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**Mercredi 4 octobre 2006**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 4 October 2006

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 4 octobre 2006

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### APOLOGY

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Yesterday, during the last question of the day from the Conservative government and before the response from the Attorney General, I made a heckle which was clearly inappropriate and I certainly want to apologize for that.

Secondly, on a much prouder note, I would like to wish my mother a happy 89th birthday today. Mom, I love you.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** In this Legislature, we saw a condemnation of the Premier for his failure in Caledonia. A week after that, on June 16, Housing Minister Gerretsen issued a press release promising emergency funding for homeowners in Caledonia. But we know that Ontarians have put up with three years of broken promises from this McGuinty government. Gerretsen's release stressed the urgency of the situation, using words like "immediate" and "emergency," and he instructed his local liaison committee to provide recommendations by June 19. That was four months into the occupation; it's now seven months and counting. Caledonia homeowners have seen no money, Caledonia homeowners have seen no timeline and Caledonia homeowners have seen no indication that the McGuinty government will be keeping this promise. You may recall Minister Cordiano wading into the dispute with his promise of money. Where is Cordiano now? Brant MPP Dave Levac waded into this broken promise, calling it "welcome news for the community."

People have had enough broken promises from a government which will say anything to get re-elected. Caledonians in particular are tired of the McGuinty government's endless flood of promises without delivery. Congratulations to Minister Gerretsen and MPP Levac. They are runners-up for promise breaker of the day award. They get an A for announcement and a D for—

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

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** I'm speaking today to advise the House of an innovative and proactive initiative that has been put forth by the city of London this morning. Anne Marie DeCicco-Best, the mayor of London, as well as community leaders, made an announcement which launched the Mayor's Task Force to End Woman Abuse. This is a new initiative to focus on the issue of woman abuse in our city. There has been an increase in violence against women within our community throughout this past year. I am proud that the city of London is being proactive in responding to the growing need to end violence against women.

Among its goals, the task force will develop a relationship among women abuse experts, the human services sector, the abused sector, the city of London, the government of Ontario and the government of Canada; ensure the availability of practical training materials to assist the community sector in responding effectively and proactively to situations of woman abuse; liaise with local media to inform, educate and bring public awareness to the issue of woman abuse and its impact on the community; and hold a conference utilizing local experts to showcase the best practice within the business, government and human services sector.

Mayor DeCicco-Best will chair the task force, which consists of a cross-section of leaders, including representatives from law enforcement, education, business, health and social sectors.

It's a very great initiative, and hopefully all of us will support it.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, with a tone of questioning in your voice. Nonetheless, thank you for the recognition.

Yesterday the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario brought forward a milestone report. He brought forward a report three years into the term of this McGuinty government that showed that what we in the opposition have been saying for so long is entirely true.

This government does not see the environment as a priority. This government does beautiful, fabulous work when it comes to advertising and marketing, but when it comes to the environment, substantial work is not there. This government has no plan to deal with climate change.

The Minister of the Environment will say, when asked, “No, we’re doing work, here, there, everywhere,” but no coherent approach.

The reality is that climate change will have significant impact on this province. Climate change will bring about changes in our climate, our weather, that will impact on people’s lives, our prosperity, and yet, given that they’re doing nothing to stop climate change, nor are they doing anything to adapt to the inevitable challenges, crises, that this province will face.

This government has abandoned its responsibilities. It has neglected its obligations. This government is a failure on the environmental file.

#### HAMILTON DAY

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I am proud to rise and sing the praises of Hamilton:

Once upon a time there was a city,  
Hamilton was where we all called home.

Last April I brought forward, along with my fellow members, a private member’s bill identifying the first Wednesday in October as Hamilton Day. We are celebrating Hamilton at Queen’s Park today, and I want to acknowledge and welcome Mayor Larry Di Ianni, Councillor Bill Kelly, Councillor Margaret McCarthy and physician recruiter Dr. Jane Walker to Queen’s Park.

Hamilton has a great history, inspired by people, places and politics. Hamilton is located at the head of Lake Ontario, captured by the splendour of the Niagara Escarpment. It all began at Hamilton Harbour, which provided the perfect shipping opportunity needed to celebrate the industrial development.

But today our airport travels to all points in the world. We have an industrious business culture, with the direction of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and a thriving small business and entrepreneurial spirit. Today, Hamilton is a model city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed. McMaster University, Redeemer University and Mohawk College are all wonderful, leading post-secondary institutions. We’re very proud of the care we receive at St. Joseph’s Healthcare, St. Peter’s Hospital and Hamilton Health Sciences.

We also need to celebrate Hamilton’s entertainers. We have them all over the world. Hamilton is a beautiful place to live, work and raise children. We want Ontarians to know that Hamilton is a vibrant community, open for business, and that Hamilton thanks the McGuinty government for their support and encouragement over the past three years, and there’s more to come.

1340

#### LIBERAL LEADERSHIP

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** After three lost years and one to go, the knives are out for Premier McGuinty. His wannabe replacements are lining up already. It seems the Liberal caucus feels the same as

Ontario voters: It’s time for a change. Indeed, the Toronto Star reports that provincial Liberals have already started undermining their leader. They can feel the sliding momentum. They recognize their slip in public opinion. They know this could be his last year.

Let’s look at the top contenders. Could it be furious George, the animated health minister who spends more time on late-night press releases attacking John Tory than he does fixing the problems in our hospital ERs?

How about the member from London West? No, no, he’s not going to win his own seat—you know, Green Lane?

Better still, the visionary pit bull from St. Paul’s. Please.

Or how about a compassionate man, the eminently quotable energy minister who tells struggling Ontarians worried about hydro rates to wrap themselves up in a blanket and get some good red wine?

Maybe they’ll pick a female leader: the public face of last month’s disastrous by-election in Parkdale–High Park; the Minister of Economic Development is reportedly honing her French skills. Might I suggest public relations training?

Or maybe the Tory floor-crosser from Ottawa West–Nepean? Then again, maybe he wants back in our House.

And why not throw in the former transportation minister, although he’d want the leader’s office at Chalmers Group?

It’s going to be a fun year. Keep your head up, Dalton.

#### ONTARIO’S RED MEAT SECTOR

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** The Ontario Cattlemen’s Association, Ontario Pork, the Ontario Veal Association and the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency all form part of Ontario’s very successful red meat sector. The sheer number of producers in this industry is indicative of how important it is to the economy of rural Ontario. For example, there are over 28,950 producers in the Ontario red meat sector: 450 in veal, 3,300 in pork, 4,200 in sheep and lamb, and 21,000 in cattle.

The economic impact of this sector is even more impressive. Ontario farm cash receipts estimate a total of over \$1.8 billion.

I would also like to point out what has been accomplished by the McGuinty government working with the agricultural industry, including \$910 million for income stabilization and \$4 million in transitional support for dead stock collection. These are just a few of the things that we have done.

In celebration of the Ontario red meat sector’s tremendous importance and success, please join myself and representatives from the red meat sector in committee room 228 from 3:30 to 6:30 for a roast and hors d’oeuvres reception.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to the gallery members from all four associations that make up Ontario’s red meat sector. Please stand and be recognized by the members. Thank you for all the

good work that you do in support of our rural communities.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** Picture it: The health minister, George Smitherman, up late in his office gnashing away at his keyboard to put out his latest juvenile and screedish press releases.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I was in my car.

**Mr. Hudak:** He may have been in his car while he was doing them, to correct the record, but we all know it's George Smitherman because of that now familiar and endearing angry loner tone that comes across in some of those press releases.

While the health minister is pounding out these press releases, real pressing and serious issues go unaddressed in our health care system. After promising to protect public health care, the Dalton McGuinty Liberals privatized physiotherapy, optometry and chiropractic care. And with the growing problem with emergency rooms across the province, you'd think the Minister of Health and Deputy Premier would be addressing that issue as opposed to his keyboard.

Even taxpayers in Niagara are now worried about what is going to happen to the ERs in Port Colborne, Fort Erie, St. Catharines and West Lincoln. In fact, Port Colborne recently lost its walk-in clinic because of the issue of getting doctors to cover those procedures.

Yesterday, a paltry and empty long-term-care bill that falls far short of promises; nursing promises not kept; and, bizarrely, an attack on small-town mom-and-pop pharmacists in their drug bill.

I'd say to the health minister that while I enjoy reading these releases from time to time, I'd suggest he spend more time with his deputy minister and start addressing the real health care problems across the province.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I rise in the House to highlight just a few differences between this government and those of the past.

Just three short years ago, the education system of Ontario was on life support. The previous government talked down their noses to teachers and trustees: Students suffered.

This government decided long ago that we would work together to find a balanced approach with our school boards, our teachers and our trustees to benefit children in Ontario, and it has.

The choices you make as a government send a message about what you value. The message that the Tories sent was, "We don't value education as much as we value tax cuts." The message the NDP sent was, "We don't value teachers so much, so we will rip up their contracts." As a result, students suffered.

We are trying to ensure not only stability in education but also in progress. That is why this government has invested an additional \$2.75 billion—that is \$1,600 per student—in contrast to Ernie Eves, who cut more than \$1 billion out of education in his first two years alone.

The differences between this government and members opposite are stark. While the Tory Tories talk down to teachers and school boards, we are standing shoulder to shoulder to find real, positive solutions together. We have updated salary benchmarks for teachers, we have updated our school operations benchmarks, and we have created a new billion-dollar school foundation grant.

We are on the side of parents and teachers in Ontario.

#### LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I understand that the Leader of the Opposition has decided to run in the next provincial election in the riding of Don Valley West. The first question that comes to my mind is, "Is he nuts?" Given his performance thus far as Leader of the Opposition, John Tory would have trouble getting elected anywhere but the safest Tory seats in Ontario, but given his party's and his anti-Toronto positions on everything from public transit funding to fiscal assistance to this city and his inexplicable opposition to the City of Toronto Act, the people of Don Valley West know full well that John Tory, once an advocate of Toronto, has been co-opted or influenced by his caucus to be anti-Toronto.

After spending his time as Leader of the Opposition slagging our city and encouraging Tory members of his caucus to continue the Tory strategy of playing on the negative sentiments from outside the city against our city, John Tory thinks the people of Don Valley West are going to forgive and forget.

I have news for the Leader of the Opposition: They will not forget, and they will not forgive him for that. They will remember that he was part of that government that brought in downloading on the city of Toronto, that damaged our community from one end to the other. But the biggest barrier Mr. Tory is going to have in getting elected in the riding of Don Valley West is none other than our own Kathleen Wynne.

I have more to say on this, but I'm running out of time. He'll never do it.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I would like to recognize the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors, who are visiting with us today in the members' gallery.

As well, I would specifically like to recognize Bob Bernhardt, president and CEO of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, which is located in Willowdale and plays a huge role in my riding.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I would also like to

recognize the naturopathic doctors, particularly Alison Dantas, the CEO of the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors; and also Jennifer Forristal, a naturopathic doctor from my own riding of Kitchener–Waterloo. They're going to be hosting a reception later today, and I hope all MPPs will attend.

1350

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### GROUND CURRENT POLLUTION ACT, 2006

#### LOI DE 2006 SUR LA POLLUTION CAUSÉE PAR LE COURANT TELLURIQUE

Mrs. Van Bommel moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 143, An Act respecting ground current pollution in Ontario / Projet de loi 143, Loi concernant la pollution causée par le courant tellurique en Ontario.

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

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** Ground current pollution is more commonly referred to as stray voltage and is a major problem in hospitals, manufacturing plants and on farms. It's the result of electrical current that uses the earth as the path of least resistance rather than the neutral wire provided by the electrical system.

It has been a problem on farms for many years. The levels of ground current can become so high that animals and humans experience electric shocks. The financial impact has been devastating for many farmers, like my constituent Lee Montgomery of Dover Centre, near Chatham.

The purpose of the Ground Current Pollution Act, 2006, is to define objectionable current flow and to establish a time frame for utility companies to respond to and remedy complaints from their customers. This bill, if passed, will set appropriate financial penalties to serve as disincentives for inaction. Finally, the bill will provide for the development and implementation of a plan to eliminate objectionable current from this province.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### ELECTRIC BICYCLES

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I rise in the House today to talk about an issue that affects everyone in Ontario, called sustainable transportation.

Ontario has the safest roads in North America, and our government is committed to maintaining and improving upon that record. The McGuinty government also recognizes the importance of having a sustainable transportation system that will meet the needs of today while protecting our natural environment for the future. This means an infrastructure that supports more energy-efficient forms of transportation, more alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, an infrastructure that promotes low-emission vehicles.

Power-assisted bicycles, more commonly known as electric bicycles or e-bikes, are part of that vision. Earlier today, I was joined by Minister Broten and our government safety partners in launching an exciting pilot to allow e-bikes on Ontario roads for the very first time in the province. E-bikes work just like regular bikes, with an electric motor that goes up to 32 kilometres an hour. The motor can be used to help make riding easier.

We've tested e-bikes because people have told us that they would like to have a safe, reliable alternative to travelling by car or the standard bike. We've been told that e-bikes provide a good source of exercise for those who may need a power boost going up the hills or for those who are recovering from, for example, knee surgery. This pilot test will help ensure that e-bikes can integrate safely with other road users, such as larger vehicles and pedestrians. Under this pilot, e-bikes will be permitted to travel wherever bikes are allowed. Riders must wear a helmet and riders must be at least 16 years old.

Our vision for a sustainable transportation system is to promote healthy lifestyles and to reduce congestion on our roads. The benefits for riders include exercise, obviously, fuel efficiency and reduced traffic congestion. If more people choose a healthier lifestyle, then we all benefit. E-bikes encourage people to leave their cars at home in their garages. Electric vehicles meet lower emission standards, and they help to reduce pollution.

Through this pilot, we are giving people the opportunity to make healthy choices for our environment and help us realize that our vision of a sustainable transportation system is here in Ontario. So it is an important and very exciting day. Ontarians now have more mobility choices that are environmentally friendly, and I know that all members will join me in encouraging the safe use of these vehicles on our roads.

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** It is my privilege to rise in the House today to mark Child Abuse Prevention Month in Ontario. This month the purple ribbon/purple bracelet campaign provides an opportunity to remind all Ontarians that we have a collective duty to be vigilant on behalf of our society's most vulnerable members. We all have responsibility for the protection and well-being of our children.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members of the public, including professionals who work

with children, that we have a solemn duty to promptly report any suspicion that a child is or may be in need of protection as a result of abuse or neglect. Abuse can be physical, sexual and emotional. Neglect occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, sleep, safety, supervision, clothing or medical treatment. A member of the public does not need to be certain that a child is being abused or neglected before reporting the situation to the proper authorities. If any person exercising objective and honest judgment has reasonable grounds to believe a child is at risk, they should report this to their local children's aid society or to the police for further investigation. I ask all members to please visit [www.useyourvoice.ca](http://www.useyourvoice.ca) for more information.

The McGuinty government takes its responsibilities to children in Ontario very seriously, and we continue to work to better serve the more than 30,000 children in the Ontario child well-being and protection system.

In March of this year, the Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act was passed by the Ontario Legislature. The act is part of our government's broad reforms to improve the lives of vulnerable children. When proclaimed in November, this legislation will provide for increased accountability of children's aid societies through a stronger, more timely complaints process. It will allow more children to be adopted and provides more options for children who cannot be adopted so they can grow up in caring, permanent homes.

Just last week the Ontario Legislature took another important step in improving the protection of vulnerable children in our province by passing Bill 89, Kevin and Jared's Law. When fully implemented, Kevin and Jared's Law will complement changes that we have made to Ontario's child well-being and protection system. I would like to acknowledge the work of the former member from Burlington and the member for Brant for their efforts on behalf of Kevin and Jared's Law.

On behalf of the government of Ontario and children throughout the province, I would like to thank everyone who has reported signs of child abuse or neglect. Last year, Ontario's children's aid societies received over 160,000 new referrals. I thank those who dedicate themselves to protecting Ontario's children, including police, teachers, medical professionals, early childhood educators and social workers. I would also like to thank all members of the public who keep a watchful eye out for our children, be they a relative, a friend or a neighbour. Everyone has responsibility for the protection of our children and youth each and every day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Statements by the ministry? Responses?

#### ELECTRIC BICYCLES

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** Today I attended in the rain, with the minister, her photo op on the announcements of e-bikes, which I look forward to using in the wintertime. Nobody actually has a problem with this

idea, except that the bald-faced truth of it all is that it's really a simple election stunt, a photo op stunt.

I asked the minister yesterday in this House what she is doing about the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. To date, after almost four years and five promises, there's no board, no appointments, no committee and no money.

Meanwhile, if you look at the record of this government, gridlock is up, taxes are up, our hospitals and schools are calling for more resources, and yesterday's scathing report from the Environmental Commissioner, entitled *Neglecting Our Obligations*, I think says it all.

Quite honestly, perhaps we could all consider using the electric bike to return our empty liquor and wine bottles to the Beer Store. Good luck with the photo ops, Minister.

1400

#### CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I rise to join with other members of this House to recognize child abuse awareness month in Ontario. It is sad that we even need a month to increase awareness, but it is necessary to make all Ontarians aware of child abuse and their responsibilities to fight against it.

The Canadian Red Cross tells us that about one quarter of all Canadian children are victims of abuse or neglect before they turn 16. In addition to the legacy of damage and pain, child abuse costs an estimated \$15 billion a year in Canada. The Red Cross program to fight child abuse gives us three important steps to follow if we suspect abuse.

The first is, of course, to learn to recognize abuse. Abuse can be emotional, physical or sexual. It can be a constant attack by an adult that negatively affects that child's self-esteem. And when someone neglects a child by failing to provide the basic necessities of life, that's also abuse.

Number two: If you see or hear something that seems abusive, pay attention. Contact the police or social agency that protects children in your area and tell them what you know. It's their job to investigate and determine the appropriate steps.

If something seems wrong with a young person in your life, you should gently ask them if something is wrong and if they would like to talk about it, but don't try to force the issue. Just let that individual know you are willing to listen.

We also have a responsibility to our own children. Let them know they can tell you anything and that you'll listen. Also, teach them how to react if a friend tells them about abuse, because young people often share information with one another that they won't share with adults. Remind them not to keep the secret, and let them know they can come to you at any time. Encourage them to keep telling until they get the help they need.

I would like as well to recognize the important role that Family Services York Region and YRAP, the York

Region Abuse Program, provide to the families in my riding and the rest of York region. We all have a responsibility to protect children. We need to know what to watch for and what steps we need to take.

#### ELECTRIC BICYCLES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** It's clear that exploring low-polluting transportation options is important, but one of the disappointments this announcement about electric bikes does today, one of the disappointments for Ontarians, is that the electricity used to power these electric bikes under this pilot project will still be coming from dirty coal-fired electricity generating plants, the same plants that Dalton McGuinty promised to close, a promise he has walked away from.

We all know about the tonnes and tonnes of greenhouse gases produced by coal-fired generating plants. And as confirmed again by the Environmental Commissioner, the McGuinty government's complete lack of a climate change plan to address the reduction of greenhouse gases is a disgrace. It's very unfortunate that broken promises and environmental indifference have become the price for producing electricity in this province.

#### CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I appreciate the opportunity to make some remarks about the child abuse and neglect prevention month that is upon us right now in Ontario.

I listened carefully to the remarks of the minister, who is charged with the responsibility of making things better for the children of Ontario, and I have to say that one of the things that I found a little disappointing, frankly, is the reference to the bill that was passed by this Legislature many, many months ago but, from my reading of the order paper, is still awaiting royal assent. So I would simply encourage the government to get that piece of work completed, because it's extremely important, although I personally disagreed with some of the measures, particularly around the way the government decided to deal with issues of complaints against children's aid societies.

The minister will recall that my preference was to have an absolutely separate and unbiased perspective on those issues through an Ombudsman oversight of children's aid societies. Nonetheless, a separate system was put in place by the government. The unfortunate thing is, that system is not yet up and running, so many children and their families remain in a state of limbo when it comes to concerns about the treatment of their cases or their situations by children's aid societies.

In fact, there is a particular gentleman who has been in touch with my office, quite concerned not only about his own experience—he comes from Hamilton; he no longer lives in Hamilton—of horrific, horrific child abuse and his frustration and inability, even to this day, to have his experience not only acknowledged and dealt with as a

serious complaint against the system, but also concerned that because the system is still not completely in place to address these kinds of problems, many, many other children in the province are at risk of a similar lack of response when it comes to the abuses they are unfortunately, tragically, being faced with here in the province of Ontario.

The gentleman's name is David Witzel. He asked me to explain to the members of this Legislature his specific experience at the hands of an abusive foster home. He and his brother were both beaten extensively with a belt buckle. They were never fed appropriately. Their foster parents were extremely sadistic. They were basically given table scraps as opposed to real meals.

I can go on and on. I feel uncomfortable, to be honest with you, raising these graphic descriptions, because the unfortunate reality that we have in the province, which is why this campaign is so important, is that we know very well there are children who are still being abused at the hands of people who have a real sick, sick problem, illness, in terms of their inability to treat children with the love and respect they deserve.

I was also interested to hear the minister's words, because in her words, she mentioned some of the features of neglect. But interestingly enough, the words she spoke didn't match the actual text of her speech. The text of her speech included "when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food." That was the first one on the paper. I didn't hear that in the minister's voice when she made the remarks based on this speech. It makes me wonder whether that's because the government is really embarrassed about the fact that there are still children in this province who are going to bed hungry, which is one of the biggest types of neglect that we have in the province of Ontario.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We have with us today in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from the province of Ragusa, Italy, led by the Honourable Dr. Franco Antoci. Please join me in welcoming our guests.

#### CHINESE-CANADIAN HEAD TAX REDRESS DAY

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent for each party to be allowed to speak on the subject of Chinese-Canadian head tax redress for up to five minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I rise on behalf of the government of the province of Ontario and the Premier, the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, to endorse this resolution recognizing June 22 as Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day.



1410

Our country committed a grave and deliberate injustice against Chinese Canadians. This injustice continued for over six decades. As there was no official response to this atrocious act of state for so many years, today I join Ontarians and Canadians of all backgrounds in denouncing this horrific practice. On behalf of the government of Ontario, I join the government of Canada in acknowledging this horrific episode in our history and apologize unequivocally.

June 22, 2006, was a landmark day in Canadian history. On that day the government of Canada tendered a long-overdue apology for one of the darkest chapters in our nation's past: the imposition of the head tax and the subsequent exclusion of Chinese immigrants.

Throughout our history, Canada's greatest strength has been its welcoming of immigrants from all over the world, but there have been times in our development as a nation when we have not recognized, valued or supported this reality. This was one example during those six decades.

This was the case with the abhorrent treatment of Chinese Canadians. It was in 1881 that more than 15,000 Chinese labourers, almost all young men, began to build one of our nation's icons, the Canadian Pacific Railway. This remarkable and pioneering landmark of infrastructure linked our nation from sea to sea. It was essential for the development and growth of Canada as we know it. Yet the incredible sacrifices of the Chinese Canadians who built our national railway were never acknowledged. These young Chinese men toiled under appalling conditions. Tragically, over 1,000 of these nation-builders perished, with little recognition or appreciation, yet they got the job done. Without these Chinese labourers and their sacrifices, this national dream, which is not only the railway but our country being unified from sea to sea, never would have happened.

It's sad to say that once the last spike was driven, these young immigrants were not given the chance to build a better life for themselves and their families. In 1885, a head tax of \$50 was imposed to discourage Chinese immigration to Canada. It was increased to \$100 in 1900 and \$500 in 1903, which is comparable to two years of wages; in other words, this was two years' wages that they had to pay to immigrate to Canada. These levies meant that many labourers who built the CPR and many Chinese immigrants who came later could not afford to bring their loved ones to Canada for years, if ever. Those families who eventually reunited were often forced to live in utter poverty.

This outrageous tax remained in effect until 1923, and was followed by a ban on Chinese immigration that continued up until 1947. This shameful policy closed the door to further Chinese newcomers, creating a lasting sense of exclusion among Canadians of Chinese heritage. Sadly, these malicious, racist measures, aimed solely at Chinese Canadians, were implemented with deliberation by the Canadian state and lasted, as I've said, for over 60 years. Again, we join in denouncing this injustice and

apologize unequivocally, as the government of Canada did.

We cannot undo the past, but we can and must learn from it. We can remember these historic wrongs and honour the contribution of Chinese Canadians to the prosperity and inclusivity of the society we are blessed with today. Commemorating June 22 each year will help us to do this. It will help our young people and future generations to be aware of the wrongs committed, the braveness and commitment required to stand up for injustice, and the strength that our nation and our province have gained from the contributions of Chinese immigrants and their descendants.

The head tax and the restrictive laws that followed were the product of a different time. I believe our deep regret that this has ever happened in Canada will help ensure that this never happens again.

For Chinese Canadians and for all Canadians, June 22, 2006, was a proud day, a day when we reaffirmed the vision we share for Canada, where all of our people are valued and all have the opportunity to live in dignity.

We also should congratulate the head tax families, the redress-seeking groups and the entire Chinese-Canadian community for their unwavering efforts to right this wrong, to secure redress for the head tax payers and to secure a formal apology for this grave injustice. I salute you and I salute all the victims of this horrific act of racism.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I rise on behalf of John Tory, leader of the official opposition, and the Ontario PC caucus in support of the motion before the House to declare June 22 as Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day. This day would truly serve to honour the head tax families, the Chinese Canadian National Council, the Ontario Coalition of Chinese Head Tax Payers and Families, and the entire Chinese-Canadian community, especially in support of their efforts to rectify the injustices that resulted from the head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act. It would also serve to gratefully acknowledge the many ongoing contributions of the Chinese-Canadian community in Ontario and in this country. It is largely due to the struggles of Chinese Canadians and others throughout Canadian history that Canada is today the inclusive multicultural society that we all enjoy and appreciate.

Chinese immigration to Canada began around 1858, to the gold rush in British Columbia. When the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed between 1881 and 1885, however, Chinese were brought in from their homeland to help build it. During those four years, over 15,000 Chinese immigrants arrived in Canada. However, as soon as the CPR was completed, the federal government moved to restrict the immigration of Chinese to Canada. The first federal anti-Chinese bill was passed in 1885, and it took the form of a head tax of \$50 to be imposed, with few exceptions, on every person of Chinese origin entering Canada. No other group was targeted this way. The head tax was increased to \$100 in 1900 and again to \$500 in 1903. Five hundred dollars at that time was the

equivalent of two years' wages of a Chinese labourer. At the same time, the Chinese were denied Canadian citizenship.

In all, the Canadian government collected \$23 million from Chinese immigrants through the head tax. Despite this discriminatory tax, Chinese immigrants continued to come to Canada.

In 1923, the Canadian Parliament passed the Chinese Immigration Act, which excluded all but a few Chinese immigrants from entering Canada. Between 1923 and 1947, when the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed, less than 50 Chinese were allowed to come to this country. Passed on July 1, 1923, Dominion Day, this law was rightly perceived by the Chinese-Canadian community as the ultimate form of humiliation. This is why July 1 has been called Humiliation Day by Chinese Canadians, and why they refused to celebrate Dominion Day for years afterwards.

The most devastating impact of the head tax and the exclusion act, however, was their impact on the development of the Chinese-Canadian family. During the exclusion era, early Chinese pioneers were not allowed to bring their family, including their wives, to this country. As a result, the Chinese-Canadian community became effectively a bachelor society as families became separated from one another for long periods of time. Many Chinese families did not reunite until years after, and many did not reunite at all.

Since 1984, the Chinese Canadian National Council has been seeking redress on behalf of the surviving head tax payers and their families and descendants, over 4,000 in all who have suffered from decades of discrimination. Although in July 2001 the Ontario Superior Court dismissed a class action suit on behalf of the head tax survivors, Mr. Justice Cumming made the following important statement that is worth noting: "It is vital that Canadians acknowledge this regrettable legacy as we strive towards building a society that both celebrates diversity and protects every individual's right to equality." To that end, "Parliament should consider providing redress for Chinese Canadians who paid the head tax or were adversely affected by the various Chinese immigration acts."

**1420**

It is an established custom in Canada and her Parliament and legislatures to honour the pioneers of our country and of our diverse cultural communities. The surviving head tax payers of the Chinese-Canadian community are, in many ways, its true pioneers. But to adequately pay them their due, Canada must first redress the historic injustices committed against them by way of the head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has taken an important—I will say courageous—first step in publicly apologizing on behalf of the government of Canada to the survivors of the head tax for these historic injustices. The official opposition joins with him in that sincere apology.

I quote the words of the Prime Minister: "For over six decades, these malicious measures, aimed solely at the

Chinese, were implemented with deliberation by the Canadian state. This was a grave injustice and one we are morally obligated to acknowledge. We have the collective responsibility to build a country based firmly on the notion of equality of opportunity, regardless of one's race or ethnic origin."

However, the pain and the suffering of these injustices are not and cannot be easily erased from the memories of the families and their descendants who experienced them. This is why the proclamation of June 22 as the Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day will build on the important initiatives of the Prime Minister at the provincial level. Again, on behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, and as the PC critic for citizenship and immigration, I am proud to support this motion.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** Today, this Legislature is honoured. It's honoured by the presence of individuals and their families whose fight against legislated racism has helped Canada turn the page from a dark chapter in its history. Today, this Legislature moves to honour them and formally express Ontario's gratitude to them for their tireless efforts and contributions toward making our society more inclusive, more prosperous.

In the gallery are Chinese-Canadian survivors of the discriminatory head tax. They're descendants and activists from the Chinese Canadian National Council and the Ontario Coalition of Head Tax Payers and Families. Together, they comprised a driving force behind the Chinese head tax redress campaign, which this year turns 22 years old. Their work and stamina in getting us all to this juncture cannot be understated. Over the course of the past two decades, the redress campaign has endured court cases, appeals, four different federal governments and setbacks, some of which are endemic to any such project, some of which are specific to attempts to redress the wrongs made by government. The campaign persevered and finally saw those efforts culminate in success this past June 22, when the federal government issued a formal apology for the head tax and the accompanying Chinese Exclusion Act and made a commitment to redress.

There is a general tendency to talk about legislation in abstract terms. The individuals who are joining us today remind us that legislation shapes the course of people's lives. They endured discrimination and impoverishment because of statutes passed in a Parliament, because of policies pursued by legislators.

Among those invited to watch this debate today is Mr. James Pon. Mr. Pon is an engineer, recipient of a Governor General's medal and he helped establish the Mon Sheong Foundation Home for the Aged and the Foundation to Commemorate the Chinese Railroad Workers.

Mr. Pon is also a head tax survivor. His father paid the head tax for him and his mother so the family could be united here in Canada.

In an interview with the *Toronto Star*, he recounted the struggles he incurred because of the head tax. Mr. Pon's father had to borrow the money to pay the head tax, encumbering the family with a debt that would take 17

years to pay back. This debt left Mr. Pon's family unable to support him, so at the tender age of 12, he found himself working in restaurants while going to school full-time.

Mr. Pon eventually moved to Toronto and proceeded to study engineering and business administration. He overcame other forms of institutionalized racism throughout the course of it all. Mr. Pon during his Star interview also revealed that, for years, he never mentioned the head tax to his family, in part due to feelings of shame.

He eventually decided to draw upon his experiences, to see to it that the story of the head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act would end with a formal acknowledgment that the policy was unjust and a mistake. Mr. Pon and all the others saw their efforts bring about just such a watershed moment on June 22 this year. That day marked the start of the official reconciliation with the Chinese-Canadian community. Shortly afterwards, the city of Toronto moved to pay tribute to the head tax survivors, their families and the organizations by proclaiming June 22 as head tax redress day.

Today, this Legislature moves to recognize in a formal way the terrible injustices that the Chinese-Canadian community has experienced in the course of making our society more prosperous, and how it has made sure Canada turned that page from the dark chapter of its history.

It was stories like Mr. Pon's, and seeing first-hand the work undertaken by individuals such as himself, descendants of the head tax families and activist organizations, that prompted me to propose the resolution we are debating and voting upon today. June 22 should serve as a day when we commemorate how a community succeeded in its efforts to end an injustice. It should be a day when we acknowledge the tremendous debt we owe to the Chinese-Canadian community for its contribution in building our society's prosperity—contributions that for decades went unacknowledged.

To all those who fought for justice, thank you. Doje lay, doje sai.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Tabuns:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice respecting Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day, following which the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the motion.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Tabuns asked for unanimous consent to put a motion without notice regarding Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day. Agreed.

Member for Toronto-Danforth?

**Mr. Tabuns:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, June 22 be recognized as Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress Day to honour the head tax families, the Chinese Canadian National Council, the Ontario Coalition of Chinese Head Tax Payers and Families, and the entire Chinese-Canadian community, their efforts seeking to rectify injustices that resulted from the head tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act and their contributions in making Ontario a more prosperous and inclusive society.

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

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**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to recognize the students from T.L. Kennedy Secondary School in my riding and their teacher, Darshan Harricharran. Welcome to the Legislature and enjoy the question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### BOTTLE RECYCLING

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. I read in the paper this morning about all the people that are lined up, after only three years, seeking the Premier's job, and I felt very badly because his name wasn't on that list. So I thought, out of a sense of fairness, that I would ask him this question that the Premier had previously been unable to answer.

Minister, you are responsible for the LCBO. We've asked the Premier, we've asked the Minister of the Environment, and so far no one has been able to tell us what the cost is of this bottle return scheme that was announced in a hurry, in time for the photo op on September 10. Can you tell us how much this program will cost? What will be the cost?

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I want to thank the member, and I note that his name is not on the list for the next Premier of Ontario either.

It's very true; for years, this member and his party, and the other party in fact, had a chance to show leadership and implement a deposit return system here in the province of Ontario. It took Premier McGuinty and the leadership of this government to want to take this kind of initiative, where others had not done before. You now say that you're interested in doing it, but I think your actions and your question speak volumes about the fact that you're not.

I'm very heartened by the words of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario president, Doug Reycraft, who says, "An LCBO deposit return system makes good sense environmentally and economically." That's the kind of leadership that is supporting this kind of initiative, municipal leadership right across the province of Ontario, and it will be the people of Ontario who will benefit.

**Mr. Tory:** Anybody can organize a photo op. I think the people of Ontario knew how serious this was when they saw the Premier of Ontario returning beer bottles on a Sunday morning. They know how customary an affair that is.

Now, it's a problem here that you can't answer the most basic question about your own scheme, because you promised many, many times over, personally, and your

government has promised, not to waste the taxpayers' money. If you can't be transparent and accountable, then that represents one more broken promise. We asked the Premier how much this will cost. He didn't know the answer. We asked the Minister of the Environment, and this is what she said—and I quote from Hansard: "If you want to know the details of the contract, you would know that's a responsibility of public infrastructure renewal. They're responsible for the contract so you should ask them."

So I'm asking you now: Isn't it reasonable that when you announce a much-heralded initiative like this, when the Premier was taking his beer bottles back on a Sunday morning, how much will it cost? Simple—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question's been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** We want to give the Leader of the Opposition a chance to take his Chablis bottles back and return them, and make sure that he has the ability to do that. Here's what's particularly interesting: We have support from municipal leaders who have been calling for this kind of action for years. We have the Environmental Commissioner of the province of Ontario, who in fact in the committee said that one third of Ontario's used bottles meant for recycling end up in landfills. Is the blue box a proper way to capture LCBO containers? That's really the question. In that context, Gord Miller, an officer of this Legislature, says it's not.

The issue has been on the table for years. It's taken the leadership of this Premier and this government to want to get the job done, not only to have a good economic deal for the province of Ontario but to have the right environmental practices.

**Mr. Tory:** I guess that would be the same Gord Miller who yesterday said that this government was guilty of fundamental neglect of the environment. I think the people you talk about in the municipalities would have said that if you're going to do something like this, you do it properly.

You can't tell us what the cost is, or you won't. We have a letter here dated September 20. It's signed by the restaurant, hotel and motel people; the craft brewers' association; Spirits Canada; the Imported Wine-Spirit-Beer Association; the Greater Toronto Hotel Association; and the Wine Council of Canada. These people represent thousands and thousands of jobs across the province of Ontario and they're directly affected by this scheme. They say in their letter that they were not consulted in the rush to the photo opportunity on Sunday, September 10. They share our view that any scheme has to be transparent, accountable and cost-effective. They're asking that you not sign a contract until you sit down and talk to them.

My question now, beyond asking you one more time what it costs, is, will you sit down before you bring this scheme in and listen to these people? Isn't that a fair request?

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I've got to tell you, quite frankly, it doesn't take the member from Dufferin-Peel-

Wellington-Grey—for now—to ask us to talk to the wine council and the craft brewers' association and Spirits Canada. We meet quite regularly with them.

I should tell you, the question really is, is Mr. Tory for or against a deposit return system? I hear a lot of rhetoric coming from the gentleman, but what true leadership would say is, "Let's get involved." Every province in Canada, save and except Manitoba and Ontario, has implemented this system. This government has taken a leadership position where others, your government and the previous government, have failed to do so. Sir, this is incumbent upon you. Are you for it or are you against it?

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I have another question for the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. Let me say to him that I have been, since 2003, before you were elected, in favour, but in favour of doing it properly: knowing how much it costs, having a system that works. And I should say—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. The Minister of Health will come to order. The Attorney General will come to order.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The minister's leadership campaign is off to a very, very shaky start indeed.

We have received the results of a freedom-of-information request in which we asked for the costs associated with the rebranding of the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. According to the letter, it cost the OLG \$6 million to drop the "C," and that doesn't even include the cost of advertising. I think we would all agree that the only one maybe who deserves \$6 million for a "C" is Mats Sundin.

Anyway, let's add several million for this ad campaign you have on that won't sell one lottery ticket anywhere, anytime. We now have you spending \$10 million of public money on this rebranding. As the minister responsible, can you tell this House if you think this is a wise investment of the public money, and will it produce good value for Ontario taxpayers? Is that your view?

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** Quite frankly, I don't know where this new figure from the member opposite has come from. I know members of his caucus had a chance to speak with Ontario Lottery and Gaming president and CEO Mr. Duncan Brown at the standing committee on government agencies. He made it very clear that it was a \$6-million strategy, including advertising, on the rebranding exercise.

It is a large amount of money that they have allocated to advertising, and it is quite reasonable, as an organization, for this size and this scope and the kind of activity that they have. Any new rebranding effort that will help Ontarians know that they received the same high standard of integrity, entertainment and service at any of the OLG's 27 gaming sites, or where lotteries are sold. This is a good investment.

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I would recommend that the member review the Cooper 360° broadcast where they show that there is a significant problem as far as the integrity of gaming—

**The Speaker:** Supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** I say to the minister, and I think the public would agree with this, that not only is it not a good investment; it is obscene that you would spend \$6 million on that kind of—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tory:** This is public money that the lottery corporation and I'm sure your government tell people, when they support the gaming, goes to hospitals, community organizations and non-profit organizations. It could be used for any purpose more important than signs and ad campaigns handed out to your Liberal friends.

Can you tell us why it is more important for you to spend somewhere between \$6 million and \$10 million, when you add in the ad contract, of the hard-earned money the taxpayers have sent to the lottery corporation on the ad campaign and the signs and all of these other obscene expenditures than to give that money to help solve the emergency room crisis, to help some farmers who need help or, heaven forbid, to help the families of autistic children, for whom you've done nothing?

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** The leader of the official opposition presents incorrect information to this Legislature. In fact, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. for the province of Ontario provides additional resources that we can invest in hospitals, in schools and in infrastructure.

We saw under the previous government the beginning of revenue decline in this agency, the need for investment and the need for their ability to generate even more revenues so that we could and so that our Treasurer could invest more in hospitals, more in schools and more in the infrastructure of the province of Ontario.

I know Mr. Tory is quite familiar with these kinds of exercises. In fact, this is the same type of exercise that was used during his term of office at Rogers Communications.

**Mr. Tory:** You seem to have some trouble distinguishing between taxpayers' money and other money. This is money that could have been invested in more nurses for Ontario, could have been invested in helping more autistic children in Ontario, could have been invested in helping more farmers in Ontario. But instead, what you did, according to the freedom-of-information material, is you used it to invest, for example, \$200,000 in focus groups and public opinion research just so we can see the degree to which the public was clamouring for you to take this "C" out, at a cost of \$6 million to \$10 million.

Will you agree to table this research so we can all see how the public as one were rising up and saying, "Please spend \$6 million or \$10 million of our hard-earned money on a rebranding exercise instead of on nurses or farmers or autistic children"? Will you table that research?

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** The facts of the matter are these: Revenue under the Tories for this agency was in decline, so this government has made, with its agency, specific investments in Windsor in the corporation in order to enhance the brand and enhance the revenues that are invested in our hospitals.

That party cut funding to hospitals; this party invested in our health care system. That party cut money to education; this party invests money in education. That party downloaded infrastructure onto our communities; this party is investing \$30 billion in our much-needed infrastructure.

I will put our record up against Mr. Tory and his government any day of the week, and twice on Sundays.

#### HEALTH CARE SPENDING

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, under the McGuinty government, the number of doctors being paid more than \$476,000 a year jumped by 56% last year. Meanwhile, the McGuinty government okays the takeover of hospital emergency rooms by profit-driven private corporations, and other hospital emergency rooms are on the verge of closure. Emergency room doctors, like those at the Grand River and Cambridge hospitals, are quitting because of poor working conditions and inadequate pay.

Premier, if more doctors are getting paid close to a half-million dollars a year than ever before in Ontario under the McGuinty government, why aren't things getting better for patients in hospital emergency rooms?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** It's hard to figure out from one day to the next where the leader of the NDP is coming from on this particular issue. Yesterday his colleague said that we should be paying more to emergency room doctors. Today he's telling us that he's got a real concern about the increase in pay being received by some Ontario specialists.

We are glad to make that investment in improving the quality of health care and access to health care for the people of Ontario. It's because of that investment that we've had an 11% increase in productivity from doctors in the province of Ontario and those doctors have been able to take on 420,000 more patients. Is that money well invested? We think it really and truly is, and we're pleased to make that investment on behalf of the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the simple fact remains: Yes, you're paying out a lot more money to physicians, but the situation in emergency rooms is getting worse. Your Minister of Health claims that emergency room doctors are being paid upwards of \$170 an hour. Emergency room physician Dr. John Carter from Grand River says, "To realize this amount, the typical full-time emergency physician must work 26 weekends per year, including holiday weekends, and provide the majority of their clinical services in the middle of the night. It is not surprising that there is a dwindling cadre of physicians

who will practise in the ER, especially when they know they can work more regular hours in a lower-stress environment while earning similar or grander incomes outside of the ER.”

Premier, you won't let hospitals pay their emergency room doctors appropriately because you say you don't want to pit communities against one another. Meanwhile, exhausted and overworked and underpaid ER physicians see the McGuinty government paying physicians a half-million dollars a year. Where's the logic in that, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Now I get where the leader of the NDP is going. He now wants to pit some doctors against other doctors and some communities against other communities.

The agreement this government entered into with the Ontario Medical Association specifically provided for removal of that artificial cap that had suppressed the activities of some specialists in Ontario. I think we all recall stories about ophthalmologists, for example, who closed up shop on a Thursday afternoon. Now they're open on a full-time basis throughout the week.

We also negotiated as part of that same OMA deal an increase for our emergency room doctors of 12%. That was part of the package. So we saw what we think is a fairly generous increase for all of our doctors. We made our family docs the best paid in Canada and our specialists the second-best-paid in Canada. We knew we had to be competitive. We knew we had to ensure that we had doctors who were enthusiastic about going to work and providing good-quality care to the patients. That's what we put in place. That's what we will continue to support.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, when you and your Minister of Health boasted about your pay deal with the OMA, you promised things would change, would get better for patients in Ontario, but there are more underserved communities that can't get a doctor today than ever before. There are over one million orphaned patients and 20 emergency rooms on the verge of closure or takeover by profit-driven corporations, which you say is okay.

Premier, I think it's pretty clear you didn't think much about emergency room physicians when you boasted about your OMA pay deal, but the question is, did you forget about the emergency room patients too?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the contrary. We are very proud of our agreement that we entered into with Ontario doctors.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** He called it nasty.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the NDP called it nasty. He said that we had wrestled doctors to the ceiling, and he said it was a bribe, effectively telling us that we were paying far too much to Ontario doctors. That's what he said.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Now he says it's not enough.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Now he's saying, of course, that it's not enough.

Part of that package involved a 12% pay hike for emergency room doctors. I think we have a real issue—

and I acknowledge this to the leader of the NDP—when it comes to pay packages for emergency room doctors, and we're taking a look at that. I want to make that clear. That's something we're doing in concert with them.

Beyond that, we have made some significant progress, whether it's taking on 420,000 new patients, ensuring that our specialists are working on a full-time basis, or bringing angiography wait times down by 28 days, cataract surgery down by 61 days, hip replacements down by 63 days, knee replacements down by 52 days and MRIs down by 28 days. We have made some strategic investments. They've resulted in continuing improvement and quality of care for Ontarians. There is an issue in our emergency rooms, and we are on top of that.

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## EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** Emergency rooms that hundreds of thousands of patients need access to every day are falling further and further behind under the McGuinty government.

Premier, it's three years to the day since the last provincial election. Back then, a flawed education funding formula was forcing damaging cuts in the classroom. Back then, democratically elected school trustees were axed because they respected their parents and their students and they refused to implement those cuts in the classroom. Back then, the Premier said that they'd made unprecedented investments in education and that trustees were simply being irresponsible. Premier, you promised to fix all that. Can you explain why, three years later, so little has changed?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Well, if the leader of the NDP truly believes that nothing has changed in public education, then I can only surmise that he has not visited one of our public schools in the last three years, because there is a level of enthusiasm, there's a level of excitement, there are more text books, there are smaller classes, there are more teachers, there are more teachers who are getting better training. Test scores are going up. Graduation rates are going up. There is a level of commitment from a government towards public education that is virtually unprecedented in the history of this province. So I'd ask the leader of the NDP to remove himself from the confines of his office and to physically visit schools in Ontario, talk to parents, talk to teachers, talk to students and come to better understand that yes, we are making progress in Ontario in public education.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, unlike you, Premier, I actually have two children in elementary school and I talk to teachers every day, so maybe you should follow your own advice.

But like the Conservative government before you, you claim that you've made—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. I'm having great difficulty hearing the leader of

the third party. I need to be able to do that. Leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** Like the Conservative government before you, you claim to have made unprecedented investments in our public schools. But a report released today by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says one in three Ontario students is getting less funding from the McGuinty government than they got from the Conservative government 10 years ago. The study also reveals that your so-called investments are actually causing cuts in the classroom, since you provide less money to boards than it costs to implement your latest schemes.

Premier, you promised change, yet parents see more of the same. The question is, are you finally going to fix the school funding formula that you admit is flawed, or are you going to take the drastic step of taking over the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and forcing your damaging cuts on the classroom?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Well, the leader of the NDP may not recall what it was like in our public schools during the Conservative government years, but students, parents and teachers most definitely do. He knows that it is completely inaccurate to compare our level of funding in our first two years with the Conservative government's level of funding. They took \$200 million out; we put \$2.7 billion in. We've increased funding on a per capita basis by \$1,500. The point is this: We are working, we're working hard, together with our school board administrators, our trustees, our principals, our teachers and our parents, to ensure not only that we make essential investments in public education, but beyond that, that we get measurable results for those same investments. We are making those. Some 68 out of 72 school boards have managed to balance their budgets. We will continue to work with those that are having challenges.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, Premier, I know 11 school boards up north that managed to balance their budget by making cuts in the classroom, cuts that your government ordered. You say that axing school board trustees and appointing a provincial supervisor to make the cuts is simply "an administrative issue." You say, "It's not being done on the backs of kids." You say that your government is different. But here's what Oliver Carroll, chair of the Toronto Catholic District School Board, says: "It's like saying the hangman is a nicer guy. What difference does it make? It's still a hanging."

Premier, the question is this—and you can't avoid it; you admit that the school funding formula is flawed and inadequate: Are you going to fix the school funding formula like you promised, or are you going to take over the school board in Dufferin-Peel and force your cuts in the classroom? Which is it, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The sky is not falling in public education in Ontario. I would argue that the skies are bright and promising.

When it comes to Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board—again, I think the facts are important—over the last three years they've seen a per pupil increase

of 18%. When it comes to class sizes, half of the early years classes are now capped at 20. There are 137 new teachers. Test scores are up by over 10% across the board. They're performing very well. When it comes to rebuilding crumbling schools, almost \$60 million has been invested in projects to fix schools.

We think we have invested a tremendous amount of new dollars in public education. There are a few boards that are having some challenges, managing in the best way possible, so we are prepared to work with those boards. We're prepared to ensure that they take every advantage of all the new dollars we've invested in a way that does not compromise quality of learning.

#### MINISTER'S COMMENT

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, I asked the Attorney General a question with respect to the proclamation of Bill 86, rescuing children from sexual exploitation, and the Minister of Northern Development and Mines interjected during the Attorney General's response with a comment that—

**Interjection:** Was that on the record?

**Mr. Runciman:** Yes, it's on the electronic record—"Tories abuse children." Earlier today, the Minister of Northern Development stood up, failed to withdraw that comment from the record and trivialized the apology by including birthday greetings.

Premier, will you ask that minister to stand up today, now, repeat that apology and make a meaningful withdrawal of that offensive comment?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I believe that the minister made it perfectly clear that he was making an apology for that statement, that it was something that he did not intend to cause offence through, and I think we should leave it at that.

**Mr. Runciman:** I suspect he trivialized it on the direction of the Premier's office, as it's the sort of thing we've seen from this government and this Premier: endorsement of vicious personal attacks in the Parkdale by-election, politics through character assassination. It's your endorsement, by promoting your chief mudslinger to be Deputy Premier, of those kinds of activities that includes and encourages your own cabinet ministers to make comments like that and not stand up and make a meaningful apology.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. The Minister of Energy will come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** I will warn the Minister of Energy for the last time.

The member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Runciman:** I ask the Premier once again to show some moral rectitude and demand that that minister stand up, make a meaningful apology and withdraw that offensive remark.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The minister not only offered an apology from his seat; subsequent to that, he visited the leader of the official opposition personally, as well as Mr. Runciman, and extended a personal apology. I'm not sure how this ranks in Mr. Tory's books, but in my books, one of my members made a mistake and he apologized for that. From time to time, any of us on any of these benches can make a mistake, caught up in the heat of the moment. He extended an apology here and he crossed the floor and apologized personally to two gentlemen over there. In my books, that ends the matter.

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#### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** A question to the Minister of Correctional Services: Why has your ministry ignored the recent plague of racist death threats that have been and continue to be made against correctional officers in our provincial correctional system?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** There's no place for racism or harassment in the workplace. Whether it be sexism, hateism, harassment or racism, there's no place not only in the correctional service but throughout the public service, and it should be that way throughout every single workplace in the province.

You're obviously questioning me because of a statement that was put out by Leah Casselman of OPSEU, in which she says—and I have to say to you, she says it incorrectly. She claims that “Community Safety and Correctional Services has not launched an investigation, has not performed a risk assessment for the threatened individuals, has not spoken out against the threats in the workplace.” I should tell you that this first emerged in 1998, 2000, 2002, and we have addressed it. It has been handled by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and referred to their tribunal. On the supplementary, I'll tell you how we've done it.

**Mr. Kormos:** Minister, we're talking about the recent spate of death threats directed at black correctional officers, people like Charlene Tardiel and Trevor Marrett. They're here today. However loath I am to do so, this is what they read when they open their lockers at work and the types of messages that are left in places in correctional facilities where inmates don't have access, including lines like “a gun will not be used, nigga; a knife will be in place to cut your fucking throat.”

Minister, you haven't launched an investigation into these death threats, you haven't performed a risk assessment for these threatened workers, and you have done nothing to bring this racist and criminal activity to a stop. Isn't it time for a public inquiry into what's gone on in these correctional facilities and your ministry's failure to stop it?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The member is now repeating information that is incorrect. Every single event has been reported to the Toronto Police Service, every one of them, as well as to the ministry investigation service.

Right from day one, when the graffiti appeared, when the letters appeared, it was referred, and there are ongoing investigations by the Toronto Police Service. OPSEU knows that; they absolutely know that.

As far as the risk assessment, you can't do a risk assessment if you don't know where the risk is. There is some public safety counselling that is going on with the police, and the investigation is ongoing.

As far as not doing anything about it, and this is really the thing that bothers me the most, we have a committee set up between OPSEU and the correctional service that is dealing with anti-racist remarks, dealing with systemic change. It has gone to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal. Everybody knows that. As a matter of fact, the member from Simcoe North asked me that question on April 6, earlier this year, and I gave him the same answers that we have now. We are totally aware of the situation, the police are investigating it—

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

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Yesterday the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario released his annual report. He said that he is concerned “that changes to several of the requirements for large livestock operations have weakened accountability and assurance of compliance” with the nutrient management regulation.

I know that a healthy environment and a strong agricultural industry are not mutually exclusive. Farmers have long been important environmental stewards of this province. I'm proud of the farmers in my riding and the work that they have done to better protect our environment. Minister, can you explain the changes that we made to this regulation and any assistance we are providing to help farmers be those good stewards?

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Good question.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** It's a very good question. I want to say, first of all, that our ministry certainly looks forward to the report of the Environmental Commissioner. We are always eager to understand ways that we can improve our record and that we can better communicate our record.

I think it's very important to take this opportunity to say to the people of Ontario that with respect to the nutrient management regulations, our regulations require a certified person to assist farmers in the establishment of their nutrient management plans. These plans are required to be updated annually, and the records of these plans must be kept on the farm. As a result of our changes in the regulations, the number of farm operations that are now required to have nutrient management plans in place has doubled. As a result of that, our commitment



of \$20 million to support the agriculture industry to implement the plans—the demand was greater than what we had set aside, so we came up with an additional \$3.7 million to assist our farmers to meet those regulations.

**Mr. Hoy:** It's reassuring to know that the changes made to the nutrient management regulation actually increased compliance and accountability while still recognizing the unique and challenging realities of farming.

There have been some startling headlines and statements made in the last few days which suggest the province is not doing enough to protect drinking water. I don't believe these statements are corrects. When this government introduced the Clean Water Act, Bruce Davidson, vice-chair of the Concerned Walkerton Citizens, stated, "The introduction of the Clean Water Act represents a crucial first step in the holistic stewardship of Ontario's drinking water for generations to come."

Minister, would you please explain this notion of holistic stewardship of drinking water and assure Ontarians that the government continues to make the protection of drinking water, from source to tap, a priority?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** I would refer that to the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** The Walkerton tragedy was a wake-up call for our province. Justice O'Connor indicated at that time that we needed this holistic approach to the treatment of water. We need to treat, test, inspect and enforce. We need good management, and the nutrient management program is one of those mechanisms of good management. But, on top of all of it, prevention, Justice O'Connor indicated, had to be key.

The Clean Water Act itself meets 12 recommendations of Justice O'Connor. It puts prevention and protection of the source of our drinking water as the first initiative. It is always most important to prevent the contamination of that drinking water. As the Environmental Commissioner himself said yesterday, the best protection for our drinking water is to get source water protection in place.

I'd ask the opposition to join with us and support the Clean Water Act. Let's get water protected in Ontario.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** My question is for the Minister of Health. This past summer, I wrote to the Premier about the looming health care crisis in Ottawa. According to Ottawa's hospital administrators, we are short 850 long-term-care beds. That's the size of one small community hospital.

Just last week all Ottawa area hospital CEOs, including our LHINs director, Dr. Robert Cushman, added their voices and signed off on a cautionary letter to your deputy minister, asking you to address this looming crisis and find alternative care for those occupying 25% of the beds needed for patients in Ottawa's hospitals.

Minister, Ottawa area hospitals need you to act. After three years of broken promises, are you prepared to

acknowledge there is a looming health care crisis in Ottawa, are you prepared to put a plan in place that addresses the shortage of LTC beds and the fallout from this, and are you prepared to work with me, Jack Kitts, Tom Schonberg and Robert Cushman so that the people in Ottawa will get the care they need and the care they deserve?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I'm prepared to work with anyone who is in favour of that. But as a Conservative from Ottawa, your capability and track record is highly in question, because the record of your party while in government with respect to Ottawa was not something to be proud of, notwithstanding your bluster today. Grace Hospital closed. Riverside hospital closed. You tried to close the Montfort, and you tried to take away the cardiac rehab program from CHEO.

I'm pleased to say that on our watch, not only is there a construction crane on site or having just left at every hospital in Ottawa, but we've worked to enhance Ottawa's access to services. Note the improvement we've made, as an example, with respect to MRI. Under your government, you couldn't even find one. Now these wait times have been reduced by something like 75%, not to mention the role we've given CHEO as the centre of our newborn screening initiative.

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The point is, Ottawa knows it's on the map in a way that it wasn't under your government, and as a result, we're very, very proud of the improvements we've made, acknowledging, of course, that it takes a lot of effort to undo the eight and a half years of destruction that you sowed.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is now warned.

The member for Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. MacLeod:** I touched a nerve. The Ottawa Hospital administrators have to talk to me because they're getting nothing out of you.

This minister needs to stop living in the past. This is not Mike Harris's fault. It is not Ottawa Conservatives' fault. You've had three years to address this problem, but you've failed.

Tom Schonberg, the Queensway Carleton Hospital CEO, today called me to tell me that three surgeries yesterday were cancelled at the Queensway Carleton Hospital because the beds needed for recovery are currently being occupied by people in acute care. He tells me that this is a weekly occurrence at the QCH and at the Ottawa Hospital.

Ministers of the crown in this government are either responsible for their departments or they're not. When is this minister going to stop fighting the ghosts of Parliaments past, take a look at himself in the mirror and realize that he, and only he, can stop the cancellation of surgeries in my city? When is this minister going to

respond to me, the CEOs of Ottawa's hospitals, our LHINs director and every other Ottawa resident with a plan that will take the stress off of our hospitals, provide our aging population with the care it needs, and those waiting for surgery with a bed—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I know that the first phone call I'll have an opportunity to check on my voice message will be from Jack Kitts, who's saying that this honourable member had no privilege to the use of his name in the fashion that it was used, because Jack Kitts knows very well, through the work I do very directly with him, from our mobile phones to one another, through the meeting the Premier had recently with him and Yves Tremblay, the chair of that board, through the work that we've done, which has meant that the Ottawa Hospital and every other hospital in the province of Ontario have received more resources from our government every single year—and in fact, because we've done multi-year funding, they also know that they're getting more money next year and more money the year after that.

We built Roger's House to support children who are in need of hospice services. We've done at the Perley veterans' centre a new respite care facility. In Champlain, we've recently provided \$3.5 million to establish a leading Ontario mechanism to reduce wait times related to cancer surgery.

The reality is clear. Our investments, using the people's money on behalf of improved health care in Ontario, are paying results, as can be demonstrated—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Order.

#### ONTARIO ARTISTS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** My question is for the Minister of Culture. According to your election platform, a report on the status of the artist in Ontario was to have been completed within the first two years of your mandate. The report was to lay the foundation for status-of-the-artist legislation that would improve the living standards of tens of thousands of Ontario's artists. Three years into your term, the report has still not been released. Minister, when is this long-overdue report going to be released?

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** I'm very proud of the work the advisory committee has done in consulting with the artists in this province. It has been like no other consultation in the province, in that over 4,000 artists, groups and organizations have been consulted. We are in the process of evaluating and taking a look at the report, and we are going to be moving forward in providing legislation that is going to deal with valuing the artist for the very first time in the province of Ontario.

I am also very proud to say that for the very first time in a very long time, the cultural sector in this province has a great deal of hope in the work that we have done.

We are providing hope to the sector, as well as 38% more funding.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member from Renfrew has a very short memory.

Supplementary.

**Ms. DiNovo:** How many times in this House have we heard that they're working on it, the cheque's in the mail and there's another promise coming? Artists earn \$26,800 on average. That's a quarter less than most Ontarians. Meanwhile, the McGuinty government has slashed \$88 million from the budget.

This legislation is important to improving the working lives of Ontario artists. Many are classified as independent contractors, according to the Employment Standards Act, and they're exempt from the minimum standards that protect the rest of the workforce.

Minister, I ask again, will you immediately introduce status-of-the-artist legislation providing protection in the workplace for Ontario artists, or is this too going to be another McGuinty broken promises?

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** I'd like to correct the record on a couple of matters. First of all, I would like to state that the total operating and capital expenditures for 2004-05, the actuals, were \$344 million. For 2005-06, it was \$475 million.

I've had the occasion to go and speak to and be with many, many of the cultural agencies in this province. I have to say they're very pleased with the support we have provided to the agencies, to the organizations, to the Ontario Arts Council. I have to say that I continue to be proud and I thank the industry for how they're providing quality of place to the people of Ontario.

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** It's a pleasure for me to attempt to bring some civility to question period and to ask some really tough questions at the same time. I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, you know that especially in a riding like mine, transit is a conversational topic that's discussed widely. As we have great volumes of commuters and tourists, people coming in from the suburbs and outside of the city itself, it's a major concern to us.

The city has gone through drought periods where for five years before we were the government, there was little, if any—like zero—investment in transit. We know the purpose of transit is to move people effectively and efficiently from one place to another without destroying the environment at the same time. I would like you to help my constituents understand and to share with the House today what are some of the things you and this government are doing to promote mass transit in the Ottawa area.

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I thank the member for the question. We are going to continue to tackle the challenges of congestion.

Obviously, there are multiple ways with which to do it, but definitely transit is one of the most significant ways.

We have made a record investment in transit in Ottawa. Ottawa wishes to increase their ridership by some 30% by the year 2021, and we feel we have a responsibility in working with them to do that. We've made a commitment since October 2003 of \$322 million to the city of Ottawa. That includes the \$200 million for the expansion of the O-Train along the north-south corridor from downtown Ottawa to Barrhaven. We also, by the year 2007, will have \$83 million worth of gas tax that will go to the city of Ottawa, in addition to \$10 million that we have invested. We know there are things that we can do working with the city and, in addition, things we can do, such as HOV lanes, to ensure—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary, the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

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**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** Minister, I am pleased to see that our province has committed \$200 million to the Ottawa light rail transit and the city of Ottawa has also fulfilled their commitment. But I'm told that the other level of government is dragging their feet on this issue. Could you inform this House, where is the federal government commitment to this project?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** I thank the member for the question. First off, we have reaffirmed our own commitment for the \$200 million. If you go back to May 2005, there actually was a memorandum of understanding among the governments, the city of Ottawa, the federal government, and ourselves. We know that Prime Minister Harper's government has been the beneficiary of some fairly significant surplus, so we're very confident that he is going to maintain his commitment to the city and the people of Ottawa, because we know that he wants, as we do, to be able to deal with the congestion issues and to serve the people of Ottawa in the best way that we possibly can.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** To the Minister of the Environment: Yesterday, the Environmental Commissioner issued a stern warning that your government is neglecting your obligations. He stated that had there are examples of government inaction in almost every area of environmental management. Minister, during estimates you said, "If you look at the Ministry of the Environment website, there is a clear description of Ontario's integrated approach to climate change and clean air." But in his report, the Environmental Commissioner said, after a search of government websites, that it was revealed that the policy documents "contained little or no mention of projected climate change impacts." He then contacted your ministry staff and was told that there is no formal plan or strategy dealing with adaptation to climate change. Minister, what is your plan for

climate change, or should we just assume there is no plan, like the LCBO?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm pleased to have a chance to talk about Ontario's strategy with respect to climate change. Ontario's strategy with respect to climate change, as I indicated in this House yesterday and indicated in estimates, is a multi-ministry strategy. To tackle this serious issue across the world, across the globe, we need to move beyond the silos of government. We need to look at a different approach to tackling climate change. We need so see investments in public transit—and we've made historic investments in public transit. We need to have investments and an examination of how we do business in the province and make sure that we innovate and provide dollars with respect to research and innovation. That's what we're doing.

On so many fronts, so many of the ministers that sit on this side of the House understand the critical challenge that is before us as a society. Like Ontarians, we're rolling up our sleeves and we're making decisions across multiple ministries to make sure we tackle this very serious—

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

**Ms. Scott:** I guess the plan is to roll up your sleeves, because the Environmental Commissioner did search other ministry websites, not just your own, and could find no plan. In fact, in your government's own estimates, this year's budget on climate change has been reduced by more than \$27 million. You also said yourself in committee on estimates that the Ministry of the Environment's operating budget has been reduced by \$41.2 million. The previous Minister of the Environment stated in 2004, "This government has placed the environment as a priority." Yet we see over and over again that you're cutting operating budgets within the ministry. You've broken your promises to the people of Ontario for three years. Minister, why are you keeping Ontarians in the dark on protecting them from the effects of climate change?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Maybe you're looking for a piece of paper. On this side of the House, we're taking action. The Minister of Energy is making sure that we develop clean, green energy sources. The Minister of Government Services is making sure that across government we ensure that we move forward with conservation strategies: Bill 21 and conservation—all of those initiatives.

You need to move out of the silo that you live in and get with David Suzuki and Al Gore. We need to re-examine as a society the entire way that we live. No longer can climate change be the sole responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment; it's not. And you yourself know—because I answered your questions at estimates—the budget line item that you're looking at is with respect to the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol. With the current federal government, frankly, that seems like it is a distant past. We need the federal government to participate. The ministry's budget is fluid. We look

forward to engaging with our current federal government, because they need to rebuild their budget, put that \$8 billion back on this table, give the \$538 million—

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Minister. New question.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, exactly one year before the 2007 provincial election, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario confirmed yesterday what Ontarians have known for some time, that the environment is not a priority for the McGuinty Liberal government. I want to read from the commissioner's report—those who scoff on the other side. He states:

“What I have realized is that inspection and enforcement targets are not being met, essential environmental standards are not being updated, important timelines are not being met, necessary guidance documents are not being written, the problems of the Great Lakes are not being addressed, there is no strategy for climate change, information on the state of our landfills is years out of date, and our waste management program is on the edge of crisis.”

The commissioner concludes that Ontario's environment is being shortchanged by the McGuinty government.

Mr. Premier, will you begin to reverse your neglect of the environment, take the commissioner's challenge and provide a penny of every operating dollar to the Ministry of the Environment?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** Did we inherit a neglect in the Ministry of the Environment from the former government? No doubt about it. Have we taken historic strides forward to reinvest in that ministry? Absolutely.

Let me tell you about some of the accomplishments we've made as a government: a greenbelt across this province—let's talk about the greenbelt and what that will leave to future generations; \$1.4 billion over five years in gas tax funding to invest in public transit, to help people get out of their cars, get off the roads, get onto public transit; 5% ethanol in gasoline—some 800,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by that single feature alone; the Clean Water Act—better treatment, better planning.

There's no doubt about it. There is a great deal of work to do, but every single day at the Ministry of the Environment, 64% of our budget goes to personnel and 50% of that personnel is out on the front lines, investigating and enforcing. Is there more work to do? No doubt about it. Are we prepared to do it? You bet.

**Mr. Tabuns:** I'll give the minister this: She does well with a very poor hand.

The commissioner's research and its inclusions are very clear: The environment is not being protected under

the McGuinty government. In fact, in some instances, such as the protection of water under the Nutrient Management Act, the Environmental Commissioner reveals there's actually less protection than under the Harris-Eves government. He emphasizes that funding essential ministries like the environment, and I quote the Environmental Commissioner—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order.

**Mr. Tabuns:** The quote is worth hearing, Mr. Speaker.

He says, “Funding essential ministries”—like the environment—“at such low levels that they are bound to fail is a fundamental neglect of our obligations to the natural environment, to the people of Ontario, and to the generations yet to be born.”

Minister, when will your government commit to spending one cent out of every operating dollar for the Ministry of the Environment?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Let me tell you what the Ministry of the Environment budget is accomplishing across the province: 99% of drinking water tested in this province is meeting every one of our very high levels of standards, according to the chief drinking water inspector.

Our operations staff: We are directing our resources out to the front lines to respond to spills to make sure our drinking water is safe—up by 54 individuals. We are directing those resources to the front lines to make sure Ontarians can have clean, safe drinking water.

Let me also quote from the Environmental Commissioner, who himself said in response to the Clean Water Act, “Once the Clean Water Act is passed, will we be better off? Yes, there is no question. It will turn our attention to that last important component of water protection in this province,” which is a good look at the source water. That's absolutely an essential part.” So join with us. Support the Clean Water Act. Let's get that protection in place so we can ensure Ontarians have clean, safe drinking water.

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#### STRATFORD FESTIVAL

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, this morning I had the pleasure of attending the announcement of the 2007 season at the Stratford Festival of Canada. This season will mark the end of the amazing 14-year tenure of artistic director Richard Monette, who has led the pre-eminent Shakespearean theatre in North America.

On September 22, I was delighted to host you when you announced \$106,000 in new funding for the Stratford Festival to help develop new training programs. This announcement is important to my constituents at the Stratford Festival as it not only attracts hundreds of thousands of theatregoers to my community each year, but it's a magnet for talent in the cultural sector. My question, sir: In today's knowledge-based economy, education and skills are the prerequisites for growth and prosperity. Can

you please explain to my constituents how this funding will further foster growth and prosperity at the Stratford Festival of Canada?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** The member for Perth–Middlesex is an excellent advocate for the Stratford Festival and for the cultural industries. Because of his advocacy, this was the third year of a \$300,000 total investment to train the artisans that the Stratford Festival and the cultural industry in Ontario needs to prosper. I'm looking forward to telling him more in the supplementary about the great work that he and the Stratford Festival have been doing.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Thank you, Minister. Constituents in my riding will be glad to know that the McGuinty government is doing all it can to support growth and prosperity in the theatre sector. Minister, as I noted, the \$106,000 in funding for the Stratford Festival is only the first step in a new province-wide apprenticeship training program for theatre workers. My understanding is that by helping the Stratford Festival create and test new curricula for key skills in the theatre industry, the behind-the-scenes, in-house expertise developed in Stratford may help boost the performing arts through all of Ontario. Minister, can you please explain to this House how developing training courses at the Stratford Festival will help boost the performing arts throughout all of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** The member from Perth–Middlesex is right; there is a direct linkage between the work that's being done at the Stratford Festival, Mr. Cimolino, Mr. Monette and others, and the needs of the cultural sector throughout the province of Ontario. So whether you're at the Shaw Festival in Niagara, the theatre district in Toronto, the Huron County Playhouse, the Blythe Festival or whether you're dealing with the movie industry, the work that's been done at the Stratford Festival to develop the expertise for assistant directors, assistant artisans, the type of artisans who create the costumes and the sets—this will form the basis for a theatre, a cultural apprenticeship program. We're so grateful to the Stratford Festival for the leadership that they have been taking. They really are the graduate school of theatre expertise, not only in the province of Ontario, but in North America, and we're proud of the work that they've been doing.

## PETITIONS

### SCHOOL FACILITIES

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

“Whereas the parents of St. Paul's elementary school in Alliston have raised many issues regarding the security, cleanliness and state of repair of their school; and

“Whereas a 2003 condition assessment completed by the Ontario government identified the need for \$1.8 million in repairs to St. Paul's elementary school; and

“Whereas the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board has approached the Ministry of Education with the intention of having the school deemed prohibitive to repair as they believe the school requires \$2.28 million in repairs, or 84% of the school replacement cost; and

“Whereas there are ongoing concerns with air quality, heating and ventilation, electrical, plumbing, lack of air conditioning and the overall structure of the building, including cracks from floor to ceiling, to name a few;

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

“That the Minister of Education immediately deem St. Paul's elementary school prohibitive to repair, secure immediate funding and begin construction of a new facility so that the children of St. Paul's can be educated in a facility that is secure and offers them the respect and dignity that they deserve.”

### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas improving job retention rates has a positive effect on developing valuable work skills, confidence in one's abilities and creating a greater economic foundation for the province; and

“Whereas JobsNow allows workers access to valuable resources such as job-matching services, pre-employment supports and up to 18 months of job retention and follow-up services;

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

“That the JobsNow program continues to be supported by all members of the House, and that we work together to ensure that workers on social assistance find a meaningful and long-term solution to meeting their employment goals.”

I agree with this and I will affix my signature to it.

### HEALTH CARD REGISTRATION OFFICE

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** I'm pleased to present a petition entitled “Reopen the Beamsville Health Card Registration Clinic.” It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Beamsville health card registration office has helped over 4,000 local seniors, families and other local residents over the last five years renew their health cards close to home; and

“Whereas the Lincoln centre provided the room and services to the province free of charge; and

“Whereas Lincoln residents are now paying more in a new health tax but are receiving less in services;

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

“The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should immediately reopen the Beamsville health card registration office, which they closed without any notice in the Lincoln community.”

In support, my signature.

## CHILD CUSTODY

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** I have a petition on behalf of the residents of Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the people of the province of Ontario deserve and have the right to request an amendment to the Children’s Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and their grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 20(2.1) requires parents and others with custody of children to refrain from unreasonably placing obstacles to personal relations between the children and their grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2) contains a list of matters that a court must consider when determining the best interests of a child. The bill amends that subsection to include a specific reference to the importance of maintaining emotional ties between children and grandparents; and

“Whereas subsection 24(2.1) requires a court that is considering custody of or access to a child to give effect to the principle that a child should have as much contact with each parent and their grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child; and

“Subsection 24(2.2) requires a court that is considering custody of a child to take into consideration each applicant’s willingness to facilitate as much contact between the child and each parent and grandparent as is consistent with the best interests of the child; and

“Whereas we support Bill 8, as introduced by the member from Niagara Falls;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Children’s Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children’s relationships with their parents and grandparents.”

I’m pleased to sign my signature in support of this petition.

## LONG-TERM CARE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Petitions? The member from Durham.

**Mr. John O’Toole (Durham):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do respect that momentary recognition.

It’s interesting that yesterday we talked about the long-term-care issue, and I have a number of petitions from my riding.

“Whereas long-term-care funding levels are too low to enable homes to provide the care and services our aging seniors and parents who are residents of long-term-care homes need, with the respect and dignity that they deserve; and

“Whereas, even with recent funding increases and a dedicated staff who do more than their best, there is still not enough time available to provide the care residents need. For example, 10 minutes, and sometimes less, is simply not enough time to assist a resident to get up, get

dressed, to the bathroom and then to the dining room for breakfast”—all rushed—“and

“Whereas those unacceptable care and service levels are now at risk of declining;

“We, the undersigned, who are members of family councils, residents’ councils and/or supporters of long-term care in Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and Minister of Health George Smitherman to increase operating funding to long-term-care homes by \$306.6 million, which will allow the hiring of more staff to provide an additional 20 minutes of care per resident per day over the next two years (2006 and 2007).”

I’m pleased to support this on behalf of the residents of Community Nursing Home in Millbrook, where my mother-in-law is. Hello, Madge. I hope you’re feeling well. I’m going to present this to Maddy.

1540

## FAIR ACCESS TO PROFESSIONS

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a petition in support of skilled immigrants and highly qualified newcomers. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the McGuinty government is committed to establishing measures that will break down barriers for Ontario newcomers; and

“Whereas these measures will ensure that the 34 regulatory professions in Ontario have admissions and application practices that are fair, clear and open; and

“Whereas these measures will include the establishment of a fairness commissioner and an access centre for internationally trained individuals; and

“Whereas, through providing a fair and equitable system, newcomers will be able to apply their global experience, which will not only be beneficial to their long-term career goals but also to the Ontario economy as a whole;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“That all members of the House support the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006, Bill 124, and work to ensure its prompt passage in the Ontario Legislature.”

Since I agree with this petition 100%, I’m delighted to sign it.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas every Ontarian wants the best water quality possible; and

“Whereas the goal of clean water can be achieved effectively through amendments to existing legislation; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals are determined to hammer through the flawed legislation known as the Clean Water Act; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals have failed to put in place adequate, stable, long-term funding into the bill; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals have failed to effectively address the numerous problems in the bill; and

“Whereas rural Ontario stands to suffer significantly under this poorly-thought-out policy;

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

“To not pass Bill 43 (the Clean Water Act) until proper funding and amendments are in place.”

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

“Whereas, in June 2003, Dalton McGuinty said, ‘Ontario Liberals are committed to ensuring that nursing home residents receive more personal care each day and will reinstate minimum standards, and inspectors will be required to audit the staff-to-resident ratios; and

“Whereas Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman, in October 2004, said that the Ontario government will not set a specified number of care hours nursing home residents are to receive each day; and

“Whereas Ontario nursing home residents still receive the lowest number of care hours in the Western world; and

“Whereas studies have indicated nursing home residents should receive at least 4.1 hours of nursing care per day; and

“Whereas a coroner’s jury in April 2005 recommended the Ontario government establish a minimum number of care hours nursing home residents must receive each day;

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

“That the government of Ontario immediately enact a minimum standard of 3.5 hours of nursing care for each nursing home resident per day.”

I present this petition and send it down to the table by way of Breanna, the page.

#### IMMIGRANTS’ SKILLS

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and it reads as follows:

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

“Whereas newcomers to Canada who choose to settle in Ontario find frequent, arbitrary and unnecessary obstacles that prevent skilled tradespeople, managerial and professional talent from practising the professions,

trades and occupations for which they have been trained in their country of origin; and

“Whereas action by Ontario’s trades and professions could remove many such barriers, but Ontario’s trades and professions have failed to recognize that such structural barriers exist, much less to take action to remove them, and to provide fair, timely, transparent and cost-effective access to trades and professions for new Canadians trained outside Canada;

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

“That the Ontario Legislative Assembly urge the members of all parties to swiftly pass Bill 124, the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006, and to require Ontario’s regulated professions and trades to review and modify their procedures and qualification requirements to swiftly meet the needs of Ontario’s employers, Ontario’s newcomers and their own membership, all of whom desperately need the very skills new Canadians bring working for their organizations, for their trades and professions and for their families.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this. I’ve affixed my signature to it, and I’ll ask page Norah to carry it for me.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

“Whereas long-term-care funding levels are too low to enable homes to provide the care and services our aging seniors and parents who are residents of long-term-care homes need, with the respect and dignity that they deserve; and

“Whereas, even with recent funding increases and a dedicated staff who do more than their best, there is still not enough time available to provide the care residents need. For example, 10 minutes, and sometimes less, is simply not enough time to assist a resident to get up, dressed, to the bathroom and then to the dining room for breakfast; and

“Whereas those unacceptable care and service levels are now at risk of declining;

“We, the undersigned, who are members of family councils, residents’ councils and/or supporters of long-term care in Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase operating funding to long-term-care homes by \$306.6 million, which will allow the hiring of more staff to provide an additional 20 minutes of care per resident per day over the next two years (2006 and 2007).”

I support the petition and sign it.

#### IMMIGRANTS’ SKILLS

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon (Scarborough–Rouge River):** I’m pleased to present the following petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

“Whereas action by Ontario’s trades and professions could remove many such barriers, but Ontario’s trades and professions have failed to recognize that such structural barriers exist, much less to take action to remove them, and to provide fair, timely, transparent and cost-effective access to trades and professions for new Canadians trained outside Canada;

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

“That the Ontario Legislative Assembly urge the members of all parties to swiftly pass Bill 124, the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006, and to require Ontario’s regulated professions and trades to review and modify their procedures and qualification requirements to swiftly meet the needs of Ontario’s employers, Ontario’s newcomers and their own membership, all of whom desperately need the very skills new Canadians bring working for their organizations, for their trades and professions and for their families.”

I truly believe in this petition, and I affix my signature.

#### NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** I have signatures here from a number of people from Caledonia. It’s titled:

“We Demand Leadership in Land Dispute

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the McGuinty government was notified of this land issue over a year ago; and

“Whereas the standoff has been ongoing since February 28, 2006; and

“Whereas there has been no leadership from senior levels of government;

“We, the undersigned, demand the McGuinty Liberals start showing some real, consistent and timely leadership in dealing with the current standoff in Caledonia.”

I fully agree and sign my name to it.

1550

#### OPPOSITION DAY

##### LIBERAL CAMPAIGN PROMISES

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that it has been three years since the Liberals took office;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that shortly after taking office the Liberals and their Premier began breaking their promises;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that ever since the Liberals broke their first promise, they have looked high and low for others to blame;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that the only people to blame for making these promises are the Liberals themselves;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that with one year to go before the next election, the Liberals must begin taking responsibility for the promises that they themselves made;

That the Legislative Assembly recognize that this list of broken promises includes, but is not limited to, the following 50 broken promises:

- (1) “I won’t raise your taxes”;
- (2) Roll back tolls on the 407;
- (3) Fund medically necessary health care services...;
- (4) Not add to the province’s debt;
- (5) Stop 6,600 houses from being built on the Oak Ridges moraine;
- (6) Abide by the balanced budget law;
- (7) Cap hydro rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour until 2006;
- (8) Respect MPPs and democracy;
- (9) Allow all non-cabinet MPPs to criticize and vote against government legislation;
- (10) Provide autism treatment beyond age six;
- (11) Reduce auto insurance rates by 10% within 90 days;
- (12) Reduce the use of private consultants;
- (13) Cancel P3 hospitals in Brampton and Ottawa;
- (14) Public inquiry into meat inspection;
- (15) Withdraw government appeal on the Richmond landfill;
- (16) Make Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health an independent officer of the Legislature;
- (17) Govern with honesty and integrity;
- (18) Provide better mental health care;
- (19) Value and support the public service;
- (20) Divert 60% of municipal garbage to recycling by 2005;
- (21) Close “private” MRI and CT clinics;
- (22) Stop school closings;
- (23) Introduce status-of-the-artist legislation;
- (24) Close coal-fired electricity plants by 2007;
- (25) Create tens of thousands of new child care spaces;
- (26) End federal child tax credit “clawback”;
- (27) Build 20,000 new affordable housing units;
- (28) Spend “every penny” of the new health tax on health care;
- (29) Eliminate barriers to foreign-trained professionals within one year;
- (30) Require trades and professions to accept qualified immigrants within one year;
- (31) Repeal the Tenant Protection Act within one year;



- (32) Establish a standing committee on education to hold yearly hearings;
- (33) Hire 8,000 nurses;
- (34) Provide legal rights to victims of crime;
- (35) Make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry;
- (36) Support the province's cities;
- (37) Ensure health dollars are spent wisely;
- (38) Stop the waste of taxpayers' dollars;
- (39) Guarantee stable, long-term funding for our rural and northern communities;
- (40) Operate an open and transparent government;
- (41) Provide a new funding formula for rural and northern schools;
- (42) Hard cap of 20 students for early grades;
- (43) Ensure 75% of students meet or exceed the provincial standard on province-wide tests within first mandate;
- (44) Tackle gridlock;
- (45) Give taxpayers better value for money while keeping taxes down;
- (46) Eliminate mercury emissions from its coal-fired electric power generation plants by 2010 as part of the Canada-wide standard (CWS) agreement;
- (47) Balance the budget every year of their mandate;
- (48) Put the public interest ahead of special interests;
- (49) Unclog emergency rooms; and
- (50) Give the Ministry of Natural Resources the resources to protect fish and wildlife.

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize this government's endless promise-breaking has left a trail of damage across this province;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ask the Premier to apologize to the citizens of Ontario for his legacy of broken promises.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Mr. Tory has moved opposition day number one. The Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** I rise to speak to what I think is a very important motion. Some might think, when you look at the preamble—and it talks about the fact that these promises were made in 2003—that this is all about the past. But it's not all about the past. It's about the past in that there were broken promises, 50 of them at least. In fact, there's probably room now to almost devise another list of 50. It's about the cause of cynicism about politics and politicians and the people in this place and other places like it. But it's also about the future, because it poses the very real question of whether people will be able to believe anything that Premier McGuinty has to say in the lead-up to and during the course of the next election campaign.

I think it also leads to very valid questions on the part of the taxpayers as to how they will assess what he would do if, heaven forbid, he was actually put back into government, because our experience has shown, just with this list of 50—let alone the others we could list if time permitted—that he is prepared to say anything to get elected. Indeed, there is no reason to believe that anything he says, now or in the time leading up to the

election or during the election, will bear any resemblance to what is actually done in government.

In looking at the past, there are I think only two alternatives to explain the Premier's behaviour, which we're asking him to apologize for. I would argue that an apology is required and is warranted in both cases.

The first explanation is that he made promises without bothering to ask the questions or without bothering to do the homework to see if they could be kept or, for that matter, to see, in some cases, if they should be kept. That is an indictment of leadership if ever there was one. It is your responsibility when you're in a position of leadership—whether as Leader of the Opposition, as he was then, or as Premier of Ontario—to ask those questions. We've seen it hasn't improved. Even today, they can't answer the simplest questions on some of the costs and other aspects of their program. So that's alternative number one: There were promises made without bothering to ask the questions or do the homework.

Alternative number two, which I think may be even worse, is that the promises were made full well knowing that they wouldn't be kept and full well knowing that in some cases they couldn't be kept. Either way, I would argue that it illustrates two things about this government, about this Liberal Party and about this leader, this Premier, Dalton McGuinty.

The first is that he has a complete disregard for the people of Ontario and a conclusion that he's obviously drawn that the word of a political party leader means nothing, so there's no consequence to breaking it. The word obviously means nothing, and there's no consequence if it doesn't mean anything, to breaking your word.

The second conclusion I think you could reach is that Mr. McGuinty—and his advisers, but he is the person who, at the end of the day, has to mouth the words—is prepared to say absolutely anything in order to get himself elected. I see no reason to believe that he will not say anything or do anything that he feels he has to do in order to get himself re-elected in 2007.

I take a different view, and we all take a different view in the Progressive Conservative Party. I think that accountability is everything. The public doesn't expect perfection from their politicians, from their elected representatives, but they do expect a modicum of accountability. I think it's everything. People are prepared to forgive your mistakes, but what they're not prepared to forgive is a lack of accountability. I think that your word is everything. It's exactly the opposite to the view apparently held by the Premier. His view is that your word doesn't mean anything, so it's expendable and whatever you say can just be cast to one side any time it suits you. I believe that what you say to the people as the basis upon which they will place their trust and confidence in you to elect you to the highest offices that we have in this province means everything.

I think it goes beyond, though, the whole question of faith in politics or the credibility of the political process or of this Legislature or of the Premier of Ontario, an

office that is the highest office we have in this province. It goes, as well, to the fact that these broken promises hurt real people. It's not just about politics and it's not just about who won and who lost or who broke whose word. It's about the fact that when he broke his word 50 times—let alone all the other ones we could recite—he hurt real people.

I want to speak briefly about two of the promises. I wish I had the numbers handy, but one of them is the promise to make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry. That was the promise: "We will make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry." The facts say as follows. The budget of the Ministry of Agriculture has been cut again in 2006: \$244 million more has been cut this year, meaning more support will be taken away from or not available to farmers. The year before, the budget was cut by \$169 million. So really, what Mr. McGuinty is indicating is not only his low esteem for his own word but his low esteem for the farmers of the province of Ontario.

Don't take it from me. Of course people are going to say, "He's the Leader of the Opposition. What do you expect he would say?" But the facts are—those are the facts; those are just numbers. But take it from Len Troup, who is the chairman of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. He was quoted just a week or so ago, September 20, 2006, in the *Belleville Intelligencer*. He said, "There's no question agriculture is in trouble. There's no question the government has failed us. That's obvious."

Take it from no less an authority than Ron Bonnett, who has written about the fact that this government has not yet followed on the lead taken in every other province, I think, without exception, to allow some relief to our farmers with respect to overpayments on the CAIS program. He writes to the minister, saying that the farmers are experiencing cash difficulties that have not gone away and in many cases have worsened, and he pleads with the minister: "In the spirit of flexibility and reasonableness, OFA asks you to seek the approvals necessary to ensure Ontario farmers are treated equally to farmers in the rest of Canada who have had their CAIS overpayments deferred, interest-free, until January 1, 2007."

**1600**

Beyond the quotes you can pull from newspapers, all of us—and I have the privilege of representing a largely rural riding with hundreds of farmers. They just come and tell you, with this pleading look in their eye, that it's never been worse. They don't blame the government entirely for the fact that it's never been worse; they understand that there are international circumstances at play and so on. What they blame the McGuinty government for is that at precisely the time when it has never been worse, this government chooses to turn its back on the farmers, withdraw support in the form of budget cuts, not respond to simple requests like making the CAIS overpayments deferrable, and just abandon the farm community, the farm economy and the rural communities of this province.

Maybe you get a glimpse of why this is when you read the comments of Mr. Jim Wheeler, assistant deputy minister of agriculture, quoted earlier this year, first of all in the *Ontario Farmer* of March 28, 2006, when he said his solution to all this is, "If you can't compete with imported apples, should you be growing apples?" What kind of an attitude is that from a senior person in the agriculture ministry? Then the very same man, on April 4, 2006, didn't think that was enough and he said, "[CAIS] wasn't meant to keep everyone in business." I mean, this is the kind of insensitivity. So we go from making the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry to saying, "Let them eat cake." In fact, most of them can't afford cake, so they're not eating cake either.

Let me go to the other promise I will address briefly, and that is the promise to help the families of autistic children. We have here a letter from the Premier—he was then opposition leader—dated September 17, 2003, to Ms. Morrison, saying, "I also believe that the lack of government-funded IBI treatment for autistic children over six is unfair and discriminatory. The Ontario Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six." Then it went on to say, "In government, my team and I will work with clinical directors, parents, teachers and school boards to devise a feasible way in which autistic children in our province can get the support and treatment they need. That includes children over the age of six."

What was the first thing this McGuinty government and this Premier did in order to evidence how sincere that letter was? He decided to devote hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money to hire up lawyers to go and fight in court the very people to whom he wrote that letter, and to make sure he didn't have to keep his promise. Have you ever heard anything so ridiculous in your life as someone who goes and hires up lawyers to fight somebody else in court—in this case the parents of autistic children—so he didn't have to keep his promise?

But then they say, "Oh, no, we're really acting. It's really true. We're doing a lot." And they put out a release on March 26, 2004. Just recognize the similarity of wording between the promise made in the letter in 2003 and this release: "Minister Bountrogianni is establishing a working group to guide implementation of the supports to teachers, educational assistants, parents and children with autism."

When you're not really wanting to keep your promise, when in fact you're fighting the people in court, if in doubt, establish a working group, because it will be a good camouflage for doing nothing, or very little.

As if that isn't bad enough, we then come to September 21, 2006, just a week ago. I'm not even sure what happened to the first working group, but now we have another one. This is a quote from a news release from the new minister, who says, "The McGuinty government has created a reference group to advise on the most effective ways to meet the needs of students with autism spectrum disorders."

Two and a half years later, hundreds of thousands of dollars spent in court, and we're still waiting. But it's not

us who are waiting, and I'm going to conclude just by citing two or three of these people—real people, real families with real kids. I've been to the homes of some of these people—not these particular people—and I'm sure other members have too, to see the struggle and the challenge that they face.

“My name is Cheryl Barton and my family lives in Ajax in Durham region. My husband and I have two sons, aged five and three. Our youngest son is three years, eight months old and he has autism. His name is Trevor. He was diagnosed at 22 months.... He has been on the wait-list since November 2004, almost two years. At last check a month ago, he was still number 25 on the wait-list. We have been paying \$30,000 in after-tax dollars for 15 hours per week of private ABA therapy for him the past year.” That's the Barton family in Ajax.

Here's another one, from Laurie Carruthers in Toronto:

“My son Michael is almost five years old.... Michael languished on a wait list for three years before being picked up for services. I spent a year on a writing campaign.... We now have a debt of approximately \$60,000.”

The Bunda family: “My son, Sebastian Bunda, born April 5, 2003, was first diagnosed with autism on March 3, 2005 by a paediatrician. He is on the waiting list since the diagnosis at the Chedoke Hospital since May 31, 2005.”

Finally, Dr. Fiona Currie, mother of Jacob Labovitz, Thornhill: “I am the mother of a wonderful autistic son named Jacob Labovitz, who recently turned three years old. Jacob was diagnosed with autism at the age of 25 months, which is extremely early, due in part to my husband's background in clinical psychology. The reason I am mentioning this is that most children are diagnosed much later than my son. However, despite early detection of Jacob's problems, he remains 88th on the waiting list for government-run IBI treatment in our region. He has been on the wait list for one and a half years now and has only moved up a few spots on the wait-list.”

That's what the broken promises are about: Farmers who say they can't take it any more, the families of autistic children who can't cope, who are losing their homes, who are moving to Alberta. What a disgrace it is that people leave this province or lose their homes because the government of Ontario—the McGuinty government—will not keep its promises. That's why this issue is important, that's why this debate is important, and that is why we are committed, on this side of the House, to raising that standard, to making sure that this kind of disgraceful misconduct in the political process is not repeated and that we do everything we can to make sure that we raise the standard, but more importantly, that we help these hurting people who have been hurt by McGuinty broken promises.

**Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie):** It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to the opposition motion. On behalf of our government, I want to say that I find it unbelievable that the opposition party has decided to

spend their time throwing these accusations out at our government when they broke their own Taxpayer Protection Act. In 2002, they added \$21 billion to the debt, costing us and all Ontarians \$1.6 billion in interest every year, and most flagrantly, I think, left us with a \$5.6-billion deficit while they repeatedly cited different numbers during the 2003 election campaign. Before the Leader of the Opposition casts stones at our government, I think he needs to take a look in the mirror and see what took place during the Harris-Eves years when it comes to fiscal responsibility, when it comes to accountability and in terms of breaking their own legislation that they passed.

This unexpected and hidden Tory deficit left our government with some tough choices, obviously tough choices that they were not prepared to make. While we inherited a fiscal deficit that we have made strides in addressing, we have also inherited a deficit in other sectors, like health care, education and infrastructure, to name just a few. We decided, on behalf of Ontarians, to take a prudent, balanced approach toward many of these issues.

I'd like to take this opportunity to quote from today's editorial in the Toronto Star. Here is it, for the Leader of the Opposition: “Overall, McGuinty and the Liberals have delivered good, competent government in the last three years and set the province back on course after eight years of cuts and conflict under the Conservatives. Indeed, in health care and education, the most crucial areas of government responsibility, the province has made remarkable progress.” That's what they're saying today, three years in. I think it's important to clarify for all Ontarians the difference between our government's record and the Conservatives' record after eight years of this kind of turmoil and chaos, as well as the \$5.6-billion deficit that we were forced to deal with and to deal with on behalf of Ontarians.

I also want to point out that I see a pattern here. When the Liberal government—our government—took office in 2003, we were left a \$5.6-billion debt from the past Conservative government. If you look at what's going on in Ottawa these days, you see a Liberal government that left a Conservative government a \$3.2-billion surplus, money that is desperately needed in Ontario for Ontario families, for education, health care investments and infrastructure. That's the difference between Liberal fiscal responsibility and Conservative overspending and budgets that go well beyond our ability to bear the costs.

#### 1610

I want to know when we are going to get the support of the Leader of the Opposition to stand up for Ontario. Our Premier is called Mr. Ontario because we know where he stands: firmly on the side of hard-working families in this province.

I want to also point out that it gives us an opportunity to continue to compare and contrast what took place during the eight years of Conservative government and our three short years in office.

When it comes to the education sector, I think the results are clear. The Conservative government took

\$200 million out of public education over the eight years; the record shows that we've added \$2.7 billion in new investment since taking office. We've hired almost 7,000 new teachers, 3,600 to reduce class sizes for nearly 70% of students. This includes 1,600 elementary specialist teachers in literacy, numeracy, physical education, art and music. We've restored peace and stability with historic four-year contracts so that educators can do the jobs they need to do and students can be in the classroom as opposed to out on the streets, as was the case under the past government. We've also increased support for kids with special needs. Test scores are up right across the province, in all grades and in all subject areas. We've got 6,000 more kids graduating this year than in 2003. We also have 16,000 new teachers trained in literacy and numeracy education. We've added \$20 million toward community use of schools, which we know is of tremendous benefit; I know it was of tremendous benefit in my community of Sault Ste. Marie. We have also made a major investment in infrastructure, with a \$280-million fund to leverage \$4 billion worth of much-needed school repairs. We've banned junk food in vending machines and issued nutritional guidelines for schools to help support the health of the youngsters in our schools. We've also implemented 20 minutes of daily physical activity, which is now mandatory in our elementary schools.

I can tell you that locally, in my community of Sault Ste. Marie, between 2003 and today the Algoma District School Board has seen an increase of \$9 million to their education funding. They've got \$2,296 more per student than in 2003, another important improvement for our education system. When it comes to the Huron-Superior Catholic board in Sault Ste. Marie, they've seen \$2,033 more per student, as well as \$4.1 million more to their budget in comparison to 2003—a testament that our investments in education are working.

When it comes to health care, we're up 19% in funding over the last two years. We've got 4,300 new nursing positions in the province of Ontario—and that can be compared and contrasted to about 8,000 fewer nurses under the Conservative era—and 150 new health teams. I'm proud to say that the Group Health Centre in Sault Ste. Marie was a model for our health care delivery program, a \$600-million investment to create 150 of these new family health teams to reduce the number of orphaned patients in the province of Ontario.

When it comes to physician supply, something that the NDP—well, they were a disaster on cutting the seats in medical schools; I believe they were the only government in the history of this province to ever take that action. The Conservatives really failed to ramp up the number of seats in medical schools in this province; we went from 60-some communities that were considered under-serviced in terms of physician supply to 143 under-serviced communities in the province during their eight years. To try to address that, we created the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine, a \$95-million investment. It's right in our budget. Take a look, Mr.

Tory. There's been a 23% increase in physician supply—that's our record—and a 15% increase at our five existing medical schools. We've taken foreign-trained medical graduates—IMGs—from 90 spaces to 200 spaces. The 15%, plus the medical school, means a 23% increase in physician supply from the time that we took office. When we took office, a million Ontarians didn't have somebody they could call their family doctor, and we know we're moving to provide those people with a family doctor today. It's action, not words, as the past government spoke about.

Fully 71,000 more people are receiving home care this year in Ontario. There were about 20 staff hired in Sault Ste. Marie. I know in 2003, the waiting lists were backed up. My phone was ringing at the constituency office with regard to home care, people saying they couldn't get their 80-year-old mother or father the support they needed. I know that today that's not the case.

There are 2,000 more front-line staff in long-term-care homes restoring the standards, standards that were eliminated by the past government. They eliminated the minimum two baths per week and eliminated the nurses on call 24 hours, standards that have been replaced under our government to ensure that the elderly in our province have the dignity and respect they deserve.

There are 79,000 more receiving community-based mental health programs. It's a 21% increase in funding when it comes to mental health. I know that in Sault Ste. Marie many of those organizations saw no base funding increase for about 12 years, so that's a remarkable change.

For the first time ever, there's real multi-year funding for our hospitals. I think for the Soo-area hospitals it's around \$311 million over three years, something for which the sector has been clamouring for years, something the past government didn't give them that we did. It's important to continue to compare and contrast.

As well, there are three new vaccines for kids, something those in the public health sector have also been advocating for, and over one million free vaccines have been given, saving families an average of \$600 per child.

When it comes to post-secondary education, we made some massive investments in post-secondary education: \$6.2 billion for our Reaching Higher program. We froze tuition for two years in the province of Ontario, which has never been done. We've got past governments here that said students would have free tuition, and we know that was never the case. Tuition increased 40% and the like, and that's certainly not the case under our government. We've restored grants for 60,000 students, originally cut by the NDP. We've added 7,000 new apprenticeship programs, and we have 86,000 more students in our schools today in comparison to 2003.

In my community of Sault Ste. Marie, we have seen major improvements when it comes to health care. We have a commitment for our new hospital, our new CT scanner, new long-term-care beds.

We have many other improvements in our local economy. I could go on and on when it comes to the benefits

and the improvements in our community. Our government has really been a breath of fresh air to my community of Sault Ste. Marie. My community knows that. When I hear Mr. Tory making these kinds of comments about our government's commitment, I think Mr. Tory needs to take a look in the mirror, at the record the Conservative government left Ontario. They left Ontario in a financial mess. We've cleaned it up and we've made massive reinvestments in the key areas of health care, education and infrastructure, and we're going to keep improving our public services.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to join in the opposition day debate this afternoon. I have to remark on one comment the member from Sault Ste. Marie made. I can't believe he's taking credit for the Northern Ontario Medical School when he so clearly realizes that it was an idea that came from the past government.

I don't have time to deal with all the 50 broken promises that have been outlined in this motion today, unfortunately, but as the MNR critic, I would like to speak briefly about broken promise 50, and that is a written commitment that Premier McGuinty made to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters: "In government, we will give MNR the resources it needs to once again properly manage Ontario's fish and wildlife." That was the written promise made by the Premier, but as we know, he will say anything and do anything to get elected. He's proven that time and time again.

This promise has very, very clearly been broken, but don't take my word for it. Take it from the many groups that are seeing the effects of this broken promise. For example, the Credit River Anglers Association, in writing to Mr. Tory, say, "Recent cutbacks by the Liberal government have left the Ministry of Natural Resources in a very sad state of affairs."

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Writing to the Premier and to the Minister of Natural Resources, David Ramsay, they say, "Over the recent years we have seen a shrinking budget within the OMNR as related to fish and wildlife management, something not in line with being supportive of Ontario's biodiversity strategy. We have seen cutbacks in genetics, conservation officers, staffing, research, enforcement, biologists and supplies, all items required for the short- and long-term management of this resource."

In Ontario Out of Doors magazine we see: "As this dedicated conservation officer aptly points out, staff cuts, changes to fisheries management zones, the elimination of the Frost Centre training facility and countless other damaging government decisions have left Ontario's resources bordering on a state of crisis."

On September 29 in the North Bay Nugget we see:

"MNR Funds must be Restored Now...."

"In 1990, there were 3½ conservation officers working out of the Temagami area office covering an area from Marten River north.

"Now there are two people...."

"In North Bay in 1990, there were six conservation officers and now there are only four. ..."

"There have been 13 jobs in the North Bay MNR office eliminated in the past two years—one of which was a conservation officer whose position was eliminated following his retirement...."

"The Temagami Stewardship Council was informed of another cutback—the biologist who represented the MNR and provided valuable input and guidance at their monthly meetings will no longer be available to them in that capacity."

We see headlines from OPSEU in the newspaper: "MNR Cuts Service—Union; Routine Patrols Eliminated in District, Officers Responding Only to Public Complaints."

Across many different groups we see evidence of this broken promise that is hurting the ability of the government to manage the fish and wildlife in this province, and it's hurting real people in this province. With 50 promises and other members who want to speak, that's all the time I have to today.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I too have some severe disappointments with the performance of this government, not around the things I had built up in my mind in terms of expectations, but particularly in terms of real commitments and promises this government made when they were running for office, when they were asking for the trust of the people of Ontario, when they were asking for the mandate to do things that the people of Ontario believed at the time and sent them off on the job to do.

Of course, here we are today debating an opposition motion that has, I think, 50 specific broken promises in it. At last count, we thought there were 231, although I'm not sure if that includes the two that just came within the last day or so, one, of course, being the promise to include water-taking fees as part of the government's latest machinations on Bill 43, which we debated last night in this House. I think it's Bill 43—I'm not good with remembering each piece of legislation in terms of the number—but it certainly was the one where they were purporting to deal with creating the appropriate standards around clean water in Ontario.

During that debate, lo and behold, we found out that the government has gone back on yet another promise they made to the people of Ontario, and that was specifically around the implementation of water-taking fees. People will recall that water-taking fees are something the government said they could implement as part of a clean water package, because then those fees could be used to offset the cost of creating the systems that were necessary at the local level to create the plans, first of all, and to monitor their implementation and deal with all the required pieces around making sure our source water was protected in Ontario. Unfortunately, as we learned last night and the day before in debate of that bill, there is another letdown of the people of Ontario because, although the legislation came forward and is now in third reading debate, it doesn't include that key piece.

What does that mean? It means that this then ripples on to another broken promise of the McGuinty Liberal government, and that broken promise is around dealing with property tax problems in Ontario. The reason I say that, and the reason these things are connected, is because the financial burden of implementation of source water protection plans in the province will go to the local level of government, to conservation authorities, and of course the funding for those is largely through the municipalities. So we know that not only has the government fumbled the ball in terms of acknowledging the extreme burden that exists on municipal taxpayers, but now has also added to that burden by not acknowledging its promise around water-taking fees, thereby foisting the cost of source water protection plans onto the municipal level of government, which we know is not something municipalities can afford. In fact, when we were debating this bill yesterday it was really clear that municipalities are currently being crushed under the burden of downloaded services and there needs to be real action there, not the opposite action, which unfortunately is what this government has done in terms of source water protection implementation.

That one was most recent. The other recent one we will know—it's rippling through community after community, and I've heard some comments on it very recently—is the abandonment of a number of planks on long-term-care reform that we had hoped for and that the McGuinty Liberals had promised was going to come in Ontario.

We've been through three years of broken promises. We knew this opposition motion was coming today—everybody knew that's what we were debating today—and yet this government so arrogantly just continues to break more promises every day. It's kind of pathetic when you think about it. You'd think they would learn the lesson that Ontarians actually have expectations, not that came out of nowhere but that were built by the McGuinty Liberals when they were running for office; expectations they created themselves; expectations that were good enough to get them a vote but not good enough to get them to keep their word. That's the crux of this motion we're dealing with today.

But on the long-term-care issue particularly, there were some real commitments around minimum hands-on hours of care guaranteed in the legislation. It's not there. There were expectations built and promises made around three baths a week. Not there. In fact they reduced that to two. There were expectations built and hopes created in communities—we're talking about our most vulnerable senior citizens, people who are in long-term-care facilities. I myself have a grandmother. I just saw her the other day, and I can tell you that the government can talk a good talk and can trot out the press conferences, the awards, the congratulations and all the nice bells and whistles, but when push comes to shove, those senior citizens, those residents of long-term-care facilities and their families know darned well that the system has not been fixed and is not going to be fixed unless the gov-

ernment is prepared to live up to its obligations in regard to minimum hands-on standards, to minimum baths and to basically making the investments they committed to quite some time ago.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Horwath:** The member across the way has quite a thing to say about it. I did in fact read the report that member put forward. She should be ashamed herself, because a number of things that are recommended in that report didn't make it into the bill. So I look forward to that bill travelling across the province, to talking to the people who really, really care about the seniors in long-term-care facilities, because it's those people in community after community—residents, family members, workers—who perhaps need to remind the government of its commitment, to remind the McGuinty Liberals of the need for real reform in that system. I can tell you that people were disappointed in droves—let's put it that way—when they saw the lack of commitment that turned out to be on paper as opposed to what was in the platform several years ago.

Notwithstanding that, the number of promises the Leader of the Opposition has decided to put forward—some of them are quite obvious, and I don't know if they've taken the time to go through every single one. I can tell you a couple that I am really shocked and appalled that the government has abandoned and did quickly abandon. One of them is the \$300-million investment for child care. The minute the federal government changed its tune, all of a sudden the McGuinty Liberal provincial government did the same. In fact they've cut the budget for child care in the province of Ontario. So much for that big platform piece, that big plank about Best Start and investing in child care in the province of Ontario.

**1630**

They could have done the right thing. They could have made sure that Ontario was a leader in terms of provision of child care in the province of Ontario, but they decided not to. They decided it was easier to take cover and point fingers and blame the federal government, which, as you know, is a theme that this McGuinty Liberal government tends to utilize in ways of trying to deflect from its own responsibility: by pointing the finger and blaming a previous administration at this level but most often the federal level.

There's no doubt that myself and other advocates for child care across the province were outraged when the federal government decided to turn its back on a national program, on a universal, accessible program that had components of real developmental benchmarks for children, a seamless program. There's no doubt we wanted to see that and that we were appalled when the federal government decided they were not going to live up to that commitment. However, to watch the McGuinty Liberals so quickly turn their backs, so quickly abandon the idea of creating a system of committing, of hunkering down and committing to putting something in place in the province of Ontario, was shameful. It was embarrassing.

I have to say that if there is one promise that I was absolutely shocked that they decided to go back on, that was the one, because it was such a big, big piece of their initial platform. It really speaks to the lack of commitment to the children in Ontario, the lack of commitment to today's families in Ontario, to working families in Ontario. It is completely, completely wrong. This province should be a leader when it comes to that kind of funding.

But you know what? Look at the other big problem that they had. It was a simple one to fix. It was something where they made real commitments, but it turned out that they would rather callously turn their backs on children with autism, callously turn their backs on commitments they made to these families about making sure that children were able to access IBI treatment. To this day, we know that the Liberal government, instead of living up to that commitment and fulfilling that campaign promise, has decided to drag those families through all kinds of layers of court battles instead of just doing the right thing and actually creating a system where those children, those very special children, are able to obtain the kind of supports they need, the kind of environment they need to be able to progress and learn and become more socially active in their communities, in their families and in their schools. Unfortunately, again, the government turned its back on children.

Since I'm on the theme of children, the other huge shame of this government, the shame of this government that every single day—I actually had an opportunity to mention it today in response to the statement from the Minister of Children and Youth Services. I am ashamed of a government—I am ashamed of the McGuinty Liberals. I don't know how they can stand to look themselves in the face, as they have still not ended the clawback. They have still not ended the national child benefit clawback that has been existing in the province of Ontario for so long now. This is the one single thing that the Liberal government could have done, fulfilling an election campaign promise—once again, the theme of tonight's opposition motion debate—to make sure that the children in this province whose families rely on social assistance have even just a little bit more in their pocket to be able to provide for the basic needs of their children.

Instead, the McGuinty Liberals are content to watch those children go to bed hungry, content to watch those families struggle to make ends meet, content to know that those children will never be able to do the things that other children are able to do, whether that means participating in sports or school programs in their educational settings, whether that's just a matter of those children being able to go to school, able to learn because they have a full belly, and they're ready to engage in their schooling every single day. We know that that doesn't happen. We know that kids are going to school hungry because this government has refused to deal with that promise they made. They refused to get rid of the clawback and stop clawing those monies back.

It's a shameful thing, because I started out talking about one of the other broken promises and how it's

going to affect the municipal level. My municipality, the city of Hamilton, comes to this Legislature every single year, begging the government to fix the fiscal problems that exist because of downloading; every year they come. And you know what my city did the other day? My city actually decided, in partnership with an NGO, a not-for-profit organization, to try to do what they could to at least end a portion of the clawback at the municipal level.

Here's a municipality that can't afford it, but you know what they've decided, what they've finally decided after coming here and knowing that the pleas of the social services community, the pleas of the social workers, the pleas of the people living in poverty are falling on deaf ears in this government? They decided that the city of Hamilton can't afford poverty. The government, the McGuinty Liberals, haven't figured that out yet, but the municipality figured out that they cannot afford to continue to lose generations of children to poverty, that they cannot afford to have a community without hope, that they can no longer afford to watch the potential of these children and these young families get lost to the fact that very basic needs are not being met. I was proud, as a Hamiltonian on Hamilton Day, to know that the other day my city did the right thing, and now it's up to this government to do the right thing.

It has been up to this government to do the right thing for a very long time, but unfortunately, they haven't. They've decided that the clawback is something that they talked about, and they talked a good talk, but they've decided it's not that important. I guess poor people just don't have a loud enough voice for this government to bother to hear them. It's really unfortunate, because they sure as hell wanted those votes of poor people when they were running in the last election. It looks like it got them nowhere at all in terms of the clawback, particularly in terms of, as you would well know, Mr. Speaker, issues like addressing the real problems of inappropriate and inadequate rates of ODSP and Ontario Works. The bottom line is that there is not enough of an income there for people to be able to sustain a decent quality of life, and that is eroding not only the city of Hamilton and the city of Toronto but most cities now, the fact that the poverty is getting to such a dire level in these municipalities.

We also know that the government—ironically, it's in the front pages of the paper this week again—did not address the broken funding formula that exists with school boards across the province. Here is one of the fundamental changes that was easy for them to talk about during the campaign, easy for them to promise that they were going to deal with, and here we are, three years into the mandate of this government, and the funding formula is still broken and school boards are still broke and children are still being robbed of a decent education in the province of Ontario. It's sad, because I firmly believe that every single one of these members sitting in this Legislature this afternoon would agree that the investment in our young people, in our education system, in our children to be able to thrive, is the only thing that's going to make us competitive as a province on the world

stage. We all know that. We all talk that talk. We all believe in that perspective, and yet we're not making the very fundamental investments that need to be made to ensure that we can tap that resource, that we can realize that opportunity that we have with young people, because we refuse to invest in the education system in a way that ensures that the children have every opportunity to strive and thrive in the province of Ontario.

There are many, many other issues that I wanted to touch on. I can see I'm running out of time because I promised my friend Gilles Bisson that I would split evenly with him. I don't think he knows how much time was on the clock, though, so I might be able to just get a couple of more minutes in.

One of the other big issues that I think is a shame around the government's lack of movement or lack of commitment on one of their promises is the issue of taxation. Again, I know that they promised no tax increases, and then they're saying their health tax is not really a tax; it's actually a premium. We went through that whole silly debate, quite frankly. But at the same time that they broke that promise, they also started delisting services. I can tell you that that has had a major effect on a lot of people, particularly in my community. When you think of a community that has a number of workers, for example, who work in heavy industry and who get injuries on the job, not all of whom have health care plans—certainly the bigger companies do, places like Stelco, where their unions have negotiated excellent benefit plans, but many don't. So what happens is that the people who don't have those benefit plans have to pay out of pocket for chiropractic, for example, or for physiotherapy. People are now seeing their quality of life being reduced because either they can't afford to get those services or, if they do actually pay for those services, they're not able to maintain payments for other quality-of-life opportunities that they would normally be able to afford, because instead they're spending the money on these other services. So it's another broken promise of this government; it's another going back on a commitment around the taxes. But the other piece of that, of course, is the delisting of these services.

**1640**

There are a number of other pieces. I mean, there are 231. I certainly could spend every minute talking about every single one, but I do not have that much time.

You'll know, Mr. Speaker, that one of the things that I used to advocate for in my previous life was more affordable housing, another broken promise by this government in terms of increasing by 20,000 new affordable housing units in the province of Ontario.

We know that they had made promises galore around—for example, another one is waste diversion. Again, that's come up recently because of the Environmental Commissioner's report that came out yesterday, commitments around waste diversion and supporting municipalities in waste diversion, and we know that that's not happening.

It's a sad day, once again, to have to be here and not only deal with the fact that we have been debating this or

that this issue has been debated several times and comes up almost on a regular basis here in the Legislature. But to come here again today in the midst of, in the shadow of, more fresh broken promises that have just happened over the last two days is really sad. What it's saying is that the arrogance of the government is such that they figure they don't have to keep any of their promises and they can continue in this same kind of way that they have been for the last three years: willy-nilly breaking promises, not living up to commitments, and continuing to erode the trust of the province of Ontario's people, because that's the problem: This government has lost all trust with the people of Ontario.

When I go back to my community, people just shake their heads and they are shocked at the lack of commitment that this government had in meeting the promises that they got elected on. People feel cheated by this government; they feel very angry that this government has not fulfilled the many, many, many promises that they made. It is a sad day in the province of Ontario, as I said.

I will now have to sit, because my friend Gilles Bisson will be making comments very shortly.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** At the onset, I want to let you know that I will be sharing my time with the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot. It is a good opportunity to—

**The Acting Speaker:** If I could, the time is apportioned. Therefore, when you finish speaking I must go in rotation to the next party.

**Mr. Leal:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me an opportunity to get a few words on the record today with regard to the progress that has been made over the last three years in the province of Ontario.

One of the things that our government did upon assuming office in 2003—you hear a lot of talk about children. For eight years during the Harris-Eves government, gyms were not open in the province of Ontario; they put onerous fees on organizations in Ontario that couldn't afford to open gyms. One of the great things that kids like to do is to go to gyms on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays to play basketball and be in other organized sports, but for eight long years, that opportunity was closed to them. One of the first things that we did was to make sure to get rid of those fees, to allow kids again to play sports in public facilities right across the province of Ontario.

Another area that we made tremendous investments in in order to help our children to achieve their potential—and I want to get on the record a letter that I received from Bonnie Patterson, who is the president and vice-chancellor of Trent University. Her second paragraph starts, "The agreement represents another milestone in your government's pledge to act on the recommendations contained in the Rae review and the May 2005 budget announcement, which resulted in an investment of \$6.2 billion in the post-secondary education sector over" the next "five years.



“The advance knowledge of our funding envelope will aid institutions, such as Trent, to complete its business planning with some greater certainty. This policy decision is an important first step forward in correcting shortfalls in funding that institutions” grappled with for many years. “The investments will benefit Trent” and other universities across the province of Ontario.

That’s something we committed to. We initiated the Rae review, which talked about our Reaching Higher program, \$6.2 billion over five years. Indeed, we have somebody as distinguished as Bonnie Patterson, the president and vice-chancellor of Trent University, talking about how these investments will help our young people reach their potential.

I also want to get on the record—my staff did a little research the other day, and I picked up this article, which is very interesting, from the Globe and Mail business section dated Tuesday, June 13, 2006. In this article, there’s a great quote from Jim Flaherty, a former member of this place, now the federal finance minister. He was talking about the loss of manufacturing jobs because of the appreciation of the Canadian dollar. ““Canadians are able to find other comparable, well-paying employment if they lose their job in the manufacturing sector,”” said Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty on June 13, 2006. He indicated that the economy is strong in Ontario, that there has been some relocation, but there are other good opportunities to find jobs in the province of Ontario.

One of the things we’ve been able to do over the last three years is to repair the relationship we have with our municipalities. In 1998, Mr. Speaker—and maybe you were present at that famous AMO meeting when the Premier of the day, Mr. Harris, talked about the down-loading exercise. He received not one, but two standing ovations on that occasion. In fact, standing at the back of the room that day, I understood that this was going to create tremendous hardship for municipalities across the province of Ontario.

Here’s how we’ve tried to correct that situation: We now provide two cents of gas tax for public transit, which will amount to \$1.5 billion for municipalities over five years. We uploaded the cost of public health from 50% to 75% funding by the year 2007. We’ve uploaded the cost of 25,000 new day care facilities for municipalities. We’ve uploaded land ambulance; we’re going to make the land ambulance a full 50-50 split in three years, to \$300 million. We’ve put new money into transit, for example, a GO transit expansion for the GTA area. We’ve renewed the Association of Municipalities of Ontario’s MOU protocol that involves allowing our constant discussions with municipalities right across the province of Ontario.

Those are fundamental steps to repair what was a ruptured relationship with municipalities across the province of Ontario. Indeed, over the next 18 months we’ll be part of the review of the Who Does What to look at the range of services as we look at repairing the fiscal deficit, not only with the federal government. An outcome of that will allow us to fix the fiscal deficit with our municipalities.

In the area of justice, in my hometown of Peterborough we’ve added several new police officers to our force. We’ve invested in the DNA Cluster at Trent University, which is an important area for innovation in the future. In fact, a company located with the DNA Cluster, Genopod, is on the verge of announcing the commercialization of an apparatus to actually provide additional traceability for cattle throughout Canada with regards to the BSE issue to ensure that the cattle have no BSE and assure potential markets that these cattle being sold around the world are safe.

Those are a few of the accomplishments we’ve had over the last three years, reflected today in a very positive editorial in the Toronto Star.

1650

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** It’s a pleasure to be speaking to Mr. Tory’s motion today on the countless broken promises of this McGuinty government.

I was elected to this chamber six months ago in a by-election where many of these broken promises were discussed door-to-door, at coffee parties and at countless community events. Eight in particular came up countless times in Nepean–Carleton.

“I won’t raise your taxes”: Young families like mine in Nepean–Carleton are paying almost \$2,000 more per year in new taxes, new fees and—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I’m having difficulty seeing and hearing the member while she speaks. There is a conversation going on in front of her. Thank you.

**Ms. MacLeod:** “I won’t raise your taxes” was a big slap in the face to the residents and taxpayers in Nepean–Carleton. Since I’ve been elected, they have signed petitions and have had me introduce petitions to cut that McGuinty health tax, which was the single largest tax increase in Ontario’s history—one, I might add, that this McGuinty government promised they would not put into effect.

Abide by the balanced budget law: During the by-election we had the “buy election” budget, where the McGuinty government taxed and spent themselves right into deficit financing.

Provide autism treatment beyond age six: My NDP colleague, who I ran against in Nepean–Carleton, ran as a result of the broken promise to the autistic parents in Nepean–Carleton. Let me assure you, I will be speaking on behalf of Laurel Gibbons today and every day thereafter because of the broken promise by this McGuinty government.

This is one of my favourite ones. In the 2003 election, the people of Ottawa said they wanted to see the Royal Ottawa Hospital expanded and wanted to see a new hospital built with a P3. The McGuinty government had the audacity to look at Ottawa taxpayers, Ottawa voters, and say, “We will not build that hospital.” Yet, three years later, this Liberal government has engaged in exactly what the former Conservative administration was going to do, and that was to build that P3.

This is something that comes up almost every day in the city of Ottawa: Divert 60% of municipal garbage to recycling by 2005. We're over a year past the target by the McGuinty government. Right now in the city of Ottawa we are only diverting 33% of our waste into recycling and composting. This is a very big issue. The city of Ottawa has asked this McGuinty government countless times to respond, to meet these targets, and they haven't. They have continually not done a thing about it.

Make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry: This was a very big issue in Nepean–Carleton during the by-election because farmers in my riding and farmers throughout rural Ottawa have consistently felt undervalued by this McGuinty government. They have consistently been out protesting and bringing issues, very important matters to their family farms, to this Legislature. I think it's a slap in the face that the budget continues to be cut.

Stop the waste of taxpayers' dollars: I could think of nothing more insulting in the last six months than the redesign of the trillium logo. It has endured through 42 years, seven governments and three major political parties. Yet this Premier and this government have had the audacity to waste taxpayer dollars on rebranding the logo of an institution that will be here long after we are gone.

Finally, give taxpayers better value for money while keeping taxes down: We all know that is the biggest broken promise of all, because not only are they taxing and spending out of control, but they've failed to keep this commitment to the taxpayers of Ontario.

That concludes the allotted time I have for today's debate, but I am looking forward to listening to the rest of my colleagues, who are going to expound upon the numerous broken promises, more than are actually in this document today.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** I've been looking forward to this moment for quite a long time, because we've known for about a week now that this particular motion was going to be coming up and it gives us an opportunity to talk a little bit about where we find ourselves in the politics of Ontario.

Here we are, it's E minus 365. We all know as politicians what that means: It's 365 days to election day. The government is trying to figure out what it's going to do for the next election to get themselves elected—that's fine; we understand that—and we in opposition are doing what we have to do to get ourselves elected and to build up our ranks so we can become the government. In saying that, we understand that this place at times can be partisan. The motion such as we have now is a partisan motion. I'm the first to admit that. I'm not going to argue otherwise. But it really does give us a chance to talk a little about where this government is at.

I've got to say, I sit in this House, I watch question period intently, I listen to the debates, and it is really interesting to watch the positioning that is going on these

days. So here we are. You've got poor old Dalton on the other side, and Dalton is saying to himself, "All right, gang, we've got to run in 365 days. So we're going to have to run and we're going to have to tell people in the next election what our plan is for the second term." Well, there's only one problem: Nobody is going to believe any promises made by this government, because they were pretty astounding in breaking most of their promises in the early days of the government. Even today we find ourselves with promises made prior to the last election saying, "I, Dalton McGuinty, if elected as Premier, promise to make sure that autistic kids get services past age six." Here we are, three years into the mandate—not done. And we see the list goes on and on and on. Mr. Tory read it.

Here's the basic problem: Poor Mr. McGuinty is going to get up in this next election and he's going to say, "Vote for me because I've got a really good agenda for the second term." The reality is that there's not a heck of a lot he can say to Ontarians with any kind of credibility when it comes to convincing people that he will hold those promises in the next election.

So then he says, "Okay, we'll run on our record." Ho, ho, ho. That is just the funniest thing. Every time I see governments trying to do that, I know they're in deep trouble. I've seen it, because I've been on both sides of the aisle. I recognize it from inside government and outside government. When the government's in trouble, you know it, because they say, "We're going to run on our record."

Well, what is that record? The government had said, "We're not going to raise any new taxes." Right? Here they are, and the first thing they do when they get elected is the largest tax grab in the longest time in the history of Ontario in terms of the health tax, and they said, "But we promise health care's going to be better." Well, tell that to the communities where emergency rooms are closing down. Tell that to seniors who are living in long-term-care institutions and others who ask themselves the question, "Am I any better off?" Arguably, I would say probably not.

I know I had the opportunity, as you did, Mr. Speaker—and I know Mr. Bartolucci did, and my good friend Monique Smith must have as well—to go to our long-term-care institutions when we were invited—

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** Long-term-care homes.

**Mr. Bisson:** Long-term-care institutions. Well, you can call them what you want. They're LTCs. Anyway, the point is that we all got invited to go in. It was actually a little bit shocking to me, and I've been around this place for a while. I was going to tell you a story, but it's too long so I won't go there. I've only got 13 minutes.

The point is that I go into long-term-care institutions, like most people do, on a fairly regular basis, but I had not gone, I have to admit, for probably about a year and a half or two years. I hadn't been into North Centennial Manor, le Foyer des Pionniers. I had an opportunity to visit those places, and I was a bit shocked by what I saw.

First of all, I want to say categorically that the staff who work in those institutions work hard. The administration and the boards that run them do the best they can, but they're having to do with less and less dollars all the time, because costs go up. Collective agreements negotiate better wage rates for employees. Food costs are going up because of the cost of buying food. Services are going up because generally prices go up. Electricity prices to run the lights and the heat go up. All of those things are going up, but their funding has not kept pace.

When I was at the North Centennial Manor, I walked into a secured wing where you've got some really—first of all, it's a top-notch institution. My good friend Madame Smith was at the opening. I'm pretty sure she was. It's a beautiful institution. Actually, funding was announced under the Tories and it was finally constructed under the Liberals. So to both those parties, I say thank you on behalf of the people of Kapuskasing. It's a beautiful institution. I went into the secured wing, which is designed in a way to be quite friendly to those people living there who have various forms of dementia. But the thing that really struck me was that there was one staff person to take care of that wing. That's all. There was one person.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** Seriously. Monique, you can do that all you want. I was there during the day. It was 9 o'clock in the morning, so people had just been fed. There is one full-time person who's on the floor, and then there's another person who's shared between the two other wings. So what you've got is that if you have more than one resident having problems in that wing, you're not able to deal with the second or third person regarding whatever issue happens. They're not getting the opportunity to give the type of care that they want to give as staff and as a long-term-care institution or a long-term-care home to the residents who live there.

So we've paid this extra health tax. Are we any better off? I think the answer is no, we're not any better off, arguably, than we were before.

I look at the education front, and this is the one that I find really interesting. We've got the Premier who, rightfully so, in the last election said, "We need to do something to deal with education," to stop the kinds of cuts we saw in education and the fights we're having in education on the part of the previous government. They said, "We're going to do something about it." So basically they went out and negotiated a fairly good collective agreement for the teachers who are there, but what has happened is they have not funded the school boards to offset the cost of the new collective agreements. As a result, a whole bunch of school boards across the province are having a really hard time trying to meet the needs of their students. So you saw, for example, over the last week or two in the Peel Catholic English board the trustees were told they have to cut almost \$17 million out of their budget in order to balance it. The board and the parents and the teachers and everybody is unanimous, along with the administration, saying, "Listen, if we take

\$17 million in cuts and services, it's going to affect special-needs education; it's going to affect some of the basic services that we provide our students in our school and we ain't gonna do it."

**1700**

Now you have Minister Wynne, who was a member of the English public board in Toronto, who was a cause célèbre fighting the Tories when they put those policies in place, and now she's basically implementing the same thing the Tories had been accused of doing when the Liberals were in opposition. I find it really interesting. I stand in this House, and if I close my eyes and listen to Minister Wynne, the Minister of Education, I swear to God I'm listening to John Snobelen, because she's saying exactly the same things that John Snobelen was saying when he was Minister of Education. I just say to myself, how do you maintain any kind of credibility with the voter if you're doing exactly the opposite to what you said you were going to do after you were elected as government?

I say to the government across the way, I think you really started off on the wrong foot. The first thing was that they tried to promise absolutely everything to everybody in order to get to government, and then when they got there, they basically decided they weren't going to keep the majority of those promises. I'm just saying, that leaves a bad taste in the mouth of voters, and I think it tars us all with the same brush. I think that's really the unfortunate part, that people then look at politicians as a group and say, "Well, you know what? They're all the same." I think it lowers the ability of members to do the work they do in this House and in their communities, and quite frankly it's a disservice to us all.

So what do I think we need to do now? One of the things that would be helpful is for the government to actually step forward and admit squarely in the cameras—as Dalton stood in the cameras and said, "I will not raise your taxes," maybe he has to stand in the camera and say, "I didn't keep my promises," and tell people why, or do something. I think at one point the voter needs an explanation as to why it is the government didn't do what it was supposed to do.

I have about another seven minutes, and I have to take the opportunity, because it's an opposition day, to talk about some of the issues back home as they relate to what's going on in forestry.

We're lucky in northern Ontario. My good friend Mr. Bartolucci across the way is going to have a warm heart when I say we're in a boom when it comes to mining. Gold metal and base metal prices are up, and thank God, because for communities like mine in Timmins and for those like Mr. Bartolucci's in Sudbury, it means good things. It means that the mining sector is strong. Thank God base metal prices are up and gold metal prices are up, because if we had the prices, as the minister knows, from five years ago, it would be a total disaster in northern Ontario when it comes to the economy. Forestry is really hurting badly. Thank God mining is doing well because of the prices of metals, but we've got to get this

government to deal with the crisis that we have in the forest industry.

I have great respect for Mr. Ramsay, and I have great respect for Mr. Bartolucci. I've worked with these guys for a long time and I know them to be good people. They're honest people. They try to do the best they can. But I'm beginning to think that Mr. Ramsay is not being listened to in cabinet to the degree that he needs to be. I have to ask myself the question, why is it that we're allowing the kinds of things that we see happening now on the part of the forest companies and what's going on in those communities, and there's no response from the government?

A good example is Smooth Rock Falls. I'm going to be really radical on this one, all right? You're going to see my social democratic roots come out on this one big time. Tembec has made a decision. They're a corporation; they have the right. They've said, "We cannot make money with the mill in Smooth Rock Falls." All right, fine, that's their decision. I can't argue with that. But where is the government of Ontario and where is the Minister of Natural Resources when it comes to the decision of what the government has to do as the second part of that decision? Tembec is going to come back to us some time this fall or this winter and they're going to make the final decision as to reopening the plant or permanently shutting the plant down. Lo and behold, if it's shut down, it's even worse news. I'm hoping against all hope that something happens in the grand scheme of things and that Tembec turns its mind around, but we're not doing anything in order to try to get Tembec to basically decide to stay in. We have levers within the province of Ontario that we can utilize to send Tembec a very strong message about what we want as far as outcomes in northern Ontario.

For example, we know that Tembec, at the mill in Smooth Rock Falls, has a power dam. That power dam was built for the express purpose of generating electricity for that mill. It was not built to generate electricity for whomever; it was built to provide electricity to that mill. What would be wrong with this government saying, "Listen, Tembec, we just want to let you know that if you decide to close down, we're not transferring the water agreements. All of those agreements are going to stay in place in order to allow somebody else who may want to buy this mill to have electricity at a lower cost through their own power dams"? That would be a huge lever for the community, because it means that Tembec would have to look at the economics of it and, if they decide to shut down, know full well that they're giving up the dam. At least it gives the community an opportunity to say, "All right. Now we want to find somebody else to buy this mill."

For example, one of the things Tembec has done is that they have not severed any of the employees. It falls under our jurisdiction as a province. Workers were given layoffs—they're now off on unemployment insurance—and they're not severing people. The reason for that, I think, is very simply that they don't have the money to

pay the severance. Again, we need to use the levers that we have as a province to force Tembec to make a decision and to do something.

I would rather see Tembec keep the mill open themselves. They know how to run the business, and I don't suggest for one second that this is a war against Tembec. Tembec is going to do what Tembec's going to do. My point is, we need to get them to make a decision so that the community can then go to the next step. If at the end of the day Tembec says, "I'm out of here," then we need to do things in order to find who's ready to take it over.

I'll be even more radical—well, not radical, but I'll give you a couple of ideas. We know it's a tough market. I'm not going to for one second say that the market isn't a difficult one when it comes to selling pulp. I don't argue that for a second. But that mill made a little bit of money. It wasn't losing money. I sat down with the corporate people here in Toronto, and the message I got from the corporate was a lot different than I got from the local. The local were saying, "We're losing money"; corporate said, "No, we're about breaking even. We're making a little bit of money, but we had to spend a fair amount of money to continue operating, and we didn't want to invest any more money, considering the return wasn't very great."

That being the case, obviously there is probably a plan that can be put together to assist that mill to reopen. I would say that the government of Ontario should be involved with the community, with Mayor Réjeanne Demeules, who, you know as well as I do, has put together a committee of people from the community—the business people, the unions and others, and various ministries—to look at, how economic is this mill? What can we do to put together a purchase offer to buy this mill through whatever means? It might end up becoming a multiple ownership model, where you maybe bring in a private investor who currently owns a sawmill somewhere, like Ben Lecours up in Constance Lake, who needs a market for his chips. Maybe it's a community investment in some way, as we did in Sturgeon Falls when we were government. Lo and behold, maybe it's partly worker ownership, where the workers come to the table and negotiate through their collective agreements some sort of accommodations in order to lever money for them to be part owners.

At the very least, if we were to use all of the tools that we have as a government and say, "We are going to make sure that dam doesn't disappear with Tembec when they close down and they become an electricity company. We're going to make sure that we put pressure on Tembec to make a decision and hopefully try to find a way to stay open"—if they're not able to stay open, at least they'll be in a position to start working towards how we're going to be able to pick up the pieces if Tembec should make the decision not to reopen. I don't think it's radical. We did it in Kapuskasing, as the Minister of Northern Development and Mines knows well. It was a huge success—

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** Are we next, or the Liberals?

**Mr. Bisson:** The Liberals are normally after me. It's the Liberals; then it goes to you.

There are all kinds of models—for example, St. Mary's Paper, Algoma Steel and others—where that's been done and it's been very successful. So I say to the government across the way, we're reaching across the aisle, and we want to be able to find a way of working with this government to respond to what the communities are asking.

Mayor Réjeanne Demeules has asked on numerous occasions herself, through my office, to meet with the Premier to talk about these issues. Yes, Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Bartolucci have met with them—I acknowledge that publicly—but they know as well as I do that the real power lies with the Premier. We've got to get the Premier onside, as we had to get the Premier onside when we were government, to make these things happen. It's not good enough for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines or the Minister of Natural Resources to say, "I'm onside." If he doesn't have the support of the Premier and the cabinet, none of this is going to happen.

1710

I would encourage people, in the last few minutes I have, to go down and see our pork, beef and veal producers. There's a great book there called Meat Club (Girls Only) Cookbook. It's a cookbook for girls only, but there's a club. I've got to read this. It's very cute. It says that the rules governing membership in the Meat Club are simple: "You have to be a girl. You have to love to cook and eat meat. You have to love to talk about meat (any kind). What's said in the Meat Club stays in the Meat Club!" You can get the book down there if you go.

**Ms. Smith:** I'm happy today to be able to speak to this motion and to dispel some of the fallacies that have been discussed already today.

It's interesting that Mr. Tory would bring this motion and talk about broken promises when in my riding of Nipissing we've seen nothing but broken promises from the previous Tory government.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe that the member for Nipissing has used a word indirectly for what she can't say directly, and I believe that the word is unparliamentary.

**The Acting Speaker:** I'm not sure what the word was. If you could be more specific, because I didn't hear anything, so I cannot—

**Mr. Yakabuski:** She used the word "fallacies" on the part of the opposition.

**The Acting Speaker:** And you find that objectionable?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, it's an insinuation that they are telling untruths.

**The Acting Speaker:** I cannot agree with you. I'm sorry. "Fallacy" just means that it's not correct.

**Ms. Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to have my minute back on the clock that Mr. Yakabuski has now taken, if you wouldn't mind.

**The Acting Speaker:** [Inaudible] has their apportioned time.

**Ms. Smith:** I'm happy to be able to discuss some of the fallacies that were raised by the opposition party, and maybe Mr. Yakabuski would like to get out his dictionary and check that out.

Mr. Tory is infamous for discussing our record and forgetting about his own. In my riding of Nipissing, the Tory record is notorious. We had two health care facilities that were in need of redevelopment. That didn't move forward at all during the Tory regime but has since gone to tender in my riding. And we're looking forward to October 19, when the tenders will be returned on projects in both Mattawa and North Bay. The one in Mattawa was in need of redevelopment since 1967 and was part of the ridings of both Mr. Eves and Mr. Harris. There was nothing done. There were promises made and never kept.

In my riding, there was a promise made to develop a children's treatment centre. For 21 years that was promised, during the entire Mike Harris regime, and he was our local member—21 years of promises and nothing delivered. Since we came into office we now have a children's treatment centre. We look forward to building a new structure for that children's treatment centre, but it is up and running and thriving. The people of Nipissing and the children of Nipissing are benefiting from that.

We have seen over 25 new teachers hired in our investments in education in Nipissing. We've seen over 7,000 new teachers hired across the province. We've seen smaller class sizes in my riding. We've seen smaller class sizes across the province. We've seen unprecedented investments in Nipissing, which are the college and the university, respectively, in my riding, places that I'm not sure Mr. Harris was even aware existed in our riding.

We've seen a completion date set for Highway 11. Highway 11 has been under redevelopment, four-laning, for, I'd say, close to 50 years. But we have a final date and we are seeing that project come to an end. The people of Nipissing and all of northeastern Ontario are going to benefit from those investments that our government has made, the promises that we've kept on those highways to the people of the north that will ensure economic development and growth in tourism.

The leader of the official opposition was in my community last week and invested a great deal of money in setting up a big sound system so that he could talk to a grand total of five reporters and an empty field about some dreamed-up thing, that he thought he had somehow influenced the building of our hospital. Nothing could be further from the truth.

My community knows and the people of Nipissing know that we are moving forward on the promises that we made in Nipissing and we are investing in what people need in our community. I'm very proud of our record, and I'm proud to have had the opportunity to speak to it today.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this opposition day motion today. We could talk about the 50 significant serious promises that the government

has broken since taking office, but we're going to concentrate on one. We're going to concentrate on their unequivocal promise before taking office to shut down all coal-fired generation in the province of Ontario by 2007, one that has turned out to be so silly and so ridiculous that they're hiding from it and running from it now.

The Premier went on record last year at the OEA conference in Niagara Falls and he said, "We were working on the best advice available from experts in the field when we made that commitment." I can tell you, they didn't hear it from OPG, which operates the plants. They didn't hear it from the IMO, now the IESO, which is responsible for the electricity system in the province of Ontario. And you know what? They didn't hear it from Sean Conway, their energy critic, either, because he would have no part of it, because he knew better. He still knows more than any of those people on the government side about energy. They went ahead and made that promise anyway.

I asked them at estimates—I said, "Okay, you tell me; I want to know—name names of the experts who told you you could do that," and they can't come up with them. Do you know what the big issue here is? It's the credibility. It goes to credibility. It proves, it manifests over and over again that this party will say and do anything if it think it means a vote. That's reprehensible.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** It certainly is a pleasure to join this debate. If you agree with our democratic system—I'm sure that all people in this chamber would—that you'd look forward to opposition day, because it's part of the democratic system, and the opposition parties are doing their job in presenting motions.

But I have to say, although I was looking forward to this day with some anticipation, that I was really disappointed in the quality of the motion. I read it through. I thought it would be a serious motion. Instead, it just looks like some shopping list that took maybe five minutes to write up. Certainly, the information that's contained in there—there's definitely a case to be made that a lot of it simply is a little economical with the truth, perhaps.

The promises that have been kept in my riding are something that I'd like to talk about in the short period of time that I've got here. I have a hospital in my riding, Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. It's a wonderful hospital, but it has simply reached its capacity. There was no way it could expand any more. Despite promises in the past by other governments, by the previous government, there simply was no progress being made on that file. That hospital was not being built. Nothing was moving forward. Since we've assumed power, we've announced the building of the hospital. The site is being picked, financing has been explained and there's an excitement in my community about another promise that we've kept to bring a new hospital to my community in Oakville.

A lot of people in my community also were very interested in the way the town was growing. They were

concerned about the environment, they were concerned about the way the town was growing, the way the environment was being degraded, and they wanted some further protections. I think you just have to look at the greenbelt plan that we've implemented as a government since assuming power to understand that we took this very, very seriously. Not only did we meet our obligation on the greenbelt; we almost doubled the area that we were protecting in Ontario for future generations.

If you look at things like gridlock and you take a look at Oakville, we're widening the QEW, putting an extra lane on each side right through my community, from one end of town to another. We've built the Third Line overpass, two more bridges—Sixteen Mile Creek and Bronte Creek—brand new bridges to provide twinned east-west passage for people who are commuting into Toronto.

When we assumed power, the public education system in this province had some very serious problems. We had parents who were fighting each other trying to keep their own school open. In my own community, the very affluent community of Oakville, there were kids in my neighbourhood who were sharing textbooks. One kid would get the textbook from 4 to 6 o'clock. After supper, the other child would drive over or be driven over by their parents and they would pick up the textbook. That has changed now.

**1720**

Our schools were crumbling. Mr. Tory's party cut \$200 million out of the public education system. Since assuming power, we've invested over \$2.7 billion.

If you look at the local economy in my own riding of Oakville, if you take a look at Ford with all of the challenges facing the auto industry, Ford Oakville—as a result of some very forward-thinking by our government, by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and the Premier—has allowed for an investment of over \$1 billion in flexible technology in the automotive industry.

Mr. Tory's party simply was not interested in those types of investments. The previous treasurer just said, "Not interested. The truck plant can close, Ford can do what it wants." We took a much different approach. We treated the problem with the seriousness it deserved, and with the announcements that were made about the new products that are coming to our community, it bore fruit very, very quickly.

When I read a motion like this, on which, as I said, I looked forward with some anticipation that we would have a serious debate, I think you just take a look at the quality of the motion, the type of information that's being provided in it, and you know that really, at the end of the day, it's a lot of hogwash.

**The Acting Speaker:** Minister of Culture.

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** On a point of order, Speaker: I just want to wish my dad, who's watching at home—it's his 85th birthday and I want to wish him happy birthday today. Happy birthday, Dad.

**The Acting Speaker:** I have to rule on your point of order by saying it's not a point of order, but I'm sure we all wish him a happy birthday.

Further debate.

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** I suppose it's unnecessary to begin by saying that I support this motion, which is intended to draw attention to the issue of integrity in politics. A cynic might suggest that integrity and politics are mutually exclusive concepts; however, I would tend to disagree. I believe integrity is fundamental in government.

David Gergen, who has served as a close adviser to both Republican and Democrat presidents alike, once said that in politics, if you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters. I believe he's right.

A few years ago, the member for Ottawa South, then leader of the Ontario Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition, visited Waterloo–Wellington in an attempt to criticize the government of the day for the environmental problems at a plant in Elmira formerly known as Uniroyal, then Crompton and now Chemtura. After his visit, he was quoted in one of our local newspapers as having said, "I'll raise this issue in the House." That's what Dalton McGuinty said.

I'd been involved with the environmental issues at Crompton for some time, working behind the scenes to try to be helpful, so I was quite interested in what questions he might ask in this House. I expected that Mr. McGuinty would ask his question about Crompton on the first day back: He did not. I thought he might ask his question the first week back: He did not. I thought he might ask the question within a month of his visit, but he did not. In fact, to the best of my recollection, he never did raise the issue, and if I'm incorrect, I'm sure the Liberal staffers in the Premier's office will let me know.

I do recall that in a subsequent visit to Elmira, Mr. McGuinty was asked by the local press why he hadn't raised the issue as he had said he would do, and of course he had no substantive answer.

I'm relaying this true anecdote to the House at this time because it illustrates the exact point this motion is making: Some politicians will say whatever they think you want to hear to get your vote, and then forget they've even said it; but the people of Ontario can't forget, and they won't be played for fools by this Liberal government.

One year from today, when the voters of Ontario exercise their franchise, they will not overlook the 50 Liberal broken promises outlined in this motion. If the government MPPs think otherwise, they are deluding themselves.

I'm not anticipating that very many of the Liberal MPPs will support this motion, but if they were to follow the dictates of their conscience instead of their whip, I know that some of them would.

For the rest of us, we can only hope for a day, one year from today, when integrity is restored in Ontario politics.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** It's easy to mouth words about integrity—very, very easy—but I want for just a minute to suggest that politicians campaign in poetry and govern in prose, and a good government is anything that narrows the gap between those two. We're about trying to narrow that gap every single day in this province, and it's been difficult, because when one talks about integrity and breaking promises, we also need to focus back on a fundamental broken trust.

I remember in the last election campaign, the Tory opponent, when I suggested the deficit would reach \$2 billion, asked me what I was smoking, what planet I was from. He said, "Quit fearmongering. That's not true. You're wrong." Well, I was wrong. I was three times wrong. In fact, the structural deficit that we were left with was \$6 billion. So don't lecture us. We've nothing to learn from the other side of the House about integrity when it comes to making campaign commitments. Let's be frank about that.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** They were all at Magna.

**Mr. McMeekin:** I don't know where they were. Anyhow, I just want to put that on the record. There's much more to do for kids and for farmers, and we'll continue to do that as best we can.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please. Further debate?

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford):** I'm very pleased to join in this debate and support the motion that's in front of you.

Certainly there are some serious issues from my side and the consumer end in terms of protecting the public interest, which I believe this government hasn't done with respect to mortgage fraud and title theft. It's a very serious problem. I put forth a bill that's been passed at second reading and is going to the general government committee. I would hope that the government would allow this bill to proceed because people in this province deserve to know that their homes are not going to be taken by fraud artists and they'll lose everything that they've had.

The government has made a commitment with respect to protecting the public interest, but they have made no move for over three years with respect to protecting homeowners from title theft and fraudulent mortgages. I think we're in a state of emergency in terms of dealing with this particular problem. You cannot continue to have, day in and day out, a situation where people can get fraudulent mortgages registered on a piece of property, and it's a valid mortgage. It's not something that's acceptable. It's not something that the public will stand for.

There have been very many people affected by fraudulent conveyances and mortgages. Title insurance companies are facing claims in the millions and millions of dollars—double digits. This is something that is very important. I don't know why the government is not

acting. I don't know what special interests they're protecting by not acting on this particular file. I think it's a very important file. They seem to think it's business as usual. I don't think it's business as usual.

There are of course a lot of transactions that go on in real estate in this province, but we're dealing with some serious situations here where the government has made a decision that, from a policy point of view, they don't believe that mortgage fraud and title theft, which will take homes away from people in this province, are a priority. I think that's wrong.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** Thank you for giving me the time and privilege to respond to the motion brought by the opposition party.

I was listening to the many different speakers from the other side of the House talking about breaking promises. I wish they had a vision for the people of Ontario. I wish they had a vision to tell us how they can fix education, which they broke for the last eight years. I wish they had a vision for health care. I wish they had a vision for child poverty. I hope they have a vision for infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

The people of this province elected us in 2003 to fix all the broken institutions which were broken by the previous government. That's why we're here today: to fix them all, not just to come here and talk and show off on different issues. We take the job seriously, because we have a lot of jobs ahead of us to fix whatever the Conservatives broke when they were in government for eight years: education, health care, infrastructure. That's why we got elected.

The sad part is, they elected a leader who is well known out there in the community as a yes man. He never said no to anything—yes, yes, yes, yes. That's not the kind of leader we need in the province of Ontario. We need a leader who can challenge the issues, stand up for the people of this province, can say it's wrong when it's wrong and can say yes when it's right.

That's what we're all about, this leadership. That's why we are proud of Premier McGuinty, who takes a stand on any issue, from the environment to education to health care. That's why we are here. We in this province proudly elected a government that can lead us into the next century, strong and prosperous.

Thank you again for giving me the chance to speak.

1730

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I'm pleased this afternoon to join the debate on opposition day. It's been three years since the McGuinty Liberals took office and they began breaking their promises. We have a list here of over 50 promises that have been broken. We all know that it's a long list. I'm not going to be able to address them all; a lot of my colleagues have started off.

Number 20: The Ministry of the Environment is to meet its promise of 60% waste diversion. Yesterday the Environmental Commissioner issued a scathing report on the government, wherein Mr. Miller said the McGuinty Liberals made the promise and waited two years before

even beginning to address the issue. According to the previous parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, the member for Perth–Middlesex, they had an amazing plan. It was only a few weeks ago in estimates that the Minister of the Environment said there is no plan. The 60% is a stretch; a broken promise. The Minister of the Environment doesn't even really have the courage to say, "We can't meet 60%; that was just a stretch target."

How about number 40 on the list of broken promises: open and transparent government? Our leader, along with myself, repeatedly asked the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Infrastructure Renewal about the costs to the Ontario taxpayers of that knee-jerk, back-of-the-napkin plan to recycle LCBO products at the Beer Store. Have we heard an answer yet on the plan? No. Everything is secret, "No, no, we have no plan." Mr. McGuinty himself looked people in the eye and promised the government would be open and transparent—another premeditated broken promise.

What about promise number 45: giving taxpayers better value for their money? Just a few short weeks ago, we heard from the CEO of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario that they undertook a rebranding exercise at a cost of up to \$6 million to \$10 million, and that rebranding exercise consisted of—take a deep breath—dropping the "C"—\$6 million to \$10 million to drop the "C," when farmers and kids with autism are not getting any of that money. We're still waiting to hear where the big public outcry was to drop the "C."

And how about number 10: provide autism treatment beyond the age of six? We haven't got that. Last week, the parents of children with autism were rallying against it.

The Minister of the Environment doesn't have the courage to get things done. She's been shuffled a rough deck. The McGuinty Liberals promised to remove the appeal of the Richmond landfill, and what did they do? They removed the appeal. The Attorney General promptly issued another appeal.

I could go on and on, but so many of my colleagues want to speak to the broken promises legislation.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** It gives me a privileged opportunity to participate in this debate and to discuss the motion that is before the House. To reject the motion that is before the House would be the appropriate thing to do because the motion is written in a rather infantile way, in the sense that the motion suggests that the discussion about issues in the province of Ontario is as simple as yea or nay, is as simple as whether they're up or down, yes or no. The reality, of course, is that the people of Ontario three years ago today elected a government which has worked very, very hard—diligently—to enhance the quality of public services in the province of Ontario.

The subterfuge associated with their motion is to obviate the reality, but the people of Ontario are smarter than given credit by the official opposition. They're



smart enough to know that the circumstances that faced us as we undertook these very extraordinary privileges of being in government were ones where the previous government had broken faith with the people of Ontario through a very deliberate misstatement of the facts as they relate to the budget of the province of Ontario.

Ernie Eves has disappeared from the political scene, but the memory of Ernie Eves and Mike Harris lives on, and not just in those members who keep the legacy of that party alive every day with the two health ministers who stand in their place and defend the record they have as a government. We know the people of Ontario are smarter than that because they know that for eight and a half years they had the measure of a government and what it was all about. One of those measures was 24 million—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Apple crisp has a word to say now, but why didn't he stand up and speak up for his constituents when 24 million student days were lost to the war they had sought and brought upon the education system in Ontario?

Here are some promises that we made and that we kept. To protect medicare, we passed the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act. We stopped Copeman and we stopped Life Line. They did not have the courage, because they have no position, and did not support the bill.

We said we would increase access to MRIs. In Ottawa, as an example, we've increased access to MRIs by 75%. We've repatriated MRIs that they privatized and introduced MRIs in other places.

We said there would be an independent agency to report on the status of health care, and we brought forward the Ontario Health Quality Council.

We said we would save money through generics—Mr. Tory likes to talk about finding efficiency in government resource—and we brought forward a bill that brought back a quarter of a billion dollars in savings to the taxpayers of Ontario. Mr. Tory and his sad-sack reject crew from Mike Harris and Ernie Eves voted against it.

We said we'd save money by using pharmacists in primary care, and we've done that. Pharmacists are now evolving into family health teams and providing better care.

We said we'd lower wait times in cardiac, in cancer, in joints and in scans. Cancer is down 3.7%, angiography down 25%, angioplasty down 50%, hips down 18%, knees down 12%, cataracts down 20%, MRIs down 23%, CT scans down 13%—promises made to Ontarians and promises kept.

We said we'd make up for the 22% reduction they had in acute-care beds by building 1,600 more beds. Instead, we're building 2,000 more beds to reduce the reductions they made. We said we would increase home care services for Ontarians, and indeed 71,000 more Ontarians are enjoying access to home care that they need.

We said we'd provide guaranteed multi-year funding to our hospitals and, true to our word, Ontario hospitals

have for some time now enjoyed the privilege of knowing what their budgets would be, not just for today and not just for next year but for the year after that.

We said we'd create a seniors strategy, and look what we've done: a long-term-care-home act. We froze the co-pay, the sad co-pay that is the legacy of the Harris government that the member from Durham is so ashamed to be part of. We reversed that by freezing the co-pay, and we invested a further three quarters of a billion dollars in our long-term-care sector. Our wait time strategy is about seniors. We have an osteoporosis strategy. We've created a seniors strategy.

We said we'd invest in community mental health: a 50.4% increase in spending on mental health, because we understand that the people in our communities need those.

We said we'd increase the number of family doctors by increasing quality of work life through family health teams, and look what we've accomplished: a 23% increase in medical school spaces—you created the doctor shortage and everybody in Halton knows it—150 family health teams, a 70% increase in family residency training and, the results of all results, 420,000 additional Ontarians enjoying access to primary care. In Peterborough, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000 Ontarians orphaned by the inaction of that party when in government are now enjoying access to primary care.

We said we'd remove barriers for foreign-trained doctors. Since our government came to office, 750 foreign-trained doctors are out there in service to communities and a further 450 are being trained.

We said we'd hire 8,000 nurses, and already 4,300 of them are on the front lines of health care; funding has been laid out for 2,500 more, who are being hired; and a nursing graduate guarantee that doesn't see the effect of these young students coming out of schools—we're not going to have them squandered like they were for so many years when Mike Harris and the legacy of that tired party over there called our nurses hula hoops.

We said we'd accelerate the development of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, and we have invested \$100 million in facilities and programs and training to support this new generation of medical students in the north—the second class of 56 students, all on the McGuinty government's watch and all made possible through our commitment to northern Ontario.

To make the chief medical officer of health more independent, we passed a piece of legislation, as we committed. To provide vaccinations that we promised to prevent chicken pox, we have spent \$154 million to add three new publicly funded vaccines. We acknowledge alternative health care options through Bill 50—traditional Chinese medicine.

The point is clear: We have done so very much since we've had the privilege of governing in Ontario. But from the disastrous leadership that preceded us, eight and a half years under Mike Harris and the right-wing regime that has lots of leftover effect in the form of these members who defend the legacy, we have more work to

do. Public services in Ontario are on the way back up, and we will be proud to work hard to be re-elected one year from today.

1740

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I'm very pleased to be able to join in this afternoon's opposition day and to speak in support of our leader, John Tory, and this opposition day motion.

In the few moments that I have, I want to concentrate on two specific areas where the government has demonstrated its inability to fulfill the kind of promises that it made. It was interesting to hear at one time one of the members of the Premier's party refer to the fact that it was probably better if they hadn't allowed their leader to have a pen during the election campaign, because the temptation to try to be all things to all people and offer promises to people was too tempting.

I want to talk for a moment about the fact that in Arts and Culture Matter, which was the Liberal policy platform on culture, the government promised Ontarians that within two years of the mandate they would produce a report on the status of the artist and from that, then, the creation of legislation for artists in this province. The two-year deadline passed a year ago and Ontario's arts and culture have seen nothing from this government. Certainly at this point in time stakeholders are telling me that they are extremely disappointed with this government. The possibility of the government doing anything in terms of introducing such an act becomes less and less a possibility, a reality, today.

The second area I'd like to speak about for a moment is the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. I think it's particularly unfortunate that this was the ministry that the government spoke about in glowing terms, about being the first government to have a full-fledged ministry. Of course, we had created a secretariat with responsibility for children and youth, but this government used this opportunity to demonstrate its commitment by having a full-fledged ministry and the bureaucracy that goes with that. But in fact, when you look at this ministry, it is one of the worst offenders when it comes to broken promises. I think it's an embarrassment for this government to use this new ministry and then fail the children and the youth of this province to the degree to which they have.

Obviously, the failure on autism is one that we are all very much aware of. Every single one of us has families suffering in our communities. They also failed to keep their promise on the thousands of child care spaces. They have failed to keep their promise on reforming the office of the child advocate. And they have failed to live up to their promise on the federal tax credit clawback.

These are all things that they promised Ontario families they would do, and they have failed the children of this province in all of these areas.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It's a pleasure to get up and talk to the opposition day motion by our leader, John Tory. I think I can keep the message quite simple and direct. What we're trying to establish here for the

people of Ontario is that we're dealing with a government that would say anything and do anything to get elected.

The comparison should be quickly drawn that you're dealing with an opposition leader and a party whose actual moniker is that of a party that did what it said, if you would recall any single thing—some of which you may disagree with, but at least we kept our promises.

I look at the role as the critic now for the Ministry of Transportation. One of the things that we should want to remind ourselves about is, I think, promise number 44, which talks about gridlock. When we talk about gridlock, we're talking about transportation solutions, and by transportation solutions, they promised just one thing that I'll comment on: the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. We supported that legislation but, quite frankly, they've promised it five times. They've had three years, it has been in three different budgets, and they've done absolutely nothing. I asked the minister a question on that just yesterday. What did she do? She made another vain promise.

So to conclude my remarks, we're dealing with a government that would say anything and do anything to get elected. The electorate of Ontario should be leery of this government and trusting anything they say.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** It's not necessarily a pleasure to join this debate, because this is all about broken promises; this is all about politicians' integrity. When you walk down the street, your integrity is everything. When you have integrity in this world, people respect you; they believe you. If you don't have that integrity, you're not believed; you have no position in society.

It's a sad state of affairs when we have over 50 promises that were made, promises like rolling back the tolls on 407. Well, the agreement on 407 is on the Internet. It doesn't take a lot of research to check out what the agreement says regarding 407. It was very, very clear that you cannot roll back those tolls, but that's what the polls said that people wanted to hear. The polls said, "Roll back the tolls on 407; you'll get some votes," and, boy, the Liberals came to the table. Dalton McGuinty came to the table. He said, "I'll roll back the tolls on 407," knowing full well, if there was even a smidgen of research done, that it couldn't be done. But that's what he did. He made that promise. That speaks to integrity.

There's the old adage that if you fool me once, it's your fault, but fool me twice, shame on me. That's what this is all about. When you go to the polls, the people of Ontario will remember that you fooled them once with all your promises that weren't kept. When you go to the polls one year from today and you try to fool Ontarians twice, I think that Ontarians are going to remember exactly what happened three years ago today. The results of the poll that will be taken—and Liberals are famous for listening to their polls—a year from today will reflect exactly the kinds of things that you talked about.

You were going to also stop the 6,600 houses that were going to be built on the Oak Ridges moraine. Well,

talk about a promise you couldn't keep. This land was already half-developed. The sewers were in, the sidewalks were in, the curbs were in in much of that development, yet that's what you promised. You promised that you were going to stop those houses, knowing full well that was impossible.

I think the people of Ontario are going to say to you very loudly and clearly, "Not this time, Dalton. Not this time."

**The Acting Speaker:** The time for debate has expired.

Mr. Tory has moved opposition day number 1. It reads as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario"—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker:** Dispense? I hear some noes.

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that it has been three years since the Liberals took office;

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that shortly after taking office the Liberals and their Premier began breaking their promises;

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that ever since the Liberals broke their first promise, they have looked high and low for others to blame;

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that the only people to blame for for making these promises are the Liberals themselves;"

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please. I have to read the motion. It has to be heard.

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that with one year to go before the next election"—

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** Dispense.

1750

**The Acting Speaker:** Dispense?

**Interjection:** No.

**The Acting Speaker:** I've heard a no.

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that with one year"—

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Dispense.

**The Acting Speaker:** I'm not going to recognize you again. Would you please have some order and some respect for the Chair?

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that with one year to go before the next election, the Liberals must begin taking responsibility for the promises that they themselves made;

"That the Legislative Assembly recognize that this list of broken promises includes, but is not limited to, the following 50 broken promises:

"(1) 'I won't raise your taxes';

"(2) Roll back tolls on the 407;

"(3) Fund medically necessary health care services (de-listed eye exams, chiropractic care and physiotherapy);

"(4) Not add to the province's debt;

"(5) Stop 6,600 houses from being built on the Oak Ridges moraine;

"(6) Abide by the balanced budget law;

"(7) Cap hydro rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour until 2006;

"(8) Respect MPPs and democracy;

"(9) Allow all non-cabinet MPPs to criticize and vote against government legislation;

"(10) Provide autism treatment beyond age six;

"(11) Reduce auto insurance rates by 10% within 90 days;

"(12) Reduce the use of private consultants;

"(13) Cancel P3 hospitals in Brampton and Ottawa;

"(14) Public inquiry into meat inspection;

"(15) Withdraw government appeal on the Richmond landfill;

"(16) Make Ontario's chief medical officer of health an independent officer of the Legislature;

"(17) Govern with honesty and integrity;

"(18) Provide better mental health care;

"(19) Value and support the public service;

"(20) Divert 60% of municipal garbage to recycling by 2005;

"(21) Close 'private' MRI and CT clinics;

"(22) Stop school closings;

"(23) Introduce status-of-the-artist legislation;

"(24) Close coal-fired electricity plants by 2007;

"(25) Create tens of thousands of new child care spaces;

"(26) End federal child tax credit clawback;

"(27) Build 20,000 new affordable housing units;

"(28) Spend 'every penny' of the new health tax on health care;

"(29) Eliminate barriers to foreign-trained professionals within one year;

"(30) Require trades and professions to accept qualified immigrants within one year;

"(31) Repeal the Tenant Protection Act within one year;

"(32) Establish a standing committee on education to hold yearly hearings;

"(33) Hire 8,000 nurses;

"(34) Provide legal rights to victims of crime;

"(35) Make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry;"

**Interjection:** Done.

**The Acting Speaker:** I intend to finish this. The next person who says anything I'm going to kick them out.

"(36) Support the province's cities;

"(37) Ensure health dollars are spent wisely;

"(38) Stop the waste of taxpayers' dollars;

"(39) Guarantee stable, long-term funding for our rural and northern communities;

"(40) Operate an open and transparent government;

"(41) Provide a new funding formula for rural and northern schools;

"(42) Hard cap of 20 students for early grades;

“(43) Ensure 75% of students meet or exceed the provincial standard on province-wide tests within first mandate;

“(44) Tackle gridlock;

“(45) Give taxpayers better value for money while keeping taxes down;

“(46) Eliminate mercury emissions from its coal-fired electric power generation plants by 2010 as part of the Canada-wide standard (CWS) agreement;

“(47) Balance the budget every year of their mandate;

“(48) Put the public interest ahead of special interests;

“(49) Unclog emergency rooms; and

“(50) Give the Ministry of Natural Resources the resources to protect fish and wildlife.

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize this government’s endless promise-breaking has left a trail of damage across this province;

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ask the Premier to apologize to the citizens of Ontario for his legacy of broken promises.”

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

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

There being more than five members, call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1755 to 1805.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Tory has moved opposition day motion number 1. All those in favour will please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	O’Toole, John
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	Scott, Laurie
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Sterling, Norman W.
Chudleigh, Ted	MacLeod, Lisa	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martel, Shelley	Tory, John
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia	Yakubuski, John

**The Acting Speaker:** Those opposed will please stand and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arthurs, Wayne	Fonseca, Peter	Patten, Richard
Balkissoon, Bas	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Jeffrey, Linda	Qadri, Shafiq
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramal, Khalil
Cansfield, Donna H.	Leal, Jeff	Ramsay, David
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Rinaldi, Lou
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Marsales, Judy	Ruprecht, Tony
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Sandals, Liz
Craitor, Kim	McMeekin, Ted	Sergio, Mario
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Smith, Monique
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Smitherman, George
Di Cocco, Caroline	Milloy, John	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Van Bommel, Maria
Duncan, Dwight	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilkinson, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David	Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 21; the nays are 48.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

It now being past the hour of 6 o’clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 o’clock.

*The House adjourned at 1808.*

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

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown  
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma–Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haliburton–Victoria–Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Ancaster–Dundas– Flamborough–Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Beaches–East York / Beaches–York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Bramalea–Gore–Malton– Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hastings–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brampton West–Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest–Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Huron–Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora–Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Millroy, John (L)
Chatham–Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener–Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement	Lanark–Carleton	Werling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Leeds–Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin–Peel– Wellington–Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglington–Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London–Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin–Middlesex–London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat
Erie–Lincoln Essex	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Nepean–Carleton	MacLeod, Lisa (PC)
Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph–Wellington	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Falls	Craitor, Kim (L)
Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant	Sandals, Liz (L)	Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)
	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)
		Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b> Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b> Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / vice-premier ministre, ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto–Danforth	Tabuns, Peter (ND)
Parkdale–High Park	DiNovo, Cheri (ND)	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	<b>Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (L)</b> Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Whitby–Ajax	Elliott, Christine (PC)
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b> Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie
Sarnia–Lambton	<b>Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (L)</b> Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b> Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse	Burlington	Vacant
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Markham	Vacant
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b> Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Vacant
Scarborough–Rouge River	Balkissoon, Bas (L)		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b> Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, government House leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

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

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

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