



No. 40B

N° 40B

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 38th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 38^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 20 February 2006

Lundi 20 février 2006

Speaker
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 20 February 2006

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 20 février 2006

The House met at 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ENERGY CONSERVATION
RESPONSIBILITY
ACT, 2006

LOI DE 2006 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ
EN MATIÈRE DE CONSERVATION
DE L'ÉNERGIE

Mrs. Cansfield moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 21, An Act to enact the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, 2006 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 and the Conservation Authorities Act/ Projet de loi 21, Loi édictant la Loi de 2006 sur le leadership en matière de conservation de l'énergie et apportant des modifications à la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité, à la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario et à la Loi sur les offices de protection de la nature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue): Debate?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy): Mr. Speaker, I'm going to share my time with the member from Peterborough.

I am pleased to be here this evening to continue the debate on third reading of Bill 21, the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, 2006, a bill which is another step in the continued success of our conservation efforts and the McGuinty government's plan for Ontario's energy future.

Let me begin by saying this: Energy conservation is an imperative for Ontario. It has been an imperative since the day we took office, and it will continue to be a driving principle for this government and for our energy standard. Our energy strategy balances the need for new supply with the recognition that we have vast opportunities to achieve significant reductions in our overall consumption. In addressing our energy supply needs, we are moreover creating a greener and more sustainable energy future for this province. We are creating opportunities for stronger communities and for a stronger economy. We are creating opportunities for all Ontarians to be involved in building the future.

We have recognized that the global landscape for energy is changing. How we view energy, how we use energy and how we value energy must change too. My

government doesn't see energy conservation as a passing fad, as many others have. We don't see it as a temporary solution, as others do. We see conservation as a real opportunity to help Ontarians prosper by helping them to reduce their costs and their consumption in the near future and over the longer term. Through energy conservation, we can enhance our competitiveness, and this will assist the province invaluablely as we move forward to meet the future.

While conservation has been a priority for Premier McGuinty and our government, conservation has also been my personal priority. I have had the privilege of leading our efforts to move forward on conservation, and I was honoured to chair the conservation action team and moreover to have the opportunity to establish strong relationships with Ontario's active and committed conservation community.

As minister, my commitment to conservation remains firm. Conservation will continue to be a key element, a keystone in our energy plan. The steps we have taken as a government demonstrate our commitment to conservation. The steps we have taken—and they are many—however, are just an indication of our resolve to do even more.

Our first immediate action was to set two ambitious conservation goals. We committed to achieving a reduction in the growth of Ontario's peak electricity demand of 5% by 2007. We also committed to showing leadership by reducing consumption in our own operations by 10% over the same period of time.

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The initiatives we have undertaken to date have moved us well toward meeting these essential commitments. By undertaking energy-efficient retrofits and upgrades to government buildings, and by making use of deep lake water cooling technology at Queen's Park, we are well over halfway to meeting our commitment to reduce government consumption by 10% by 2007. But there is more.

With the passing of Bill 100, the Electricity Restructuring Act, 2004, we put into motion the structural reforms needed to make conservation an integral part of our electricity system. We appointed Peter Love as Ontario's first Chief Energy Conservation Officer. His primary responsibility is to ensure that Ontario fully exploits the potential that exists within this province for achieving conservation. Mr. Love will help ensure that we achieve our goals both by monitoring our progress and by developing province-wide programs that encour-

age us to conserve in our homes, in our businesses and in our communities.

We made over \$160 million available to Ontario's local distribution companies, the LDCs, the utilities, and restored their ability to encourage conservation through initiatives such as community education, the promotion of energy-efficient products and the piloting of new technologies. We launched powerWise, a public education and outreach campaign, in partnership with Ontario's six largest utilities, that will promote energy conservation and awareness across Ontario.

Every one of these actions is aimed at ensuring that we are embracing innovation. These actions are removing the barriers to conservation and energy efficiency and promoting new technologies and new ideas, yet they represent just a fraction of what the government has done with respect to energy conservation. More importantly, these actions are only a first step of what we intend to do.

Over the last year, the ministry has issued a number of directives to the conservation bureau to help develop conservation programs in a number of important areas. I am pleased to inform members of this House that these directives will generate over 1,000 megawatts of savings through new conservation programming. These directives include: a low-income and social housing program building upon the ministry's successful pilots on energy conservation and demand-side management with various organizations; an appliance exchange program that will encourage electricity consumers to replace energy-inefficient appliances such as refrigerators, dishwashers and freezers—the difference with that program is that in the past, when there was a program, it was strictly a rebate in terms of your tax, and this time we will pick up the refrigerator and recycle the refrigerator so it doesn't end up in your basement; a conservation outreach and education program that targets residential consumers and small and medium-size enterprises that would promote energy-efficient lighting technologies and efficient lighting design; and 300 megawatts of additional conservation programs to address the urgent need facing the city of Toronto to reduce energy use and add new supply by 2008. This more than doubles the new conservation programs recently announced by Toronto Hydro.

Our government has also signalled the importance of energy efficiency and conservation by making low-interest loans available to Ontario's municipalities and universities for energy efficiency projects through the Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority.

We know that the potential savings achievable through conservation are real, and as we move forward, the conservation bureau will continue to spearhead innovative and successful initiatives that will enhance the imperative for energy conservation in our province.

In terms of changing the landscape, I would also indicate that the responsibility for and commitment to creating a culture of conservation does not reside within the Ministry of Energy exclusively. From new school curricula to innovations within social services, many ministries are incorporating energy efficiency and conservation into their programs and initiatives.

Our new legislation will foster that even further. Bill 21, the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, 2006, represents an important milestone in our effort to create a conservation culture in Ontario. The bill consists of two key components: the Energy Conservation Leadership Act and legislative changes that support the government's smart metering initiative through amendments to the Electricity Act, 1998, and the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998.

This government is working with organizations, and indeed with all Ontarians, to create a culture of conservation and to demonstrate conservation leadership. We need to give Ontarians the tools and the information they need to effectively incorporate conservation into their work, their homes and their everyday lives. We know it will make a difference. According to the federal Office of Energy Efficiency, for example, Canadian businesses saved as much as \$3.4 billion in purchased energy in 2002 simply by managing their energy use more effectively. That was 2002. Even in the narrow distance between then and now, new technologies have emerged and changed, and every day there are important advances and, more importantly, new opportunities.

I believe the public resolve to conserve has changed as well. With what we now know and what we can now do, there is much more to be saved, and we will all benefit economically from eliminating energy waste. We benefit directly, of course, in the prices we pay for energy. But we also benefit in the prices we pay for goods and services; we benefit from the jobs that result from more efficient export.

Our public sector organizations benefit—and I'll speak more of this later—as taxpayers also do by having more money to devote to services and paying less of their budgets to energy costs. Wasting a commodity as precious as energy is an unnecessary drain on our economy and our society. It's a cost we can't afford. As we work to replace over 25,000 megawatts of aging electricity-generating capacity in this province, one thing is clear: Despite the prudence and innovation our government has shown in having set in motion over 9,000 megawatts of new generation, all at fair prices, replacement generation will not come cheap, and energy wastage is more than just dollars. The Energy Conservation Responsibility Act aims to give government, the broader public sector and consumers the tools needed to foster a culture of conservation in our homes, public buildings and institutions.

This bill would remove additional barriers to conservation that exist and would make conservation a key element in public sector planning and operations. Under Bill 21, ministries, agencies and broader public sector organizations would be required to prepare and publish energy conservation plans on a regular basis and report on energy consumption, proposed conservation measures and progress on achieving results.

As public servants, we collectively need to ensure that we are doing all we can when it comes to energy conservation, and this bill will help us by giving us the tools

we need to carry out the job. I've already mentioned initiatives the government itself is taking, such as energy retrofits of government buildings and initiatives like deep lake water cooling, which is being expanded to include buildings at Queen's Park. But public buildings across Ontario are the symbols of our communities, be they courthouses, hospitals or schools, and energy conservation in these facilities can serve as an important example and reminder to others of the importance, and methods, of conservation.

We've seen real leadership among many public sector organizations: hospitals in Hamilton and Windsor, universities throughout the province and others. What this legislation does is challenge all public sector organizations to think about how they can save energy and share that information and best practices with their communities and with other similar organizations across the province and, ultimately, with all the people of Ontario.

The legislation also recognizes the important role that organizations outside government can play in encouraging conservation. Through partnerships and other arrangements in communities across Ontario, non-profit organizations, environmental groups and other bodies of concerned citizens are generating ideas, initiatives and the community will to spearhead conservation efforts. The legislation being reviewed by this committee builds on the resolve of this government to create a conservation culture by providing the mechanisms for further co-operation between government and these organizations.

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Even without this legislation, we have made significant headway. The legislation simply makes it possible to do more of a very good thing. Bill 21 also includes proposed legislation that would facilitate the installation of 800,000 smart meters by 2007, and to all Ontarian homes and businesses by 2010. Smart metering is an innovative technology that will help Ontario consumers manage their energy use, encourage energy conservation and save money. Combined with a pricing structure that reflects the true cost of power production at certain times of the day and year, smart metering would allow consumers to make informed decisions about the electricity they use. This will allow Ontarian consumers to save money and to reduce the strain on the power system at peak times.

Bill 21 also confirms our commitment to work in partnership with the local distribution companies on this historic initiative. They will continue to own, operate, maintain and install meters and will work with us as partners whenever a centralized approach makes sense. As many as 20 of our local distribution companies have or are planning smart meter pilot projects, providing us with invaluable technological information. For example, Chatham-Kent Energy has successfully installed as many as 1,000 meters, and meters are now being read in 11 different local communities. Two hundred meters have been successfully installed in Middlesex Power, a sister company of Chatham-Kent. Toronto Hydro currently has 10,000 smart meters installed and capable of being read.

We are supportive of these local pilot projects, and some LDCs have raised concerns that Bill 21 has prohibitions on discretionary metering that would block these efforts, and that is absolutely not the intent. One of the most significant amendments to the bill enables sub-metering of condominium buildings. Under the bill, sub-meter providers regulated by the Ontario Energy Board would bill condominium residents based on electricity they use. The cost of electricity will no longer be embedded as part of the total condo fees, and further details will be set out in legislation. If you recently read the report by Stratacon, who are actually sub-metering rental apartment buildings, you would have heard that they found 12 grow-ops, a reptile farm in one area and a catering business. All the renters in that building had to share the extraordinary costs of those particular programs. Fortunately, they were all shut down.

Through this important amendment, condominium residents will now join other Ontario electricity consumers in having the tools they need to manage their electricity consumption and bills and contain the ongoing increase in the condo fees, mainly as a result of higher electricity usage and cost. Smart meters will help consumers to understand their electricity usage patterns and to encourage them to shift electricity use to off-peak times. Not only will this benefit consumers by allowing customers to take advantage of lower costs, it will also help us meet our coal phase-out targets by saving critical capacity during peak times.

Bill 21 is one of the many key actions this government is undertaking to build a conservation culture in Ontario. It is an important part of our vision for the future. We will continue removing the barriers to conservation and energy efficiency, we will continue to promote new technologies and new ideas and we will continue to provide the vision and the leadership to build a new, sustainable energy future for Ontarians. Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? I understand it's being shared, but you must be in your seat.

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm trying to help my friend out. That's all I'm trying to do, because the Speaker can't stand there. As you know, sir, you're not allowed to stand there unless there's a point of order on the floor, and seeing that it's that time, the point of order is done.

The Acting Speaker: That not being a point of order, there's nothing to rule on.

The member for Peterborough.

Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough): I do appreciate your patience, and also my friend Mr. Bisson for helping me out in this situation.

I do want to make some comments on Bill 21, which is the energy conservation act smart meters initiative. I want to take this opportunity publicly to thank the member from Kenora-Rainy River and leader of the New Democratic Party, Mr. Hampton, and the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, who were part of the committee deliberations as we visited a number of com-

munities in Ontario: a day of hearings in Toronto, and then we went to Simcoe, Chatham and up to Thunder Bay. It was a pleasure to be on the committee with Mr. Hampton and Mr. Yakabuski, as we heard very detailed presentations on Bill 21.

I want to speak a bit about the smart metering initiative, particularly in Chatham-Kent. In Chatham-Kent, the LDC has a pilot project of about 1,000 homes using smart meter technology. What I thought was very interesting about that pilot project—we got a detailed presentation from the general manager of the LDC in Chatham-Kent. In his presentation, he detailed that what they did in Chatham-Kent was retrofit the existing meters of the 1,000 homes that were targeted for the pilot. They incorporated a technology that allowed them fairly easily to retrofit the existing meters in those 1,000 homes.

We heard a lot about costs from different presenters as we went through the committee hearings. But what is interesting to note in the Chatham-Kent situation is that the all-in cost for the smart meter was exactly \$1.29 added to the bill, because we heard suggestions from other people that the cost might be \$3, \$5, \$7, \$8, \$9 or \$10. In the Chatham-Kent case, through their experience in their pilot project, they were able to establish quite clearly that \$1.29 per month was the all-in cost. They did take the step, which I think was very important, of asking a third party, the very distinguished accounting firm Deloitte, to come in and do a detailed analysis of the pilot to verify that the cost was indeed \$1.29.

I think the experience in Chatham-Kent goes a long way to allay some of the very legitimate fears out there. Anytime you introduce a new concept, there are people who have some concerns, some anxieties. I think the Chatham-Kent experience certainly indicates that a smart meter initiative can be brought in at a very reasonable cost, and Chatham-Kent's case certainly demonstrated without a shadow of a doubt the amount of electricity that can be conserved by shifting to off-peak times in order to conserve.

The other thing that I think is important in this bill is the whole conservation side. I know we have received detailed presentations, the Pembina Institute being one, that have clearly suggested that an aggressive conservation plan in Ontario could go a long way to meeting our needs and conserving that very valuable resource. It's important that each one of us embraces that conservation culture. It's sort of like 10 or 15 years ago, when we all, as a society, bought into the important concept of recycling. For the longest time, we disposed of everything into landfill sites. Then suddenly we woke up one day and said, "There are a lot of valuable commodities that we're putting in the landfill sites that have another use." Now it's just second nature for all of us, on a day-to-day basis, to embark on the recycling effort, which, over a period of time, has diverted an awful lot of material that formerly was going into landfill sites.

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So it's important now, in 2006, that we embrace the culture of conservation and buy into it as a society, to

start to conserve a very precious resource, which is electricity.

One of the ways we will accomplish that is certainly through smart-metering as we bring in 800,000 smart meters initially, and then go from there to have smart meters throughout the province of Ontario.

The other thing that is quite remarkable is the role that I believe LDCs have in terms of creating this conservation culture. When you look at the history of providing electricity in the province of Ontario, you can go to any community to see that their local distribution corporation has really been on the vanguard of programs working in those communities.

I think of my own community of Peterborough and I want to say that Bob Lake, who has been the president of Peterborough Utility Services for some 20 years, will be retiring at the end of March. But he also spent time being president of the old Municipal Electric Association of the province of Ontario, and he was recognized by his peers as being on the forefront of innovation. One of the things that he has been involved with is the funds that have been provided from the Ontario government to LDCs across the province.

In Peterborough's case, we developed these storage units. The storage units are particularly useful for low-income families. It allows them to acquire and store electricity at lower costs off peak hours and then to utilize that electricity that would normally be during high-peak times. It has allowed low-income people to take advantage of that innovative technology. I would certainly like to see that used more frequently throughout the province of Ontario, because I think it's innovative and provides a real opportunity for those people who we all recognize have a lot of struggles on a day-to-day basis. That's just one example of an LDC that is coming forward with some innovative ideas. Here in Toronto, Toronto Hydro has some very aggressive programs.

I think that key partnership between the government of Ontario and the LDCs—and most of the municipalities were wise; they retained their LDCs. Many of them are providing substantial dividends to the municipality that owns them and they have been very successful in helping us to achieve our goal.

I also want to talk about the work of Mr. Peter Love, who is working on becoming the conservation czar for the province of Ontario. He is actively looking into a number of options, because the more effective we can be on the conservation side, the better off we'll be as we move forward in terms of the new generation that we certainly need to look at.

I was struck by the number of people who came forward during the committee deliberations who are embracing the need for smart meters and the need for conservation. They are certainly advocates of making that sea change in terms of how we do things here in the province of Ontario. I also want to say that there will be other opportunities. Solar energy has great potential, and we have an opportunity to develop that as we look at other alternatives, look at other ways to have a steady

supply of electricity here in Ontario. But such things as Bill 21 really are a foundation in order to look to the future for Ontario's energy needs.

Having said that, I wholeheartedly endorse Bill 21, and I recommend that this Legislature pass this bill as quickly as possible.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make a few short comments on Bill 21. I was talking to the minister a few minutes ago on this whole idea around conservation. I think the blackout in 2003 alerted a lot of people, not only here in Ontario but right across North America, to just what we take for granted: an adequate supply of electricity. Particularly after the blackout, when they were trying to get all of the different generation up and running again, I remember our Premier at the time, Ernie Eves, almost on a daily basis, almost on an hourly basis, on TV or in the media, asking people to please be responsible and careful in the amount of energy they were using as they brought it on stream. I can tell you, I think a lot of people right here in this House—I know I myself learned a lesson from that blackout. I realized at that point just how much energy, with or without new sources of power, we were actually wasting right in our individual homes. Bill 21 goes back to the amount of power you use in your home, but I think that was our number one lesson, and where we take it from here is up to this House in the province of Ontario. So I look forward to the debate around third reading of Bill 21, and I look forward to good solutions for the citizens of our province.

Mr. Bisson: Speaker, this particular bill supposedly deals with energy conservation and specifically smart meters. I had an opportunity to review the bill extensively and have some discussions with individuals in the energy sector. I am not convinced, at the end of the day, that the smart meters are really going to achieve what the government is setting out to do. The goal is—yes, I agree with the government—should we look at ways to conserve electricity? I don't think anybody argues against that. That's motherhood and apple pie. However, if you take a look at some of the experiences where smart meters have been used, it's a fairly significant cost to the utility ratepayers who, at the end of the day, will have to pay to have these smart meters installed. I understand it's somewhere around \$1 billion to set up the entire—

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): It's \$2 billion.

Mr. Bisson: Is it about \$2 billion?

Mr. Yakabuski: It could be up to \$2 billion.

Mr. Bisson: They don't know. But I've heard numbers of \$1.3 billion, \$1.7 billion. Whatever it is, it's over \$1 billion. My point is, somebody has to pay for this at one point, and it's going to be ratepayers.

But here's the interesting thing. I read some information that came my way in regard to some people who have actually installed these meters, have done absolutely everything they are supposed to do in order to save

electricity, and at the end of the day, in this particular article I was reading, one person saved \$1.85 in a month. People are going to basically cook at different times, clean their clothes at different times, wash the dishes at different times—they're going to change their lifestyle for \$1.85? I don't think so.

So I say to the government that it's not a bad idea, but I'm not so sure you're going to get to where you want to go at the end. I think the bigger issue is, yes, we need to find ways to put in place the types of investment necessary to give people an opportunity to invest and save energy by insulating their homes, better windows etc., and we'll talk about that later on in debate.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge): I appreciate this great opportunity, even if only for a couple of minutes, to speak to Bill 21. In particular, this is the type of bill on which each of us probably has a lot of interest in our constituencies about some of the things we are doing. The minister talked about it being the energy responsibility act; the parliamentary assistant talked about energy conservation.

I just want to quickly reflect, if I can, on a couple of things that have been happening with me and what I do but also within our community. First, I had the opportunity to serve with the minister when she was the chair of the conservation action team. During that process in my role as the parliamentary assistant then to the Management Board Secretariat and Minister Phillips, we were looking at the chillers in the Macdonald Block and looking at this building and talking about replacing them, and along came the Enwave project and the pitch was made. Because of the initiative that was ongoing for the government to reduce its consumption in its managed and owned buildings, the Enwave deal was put together as a package. It's really forward-thinking about taking advantage of the existing cool water, cold water opportunities in Lake Ontario, rather than spending millions of dollars in replacing chillers. So just here alone we've found some things coming out of the kind of process we're into.

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I have the distinct pleasure of having the Veridian Corp. as my home supplier of hydro; it used to be Pickering Hydro and Ajax Hydro and it became Veridian. Veridian is one of those half-dozen large utility partners in powerWise, along with the government of Ontario, in the very beginning of driving the energy conservation agenda to consumers, getting the message out about how important it is to continue doing what we're doing in that regard.

There is just such a long list of initiatives going on in Durham region. A number of utilities, municipalities and the private sector have formed the Durham Strategic Energy Alliance and have really capitalized on the government's initiatives around energy as a way of coming together and moving forward.

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): It's my pleasure to add some comments to the minister's speech this evening and that of the member from Peterborough on Bill 21, which is the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, 2005.

Just a minute ago, the member from Timmins–James Bay was saying how conservation is motherhood and apple pie, and I agree with that. The question for me is, should these smart meters—which are just part of this bill, but it seems to be what we’re focusing on right now—be mandatory?

We heard from the leader of the third party when he was up in Atikokan; his number for the cost of the program is \$2 billion. But for the individual household, the idea of course is that you shift your use of electricity to non-peak times—for example, the middle of the night—and you get a lower cost on electricity. But there is speculation that it could cost up to \$8 a month. I know that’s what Tom Adams, who is the executive director of Energy Probe, says they’ll cost.

I attended a day of hearings up in Atikokan—or, rather, up in Thunder Bay. Atikokan Hydro was there and they said that in their remote rural situation in the north, they have situations where they might have six meters. They’re in a very remote situation. They have to build a tower and they have to hook up phone lines. The cost is very substantial—they said up to 80% of the cost of the whole asset of Atikokan Hydro—just to put these meters in.

My feeling is that it should be optional, because in many cases for low-electricity users it just won’t make sense. It will cost you money to hook these meters up, and there will be very little savings. I think it should be up to individual residents, the individual consumer, to decide if they think that by putting in a smart meter, they’re going to save some money and for them it will make sense.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Peterborough has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Leal: I want to thank the members from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge, Simcoe North, Timmins–James Bay and Parry Sound–Muskoka, who provided comments.

I just want to reiterate one of the best real-life examples, Chatham–Kent: 1,000 meters in their pilot study, an all-in cost of \$1.29, verified by a third party, the accounting firm of Deloitte. I’d recommend that everybody in this House take an opportunity to read the results from Chatham–Kent, because it provides detailed background information that’s so important to legislators in order to make a decision on Bill 21, which is the smart metering energy conservation initiative.

My colleague the member from Mississauga West in fact had a smart meter installed in his home. He indicated to us in committee the amount of electricity he has saved in his home when he introduced and installed a smart meter to his day-to-day living. Clearly, the member from Mississauga West demonstrates what effect smart metering can have.

If you extrapolate the result from Chatham–Kent and you look at it closely, I think it’s reasonable to conclude that the estimates that have been provided by the Ministry of Energy to install smart meters in the province are certainly within the dollar amount that has been sug-

gested for this initiative. When you look at Chatham–Kent and see that people did save electricity and the pay-back was greater than the cost of installing the smart meter, the real value of smart metering and conservation for Ontario is very visible through that study.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr. Yakabuski: It’s a pleasure to join third reading debate of Bill 21, An Act to enact the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, 2006, and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998.

I would put it to the member for Peterborough—I do appreciate the member for Peterborough’s input on the travelling committee as well as that of the member for Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh, the member for Mississauga West, the member for Stoney Creek—I think there’s probably at least one more, but I can’t think of it right now. Those are members from the government side. I want to thank my colleagues the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka and the member for Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant for travelling and the member for Durham for sitting with me on that committee, and also the member for Kenora–Rainy River and leader of the third party for their input of course.

I would like to know if I could get some kind of commitment from the member for Peterborough who, as you know, is also the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy. He was going on quite extensively about how he applauded the pilot project in Chatham–Kent and quoted that figure very often of, I believe, \$1.29.

Mr. Leal: All in.

Mr. Yakabuski: All in, \$1.29. That’s the way we like it: all in, full price, \$1.29. Could we expect it to be a commitment from this government that that is what smart metering will cost? I hardly think so. I heard somebody in the background, the member for Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge, saying “Probably less.”

Probably not. The estimates go as high as \$8, as you know, Mr. Speaker. My friend from Parry Sound–Muskoka indicated that Tom Adams of Energy Probe says the figure could go as high as \$8. This could be another \$2-billion boondoggle like the federal Liberal gun registry: a complete mess that has done nothing but cause problems and solved none.

Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care): That’s why the chiefs of police are in favour of it.

Mr. Yakabuski: The Minister of Health has wakened from his slumber. It’s good to have him here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, if I could get back on topic without the heckling from the government side, this could be another \$2-billion boondoggle, as I say, just like the federal Liberal gun registry.

Some things were raised at the committee hearings with regard to smart meters; there is a varying range of opinion as to whether they’re worthless, somewhat useful, very useful or the best thing since they invented the wheel. They did run the gamut, and we had varying opinions on them.

There were lot of concerns about smart metering: a lot of concerns with regard to privacy, concerns with regard

to lack of detail. You see, the minister started talking about smart meters months and months ago—I'm trying to think of exactly how many—but as of yet, no RFP, and people who are in the business are asking themselves, "Is the government doing it; is it not?" There's no way they're going to be in a position—they've got a new energy pricing schedule based on smart metering to come into effect on May 1, a scaled price of 2.8, 6.8 and 9.3, depending on the time of day you're using the power. They're not going to be in any position at all to implement that, because none of these meters are going to be in place. We're in February now; we're almost into March.

It's like everything else: The government is great at coming up with an idea, they're great at picking a destination, but they're not all that good at navigating their way there. As Yogi Berra once said, "If you don't know where you're going, you're probably going to end up somewhere else." That's just about what this government is embarking on—a trip to never-never land or something, or maybe they think they're going to Disney World. Who knows? Maybe they think they're going to get cheap power down there.

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Speaking of power—and we'll come back to this smart metering a little later on as well—

Mr. Leal: Let's get back to Bill 21.

Mr. Yakabuski: Bill 21, yes. The member from Peterborough is very good at keeping people on track, although I didn't hear a lot about the bill coming from him; it was more about politics.

Politics: The Minister of Energy has said, "We're removing politics from this file. We're just going to deal with the issues. We're removing politics." Well, I have been speaking to so many people, the stakeholders in this business, and they tell me this file has never been handled more politically than it's being handled by this government. It is just total politics. Do you know why? It's because they have no plan whatsoever. They had no idea what they were doing in this energy file—still don't—but they keep lurching from crisis to crisis and hoping against hope that something is going to actually sound feasible and plausible. But everything they come up with just seems to dig them deeper in the hole.

Some guy from the States once said, "If you're in a hole, the first thing you've got to remember is to stop digging." But not only do these people not want to stop digging, they actually keep reaching up and asking for bigger shovels. They actually look for bigger shovels because they just want to keep digging this hole. I think that if they get deep enough, they're going to think that they can hide and that nobody is going to see them and the people of Ontario are just going to forget about them. They'll be so far down there, they'll be in the dark. The sad part about it is that under this government we are all going to be in the dark.

What do they say, "The last one out, please turn off the lights"? Well, don't worry about it, because by the time this government is done and has finished wreaking

havoc on this province, the lights will be out anyway. The last one out won't have to turn off the lights, because they'll be stumbling their way out in the dark.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: It sounds like your Saturday—

Mr. Yakabuski: It's very difficult sometimes, Mr. Speaker, to deliver your opinions and your feelings on a serious issue when the people on the other side seem to take it so lightly that it's something to be laughing about.

If this weren't such a serious subject and one that presented Ontario with some of its greatest challenges in the history of this province, it would actually be laughable with what this government is doing and has done.

Let's talk for a moment about conservation, and I say that on a personal basis I really do believe the current Minister of Energy is committed to conservation, she's personally committed to that. I commend her for all her efforts in that regard. I find her, quite frankly, to be a very pleasant person, and I think her heart is completely in the right place.

Mr. Leal: A really bright light on this one.

Mr. Yakabuski: Well, the problem with this government is that the lights are getting turned down.

I do personally like the Minister of Energy, but she's not calling the shots on this file in any way, shape or form. There is only one person who is calling the shots on this file, and it's Dalton McGuinty himself. He is fixated. He is going like a horse with blinders. His whole crew is going to follow him like that group of lemmings over the proverbial cliff when this energy policy, that is so unsupportable and so full of holes and so worthless, just comes crashing down like a house of cards.

On the issue of conservation, we support in every way possible comprehensive conservation, not only in the province of Ontario but everywhere and in every home and business in Ontario. I could go on and on and talk about all of the different things we've done ourselves with regard to conservation. We've done all of that without any help from this government. This government talks an awful lot about conservation—talk, talk, talk. My wife would call them Plapperhanses. They just yip, yip, yip. But as your leader would say, there is no meat in the sandwich. They keep talking, but they're not walking. Places like Home Hardware—and I was in the Home Hardware in Barry's Bay the other day which, incidentally, bears the name Yakabuski's Home Hardware—

Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs): What did you guys serve in the back?

Mr. Yakabuski: Everything a man needed to keep the world turning right, absolutely. We were the "everything" store. It's still a great store in Barry's Bay. We no longer own it but it still carries the name.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues): Did you get any women coming in as customers or was it just a place for the men?

Mr. Yakabuski: The Minister of Community and Social Services has pointed out an error.

Hon. Ms. Pupatello: And women's issues.

Mr. Yakabuski: And women's issues. And no wonder. I commend her for raising that point, an error on my part. Of course people of all genders and races and religions and everything else, Madam Minister, were welcome and served very well in that store, and are today too.

Anyway, I digress. I was in that store the other day and bought myself a very good purchase. It was the last available light bulb I could buy. I bought a compact fluorescent trilight. It was the last one we needed; all of the others have already been changed. But we had to have a trilight one to take care of the lamp that had a trilight in it, obviously. We wouldn't be putting it in if it wasn't a trilight. So now we've done them all. But I didn't see any incentives from the government to try to help us buy those. Home Hardware had them on sale. That was a good idea for us. But places like Home Hardware and Canadian Tire and Home Depot have done more to promote conservation in this province than the government has.

In fact the previous government—you know that government that those folks over there just like to rag on continuously, the government that had the EnerStar program for energy-efficient, energy-saving appliances. In 2004, some time between July and September, they just cancelled that program. Do you know what the energy minister said at the opening hearings or someplace there? She said, "We cancelled the program because it was our belief that people were taking the old fridge and putting it in the basement for a beer fridge, so we had to cancel the program." I don't know what empirical evidence they'd have to support that. They may have some that's anecdotal. But do you know what? If I don't need a beer fridge, I'm not going to have a beer fridge in the basement. But do you know what? You still have a washing machine, you still have a dishwasher and you still have a refrigerator—sorry, we replaced that one. So there are other appliances. I don't think you put the second dishwasher in the basement, do you? If you have a load of dishes, you run them—

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Hon. Ms. Pupatello: I'll bet you have a beer fridge.

Mr. Yakabuski: There was a great opportunity to continue to offer incentives to people in Ontario to save electricity, to save energy, to take some of the pressure off the demand in this province that this government, quite frankly—let's face it, they're just lost on that file, completely lost. We'll get to that one in a minute.

Anyway, the previous government, the Progressive Conservative government, had a great program that offered incentives to people to buy energy-efficient appliances. They cancelled it, but in fairness, it was the former Minister of Energy—what's his riding, Windsor something—who did say in July 2004, "Oh, yes, we're cancelling that program, but we're going to replace it with something better that actually saves even more energy and is more of an incentive to save." Well, we're nigh on 17 or 18 months after that—oh, God, wait, 19 or 20; who

cares? It's so long that I can't even count backwards that far. That's how long we've been waiting for a new and better program from this government to replace that very successful program. The only excuse they could give was that people were taking those old fridges and putting them in the basement for beer fridges. So they talk about a new program: "We're going to come and actually get your fridge and get rid of that old energy-wasting fridge." But where is the program? Again, that's that talk, talk, talk. Plenty of that, not much to back it up.

As I say, conservation is an easy one. No party that aspires to government in this province is going to be successful without a comprehensive program that addresses the issue of conservation, because you simply can't allow electricity demand to grow beyond your ability to supply it. You reach the point of, "Sorry, we don't have any more." But we're going to reach that point a lot quicker under this government—a whole lot quicker.

One of their first acts after being elected was to reiterate their promise to shut down, depending upon your figures, today it is probably about 18% or 19%, then it might have been 22% or 23%, of the province's generational capacity when they said, "Yes, we're going ahead, and by 2007 we're going to shut down all coal-fired generation stations in the province of Ontario." When they made that promise, like any one of the 231 promises in the Liberal election document, it could be taken for what it was worth: It was a Liberal election promise. But they did reiterate it, and they have reiterated it repeatedly since. The sad truth is, there's nobody left out there—only the Premier as he lays in bed reading poetry—who continues to believe that it can actually happen.

Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh): How do you know he reads poetry in bed?

Mr. Yakabuski: Only the Premier, as he reads poetry in bed, and I repeat that. Do you know when it's the slow season? They do stories in the newspapers after Christmas. They weren't quite into the federal election heat yet, and they were writing stories about the Premier, Dalton McGuinty, and how he likes to read poetry. I thought, "Oh, we definitely have to get back to work."

Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal): What's wrong with poetry?

Mr. Yakabuski: There's nothing wrong with poetry; it's writing a story about the Premier reading poetry. I think we could get a better use of ink. But anyway, as he reads the poetry, he's the only one left in this province who believes that somehow he can pull this off. There's not a single member on that side who actually believes it.

Interjection: I believe it.

Mr. Yakabuski: They keep talking about it because they are told, "This is the message: If you want to continue to sit in those front benches, this is the message. And for you people who are in those back benches, if you think you're ever going to get into those front benches, that's the message, because this is the only message I'm allowing you to disseminate across this province." That's what the Premier says.

I want to talk to you about what some other people say about it. I can tell you that the Premier—

Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, can he talk about energy conservation?

Mr. Yakabuski: Well, I'll tell you about energy because, the direction you're headed with your energy policy in this province, the Premier had better get used to not reading so much Shelley or Keats; he'd better start reading a lot of Edgar Allan Poe stories. That's what he'd better start reading, because it's becoming quite a horror story, the energy file in this province under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty and his blinders-on gang over there.

Tom Adams, who you wouldn't say would be a friend of coal-fired generation, says, "Guys, give it up. You can't do it." You haven't put anything in the ground. There are a few projects; there are some windmills being erected, stuff like that. But we're talking about 6,500 megawatts of electricity. You're way behind schedule; none of those gas plants that you've talked about building has even been started. They haven't even been approved; you've still got fighting going on here and fighting going on there. How in the name of Sam Hill are you going to get any of those things done? You know why you won't get them done? Because you didn't have a plan.

Interjection.

Mr. Yakabuski: I have a note from the opposition. I'll read it later. It's a nice piece of poetry, though. Did I say—it's my opposition; it's the government that is writing me poems now. If I use it in any of my acts, I'll pay royalties; I assure you of that.

Where was I? They just can't do it. They can't come through with their plan because they didn't have a plan. Another one of those old sayings—I didn't invent them: If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni: That's the Weight Watchers motto.

Mr. Yakabuski: Is that what it is? I've never been to Weight Watchers, and please, no comments. Nothing against Weight Watchers. Anybody who has a franchise or anything out there, keep doing well. I just hope that when the clients show up a few years from now, there's power. I just hope that there's power there when they show up at your shop, because it's doubtful if there will be, at this point.

As I say, there's nobody out there, other than the Premier himself and his subjects—loyal, at this point—who keep spreading that message.

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I listened to a fellow by the name of Ian Delaney from Sherritt the other day over at Sutton Place. He said, "These people, they're just"—not my words—"insane. This can't be done. Why do they keep insisting on it?" You know what you do? There's no credibility for you people out there in the energy sector.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: These are coal sellers.

Mr. Yakabuski: Well, let me tell you what Pat Daniel said. Do you know who Pat Daniel is? He's the—

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: Jack's brother?

Mr. Yakabuski: Not Jack's brother. Good call, though. Pat Daniel is the CEO of Enbridge. You would

think that the CEO of Enbridge would be a big-time gas power guy. You know what he said? He says, "These guys have got to get it. You can't shut down these coal plants; you've got to clean them up." Making power is not the best use of the resource of natural gas. There are so many things that can be done with natural gas; so many things that it's better at than making power.

Enbridge made a great presentation at these hearings about getting people off of electricity with regard to appliances and water heating and all of that kind of stuff and getting them on to natural gas—much more efficient, and far more efficient than you'd ever get from generating electricity from a gas plant. It's a better use of the resource, a resource that—again, there are differences of opinion as to how much we have left out there, but the supply is not infinite, so we should make sure that how we're using it is the best way possible. That was from Pat Daniel, CEO of Enbridge. I didn't hear the Minister of Health saying that he was a coal guy, because he's a gas guy. But anyway, there you have it.

I was at a breakfast at the Sutton Place Hotel the other day, and Dave O'Brien from Toronto Hydro was there. Well, I'll tell you, did he have some things to say about this government's energy policy. Here are guys who talk about—oh, I like this one: The Premier has been jumping all over those CUPE people, and he says, "People, please respect the process; I'm asking you to respect the process." That's what he says over and over again: "Respect the process." What kind of process did they respect in the Portlands Energy Centre? They claimed that the bid they accepted was 20% lower than the other bids. The other bids weren't in. Toronto Hydro says, "Hey, our bid wasn't in." My understanding is that they're going to be submitting a bid this week.

"Respect the process" is what the Premier says. The only process they have is the one that is going to further their political goals, even if that means completely—I'm trying to think of a word that isn't going to be offensive here—hiding the facts on power generation in the province of Ontario; completely hiding the facts on the realistic potential of achieving that goal.

They talk out of two sides of their mouths on this. I have a chart here. "We're going to clean up this air, I'll tell you." This is what they're going to do. There are 683 coal plants in the United States, many of them in our airshed. But the Minister of the Environment was on the soapbox the other day, and she was chastising the Americans for concerns that they may ease the standards for coal-fired electricity plants in the United States. It's funny, last summer, that's where a good chunk of our power was coming from, when we couldn't generate enough of it ourselves, even though we had our coal plants running at capacity. Do you know where that power was coming from? It was coming from Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and all of those places that are primarily fossil fuel thermal generating stations, and we're right in their airshed. That's where we were getting the bulk of that power to keep the lights on in Ontario last year. She's chastising because, you see, they passed a bill, or

rule, or regulation or whatever you might want to call it there—I'm not sure of the terminology exactly—that required them to clean up their plants. The minister was concerned that they might backtrack on that.

I'd like to ask you, what has this government done since they've been elected? The last SCR—that's a selective catalytic reduction unit—that was installed in Nanticoke went in in early 2004. That was done by the previous government. That removes 95% to 98% of the nitrous oxide from the emissions from the coal plant. That was done by the previous government. There has not been one nickel spent by this government to, in any way, mitigate the emissions coming out of our coal plants. You know what's really sad about this? There are tremendous opportunities to do just that if they would only be honest and admit. You see, they're hanging on to this crazy idea that they're going to have these things closed. It can't be done. The time has already ticked away on them, but they can't admit that they're not going to close them now because then they'd be under all kinds of fire from the environmentalists, who would be saying, "If you weren't going to close them, why, in the name of God, didn't you at least clean them up?" There's that failure to plan again. They thought they could do this when everybody told them they couldn't.

Mind you, there were a few groups there that, even though they knew the government couldn't do it, were afraid to tell the government that because, after all, they were the new Liberal majority government, chests pushed out and very proud of themselves. They were pretty powerful, so nobody wanted to take them on at that point. They all thought that maybe, if there were some changes, they'd be able to participate in that and actually be able to work at improving the electricity situation in the province of Ontario. Do you know what? There's not a stakeholder out there that believes a thing they say, because they've lost all their credibility, because everything they've said they were going to do, they failed to do.

You know, we're paying \$30 million a year to the Ontario Power Authority. They give the Ontario Power Authority direction, but when they don't like the political wind that's blowing around, they circumvent that whole process. What were those words again? "Respect the process." You're paying \$30 million out to quality people—I will say the people on the OPA, they're quality people. If you look at the resumés and backgrounds of those people, they're good people. I won't say the government did a bad job of picking their people, because I don't believe they did. But you've got to allow them to do their job. They're not being allowed to do their job; so again that credibility issue.

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The government and the minister, who talk about a culture of conservation, have actually become more adept at creating a crisis of confusion, and because they haven't respected the process, a culture of confrontation. That's what you're seeing now in the city of Toronto. Oh boy, there are a lot of people not too happy with the fact that

they didn't respect the process with regard to the Portlands Energy Centre. I guess we're going to hear more about that this week, when Toronto Hydro brings in their bill.

Here's a little something the government put out today; I guess it went out today but the announcement went out yesterday: Our Energy, Our Future. It's a nice little pamphlet of partisan propaganda.

Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader): No minister's picture.

Mr. Yakabuski: No minister's picture; that's correct. If there's no picture, does that mean it's not propaganda? It just means they didn't have a camera that day.

Mr. Speaker, you've got to read this. Here it is. They've got themselves backed up against the wall. They're getting all kinds of heat on their failed energy policy, and instead of—again, going back, what's that thing about no plan?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Are the lights on?

Mr. Yakabuski: The lights are on. The government House leader says the lights are on; everybody is happy that the lights are on. That is the problem. The government House leader thinks that because the lights are on, everything in Liberalville is just coming up roses. Night is dawning in Liberal-land.

Let's talk about this pamphlet. When you're devising a plan, you expect the unexpected and you prepare to deal with it. You think ahead and you say, "What are the possible pitfalls that could beset us on this journey? On this voyage, what could possibly go wrong?" That is part of the planning process. But when you don't have a plan, it's like setting off on that voyage without a compass or any navigational tools of any kind. You just head out to the high seas, no idea of where you're going.

It's no darn wonder that somebody said at one time that Christopher Columbus was the first Liberal. Christopher Columbus was the very first Liberal. He had no idea where he was going, no idea how he was going to get there, and he did it all on other people's money. That is very much what the Liberals are up to today: no idea where they're going, no idea how they're going to get there, and they're doing it all on other people's money.

Let's talk about this pamphlet again: no plan. You see, if they had thought about this ahead of time they would have said, "Okay, do you know what? We want to plan an exit strategy for coal in the province of Ontario, and we want to do it so that we can ensure that the lights will stay on, we can ensure that this province will be competitive, ensure that manufacturers will have the power they need. Do you know what might be a good idea? Why don't we sit down with the people, the only people who run coal plants in Ontario, and that would be Ontario Power Generation? Let's say, 'What should we do if we want to get out of this?'"

Mr. Leal: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: While we certainly enjoy hearing about Christopher Columbus's voyage to the New World, I think we are talking about Bill 21, smart metering and the energy conservation act.

The Acting Speaker: The point of order, I take it, is that the member may be wandering. I think the member is on topic, but I would remind him it is Bill 21.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I respect the opinion of the member from Peterborough.

However, if you read through Bill 21, it's empowering legislation. It's about energy policy. There are no facts and figures here; there is no meat in this bill. It's empowering legislation, it's about energy policy, and that's what we're talking about. Bill 21 is part of this government's energy policy, and I will do my best to quote from it once in a while, boring and painful as that may be.

Where were we? Let's sit down with the guys who are actually in the business and say, "How do we get out of this?" If they had done some of those things, they would have said, "We've got some problems here. You can't do that. You can't just do that any more. You can't just rush to this thing. We've got transmission issues and we've got coal delivery issues and we've got contract issues, all of these kinds of things. Secondly, we have to actually have power to replace it, Mr. Energy Minister or Mr. Premier. So we're thinking that we could have some problems. There might actually be some people who oppose what we're doing. There might actually be some neighbourhoods that oppose what we're doing. There might actually be some First Nations that say, 'If you're going to be putting transmission lines through our land, we want to have something to say about it.' There might actually be some environmental groups that have legitimate concerns. There might actually be a lack of energy people willing to invest in some of your crazy projects." That is important, and we're seeing that now: not too many people ponying up the money for this government's energy projects. The industry has no confidence in them, no confidence whatsoever.

So if you had a plan, you would have looked at this as you were devising it and said, "Do you know what? That all-party committee were more on track, that all-party committee that said, 'You can do this, but it's going to take you until 2015 to do it.'" But they weren't interested in all-party committees. They are only interested in themselves. So they set off on that voyage with no navigational instruments whatsoever, and they only set out with half a load of coal to power that ship.

Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): You're using the full 60 minutes?

Mr. Yakabuski: Yes. There's some really good stuff yet coming, Howard.

If I could liken it to the voyage of the Titanic—because we're talking about them going off on a voyage—they won't face reality, they won't face facts. They just won't do it. "Blindly we go. Have you seen any landmarks or anything? Have you seen anything we can go by to give us an idea if we're on the right track?" "No, no. We don't care about that. Immer geradeaus"—as my wife would say—"always straight ahead." Immer geradeaus—that's what they're doing with their ship, not

interested in what anybody else is saying—just, "Here we go."

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When the Titanic crashed, they struck an iceberg, as you all know. It's a historical fact. I'm not bringing anything new into this debate with that statement. So here we are, it strikes an iceberg, and if you recall the stories of the tragedy, one of the great tragedies in history—and this government is going to repeat it with their energy policy—you barely heard it. The dishes didn't even fall off the shelf from the china cabinet on the Titanic. So they thought, "No big deal." The architect or chief engineer goes down and looks at the damage and he says, "This ship is going to sink. This ship is going to sink in a matter of a couple of hours." But you see, the Liberals were operating the ship. They didn't believe him: "No, no, no, no. We know what we're doing. This ship isn't going to sink. We know what we're doing." So as it's taking on water, more and more water, nobody is doing anything to correct the course or do something, because you see, Ministers Cansfield and Duncan were up on the deck dancing to the music of the band and Dalton McGuinty was going around serving drinks. It's a party. And what happened?

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Standing order 23(b) does request that the member direct his or her speech to the matter under discussion, which matter seems to be a recounting of James Cameron's Titanic and not any matter pertaining to energy conservation or smart metering.

The Acting Speaker: The point of order is that the honourable member thinks you are straying somewhat from the topic. I would ask that you remain as focused as possible on Bill 21.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Apparently the Liberals have the blinders on so bad they don't even want to hear analogies. We're trying to draw attention to the silliness of this policy. When we re-enact or talk about the tragedy of the Titanic, part of it was because people didn't believe it could happen. They wouldn't get on the lifeboats because they didn't believe that ship was going to sink. Well, this ship is going down, folks. This energy policy ship that we're sailing on in this province is going down. We are ensuring that the lights will fail in this province, because this government doesn't want to admit how wrong it is.

If I can't make that analogy, Mr. Speaker, then I don't know how we're going to have debates in this House, because you have to be able to offer opinions on the bills that are presented before you. I'm trying to draw attention to the failure—the failure—of this government's policy and the fact that they can't seem to see what's ahead of them. They're going into an iceberg—that's what they're doing—and they're failing to admit that it's there.

Let's talk about this pamphlet, because Our Energy, Our Future—and of course Bill 21, the bill we're debating on. I want the member from Mississauga West to be very, very comfortable that this is in fact the piece

of legislation we're dealing with tonight, Bill 21. This pamphlet—again, if they had a plan for electricity they would have gone to the people long ago. They would have asked them, “What do you think of our electricity policy? What do you think about the direction we're taking with regard to supply management, conservation demand management? Do you think we're on the right track in this province?” No, they wouldn't do that. They wouldn't do that. Heck, no, Liberals don't ask for other people's opinions. They do other people's thinking for them. That's what they try to do, because they consider themselves to be far superior to the average working joe in this province.

Now they have a problem. Again, they forgot to plan. They've got this opposition coming up against them on many of their policies. So now, after the horses are gone out of the barn, “Oh, ladies and gentlemen, may we have your opinion? Would you mind telling us?” But no, they're not asking you for your opinion; they're telling you what your opinion's going to be. This is a rehash of their policy. This is not a consultation process. This is not where you, freely and openly and accepting of other people's viewpoints, go out and ask them what they think or how they feel. This is a piece of propaganda. They're going out and saying, “We're going to tell you what we're going to do in energy. Now we'd like you to get on board.” This is rubbish. Rubbish. Total rubbish; \$1.1 million worth of rubbish. I wonder if the Minister of Health could tell me how many knee operations you can do with \$1.1 million—he could probably tell me right down to the penny; I know he knows his file—\$1.1 million for this piece of Pravda. That's what that is; this is pure propaganda. They're not asking people for their opinion.

Let me read an excerpt from it. They're going to tell you what to decide here. Talk about framing the issue and framing the question. This is terrible. I thought you guys passed—the House leader could tell me—was it Bill 25, about advertising, partisan advertising? Oh, my goodness gracious, this is as partisan as it gets.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: That's not partisan.

Mr. Yakabuski: They don't like it when you tell them they're being partisan, Mr. Speaker. But you find me an objective person out there who'll look at this and say, “Oh, come on. You mean we paid for this?” I might say to them, “Well, yes. You're a taxpayer in the province of Ontario. It cost you \$1.1 million.” “You have got to be kidding,” they'd say to me. Rubbish.

The IESO—do these people know what they're doing? One of those front benchers could tell me: Do we have confidence in these people? Do they know what they're doing?

Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni: Prop. Put it down.

Mr. Yakabuski: This is a report, Mr. Speaker, that was given to this Legislature. It is no prop; I can assure you that—it's factual.

The IESO says, “You're going to have to keep that coal infrastructure in place, ladies and gentlemen. You can't dismantle it. You can't close the stations. We're not in a position to do that.”

You know what? When you go to do something, you've got to know what you're going to create. Here we have a situation now where everybody in the sector says you can't do it. They're going to do it anyway. What are we going to do about the contracts we've got? They haven't even addressed it, but behind the scenes they're going to, let me assure you. They don't want to admit that they're wrong, but behind the scenes they're going to have to ensure that on January 1, 2008, they've got fuel to service Lambton. They're going to have to make sure it's there. They're going to have to make sure that, prior to that, they've got shipping schedules booked, shipping lanes available. You're going to have to make sure that they've bought from the mines so that they have fuel. You can't do that overnight. You can't go to Loblaw's and pick up that stuff.

The other thing: What about the human resources that it takes to operate these facilities? The best are moving on, where there are other opportunities. So when you've got to keep these things going in 2008, you're not even going to have the people there, and if you do, it's going to cost a lot of money to take care of this mess you've created. It's a lot easier if you know what you're doing than if you have to dance around in circles and go backwards and forwards all the time. It takes a lot longer to get there when you're going two steps forward and three steps back. In fact, at that rate you'll never get there. So I just don't know how they're going to get there.

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This thing here: Where are the parameters? When are we expecting input on this and when are they going to table it? On December 9, the minister said, “We'll respond to the OPA's report in 60 days.” Well, 60 days, by rough calculation, would put you somewhere between February 7 and February 9.

Hon. Mr. Smitherman: Oh, my birthday is the 12th.

Mr. Yakabuski: I'm sorry I missed it. Happy birthday.

That would have meant that she would have had to respond to it at least a week and a half ago. No response but, “Let's go back and spin our wheels a little more.” They're not interested in what people have to say. They're just interested in saving their you-know-what.

I think it was in December 2004 that they put out a green paper on LDCs, and all of the input had to be back by February 15, 2005. It's already more than a year and we've heard nothing from this government. This was going to determine what the role of LDCs was, or about restructuring LDCs, because they thought maybe we have too many, all of this kind of stuff. They wanted responses to that green paper. The government demanded it: “We've got to have it by February 15.” Of the public, whoever wanted to respond to it did. The stakeholders responded, with I'm sure considerable work, effort and expense on their part. What is it doing now? It's a paper-weight on the minister's desk, I guess, or something; I don't know. But no release of the report. That's the kind of game they're playing.

I only have a couple of minutes left and I want to get back to the bill. Smart meters: Are they going to work? There are a lot of questions about how they're going to work and how well they'll work. For example, we had a gentleman—the Minister of Natural Resources would find this interesting, I'm sure, because he's pretty careful on his own hydro bill, I've heard. The fellow was in Simcoe, and he has a hydro bill of something like \$16 a month. His last name was Church, I think. He says, "How am I going to save any money with a smart meter?" Of course he's not going to save any money. This guy is a smart meter. He's got it down to a science. There are all kinds of people out there who will make no changes based on having a smart meter in their home. Why would we not make those things voluntary? If something is so good, you know what? You're going out to buy it. If it is the best idea since sliced bread, you're going out to buy it. You don't have to be mandated to buy it. If it's a great idea, you're going out to buy it. So those people who would most benefit by the installation of a smart meter in their home will be out there with bells on. If it means something positive to them, they'll be out there buying it.

But what's the government going to do? They're going to put 4.5 million in the province by 2010. Do you know what Toronto Hydro said? They will have to install over 15,000 of these a month. Do you know how taxing it's going to be on resources to get that done? Fifteen thousand a month may not sound like a big number in Toronto, but you've got to shut the hydro down to do it, you've got to make appointments, all of this kind of stuff. They just have no idea what kind of messes they create. The only thing we can be absolutely certain of is that as they become more and more confused with creating one mess, they will do everything they can to create another one to divert attention from the one they previously created. That is one thing we can certainly be assured of with this government. I don't know where we're going to go with this, but I'm not very encouraged by what I've heard so far.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and comments?

Mr. Bisson: Quite an interesting speech; he covered a lot of bases, I thought, with regard to this particular bill. There's one thing I want to raise, and I wonder if my good colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke can speak to it: Why, if the government is so serious about dealing with energy efficiency, haven't they put any programs forward to assist either the homeowner or industry, in terms of pulp and paper and mining, or the retail sector to find ways to reduce their reliance on electricity?

We know, for example, that thousands of apartment buildings have been built across this province that are very badly insulated. We know that a lot of buildings have windows that are probably no better than leaving the window open when it comes to keeping the heat inside a building. If you were to deal with those issues alone—making sure we retrofit buildings with windows that actually do the job they're intended to do, that is, to keep the heat in and the cold out in the winter and to keep

the hot out and the cold in during the summer; and also put in insulation—that would save a huge amount of electricity in the system, electricity we wouldn't have to generate. Why is it that they have no programs to respond to that issue in any meaningful way?

For industry, why is it that they don't have programs where they go to the large utility users in this province, such as Tembec, Falconbridge, Columbia Forest Products and all the rest of them, and say, "Listen, if you're prepared to invest in your companies"—which they are and they have; it's not as if they've not done some of this on their own—"the provincial government is going to provide encouragement through some type of program to offset your capital costs"? These companies now are having such difficulty, and it would help to reduce their overall reliance on electricity, and thus we would not need to generate as much electricity in the first place.

Mr. Brownell: I am proud to have a few moments this evening to speak on Bill 21 and to follow the comments made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I would first of all say how pleased I was to have had that opportunity of moving out to Simcoe, Chatham and Thunder Bay to get opinions from across the province, with my friend from Peterborough, Mr. Leal, taking the leadership there and doing a great job. You certainly did a great job, and I was proud of your efforts.

I'd like to hit upon the opinions of Ontarians regarding this bill. This bill has been up for public comment on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry. We've had standing committee opportunities and opportunities for Ontarians to write in. They've had ample opportunity to express opinions. I would like, some day, for the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to just get in touch with Volker Thomsen, president of St. Lawrence College. If there is any man in Ontario who knows energy and knows what we're doing and knows the work that the good member we have as our Minister of Energy did when she was a parliamentary assistant in the area of energy conservation and what she continues to do in that regard—well, I would say call Volker Thomsen. Have a meeting with him and you'll be surprised at what he has to say about where we're going on the energy file, where she has gone in the past on the energy file. In fact, there are many times that he has called me up, many times that I've met him in person, and he's made comments about the opportunities that we have put before this House and before Ontarians to look at that and to build on that conservation culture that we're trying to have here in Ontario. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this.

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Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): I'm pleased to be able to offer a few comments on the remarks given to us this evening by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. The government, in introducing this bill, has placed a great deal of emphasis on the notion of conservation. I think all of us would agree that it's certainly very noble in its concept, but when you look at it with

close scrutiny, obviously it raises a great many issues. I think that it assumes that we, as Ontarians, are very wasteful in our use of electrical power; in fact, I think there are probably very few in this province who are consciously wasteful.

I think of the average working family, where the peak time use is one of necessity. Obviously, that peak time refers to the time at which meal preparation is done; it's the time when the washing machine is working at the same time as the stove. It's the time when the dishwasher and the television or the computers are working at the same time. It's the time when lights are going to be around the house as family are engaged in the many activities and tasks of homework and household responsibilities.

So for us to think that people now, because they pay for a smart meter in their house, are going to suddenly be able to take those necessary tasks and put them into a period of time in the middle of the night is totally unrealistic. This whole issue of conservation has been blown into something that nobody wants to talk about in detail; they only want to embrace it as a concept.

Mr. Hampton: I listened with great interest to the one-hour marathon of my colleague from eastern Ontario. One of the points that he alluded to briefly, but that I hope he would talk a bit more about, is the fact that when the public hearings were conducted we asked a number of presenters if they had seen a cost-benefit analysis for the smart meters. Given that this is going to be at least a \$1-billion investment, and quite possibly a \$2-billion investment, one would think that the government would have a business case, that they actually would have sat down and looked at, what is this going to cost and what's it going to produce? We asked, "Have you seen a cost-benefit analysis? Have you seen a business case? Before McGuinty blows \$2 billion on this, have you seen a business case?" I don't remember ever hearing any of the presenters say that they had seen a cost-benefit analysis or a business case.

So I wonder if my colleague would elaborate on that a bit, because I'm quite sure he was at the same public hearings that I was at, and I'm quite sure that out of all the presenters not one could say that they had seen any kind of cost-benefit analysis, any kind of business case. I think it's astounding the government would consider blowing \$2 billion with no cost-benefit analysis, no business case.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Yakabuski: I just want to speak briefly to the comments. I want to thank the members for Timmins-James Bay, Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, York North and Kenora-Rainy River for their comments. Just to touch on some of those, the member for Timmins-James Bay had questions about what the government is doing for true conservation and retrofits and upgrades and real, if you want to call it, low-hanging fruit for conservation. Well, as far as we know, they're doing nothing. But that's not surprising with regard to this government.

To the member from Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, we didn't say there was nobody out there who thought that this government was doing a good job. Actually, I was out there the other day and I found two. So nothing is unanimous.

The speaker from York North and the leader of the third party, from Kenora-Rainy River, you raised the question, basically, about what analysis has been done to actually determine that this will have a cost-benefit. We're not talking about just a pilot project that says they might cost this much to have in place, but what are the actual cost-benefits? How much electricity are we actually going to conserve based on smart metering, and measure that against the cost not only of the implementation but the ongoing costs of maintaining and administering them. He is absolutely quite right: There has been nothing presented in that regard. If there is, then I think the people of the province of Ontario have a right to see that. Certainly, the leader of the third party should have an opportunity to see that. The Leader of the Opposition and members of the opposition—both the official opposition and the third party—should have an opportunity to debate those kinds of issues. So if you have information there, we need to see it. We don't get too much when it comes to facts and figures from this government. They tend to want to hide them. Maybe they're ashamed; I don't know.

The Acting Speaker: The member from Kenora-Rainy River.

Mr. Yakabuski: You're going to run the clock, eh?

Mr. Hampton: I'm going to run the clock, yes.

I'm pleased to be able to participate in this debate. Not that there's much in this bill; in fact, after the government talked so much about this bill and said, "Oh, the bill is coming, the bill is coming," to see what a slender offering it is, is quite disappointing. In fact, while the government entitles the bill the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, I think it should really be called the nuclear future act. Because the anemic measures that it would put in place in terms of energy conservation and energy efficiency only confirm that the McGuinty government's real electricity policy is, "Go nuclear and go big and go now." Because there is virtually nothing in this bill—nothing—that will make any significant contribution to energy efficiency, energy conservation.

In fact, it's amazing—this bill was talked about by the government in the first couple of weeks after assuming office: "Wait until you see our energy efficiency, energy conservation bill. We're going to be the leading edge." I think people across Ontario heard this lingo about the culture of conservation over and over again, and were really expecting to see some meat in the sandwich. Not only is there no meat in the sandwich, there is really no sandwich here. This is all about rhetoric and no substance.

I want to demonstrate that. Because we heard from a lot of presenters from the environmental community who basically asked the question, "Where is the substance? Where is the energy efficiency? Where is the con-

ervation? We see the gimmicks, we see the photo ops, we see the speeches, but where is the substance?" Most of them had to conclude that there is no substance. This continues to be a lot of rhetoric, a lot of hot air, a lot of gimmicks, but no substance.

What's really sad about this, though, is that from day one, virtually, the McGuinty government has had all kinds of non-government organizations who have done excellent work, good research, who have tested that research with other non-government organizations and other jurisdictions: in California, in New England, in Manitoba, in Quebec. They came forward and offered all kinds of very practical, very specific recommendations. Let me just point out one—and this is an excellent study—by the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Pembina Institute. It's called, *Power for the Future: Towards a Sustainable Electricity System for Ontario*. The Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Pembina Institute presented this study, with its recommendations, two years ago now, in the spring of 2004. It's just chock full of very practical recommendations. I want to read some of them so people will understand just how practical they are: "The government of Ontario should adopt minimum energy efficiency standards under the Energy Efficiency Act equivalent to the energy efficiency levels required for Energy Star labelling for all major electricity-using devices and equipment...."

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What do we mean? We mean fridges, we mean stoves, we mean freezers, we mean air conditioners: all those electrical appliances that people use in their homes. They're simply saying that you should set some energy efficiency standards and then have a labelling exercise so that when people go to the hardware store and they want to be environmentally responsible and they want to purchase a high-efficiency refrigerator, they'll clearly be able to do that; if they want to get a freezer that is very energy-efficient, they'll be able to do that; and if they want to get some other appliance that is very energy-efficient, they'll be able to do that. That's a very practical recommendation to which I think most people in Ontario would say, "Gee, that's a good idea and it's a very practical idea." You don't have to spend billions of dollars to do it. You basically set the standard and require the labelling. Certainly there should be somebody out there producing appliances who would want to appeal to those environmentally responsible people.

Did the McGuinty government do that? No, they didn't. They didn't do it in 2004, didn't do it 2005, they haven't done it in 2006, and they're not going to do it with this bill.

Another very practical recommendation, so practical, so elementary that I think any carpenter would be able to tell the government this: "The provincial building code should be amended to require R-2000, Canadian building improvement program ... or equivalent energy efficiency performance for all new buildings and building renovations...."

That's what they say. If you want to use less electricity and if you want to use less energy overall, a practical step: amend the building code so that any new home that is built, any new apartment that is built, any new office tower that is built will be energy-efficient. It means energy-efficient windows, yes. It means good insulation, yes. It means employing some slightly different building techniques. It means insulated doors, yes. But all of these things are available. All that would be required is for the McGuinty government to have the political will to do it.

Did the McGuinty government do it in 2004? No. Did they do it in 2005? No. Are they going to do it with this bill? No, they're not. In fact, it's another practical recommendation that is not going to happen.

Let me give you another example: "The most energy-efficient technologies in all sectors and end uses should be labelled through the Energy Star program or, if not included in Energy Star, through a provincial labelling system." Again a very practical recommendation. Let's say they're building a supermarket and they want to know, in terms of the freezers and the coolers and all the other appliances or all the other work that they may want to do in that supermarket, if they want to be energy-efficient, they would be able to do that with the help of the Ontario government.

Has the McGuinty government done that? Did they do it in 2004? No. Did they do it in 2005? No. Are they going to do it with this bill? No again.

Another example: "The government of Ontario should establish a partnership with utilities, financial institutions, energy service companies, municipalities, and other stakeholders to offer a series of financing mechanisms to assist electricity consumers in all sectors to finance the adoption of energy-efficient products and technologies and measures out of the savings they will achieve through these investments."

Basically they were saying, "Look, if we want people to get rid of the old appliances, if we want people to get rid of the old freezers, if we want supermarkets to get rid of the old inefficient coolers and freezers," and if you want to do it fairly quickly, one of the best ways to do that is put in place a financing mechanism. They're not saying the government had to do it all alone. They're saying you should work with the utilities, with financial institutions, with energy service companies, municipalities, other stakeholders, perhaps the federal government, to ensure that people, especially if they have low or modest incomes, can take that inefficient fridge, freezer, or stove, all of which use too much electricity, and replace them with new, very efficient appliances.

Did the government set up a financing mechanism? Did they even call together potential partners and other stakeholders to do this? Did they do it in 2004? No. Did they do it in 2005? No. Are they going to do it with this bill in 2006? No.

Another recommendation, again a very practical recommendation, was given to the government over two years ago: "The government of Ontario should enter into

an agreement with the federal government under the auspices of the federal government's Kyoto protocol implementation plan to share the costs of providing the following financial incentives for the adoption of energy-efficient technologies:

- grants for high-efficiency home energy retrofits and new R-2000 homes;

- grants towards the additional cost of new high-efficiency commercial buildings, and commercial building retrofits;

- sales tax rebates for all Energy Star products in all sectors and small-scale renewable energy power sources;

- business tax credits for industrial energy-efficient equipment and cogeneration systems.”

They're very clear. The federal government already does some of this—pretty minor, pretty meagre—but there was an opportunity to do something positive, practical and very progressive on this front. Did the McGuinty government do this in 2004? No. Did they do it in 2005? No. Are they going to do it with this bill in 2006? No again.

Another recommendation: “Mechanisms to ensure the delivery of programs to low-income consumers should be incorporated into the demand-side management mandates and incentives provided to energy and electrical distribution utilities. A specific portion of DSM spending should be set aside for this purpose, including revenues from the public benefits charge,” which is talked about later.

This again is a very practical recommendation. This group, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Pembina Institute, recognize that a lot of low- and modest-income households might not have the money. They might not have \$1,500 or \$2,000 to go out and buy that new energy-efficient fridge. They might not have \$1,000 sitting around to buy that new energy-efficient freezer. They might not have \$1,000 sitting around to buy that new energy-efficient stove. They're saying that to be equitable and fair and really achieve something on energy efficiency, you've got to have this strategy for low- and modest-income households.

Did the McGuinty government do this in 2004 when it was first recommended? No. Did the McGuinty government do this in 2005? No. Is the McGuinty government going to do this with the current bill? No again.

Another recommendation, again a very practical one: “The government of Ontario should adopt legislation creating a new agency, the Ontario sustainable energy authority, reporting to the Minister of Energy, to lead and coordinate the province's energy efficiency efforts. The agency function should include:

- the coordination and oversight of the development and implementation of provincial energy efficiency standards and labelling programs;

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- ensuring the consideration of energy efficiency in the policies and programs of provincial government agencies;

- the ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of energy efficiency programs being delivered by utilities

and provincial agencies, including low-income programs and the provision of recommendations for their improvement to the provincial government and the OEB;

- the forecasting of province's future electricity needs;

- research, development, and education and information dissemination on energy-efficient technologies and practices.”

In other words, there ought to be someone reporting directly to the Minister of Energy driving energy efficiency. Did this happen in 2004? No. Did it happen in 2005? No. Is it going to happen with this bill? No again. Yes, we have somebody who is called an energy efficiency officer now, but this person doesn't report to the Minister of Energy. This person doesn't drive energy efficiency. He sits over in the Ontario Power Authority building and doesn't say much while they talk about building mega-nuclear plants and mega-natural gas plants and has virtually nothing to say about energy efficiency and energy conservation. Once again, a very practical, very realistic, very progressive recommendation from the Canadian Environmental Law Association, and the McGuinty government didn't do it in 2004, they haven't done it in 2005 and they're not going to do it with this bill either.

I think if people were to read this, they would just be astounded—just astounded—at all of the recommendations, all of the good, practical information that has been available to this government since virtually the day they assumed office in terms of what can be done now—not a year from now, not two years from now, not five years from now, but what can be done now—in terms of energy efficiency to reduce the waste of electricity, to reduce the overall consumption of electricity. What has the McGuinty government done with these good, practical suggestions? Virtually nothing. Virtually zero.

That's why I think so many environmentalists are so very disappointed with this slender, slender offering. The McGuinty government has the nerve to call it the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, and it does virtually nothing. It implements virtually nothing. It adopts virtually nothing. It is, again, another one of those bills that has a fine-sounding rhetorical name, but in substance there isn't much to it. Now, as I say, that's why we should really call this the nuclear future act. Because the government that has done nothing now in three years on energy efficiency and energy conservation is literally pushing the province into the arms of the nuclear industry.

I remember a famous speech that John Snobelen, the first education minister under the Conservatives, gave under the Mike Harris Conservatives, where he talked about, “The key to turning the education system upside down in the province is the need to create a crisis.” If you look at what has gone on with the electricity supply in this province over the last two years—virtually no new supply and no energy conservation, no energy efficiency strategies—I'd say what the McGuinty government has really been up to is trying to create a crisis and then say,

“The only thing we can do is go nuclear, go big and go now,” and that’s exactly what they’re doing.

Those are some of the practical things that were offered up by a number of environmental organizations. I want to get into some of these in greater detail, because it really does tell a story. I want to first take the Green Energy Coalition. So people know, who is the Green Energy Coalition? One member organization is the David Suzuki Foundation. I think people are used to seeing Mr. Suzuki on television, one of the leading voices in terms of the need to confront global warming, to confront climate change and the need to adopt energy efficiency strategies. Another is the Energy Action Council of Toronto, another is Greenpeace Canada and another is the Sierra Club of Canada. So the Green Energy Coalition is not some people who fell off the turnip truck last week. These are people who have been around for a while. They don’t just operate in Ontario. They operate literally across Canada. In fact, in many respects they now operate across the globe, in terms of their research, their knowledge, their experience and the effort they put in. As the group says, the Green Energy Coalition was formed over 15 years ago to intervene in regulatory proceedings in support of energy efficiency and environmental sustainable energy policies. It has participated in dozens of hearings and policy-forming processes, significantly influencing demand-side management or conservation rules for both electricity and natural gas.

What do they say about this act? The first recommendation they make is to say, “We welcome an act, but you have to do something right up front and centre. You have to add a conservation-first directive.” Can you believe that the government would come forward with a bill they call the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, yet nowhere in the bill is it made clear that it must be conservation first before you go contemplating big nuclear or big natural gas? That’s not in the bill. The bill doesn’t say conservation first. That’s why these groups are critical.

They also make the point that, “The efficiency resource”—energy efficiency and the potential of energy efficiency—“is very large and it’s very cost-effective.” They go through some demonstrations from other jurisdictions, and that’s what I think is so enlightening here. For example, by 1996, American electric utility energy efficiency strategies had lowered demand by 29,000 megawatts. What is significant about 29,000 megawatts? Well, what’s significant about it is that that’s more than Ontario’s all-time peak consumption of electricity. In other words, if we took some lessons from some of those utilities elsewhere that have invested seriously in energy efficiency, we could really make a big difference in Ontario.

But they go on. Again, they say, “The efficiency resource is very large and it’s very cost effective. California alone has built 12 conservation power plants with energy efficiency investments or they’ve displaced the need for 12,000 megawatts of generation capacity.” You know what? Do you know when they started doing this

seriously? It really wasn’t that long ago. If you actually look at some of the big jumps, they got very serious about it only about 10 years ago. What is significant about 12,000 megawatts? That’s the equivalent of three Darlington nuclear plants. At a time when the McGuinty government wants to build 16 more nuclear units—they say \$40 billion for more nuclear plants—the lesson of California is, “Hey, we can save you from having to build three of those.” Again, this wasn’t rocket science. They detail how they did it by adopting energy efficiency appliance standards. In other words, in California you can’t buy an electric fridge or freezer or stove or air-conditioner unless it meets the energy efficiency standards. You can’t put it in. California saved the equivalent of 2,000 megawatts. There is two nuclear units right there, two nuclear units you don’t need.

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By adopting building standards—remember building standards? The Pembina Institute said to adopt up-to-date energy efficiency building standards and reduce the wastage of electricity and other energy that way. By doing that, California has saved 4,000 megawatts—just by doing that. No rocket science, no razzle-dazzle, no photo ops, which the McGuinty government is so fond of holding: Just update the building code. California has saved the equivalent of one Darlington nuclear plant in total: 4,000 megawatts.

Then they put inside some demand-side management strategies. I’ll give you an example. After the Enron fiasco, after Enron created an artificial electricity crisis in California, started shutting down generation stations to create an energy shortfall and then drove the price of electricity through the roof, after Enron engaged in that bit of nefarious activity—by the way, it wasn’t that long ago that members of the Conservatives and members of the Liberals, one Dalton McGuinty, were all in favour of bringing the Enrons to Ontario. Privatized generation, privatized transmission: The Conservatives were all in favour and Dalton McGuinty was all in favour. Oh, he tried to deny it, until Global Television produced the tapes where his mouth moved and the words were uttered: “Yes, privatize even transmission. Privatize Hydro One.”

But that experiment in full-scale privatization/deregulation led California, as a result of the crisis that happened in 2000-01, to implement demand-side management strategies. What was one of their most effective strategies? It was called the 20/20 program. Basically, they paid people and they paid businesses and they paid industry at certain times to shut down their operations and conserve electricity. If you reduced your electricity consumption by 20%, you got a 20% cut in your bill. That was very, very effective. It was incredibly effective. Those demand-side strategies, where you literally provide people with incentives not to use electricity, let’s say at peak hours or at peak times of the year, resulted in savings of another 6,000 megawatts. That’s not just short-term but now permanent savings of 6,000 megawatts. What is that the equivalent of? That’s the equivalent

ent of Darlington plus Pickering A—another one and half nuclear plants that you don't need. That's how cost-effective energy efficiency is.

So in terms of, "We have to go nuclear, and we have to go big nuclear, and we have to go big nuclear now," which is the siren song of the McGuinty government, California is saying no, you don't. It's more cost-effective, it's more efficient and it's better for the environment if you develop thoughtful energy efficiency strategies and you implement them systematically across the province.

But is that what the McGuinty government is doing? Not at all. Not in this bill. They didn't do it in 2005. They didn't do it in 2004.

More information on this: "The conservation resource"—again this is the submission on the bill—"is very large and cost-effective. A recent study of 10 US states shows average annual savings of 0.4% of utility sales. The leading states are saving 0.8% of annual sales: California, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Vermont." You don't have to go to California to see some of this. If you go to Massachusetts or to Rhode Island, basically if you go to New England, the New England states have put in place some very practical, very nuts-and-bolts energy efficiency standards, and part and parcel of it is demand-side management. When you get into those very hot days of summer, actually paying some industries not to operate, you basically say to them, "We will provide you with some money so that you're not going to lose a lot of money, but we're going to ask you not to run your most energy-intensive operations," or you provide homeowners or apartment dwellers with some incentives, saying, "We're going to give you a real cut in your hydro bill if you'll help us save electricity use at this time of the year."

These recommendations—not just recommendations; this is actually happening. Did the McGuinty adopt any of that in 2003? No. Did they adopt it in 2004? No. Did they adopt it in 2005? No. Are they going to adopt it through this bill? No again. Incredible, absolutely incredible.

There are some other interesting things contained in this brief. The one I like is this graph. This graph basically shows the relative investment of different jurisdictions in energy efficiency. I've been using California and New England as examples, but you know what? You don't have to go that far away. All you have to do is go to the province of Manitoba, which does not have an electricity crisis; they've got more electricity than they need. But Manitoba is investing 3.44% of annual revenue requirements in energy efficiency. So that's Manitoba, up here, making a big investment, and then there's Vermont and there's California and there's British Columbia—British Columbia is way up here, and British Columbia isn't facing an electricity crisis. Let's see: Who else is way up there? Well, my, my: Massachusetts, Connecticut. But who do you think is way down here, this little wee smidgen on the graph that you can hardly see? Who do you think that jurisdiction is, that's only investing 0.17% of the annual revenue requirement in energy

efficiency? Who do you think that might be? I'll give you a hint: It's a government that boasts about its energy efficiency. It's a government that holds photo op after photo op after photo op. It's a government that has the nerve, the gall, to talk about creating a culture of conservation. It's a government that has the nerve of bringing forward a bill that they call the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act but which has no substance in it. This government that is doing virtually nothing on energy efficiency and conservation as compared to other jurisdiction in North America is the McGuinty government. Embarrassing. Shameful. You all ought to be hiding under your desks, yet you go around the province and you talk about how you're going to create a culture of conservation and you spend millions of dollars on these superficial television ads that aren't going to save one watt of electricity. Shameful. But that's the truth, and that's why so many environmental organizations came to the hearings and, literally, it was very difficult for them to sit there with a straight face given how little this government has done.

The Green Energy Coalition, the David Suzuki Foundation, the Energy Action Council of Toronto, Greenpeace Canada, the Sierra Club of Canada weren't alone: There's the Conservation Council of Ontario, and they make many of the same recommendations. They say, "Look, we're pleased to come and talk about conservation and we're pleased to come and talk about energy efficiency, but can we please have some now?" They go through the recommendations. They say:

"(1) Raise home efficiency standards in the Ontario building code to a minimum rating of EnerGuide 80;

"(2) Require energy efficiency labelling of all homes, starting with new homes and incorporating existing homes on resale;

"(3) Provide immediate financial incentives in the 2006 budget for investing in conservation, including

"(i) PST exemption on conservation supplies

"(ii) linking electricity surcharges to conservation financing;

"(4) Invest in conservation renewable resources...."

These are their recommendations. Are any of these happening in this bill? No, not at all.

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They also did some other interesting work that I think ought to be added to the record on this. They actually did some polling. They hired a pollster to go out and do some polling, and this is what they found: In terms of personal commitment to conservation and energy efficiency, people are prepared to purchase and install compact fluorescent light bulbs, are prepared to go out and purchase insulated doors, that many people, if they have the money, have upgraded to more energy-efficient appliances, and that many people, if they have the money, are prepared to go out and insulate their basements and add extra insulation to homes. In terms of policy support, 95% of respondents wanted new homes to be insulated to meet the highest energy efficiency standards. So 95% of people want to see the building code changed so that

homes are insulated to the highest standard—95%. Some 93% felt that renovations should also meet the highest energy efficiency standards; 89% support an energy efficiency label for new homes; 85% want the government to invest in incentives and low-interest loans for conservation; 80% support increasing energy efficiency standards in the building code.

People are being very, very clear about what they want. So why isn't the government doing it? Let's take, for example, the building code. If 95% of the people want the building code to reflect more energy-efficient standards, who do you think would be opposed to that? Let me just offer one possibility: developers. In fact, we know that when the building code was actually downgraded under the Conservatives, the major interest lobby that said, "Lighten up the building code," was developers. You know, you get all this rhetoric from the McGuinty government about, "Oh, we're going to create a culture of conservation." Just don't look too close, because you won't find any. That's what they talk about and they run these superficial ads on television. But who are they actually listening to when it comes to energy efficiency in buildings? I think they're listening to developers—developers who do not want more energy efficiency, because frankly, if you have to put more money into energy efficiency, you may have to take a little less in profit. The margin gets shaved, as they say. That's who the McGuinty government is really listening to on this front.

But there are more. I want to talk about Green Communities Canada. If I may say, I was part of the NDP government that actually put government money into the green communities strategy. With all the rhetoric of the McGuinty government, the green communities strategy remains the most effective energy efficiency vehicle in Ontario. They're the people who are actually doing something out there. I just want folks to understand what Green Communities Canada does. They're active in many communities. If, for example, you want to have your home looked at, if you want an audit done to see how energy efficient or inefficient your home is, Green Communities will come and do it for you. They operate on a not-for-profit basis. They'll come and look at your appliances and your insulation and your doors and windows and your heating system and they'll tell you; they'll make some recommendations for you. So they're doing very good work out there. I was very pleased that I was part of a government that said, "We're going to support this group and organization financially so we can get energy efficiency off the ground."

In any case, they came forward. Just to show you, they've "completed 50,000 EnerGuide for Houses assessments, a fifth of all the evaluations performed Canada-wide. In Ontario," the Green Communities strategy of "certified energy advisers have completed over 45,000 evaluations, or three out of five." They "have established the highest standards of technical excellence and quality control in" their program, "offering Natural Resources Canada advice and assistance in program modifications."

Again, these are folks who didn't fall off the turnip truck yesterday; these are people who know something about energy efficiency. They've "championed the establishment of a national energy efficiency program for low-income households, who can least afford to pay rising energy bills but often lack the means to control bills through efficiency improvements."

What did they recommend? They said we've got to have "mandatory universal labelling of building energy performance at point of sale...."

They said that the "EnerGuide for Houses" standard "be adopted as the standard for labelling residential buildings...."

"That where EnerGuide for Houses methods and procedures are not applicable for certain types of buildings, the province join forces with the federal government to develop appropriate ratings procedures and national standards...."

"That Bill 21 be amended to enable the province and local governments to establish minimum energy efficiency standards for existing buildings...."

"That Bill 21 recognize the need for support for building owners to fulfill requirements specified in sub-segment regulations, including:

—access to energy advisors/rating organizations...

—access to energy-efficiency related incentives...."

"That Bill 21 acknowledge the growth of energy performance retrofit industry and the need to support it as well as to monitor the quality of these services:

—establish standards for work quality where none exist

—assist in training and ... development where needed

—monitor quality of services and check performance standards."

All of these things they recommended, and you know what? They have been recommending these things for two years too. Did the government adopt them in 2004? No. Did they adopt them in 2005? No. Are they going to adopt them through this bill? No again. No, not at all.

They were very helpful once again in comparing Ontario to other jurisdictions. I'm sure some members of the government were embarrassed when they provided this information. For example, what they point out is that Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador—poor provinces like Newfoundland and Labrador—matched the federal EnerGuide for Houses retrofit grant. Hydro-Québec provides an incentive that is double the federal grant. Manitoba can get back 100% of the cost of home insulation materials. Seniors in Nova Scotia and moderate-income households in Saskatchewan qualify for additional grants when they improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Low-income homeowners receive additional free services—heating system tune-ups, weather-proofing, programmable thermostats etc.—in most of these provinces.

Has any of this happened in Ontario? Did it happen in 2003 under the McGuinty government? No. In 2004 under the McGuinty government? No. In 2005 under the McGuinty government? No. Are there any provisions to

do this in this bill, this slender, anemic bill they've presented? No again.

Just to give you two practical examples, the provinces on either side of us, Quebec and Manitoba: If you live in Manitoba or Quebec and you own a home, in Manitoba you can get a \$5,000 low-interest loan to put in a high-efficiency heating system, to put in better insulation and to put in energy-efficient appliances, and in Quebec it's similar. I point out again that neither Quebec nor Manitoba are facing an electricity crisis. They're both willing to sell Ontario electricity because they have a surplus.

I think people need to ask, how is it that the province to the west of us, Manitoba, which is not facing an electricity crisis, is doing so much on the energy efficiency front that if you're a homeowner, they'll actually provide you with a low-interest loan so you can do real, effective, specific energy-efficient things in your home, and in Quebec, you can do real, specific, practical, energy-efficient things in your home and they'll provide you with an incentive, but in Ontario, nothing is happening? Oh, no, I shouldn't say nothing is happening. You get these superficial ads on television. That's what you get from the McGuinty government: these superficial ads on television. There are many more reports that I could refer to.

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For people at home, let me just tell them that the Pembina Institute and the Canadian Environmental Law Association just a while ago put out an update of their *Power for the Future: Towards a Sustainable Electricity System for Ontario*. They put out all their recommendations in the spring of 2004, and now here we are, almost in the spring of 2006, so they put out an update. They grade what the government has done, and I think this would be enlightening for people to hear about.

Once again, their recommendation—and again, this is in the context of this bill. This is in the context of this government repeating over and over again, “We’re going to create a culture of conservation.” So they’re reporting on what’s actually happening or, as it truly is, what’s not happening now. They repeat their recommendation, “The government of Ontario should adopt minimum energy efficiency standards under the Energy Efficiency Act equivalent to the energy efficiency levels required for Energy Star labelling for all major electricity-using devices and equipment,” and then it says what’s happening. Do you know what their comment is? Their comment is, “Unclear if Ministry of Energy currently has adequate resources to undertake a major updating project.” So not only are they not working on it; they’re saying it’s not even clear if they have the resources in the ministry to undertake any of this, to make a simple beginning.

Let’s look at some of the other recommendations. “The provincial building code should be amended to require R2000, Canadian Building Improvement Program, or equivalent energy efficiency performance for all new buildings.” “This, again, is a very cost-effective

method of incorporating high levels of energy efficiency into new buildings.” What do they say about that, in terms of their comment? This is what they say about the McGuinty government: “No action to date.” No action to date.

Recommendation 4: “The most energy-efficient technologies in all sectors and end-uses should be labelled through the Energy Star program.” What do they say about the McGuinty government on that issue? “No action to date on appliances.” Wow, it sounds like this government, while they talk about a culture of conservation, is not doing much.

“The government of Ontario should establish a partnership with utilities, financial institutions, energy service companies, municipalities, and other stakeholders to offer a series of financing mechanisms to assist electricity consumers in all sectors to finance the adoption of energy efficient products and technologies and measures,” to save electricity. The government is boasting about their bill. What does the Pembina Institute, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, find on this measure about the McGuinty government? “No action to date.”

Then there’s the issue, “The government of Ontario should enter into an agreement with the federal government under the auspices of the federal government’s Kyoto Protocol implementation plan to share the costs of providing the following financial incentives for the adoption of energy efficient technologies:

“Grants for high-efficiency home energy retrofits and new R2000 homes;

“Grants towards the additional cost of new high-efficiency commercial buildings, and commercial building retrofits

“Sales tax rebates for all Energy Star,” appliances.

What do they say about this? “No reported progress to date on a Kyoto Protocol implementation agreement.”

What do they say about a provincial sales tax rebate on Energy-Star-rated appliances? What they say is that not only has the McGuinty government not done anything positive on this file, they did something negative: They actually removed the very modest provincial sales tax rebates that were there and put in place by the Conservatives. The McGuinty government is actually moving in the wrong direction.

I could go on. Has a public benefit charge been put in place that would be applied to all electricity sales to finance energy efficiency and low-income assistance programs? Response: “No action to date.”

“(13) The government ... should undertake a design and costing study for a 200,000-unit solar PV roof program modelled on those undertaken in Europe and the United States....” Response: “No action to date.”

“(16) The government ... should initiate a research and development program on renewable energy technologies funded through the public benefits charge proposed in Recommendation 11.” “No action to date.”

“(17) The Independent Market Operator ... now the Independent Electricity Systems Operator ... should adopt

management practices designed to forecast power outputs from wind-power capacity, run-of-river hydro and solar PV systems....” Response: “No action to date.”

“(19) The government of Ontario should develop guidelines, in conjunction with the federal government, for the approval of offshore wind power generation facilities.” There is actually a lot of potential for wind power generation on the Great Lakes. What’s the response from a government that boasts about how it’s going to create a culture of conservation? “No action to date.”

It just goes on and on.

Now, one of the things that is in this bill that the government boasts about and boasts about and talks about and talks about is their so-called smart metering. In fact, if you ask them about energy efficiency, right away, they say, “Oh, we’re going to do the smart meters.” What I found during the hearings was very revealing, because you know what? The people who are going to make money off smart meters, the people who are going to sell them, are all in favour of smart meters.

So the companies that might make them and manufacture them and sell them and service them are all in favour of smart meters. As I said earlier, I asked every one of them, “What do you think this is going to cost?” They said, “It’s going to cost at least \$1 billion.” Some of them said it might cost more than that; it might cost \$2 billion. I said to them, “If your company was going to spend \$1 billion or \$2 billion, would you do a cost-benefit analysis before you put out that money?” You

know what they said? Every one of them said, “Yes, we would do a cost-benefit analysis; we would do a business plan. We couldn’t get it past our board; we couldn’t get financing unless we could show that we had done a cost-benefit analysis and unless we could show that for \$1 billion or \$2 billion expended, there were going to be some real returns.”

I asked every one of those presenters, every one of those companies. I said, “Have you seen a cost-benefit analysis on smart meters? Never mind the propaganda, never mind all the press releases from the McGuinty government. Have you seen a cost benefit analysis? Have you seen a business case?” You know what? Not one of those companies could provide a business case; not one of those companies could provide a cost-benefit analysis. In fact, the most frequent response that I got was—and the response that I got, for example, from the Canadian Environmental Law Association was, they said the Ontario Power Authority, in their drive to go nuclear and go big, said, “You might shave 500 megawatts off peak consumption.” Peak consumption of 26,000 megawatts: “You might shave 500 megawatts.”

I want to continue this little histoire tomorrow because I think it’s a very interesting histoire. You’re going to blow \$2 billion and you might save 500 megawatts? This sounds like more, “Go nuclear, go big.”

The Acting Speaker: The time now being 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

The House adjourned at 2130.

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