increases right across the board. Not one member of the commuting public will be spared—adults, children, students and seniors will all take a minimum 50-cent hit come April 1." Of course, this is this year. "Fact is, no matter how much money comes pouring in from the senior levels of government, it seems there will never be enough to satisfy the TTC."

I think it's important to recognize that that's the problem we have to look at: how best we can provide it, and recognize that there is not an endless amount of money that can pay for the services. I'm not suggesting that the TTC doesn't need more money; I'm just suggesting that we have to make sure that in everything we're doing we're getting value for money.

As our leader said at the Canadian Club on January 31, "Before we rush to implement new powers to tax for city governments—whether in Toronto or elsewhere—why don't we carry out a proper, expeditious examination of federal-provincial-municipal finance first to see how much of our current problem can be solved by using existing taxpayer dollars." It's so important that we look at how we're spending the money at all three levels of government, to make sure the right government is doing the service and that they have the money to provide it.

"The new city of Toronto legislation is welcome in many respects, but we should delay the proclamation of the new taxing powers until after we have both completed an examination of the federal-provincial-municipal imbalance as well as asking the city to conduct a full value-for-money audit of the city government—as I was committed to doing had I been elected mayor in 2003." That's the end of the quote by our leader.

The basic premise is that we should be looking at this—it seems to be a bill to increase the ability to tax when I think it should be a bill to help them work out or to come up with a balance of their ability to provide the money for the services they're being asked to provide.

Just quickly to point out, one of the things we've been hearing a lot of concerns about is the cost of social services in the city of Toronto. We hear a lot of that from outside of Toronto, because of the process they call pooling, where the outlying 905 area has to help pay for the average cost of social services across the greater Toronto area, because the social services tend to be more focused in the centre of the big city. Of course, if the social services were looked at as a greater provincial responsibility, then the pooling would no longer be required and it would help not only the budget in the greater Toronto area but also the budget in the 905 area.

One of the other areas, aside from the taxing, is the authority to license. I think this is a major concern that

we have in the licensing part of the bill. It's not new that municipalities have the ability to license. Obviously, they've been licensing certain types of businesses and certain occupations for some time, but there's some real concern with the ability as to licensing today in the bill. I think it's important that we look at the "Powers re licences," section 86 of the bill: "Without limiting sections 7 and 8, those sections authorize the city to provide for a system of licences with respect to a business...." Then it goes on to list the types of businesses. I think it's rather important to put it on the record the types of businesses that licensing could and would apply to: "to prohibit the carrying on or engaging in the business without a licence...." They can stop people from running any business without having a licence.

1700

Actually, that was in the section of the powers they have on the licence. But in section 85, "'business' means any business wholly or partly carried on within the city even if the business is being carried on from a location outside the city and includes,

"(a) trades and occupations...."

So anybody living in Oxford county and coming into Toronto to work, if that's a business, could be asked to be licensed by the city.

"(b) exhibitions, concerts, festivals and other organized public amusements held for profit or otherwise,

"(c) the sale or hire of goods or services on an intermittent or one-time basis and the activities of a transient trader".

They already have the ability to license certain types of transient trades, but this makes it broad, so that anyone who comes into the city can be licensed.

The next one is a rather interesting one:

"(d) the display of samples, patterns or specimens of goods for the purpose of sale or hire."

So anyone coming in and advertising their business in the city would have to have a licence to do that. I don't know how they're going to regulate someone coming downtown with a truck and having it advertised on the side of their truck that they have a business and work for sale. A house renovator wants to come into town and his trucks advertise his business: I suppose that's a display of "patterns or specimens of goods for the purpose of sale or hire," particularly if he had some windows in the back of his truck that were for sale. I suppose he could be asked to be licensed.

The problem with that, of course, is that the licensing could be very expensive. There is no real limit in the bill on how much they can charge to license any specific business. They could in fact charge whatever they want. If someone doesn't buy the licence, of course, then they have the ability to prohibit them from carrying on the business, or I suppose prohibit them from coming into town. They can also revoke the licence without a reason, and they have 28 days then to come up with a reason.

They can "impose special conditions on a business in a class that have not been imposed on all of the businesses in that class in order to obtain" or continue to have

a licence. It really concerns me that they could actually license differently for individuals in the same trade. You could say, "Well, we have enough home renovators in the city, so anybody else applying for a licence—from now on we're going to treat the next applicant differently than we've treated everyone else," and that would be legal in there. I think the licensing part and how they can enforce that is a real problem.

There are a couple of other authorities they're getting in this bill that are supposed to make the city work so much better, and because they've matured, they can have these responsibilities. I say that somewhat with tongue in cheek, because I believe that the authority to extend bar hours, which presently are, I think, 2 o'clock in the morning—I'm not up that late very often to see whether it's 2 or 1. The truth is, I don't think anyone would suggest that the city doesn't or shouldn't have the ability to regulate those hours. But I also think it makes absolutely no sense that you could regulate bar hours differently in Toronto than you could in Mississauga or Vaughan or anywhere else around the city, or anywhere else in the province for that matter. I think all municipal governments are in the position to license and to set bar hours.

It's the same with the authority to regulate holiday store openings. Again, the Municipal Act already gives authority to designate certain areas of municipalities to have Sunday openings and holiday openings. This does make it uniform across the whole province, so you don't need a tourist designation in an area in order to have this. But I don't see that this should be unique to the city of Toronto. That type of authority would definitely have no harm in being across the whole province.

What it doesn't include are things such as the Building Code Act, the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, the Planning Act, the Employment Standards Act and the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. It's not that they wouldn't govern it exactly the same way, but we have the ability to regulate bar hours but not what they can do in the bar. So again, I think smoke-free Ontario would cover all of us, but I don't know why they would not include that when in fact they don't believe that the uniform bar hours across the province should stay uniform, where the other one does.

The other thing, just very quickly—I mentioned the licensing and the concerns of that. It's not only my concern as I read the bill but it's also the concern of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They have raised this concern. I want to quote Judith Andrew, the vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, in a letter that she wrote to me on November 7:

"We are extremely concerned with the lack of in-depth consultation with stakeholders prior to the drafting" of this legislation—and again, this has primarily to do with the licensing provisions. "It is inconceivable that the province would proceed with a matter of this significance without the necessary analysis, study and consultation with stakeholders on specific policy proposals—before legislation is drafted."

Again, I think it's important to recognize that there is a difference. She's not implying that the legislation has

been passed and now the government is going to say, "We will consult on this and we'll have public hearings"—and I'm sure they're going to say we're going to have a lot of public hearings on this bill, not just for the city of Toronto but for all of the province, because of the impact. What Judith is really saying here is that you should talk about these things before you draft the bill. There was a good example of that in Bill 206, which we've just gone through, the OMERS bill. The government members on the committee made the comment, "We're not going to apologize for all the changes we made, when we had hearings after first reading. We're not even going to apologize for all the changes that were made after second reading. We don't apologize for talking to the people." I had the opportunity to sit on committee and said I didn't expect an apology for listening; I expected an apology for not consulting before you wrote it in the first place. That's really the problem here.

This goes on with the quote from Judith Andrew:

"After months of playing coy, Premier Dalton McGuinty has finally admitted that the new city of Toronto cct will give the city new powers to raise revenues.

"As reported yesterday, the Premier is willing to give Toronto greater authority, even as he worries that the whole plan could go sideways if the mayor and council don't use their new powers wisely. It's a scenario the business community has feared since the plans for the new legislation were announced. Past experience with property taxes, city procurement and municipal regulation have shown small business owners that they can count on unfair treatment from the mayor and council."

Now, as the member for Oxford, I've also received many e-mails from members in my riding. I'll read one of them now. This is again going to the same problem. This is a member of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

"I am a resident of Woodstock and also a member of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.... The reason for this e-mail is to let you know that I oppose the introduction of this legislation without meaningful consultation and without full details being released to the public. I am also opposed to the idea of granting more revenue-raising and regulatory powers to municipalities. I would like to know your position on this matter and would like you to go back to your caucus and seek a postponement. I look forward to hearing from you."

Obviously, they also are not very pleased with this piece of legislation. I've got quite a number of those in my riding, and it's not because I live in the 416 or the 905. It's far from Toronto. I'm sure all the members opposite who represent more distant ridings and rural ridings will realize that the small business people in our communities are concerned about this legislation, not so much for what it does in Toronto but for what it will do as it spans out into the rest of the province. I think they're all assuming it's a given that if these types of authority are given to city of Toronto council, they will also go into the rest of the province.

Just a few months ago I was in this House, and we were debating Bill 37, the Respect for Municipalities

Act, 2005. I stated then and I'll state again that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has introduced a "no respect for taxpayers act." This bill is a groundbreaking demonstration of how the McGuinty Liberal government is committed to tax and spend and now allows municipalities to do that.

1710

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business at this point agrees with that scenario. The answer to all the problems, both in the city of Toronto and in the province, in the view of the Liberal government, is to just increase taxes and spend.

Again, I think we want to make sure that they look at that, as they didn't do with the OMERS bill, look at what impact this will have not only on the city of Toronto and all of Ontario but on the taxpayers as opposed to just municipal governments.

We will all remember, as I just mentioned, the debate on Bill 37. We will remember that Bill 37 was the act that the government introduced after having the Premier, for all to see just prior to the last election, signing the Taxpayer Protection Act, agreeing not to raise taxes. Then of course, realizing when this bill was coming that he was going to allow the three areas of taxation which are also provincial areas of taxation, he realized that according to the pledge he had made to the taxpayers federation he couldn't bring this bill in, so they brought in Bill 37, which was in fact saying that if they transferred their taxing authority to another authority, which would be the local government, they wouldn't have to have a referendum. Of course at that point he said they could then increase taxes on behalf of the provincial government. I suggested that maybe they were just doing that so they could get by the fact that they said they wouldn't raise taxes; they would just have the municipalities do it for them. Obviously that's what has happened here.

Talking about the city and the money, in the Toronto Star, David Miller, the mayor of Toronto, said—this was when the province gave him the money from the gasoline tax. I think what's interesting here is that the city needs the money, but it's not good enough to just say, "Well, here's the money, but then you're not getting the other." They need more money if they're going to deliver more services. "It's very good news that Dalton McGuinty delivered on his gas tax promise," said Miller.

"But, unfortunately, we're in this seemingly endless provincial and federal way of moving the cheques around and that does not support the needs of the people of Toronto."

The minister mentioned this, that this was when the city got \$91 million from the gas tax. I can't understand this, but Mayor Miller said in the Toronto Star on October 27, 2004, which goes back a year, so this debate has been going on for some time, "We are worse off than we were before." After he got \$91 million because of the sleight of hand or the changing of the way they were passing out the money and the services that they were asked to present, they were actually worse off.

Maybe it's by design, but maybe it's just incompetence or we don't understand what's happening, but this bill, to me, is a lot like the OMERS bill. There was some discussion about that in question period today, that there are some similarities.

The OMERS bill is the bill that changes—at least we were told the intent of the bill was that the governance of OMERS would change from the provincial government to the municipal government and the employees of municipal government, so it would be run by the people involved with the plan as opposed to being run by the provincial government.

The bill was introduced and given first reading, and then it went to committee before it went for second reading, and then amendments were made. There were some 140 amendments—just a little over 100 the first time—introduced and some 60 of those were government amendments. This is between the time that they had written the bill—before it ever got into the House for debate, they decided that it needed 62 amendments, not just word corrections but total changes in the bill.

It then came into the House for second reading. There was no debate during second reading. That was just before we recessed. It went back to committee, and during the recess we had another number of days of hearings on it, and the government introduced 40 more amendments. Now, some of those amendments were beyond the 60 and some were amending the previous amendments. But when the Legislative Assembly printed the bill and gave it back to committee, they printed it in two colours: that which was the original and that which was amended. The original is black and the amended is blue. If you look at the bill, about two thirds of it is blue. So obviously we didn't really look at the original drafting of the bill to make sure that it accomplished what they wanted to accomplish.

When it was introduced, the minister came to the committee and suggested that all was well and it wouldn't take long to have the public hearings because we were going to hear a lot of good reports on this bill, because this was really good stuff: Municipalities had been asking for years to have the plan devolved and everybody was going to like this approach. Of course, we started getting people coming in and we didn't have anyone, to be honest about it—at the end of the public hearings after first reading, nobody supported it anymore. They did make some amendments to bring some of the groups back on side, but a very small number of them. The largest participant on the employee side in the plan is totally opposed to the bill; the management side of the plan is totally opposed to the bill. The government said, "We're listening, but we're going to pass it anyway because"—I guess I don't have a good reason. They said it was because everybody was asking for it. Now we have no one left asking for it, but the government is going to proceed with it anyway. So I think that's rather a telling thing about, "We're doing the consultations, we're looking at these bills, but what really is being said and what we're hearing doesn't make that much difference."

The reason I bring up 206 is that I think it's very important that we don't end up with the same thing here, when we see the bill and what's in it. It doesn't really do what we all had hoped it would do, which was to give the city of Toronto the ability to deal with its own affairs. It's really just a bill that is a rewrite of the Municipal Act with a few added features that the government wants to impose on that.

The other connection between the OMERS bill and this bill that bothers me a little is the fact that one of the presenters on the OMERS bill came forward and said that no one seemed to be talking about it, but that if you looked at the OMERS plan today, there was an unfunded liability risk coming forward and the sponsor of the plan would be liable for that. In fact, the bill changes the sponsor of the plan so the liability would change, as to who would be responsible for that unfunded liability. That's a bit of a concern, but I guess the reason it relates back to this bill is I have some concern that what we're doing here is devolving some of the taxing powers and some of the licensing powers so we can stand back and say, "City of Toronto, it's your problem." There's nothing in this bill that's going to help the city of Toronto with the TTC. There's nothing in the bill that's going to help the city of Toronto meet their objectives in social services. I think those are the types of things the city is looking for that they're not getting.

The other thing—and I mentioned it earlier—is the issue of the authority that they are giving the province. Presently in the Municipal Act, municipalities can decide the makeup of their council; they can decide the makeup, if they have a ward system and how they create their governance—it's already in the Municipal Act. That part of the new city of Toronto act is a similar approach. But the province has decided, and the Premier has spoken out about this a number of times, that they really want a different style of governance in the city of Toronto. They want what they call a strong mayor approach, where the mayor has more authority than just as a single vote within the context of the council. Now, I think they've left that direction with the policy-makers at the city of Toronto and in council. And if that works out, then, "We gave them that authority, and they did what they wanted to do."

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The province has also decided in this that if they don't like the decision of city council as it's structured and the new way they structure it, then by regulation, by order in council they can put in a new style of governance in the city of Toronto. I don't know how you can backstop a city decision like that and then say, "Oh, we're giving you autonomy. It's time that you had control of your own destiny."

There are absolutely no extra powers in the city of Toronto act given to the mayor to appoint certain people. I know the mayor has suggested that was a good idea, others have suggested it wasn't, but there are no special powers in the bill to deal with things other than as a straight member of council; he's only the chief executive

officer. But they can, by regulation, as I said, overpower that and they can just send in a regulation to say this is the way it's going to be.

The city can also appoint boards and commissions, except they're told that there are certain boards and commissions they must have, which of course includes everything they've got today—or I shouldn't say everything, they may have more than are there. The boards that already exist must be maintained by the city, and those include the TTC, the police services board, the board of health, the Exhibition Place board, the Toronto zoo board, the library board, the historical board and the licensing commission. Again, if we're going to be free and open and we're going to be able to direct our own destiny, I don't know how we can put such limitations on that by suggesting what they can't do.

It's the same with the delegation of powers. They can delegate powers, but then there is a list of powers that they can't delegate. Of course, it's not surprising they can't delegate budget authority and so forth, but one has to wonder why they can't delegate some of the other things.

One of the other areas is the area and responsibility of housing. The minister mentioned a time or two that the city of Toronto shouldn't have to come to the province to make housing decisions; that should be a city decision. One of the legal people who did some review for the housing people said—let's hear a quote from the legal firm: "One area in which the province appears to have maintained its opportunity to hedge its bets, is in the area of retaining regulatory powers, whether full-scale regulations by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, or as increasingly appears to be the case, empowering the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to make regulations through a less formal process not subject to the Regulations Act, dealing with technical matters, or circumscribing the powers of city council."

When a professional legal person looks into the act, it's something that I wouldn't have seen if I was reading it and I'm sure that the general public wouldn't have seen, but it concerns me when we say we're giving the city this local autonomy but somebody is watching. Big Brother is always watching; Big Brother can change that. I think we should be very cautious, that if we're going to put limits in place, let's be clear and open about it: "No, you don't have that authority. We want you to do it, but the province will be watching you."

One other area that Bill 53 deals with is the appointment of mandatory officers for accountability: the Integrity Commissioner, Ombudsman and the Auditor General. They've always had the ability to do that, but now they must do that in the act. I don't object to "must" do that. I don't know why the government would portray that as a plus—"This is part of your local autonomy, you must appoint these people"—where no one else in the municipal realm has to do that. So I'm not sure that the "must" is going to improve the—

Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot): Didn't you just say we should define the limitations? Didn't you just say that?

Mr. Hardeman: What did I just say? I hope you were listening.

Mr. McMeekin: That the government should define the limitations—

The Deputy Speaker: Excuse me, gentlemen, but I feel a little left out of this, really. You should be speaking through the Chair and not directly to the member.

Mr. Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I have been doing my best to speak through the Chair. It's the member who spoke directly to me.

The Deputy Speaker: In that case, I'm reminding both of you.

Mr. Hardeman: I appreciate that and I would agree with you.

I would just point out that putting in limitations is a good thing for anything that we do, but telling them what they have to do as opposed to what they may do is not the way I would call putting in appropriate limitations.

I would just point out here that there are a couple of other things that the act does. One is the ability to affect design in the Planning Act. There are a lot of things in the Planning Act that don't change. The Planning Act is one of the acts that stays in place for the city of Toronto, save and except there are some amendments that they will get more authority over than what the rest of the province would get. They can affect design of buildings and the exterior of buildings and so forth.

The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, in a letter they wrote to the Premier, said, "Design should not be decided by city government—it should be left to the creativity of the many qualified architects and designers in the province. Giving the power to control 'good design' to a city bureaucracy is totally wrong-headed." I think this is important. Maybe the Premier did listen to that as they developed this policy—I don't see anything in there that he did—but it would seem to me that that's the type of thing they should have heard before they drafted the first draft of the legislation, to make sure that was still what they wanted to do. I attended a seminar on that, and there was great concern about the city deciding on certain types of exterior finishes that would dramatically increase the cost of the building. Now, is that really what the people of Toronto—not just city council—wanted, the brick instead of the glass, because it pleases one or two people on the planning board, as opposed to serviceability for the people of Toronto? Those are the types of things that are of some concern.

The other thing I found rather interesting—being from Oxford county I suppose it struck me—is that under the environmental controls the city can also regulate green roofs. In my case, we have red roofs. We don't like to have black because they attract the sun too much, but we have all kinds of roofs. I didn't realize a green roof is allowing the building of a garden on the roof. One of the things that act says is that it has a sunset clause on it. If that's a good idea, why would that be limited? It would be time-sensitive. I guess that would be a question that we could ask.

The other area is some of the planning decisions, such as under land use planning. The authority to create appeal boards after the decision-making will assume that the city has delegated their authority to a consent authority or to a committee of adjustment, and then the city can appoint a body to hear appeals to those decisions. So we would have an appointed board and an appeals authority both appointed by the city. The problem of course is to establish the ability, the things that they would be able to decide, and how you make sure that we don't end up with the problem that we make the decision based solely on the objector as opposed to on the proponent.

Again, a quote from the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association on July 26: "Municipal politicians have demonstrated time and again their susceptibility to the pressure of local residents when they make NIMBY (not in my backyard) arguments. The OMB provides an essential check on local political influences."

This refers to the fact that we shouldn't have the appeals body appointed by the city. This should be an Ontario Municipal Board decision.

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Going to the rental housing approach, I quote from WeirFoulds. It's a letter from the lawyer to the Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario: "This new approach begs, of course, an analysis of the ways in which the city of Toronto really is different from other municipalities and communities throughout the province of Ontario, and whether it is appropriate that it be treated separately and differently, and given virtual legislative independence in so many areas, in ways not similarly applied to even the large municipalities in the province.

"It may, of course, be the case that the city of Toronto act is a form of trial balloon, and if the city shows that it can handle its new-found powers and jurisdiction, similar provisions will be extended to other municipal governments."

I said earlier that a lot of what is in the city of Toronto act can be found in the Municipal Act, and I will read the following quote. This is again from WeirFoulds: "Many of the provisions in the new act are simply re-enactments, in the proposed city of Toronto act, of provisions already existing in the Municipal Act, the Planning Act, Bill 51 and other legislation."

Again, I will quote John Tory: "It really is quite simple: increase clarity, accountability and planning and more with existing tax dollars before asking for ... more" and more.

I'll quote from the website of Tourism Toronto, because I believe that they sum it up well in describing Toronto as: "Every city has a story, and Toronto's is written by the people: in several languages, in poetry, in song, in sidewalk art, in restaurant menus, in architectural blueprints, in scientific discoveries—even in legislation. Toronto is a city built with and for the limitless imaginations of the people who come here to live and those who come here to visit.

"Toronto isn't just diverse, it's the most diverse city in the world, and that leads Torontonians to look at things a

little differently, from the perspective of a hundred cultures. Two transit tokens can take you from one country to another, passing along the way through the quaint neighbourhoods that make up our intimate metropolis. It's a place of energy exchange."

Let's make sure we get this legislation right the first time. All municipalities in Ontario are waiting because they expect, through the Municipal Act, to receive the same opportunities that the Toronto act legislates for this great city. Toronto deserves a good and supportive piece of legislation that will do what it needs done, not Bill 53 as it's presently written.

Thank you very much for allowing me to take a few minutes to put some of the points and the problems that I see with Bill 53 on the record.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Prue: The member startled me a little by sitting down; I was expecting him to go on for his other eight minutes. But he did summarize, I think very well, in the 50 or so minutes that he took, his party's position on where he thinks this act should go.

I have to agree with him on some of the points that he made. I don't think that the act goes far enough. The real issue for the city of Toronto and for the council and the people who live here is not so much one of governance, as much as the governance has been a problem ever since amalgamation; the real problem is one of financing. The real problem is getting sufficient monies to the city of Toronto.

In fact, the city of Toronto is not unique. Virtually every municipality in this province is having financial difficulties because of the download. When it becomes my opportunity to speak to this bill, I want to spend some considerable time on the download. I want to spend some considerable time explaining what would actually work to the benefit of all of the municipal structures and all of the municipalities in this province, and that is money. I don't want to sound like Jerry Maguire, but, "Show me the money." It isn't enough to say, "You don't have to come to the province to put in speed humps. You don't have to come to the Ontario Municipal Board on matters of minor variance," which this bill contains.

I'm not opposed to those kinds of things. I think that they're probably fine. But what is missing here, throughout this entire debate and throughout this entire bill, is the power and the authority of the municipalities to have sufficient money to make the municipal governments work. That's what I'm hoping the debate will revolve around; that's what I intend to spend some considerable time later today and on the next occasion talking about, and I'm hoping my friends on the government side will explain in more detail how they will empower the city of Toronto and all other municipalities through financing.

Mr. McMeekin: One of my favourite poets, Aeschylus, once wrote, "In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until" finally, "against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God." As I listened to my colleague opposite, I had moments when I thought he was approaching an articu-

lation of wisdom and other moments when, frankly, I didn't have a clue what he was talking about.

I want to just say that we're trying, on this side of the House—maybe not as well as we could do it, but I think we're trying: We're aspiring to, some daring to, remember our history as we try to imagine our future. The member opposite talked in passing about not downloading responsibilities without consultation, and certainly don't do it without providing the revenue tools; I heard him say that. He talked at one point about too much authority being granted, then he got into that red roof, green roof stuff about too little authority, and then he said that it does nothing about the TTC or social services.

Then he said something about AMO saying, "Don't do this unless you do that." I can recall, when I was mayor of Flamborough, we begged—begged—the provincial government not to do amalgamations, social services downloading and market value assessment all at the same time. You laughed at us and you did it anyway. You, sir, and I say this to you respectfully, your government went out and got the best advice money could buy, the David Crombie commission, the so-called Who Does What commission, before you completely ignored it, and in the process you debilitated cities of somewhere between \$1.8 billion and \$3 billion. Shame.

Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington): I'm very pleased to have listened to the debate from the government on Bill 53, the city of Toronto act. I've listened very carefully to the very clear and very measured statements from my colleague from Oxford, himself someone with an extensive municipal record, and quite a proud and distinguished one at that.

My comments will be brief. My concerns here have to do with some of the larger issues with respect to why we've created, yet again, legislation solely for the city of Toronto.

I had occasion to be out with Hazel McCallion at a function last week. Incidentally, it's Hazel's birthday tomorrow. Being a gentleman, I'm not going to say what number it is. I'm just going to say that Valentine's Day is a special day for Hazel, and—

Mr. Prue: She's proud of her age.

Mr. Jackson: Yes, she is very proud of her age.

She had expressed some concern about giving municipalities far too much taxation power, and she has seen circumstances in the past where there were not the checks and balances that were required. For example, we live in a province that has had historical debts in certain factors, whether it be workers' compensation, whether it be hydro or others, that are added to the public debt, and we live in a province where that hasn't been contributed to by municipalities because they haven't had the ability to carry very large debts over time. So there are many of us who are saying that we should be understanding the true motive behind this kind of legislation and watching the city of Toronto act much in the same way and fashion as this Legislature now: wanting its own Integrity Commissioner, wanting its own Ombudsman, wanting these

levels of services that other cities, quite frankly, are asking why, and when will it be their turn.

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh): Certainly, being a member from eastern Ontario, some might say, “Why is Jim Brownell standing in the House commenting on this?” But it’s very important that I comment. I think the residents of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh and the city of Cornwall understand the importance of the city of Toronto and its position as the economic engine of this province. We know that. We certainly have some economic problems in eastern Ontario which the Premier and my colleagues in cabinet are working hard on.

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You know, when I look at this legislation, I look at the public consultation that went on to bring this about. This is really the first time that the province and the city of Toronto worked together in a public consultation forum to get a bill right, to put ideas into a bill. I think we can be proud as a government that we did form a joint Ontario-city of Toronto task force to do that very thing: to develop a series of recommendations and to bring those recommendations into formulating this legislation. I’m proud of that. To think of the many, many people from all walks of life who contributed—that’s important. That’s what I see this government doing.

I know that in eastern Ontario we have had some economic problems. But I saw last spring—late spring and early summer—that Minister Cordiano came down and worked very hard; he organized a round table to bring economic leaders together through a consultation process so that we can get things right and we can as a government work with our community leaders. I think this is exactly what is happening with this bill. We worked with them; we have the bill now. I am proud to be here in support of the bill.

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Durham, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr. Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, but I’m not from Durham. We’re close to Durham; next door.

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Oxford.

Mr. Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the members from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot, Beaches–East York, Burlington, and Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh for their comments.

I do want to say very quickly in wrapping up that the challenges that are facing municipalities were mentioned. Some of them are related to who does what and the Crombie report and so forth. I’ll stand here today and say that I accept that some of those challenges are there. Times have changed; things have changed. Social services proportionate to the budgets have totally changed. This government is in the position to change that and look after that. They seem to be not willing to do any of that.

In my whole presentation, if there was one thing that I was trying to get across, it’s that there’s more to creating

the city of Toronto as the city it should be than just giving it more taxing powers. We have to look at who does what; we have to review the services that are being provided, and can they be provided on the tax base that the municipalities have, or should we be looking at realigning those services? Our leader has said, since he has been our leader, that he is willing to look at those with the municipalities and with the federal government to find who should be doing what in the total scheme of things.

This bill seems to just deal with putting more taxing power—not changing the structure, not delivering the services better and more efficiently or in the most effective and efficient manner. This is just looking at more taxing power, and this will supposedly solve the city of Toronto’s problems, and eventually provincial problems. I don’t believe it will. I believe they have to do more, and this act does almost none of what they said it was supposed to do, which was to make Toronto a better city and help them govern themselves and direct their own destiny. This act does not do that.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Prue: As happens to me so often, I am in the unenviable position of having 16 minutes to deliver a one-hour speech or cut it in half—or in one quarter and three quarters, to be more technically correct. But I’m going to do the best I can.

First of all, because there are so many things I wanted to cover, I’m going to cut this speech up and deliver the lion’s share of it, as I have to because time permits that, on the next occasion. Today I want to talk about amalgamation and what amalgamation has meant to this city. I want to talk about how downloading has hurt not only Toronto but literally every single municipality across this province. I want to talk about the inevitable mess that one could see and should have foreseen when all of this transpired in 1997, and how we have to try to get ourselves out of it.

If time permits, I will go on, but more than likely on the next occasion I want to talk about the consultative process that is contained within this bill. I want to talk about the provincial override that does away with some of the consultative process. I want to talk about the governance structure that this bill contains and again how the provincial override might negate some of what the city of Toronto politicians and people of Toronto want to do. I want to talk about electoral reform that the city of Toronto has been advocating and asking this Legislature to undertake now for a number of years and how this bill will put that off until after the upcoming 2006 elections.

I want to talk about the licensing of taxis, because that was a contentious issue before we broke for the winter break, for the Christmas break: the licensing of taxis and how it was said at that time that the city of Toronto bill would help the city of Toronto taxi drivers to end scooping in Toronto and how in fact it does not. I would like to talk—on the next occasion, in all likelihood—about the deficits that the city of Toronto and all municipalities are starting to face because of the downloading

and because of the lack of taxing powers that they have. I want to talk about uploading the download. To coin a phrase, I think that's what we need to get across to the public and to the members of this Legislature: that the time has come to upload the download. If we are going to resolve the problems of municipalities, it has to begin there.

I want to talk about property tax reform, which many have advocated and which is not contained within the body of this bill but should have been. I want to talk about the options that the province has of giving a percentage of the PST or perhaps a sales tax exemption that some municipalities asked for. I want to conclude by talking about all of the other cities and the problems that they face, because the problems of Toronto are not unique in every respect. Yes, it's the largest city, and yes, I guess the problems are compounded and manifested because there are 2.5 million people, but the same types of problems exist in Hamilton and they exist in Ottawa and they exist in London. They literally exist in any of the larger cities of this province.

Back to where I wanted to start from—hopefully I can get all of that within an hour—today I want to start with the amalgamation and what happened in 1997. In 1997, in this very Legislature, Mr. Leach, who was then the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, stood up and announced he was going to amalgamate the city of Toronto, and while he was at it he was going to amalgamate a number of other cities. He did so, and in fact we've seen what has happened to most of those cities as a result of that amalgamation. The government did not care, not for one minute, what the elected representatives had to say. The government at that time did not care, not for one minute, what the citizenry of all the affected municipalities had to say.

At that point I was the mayor of East York. I remember quite cogently and clearly, even to this day, how we were informed of what Mr. Leach had planned. The six mayors and the metro chair were called into a meeting one evening in a ministry office not very far from here and sat down in front of then-Minister Leach and were told unceremoniously that he had big plans. He had the big plans that he was going to amalgamate the six municipalities and Metropolitan Toronto into one unit. We protested. I think the one who protested loudest was me. I remember asking him the question, "Why are you doing such a thing? Is it because we are not financially secure?" He said, "No, you're all financially secure." I said, "Is it because we are all paying down our debts and have virtually no debts?" He said, "No, that's not the reason." Then I questioned him further and further: "Are we not providing a good governance structure? Are the citizens unhappy?" The answer was, "No, no, no," to all of the questions that were posed. Finally I asked him, in desperation and complete anger, "Then why are you doing it?" He looked at me and said—and these were his exact words—"Damned if I know, but I have to do something." That was what this was all about: "Damned if I know, but I have to do something." So he embarked

on what had to have been one of the most brutal and repressive actions of this Legislature against the citizens of its own province.

I participated in a lot of the debates in the weeks and months that went after that. I participated with ordinary people who were fearful of what was going to happen to their municipalities. In my own beloved borough of East York, we had only one year left until all of our debts were paid. We had a new municipal structure. We had happy people, where more than 90% had said they were satisfied with municipal services. We had a great workforce. We were really, I thought, doing some wonderful things. I was very proud to be a member of the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and one of the 28 people plus the six mayors who sat on that council. We did all of the regional municipal things, important things like the TTC and the police. We did important things that went across municipal boundaries.

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In fact, throughout all of that period that led up to the amalgamation I remember that people came from all over the world to watch a municipality that worked. They came from all over the world to see a municipality that was not in debt, where buildings were going up, where people were plugged in and where everyone seemed to be happy.

I have to ask, what has happened to that wonderful city? I've lived here my whole life. Can anyone here today honestly tell me—and I would particularly ask my friends from the Conservative Party—that they think Toronto is better today than it was before amalgamation? Can they tell me that the streets are cleaner? Can they tell me that the number of staff who work for the city has gone down or that there have been cost savings? Can they tell me that the governance structure works better than the governance structure before? Can they tell me that the citizens and the boards that those citizens sit on are plugged in and actually doing something in making decisions that people care about? Can any of those things be said about the new city of Toronto? I'll tell you, they can't.

But one of the worst failings is that this city that used to work, this city that had councils that carefully watched how the pennies were spent, is now finding itself deeper and deeper in debt, not just because of the downloading, although I'll get to that in a minute, but also because it has become impossible for politicians, bureaucrats and ordinary citizens to have a handle on what is happening with the \$7.7-billion budget.

It became very easy for things like MFP to happen. It became very easy for people to just walk away when the agendas got so big that they couldn't read it all. It became very easy, and we saw this only a couple of months ago, where politicians put their hands up to give a raise to non-union employees and suddenly found out a week later they'd given one to themselves. It becomes very easy when you have thousands of pages that you have to read on a weekend. It becomes very easy when the structure becomes so big, so impersonal and so far

away from the community that quite literally anything can happen.

I remember that first term. I remember that first day going into the new megacity of Toronto. There were 56 councillors and a mayor. We sat around the table. That was more than half of the people who can sit in here. We sat around a table and Mel Lastman, ever the jokester, rolled up two pieces of paper and pretended he had a pair of binoculars to see the far end of the table. He was trying desperately to learn who all of these strange faces were. He didn't know some of the people involved in the room.

On that day I remember him talking prophetically about what he wanted to do and what he was going to do in his first term. You see, he'd just been elected by a fairly narrow margin. You all remember that. He defeated Barbara Hall, who was, before that, the mayor of the city of Toronto. Mel Lastman had come from North York, and he believed—and I believe he believed with all of his heart—that he had won the election because he had promised there would be no tax increase in the first three years. Do you remember that, “No tax increase”?

You have to remember that it was imposed, and do you know how it was imposed on the city of Toronto? It was imposed because Mel Lastman, and Tom Jakobek, who was his finance chief—I warned him about that too, but he insisted that Tom Jakobek was the right guy because he was the only guy who was brutal enough to make sure there would be no tax increase. I don't know how true that was, but those were Mel's words.

What he did, and what Tom Jakobek did, was systematically raid all of the reserves of the former municipalities, the city of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto, to ensure that there was no tax increase. Every year the taxes were flatlined even though the costs were going up. The taxes were flatlined; the costs went up. The taxes were flatlined; the costs went up. At the end of three years there was no reserve to be had—no reserve; all gone. Everything that six municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto had spent 100 and more years holding on to, every single penny they had, was gone. Of course the people were very happy; they didn't get a tax increase even though the costs to the megacity were enormous.

I'll tell you, the next term came and Mel Lastman was again elected, and Mel Lastman again said that he was going to try not to have a tax increase. But it was impossible by that point to live up to that. It was absolutely impossible because the money, quite frankly, had to be found. Mel Lastman didn't know where to find it, so you started to see little bits of tax increases, but they were not sufficient. Again things were raided. Again the city did all kinds of strange things by selling little bits of property and fiddling, what an auditor can do, with books and changing the books over here and moving it to this and moving it around. It was a shell game. At the end of those three years, all of that happened. Now, of course, there are no reserves, there are no more shell games to be played and there are no more poles to be sold to Hydro, which you own yourself. There are none of those things

that can be done, and the city has found itself in a \$500-million deficit.

How do they get out? I was reading today's paper. The Toronto Star today says that they've found a few ways. They think they're down to \$412 million. They've had to put off the money that was going to go into reserve to pay for pensions. They've put off money for roads and sewers. They've had to put off money for the TTC and a whole range of things. That's all not going to happen again this year, and they're down to \$412 million.

I know what's going to happen and everybody in this room knows what's going to happen next week. Mayor Miller is going to walk up University Avenue with David Soknacki, the budget chief, and he is going to meet with finance officials and do something I never thought a mayor of Toronto would ever have to do: He's going to have to come again, cap in hand, and he's going to be asking for a bailout, and he's going to ask for a bailout like he asked for last year and he's going to need a bailout even bigger than he got last year from this province. It saddens me to think that before amalgamation and before the download, that never happened at all. The city of Toronto was sustainable, East York was sustainable, North York was sustainable, as were Scarborough and Etobicoke. I can't say that the city of York always was. I'm going to be honest. I can't say that they were always sustainable, but I think they could have struggled, and they might have made it, too.

I've got about two minutes. Now we've got Bill 53. I have looked forward ever since 1997, ever since that awful day I was told we were amalgamated, ever since Minister Leach and the Conservatives all sitting out there ignored the will and the wishes of the people of Toronto who voted in a referendum some 75% not to be amalgamated—my own borough of East York was 82%. The people did not want it because they knew what was going to happen, and they resisted it with all the strength they had. But, you know, it's there, and now we have an opportunity to change. I would have loved to see something radical, like those radicals in Quebec. When they turned around and had a group, the Parti Québécois, who decided against the wishes of the people of Montreal and Quebec City and Hull and all those places—they were going to amalgamate them. They allowed the people to vote, following the next election. A good portion, nearly half of them, voted to de-amalgamate.

I want to tell you that the problems in Quebec City, Montreal and Hull, where they've gone back, are almost nonexistent. The problems exist with amalgamation, with the large size. The problems exist with cities that are incapable of looking after themselves. And we have a bill here which is going to try to tinker on the edges. It's going to try to say, “We're going to give this megacity some enormous new power,” although it is a kind of minuscule power, “and hopefully everything is going to be right with the city that used to work.” Quite frankly, it's almost impossible for it to ever work well again. It is an opportunity, I guess, for the city of Toronto to have a governance structure that they want—not one that was imposed by this Legislature where they had 56, and later

57, members and a mayor; not one that was imposed by this Legislature where they were taken to 44 members and were told they had to conform with federal boundaries, even though oftentimes that did not make a lot of municipal sense. It just galls me to think that the structure that was set up negated the power of the community councils and local neighbourhoods to actually have an influence on what was happening. This will allow them, I suppose, that opportunity.

However, it really, really won't happen if the province of Ontario lives up to one particular section in this bill. That particular section says that the city can institute any governance structure it wants, but if the province disagrees, then the province can unilaterally go in and impose its own structure upon them. Therefore, if the city of Toronto wants to have a governance structure that de-

centralizes, the province of Ontario will come in and centralize them some more. The province is quite clear where they want to go. The province wants a strong mayor system, they want a board of trade and they want all that goes with that. I think the people of Toronto want to go the other way.

I can see, Mr. Speaker, that you're standing up. The rest of my comments will take place on the next occasion.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned and will resume at 6:45 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1802.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

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Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Horwath, Andrea (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham–Kent Essex	
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Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
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Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

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McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa–Orléans	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Transports
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Milloy, John (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Mitchell, Carol (L)	Huron–Bruce	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
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
Munro, Julia (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	Deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Oraziotti, David (L)	Sault Ste. Marie	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources and minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Richesses naturelles et au ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
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Ramal, Khalil (L)	London–Fanshawe	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Northumberland	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique
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Ces listes figurent dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions paraît si l'espace est disponible.

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