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## **Official Report of Debates (Hansard)**

## **Journal des débats (Hansard)**

**Wednesday 11 April 2007**

**Mercredi 11 avril 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 11 April 2007

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 11 avril 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

**ESTIMATES**

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Mr. Speaker, I have a message from the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor signed by his own hand.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending 31 March 2008 and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**ONTARIO LOTTERY  
AND GAMING CORP.**

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** There are far too many unanswered questions surrounding the Lottogate scandal. Day after day we've asked the Premier and his minister responsible for lotteries straightforward questions that anyone without something to hide should be able to answer, yet the McGuinty government chooses to deflect, deny and dither over providing information.

When did the government first learn of the problems—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock.

Point of order, the Minister of Health.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it's appropriate in this House that an honourable member calls into question the integrity of another through the use of language such as in the statement by the honourable member.

**The Speaker:** I would caution all members. We've been off to a rather rocky start in the last few weeks and we must be very careful about the language we choose.

The member for Cambridge.

**Mr. Martiniuk:** When did the government first learn of the problems involving suspicious lottery claims? How could the minister responsible be blissfully unaware of the insider-win problems for so long? What was the involvement of the minister's office and the Office of the

Premier in trying to cover up the extent of the scandalous situation?

These are the basic questions that speak to the integrity and accountability of any government. By dismissing our calls for answers, Premier McGuinty is denying the people of Ontario the truth behind this scandal.

These questions are outside the investigation of the Ombudsman and are not subject to a subsequent OPP investigation. An inquiry by a fully empowered legislative committee would provide the answers that the people of Ontario deserve. They may not be the answers the Premier wants the public to hear, but they are what accountability and integrity demand.

Instead of deflecting attempts to get at the truth, it is time the Premier dropped his focus on communications strategies and allowed a thorough examination of the government's role in Lottogate. What is Premier McGuinty trying to hide by avoiding an investigation?

**PROSTATE CANCER**

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I rise in the House today to raise awareness about prostate cancer and to highlight the important work being done by the Prostate Extreme Team. It's a non-profit organization from my community of Oakville, and it raises funds and awareness for prostate cancer research.

I'd like to acknowledge the founder, Steve Hutton, as well as Sherrie and Richard Deschamps, who help run this amazing organization. The team organizes snowmobile rides, ATV rides and a variety of other activities and fun initiatives to raise money for this worthy cause. I was lucky enough to participate in the Bala sled ride this year and had a wonderful time in support of this important cause.

Prostate cancer is the number one cancer threat to men—that's your fathers, your sons, your brothers and your uncles—and early detection can literally save lives. Over 95% of prostate cancers are curable if treated in the earlier stages. Many men are reluctant to consider their risk, much less to discuss it with their doctor.

One in seven men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer within his lifetime. One in four of those men will die of this disease. Approximately 21,000 Canadian men are diagnosed each year. Numbers are only expected to increase as the baby boom generation ages.

Unfortunately, the cause of prostate cancer is not yet known. But with the hard work of groups like the

extreme team, continued research for a cure and better prevention gives us all hope.

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** A government that lacks transparency, integrity, responsibility and accountability is a government that people can't trust.

Every day for two and a half weeks, Premier McGuinty and his minister responsible for Lottogate have arrogantly shrugged their shoulders at the lack of confidence in the integrity of our lottery system. They have refused to answer direct questions about who in the Premier's office and the minister's office was aware of allegations of fraud and why it was ignored. They've avoided explaining how they could have possibly missed or chosen to miss a comprehensive number of warning signals that should have spurred action on cleaning up this mess more than a year ago. They have tried to deflect responsibility for their lack of oversight by blaming everyone from the CBC to tens of thousands of hard-working retailers.

The government has provided contradictory answers about communications meetings and freedom-of-information requests involving the OLG. The Premier has failed to explain how and why several political spin doctors tied to his office, and with the Liberal election campaign team, were brought in to plot a communications strategy for Lottogate.

Many questions; no answers: The Premier has failed the test of leadership by hiding answers, ignoring questions and denying requests for the truth. If the Premier is confident that he and his minister should have no accountability for a scandal occurring under their watch, why won't this government agree to call for an open and transparent investigation by a legislative committee? Just what are they hiding?

#### MOOSE TAGS

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Yet again, we have a number of people in northeastern and northwestern Ontario who have been upset for years now with the moose tag allocation system. I want to bring to the House a report that has been basically prepared by both myself and Mr. Charlie Angus, the federal member for Timmins–James Bay, in regard to a consultation that we conducted across northeastern Ontario and northwestern Ontario in improvements to the current tag lottery systems.

I want to say, first of all, that this particular report will be available to members of the public, if they so wish to see it, by visiting my website at [www.gillesbisson.com](http://www.gillesbisson.com). I encourage the Minister of Natural Resources to accept this report as a recommendation of possible solutions to the current system. One thing is clear: The current system doesn't work. Far too many people who are interested in being able to obtain a tag are not able to do so, and have

been frustrated for as much as 25 years in not being able to receive a tag.

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The recommendations in this report look at a number of ways of making the system fairer, but at the same time protecting the herd, because the one thing that was very clear at all of the public meetings we had—anglers, environmentalists and others who attended all said that what is important is that we need to make sure there is a healthy moose population and that we don't endanger the herd. These recommendations are given within that context. I encourage the Minister of Natural Resources to take a look at some of these recommendations and, for once, to do something to resolve this long-standing problem.

#### PARKINSON'S DISEASE

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** I rise to speak about World Parkinson's Disease Day, which will actually be taking place on April 11, a day when the global Parkinson's community asks us to consider the plight of citizens diagnosed with this debilitating neurological disease—a disease that robs them of their independence, their mobility as well as their livelihood.

As a doctor, I can tell you that Parkinson's is a complex condition and one of the more common neurological disorders, and one that we should be concerning ourselves with urgently. It's thought to be a disease of the elderly, but unfortunately, it's actually being diagnosed more and more in individuals in their 20s, 30s and 40s. It strikes randomly, with no preference for gender, race or lifestyle. We don't know how to predict, prevent or cure Parkinson's, but we can work to keep those who are battling the disease as healthy as possible for as long as possible.

Some of us had the opportunity of meeting with a number of Parkinson's disease patients recently in the Legislature when they visited here a couple of weeks ago. Hopefully, through that initiative and others, we'll be able to enhance the appreciation of the public as well as members of this Legislature. Currently, for example, something like 40,000 Ontarians suffer from Parkinson's disease.

So on April 11, World Parkinson's Disease Day, I commend Ontarians with Parkinson's, their families and the association working with them for helping to better foster treatment and understanding.

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** The Premier's response yesterday to a question about why Mr. David Menzies of Richmond Hill was stonewalled for weeks by the OLG is extremely troubling. The Premier told the member for Oak Ridges that "obviously, as a result of raising this matter here today, this has elevated it automatically as a priority...." Why is it that

until a problem is made public and the government is directly questioned, the Premier and his ministers are content to ignore the situation?

There is a pattern here. Last week, we brought forward the case of a senior from Ottawa who had also been ignored by the OLG upon raising a concern. Despite calling them since March 15, it was only when we questioned the Premier about his case on April 4 that the OLG decided to investigate.

The fact is that the minister ignored hints of suspicious insider wins and his chief of staff's awareness of the issue. When it was evident that *The Fifth Estate* was preparing to broadcast a story certain to rock Ontarians' faith in the integrity of our lottery system, the only plan of action from the McGuinty government was to prepare a communications strategy rather than address the problem.

Content to leave the OLG to investigate itself, the government sat back and did nothing but deflect until finally caught by the Ombudsman. And, incredibly, despite the Ombudsman's report, the people of Ontario continue to be stonewalled by the Premier and his minister as they repeatedly prioritize spin over substance, electability over accountability.

If there is no government cover-up, why won't the Premier take our advice to allow a Legislative committee to investigate the full story?

#### 2007 BOOK DRIVE

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** I rise to say thank you to the hundreds of people in the London area who donated thousands of books to children in remote northern communities through the Lieutenant Governor's 2007 book drive.

This was my third book drive, so I knew our community would rise to the occasion and fill a truck with books. But imagine my surprise when U-Haul donated a huge 26-foot truck instead of the small cube van I was expecting. So I put out a challenge to the community, "Please, help me fill this truck," and they did.

City Lights bookstore donated almost their entire children's section. The London Christian Elementary School delivered a school bus loaded with books to help fill the truck. Glencoe District High School put out the "Phoebe and Rory challenge," with staff member Scott McGregor's young children acting as spokespeople to get their community involved.

Many other schools in the London region also got involved. Retired teachers collected educational books from their neighbours and colleagues. High school and university students put in many hours packing up the books and loading the truck. Bill MacKenzie and Ken Regan gave up a whole day to drive the packed U-Haul to the drop-off site in Toronto. Altogether, between 40,000 and 50,000 books were collected.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this book drive such a success, and thank you to Lieutenant Gov-

ernor James Bartleman for giving us the opportunity to help our fellow citizens.

#### ONTARIO POWER GENERATION ENGINEERING BUILDING

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge):** I rise today to commend the University of Ontario Institute of Technology in Durham region and Ontario Power Generation for their work at the university. The official opening of the Ontario Power Generation engineering building on March 30 introduced the newest facility to UOIT. It holds the key to Ontario's future electricity system research and development and the faculty will prepare its students to be leaders in our increasingly technological world.

A \$10-million multi-year partnership between OPG and UOIT has been able to provide the OPG engineering building with equipment carefully selected to educate students about technologies of the future. The 40,000-square-foot, three-storey building includes 17 state-of-the-art labs.

Along with Energy Minister Dwight Duncan, OPG's chief nuclear officer, Tom Mitchell, and UOIT president, Ron Bordessa, I had the opportunity to view this building two weeks ago.

With this new facility, UOIT and OPG are helping train students to build a greener energy future for Ontario through its emerging energy systems lab with solar, wind, hydrogen and fuel cell technology.

The first group of students to complete this engineering program will be graduating this spring. OPG will be well served, as some of these graduates—these bright young minds—join them in their continuing efforts to energize Ontario.

Congratulations once again to UOIT, OPG and the Ministry of Energy on another step towards building a stronger Ontario.

#### BRENT POLAND

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** Today I stand in the place that belongs to the people of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex to pay tribute to a courageous young man who died while attempting to bring stability and security to a region and a country that lack in both.

Corporal Brent Poland, stationed with the 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment, Hotel Company, was among six soldiers who were killed on Sunday in a bomb attack near Kandahar. Corporal Poland is the second soldier from Lambton county to die in Afghanistan.

Too often, we have a tendency to use words like "brave," "courageous" and "dedicated" with almost indifferently frequency and without proper context, and thus they tend to lose some of the magnificence of their meaning. In recognizing Corporal Brent Poland, these words fit the example and aptly eulogize this young man.

He gave the ultimate sacrifice—his life—for the freedom and improved quality of life for others, people he will never know and now will never have a chance to meet.

The people of the close-knit community of Camlachie and surrounding area where Brent was born and grew up are sharing a sense of loss. Brent was deeply loved by family, friends and comrades.

I know that everyone in this House joins me in extending our sympathy and appreciation to the Poland family for their sacrifice on behalf of all who seek to establish peace and stability in this world. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent for a moment of silence in memory of Corporal Poland.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed. Would all members and guests stand to observe a moment of silence?

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

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## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** Mr. Speaker, our government has a vision of hope and opportunity for Ontario's children and youth. To bring our vision into clear focus, we have been working closely with our many partners to build a system that is centred on the needs of our young people, a system that provides prevention, early intervention services and more community-based programs to help them overcome the challenges they face in their day-to-day lives.

We have been hearing from educators. We have been hearing from organizations that work with youth. Most importantly, we have been listening to young people, because they have told us that they can help us to help them. I have taken the time to meet with young people and to listen to what they have to say. At our ministry's annual youth summit, at round table discussions I have hosted across the province and through informal conversations, young people in Ontario have provided me with thoughtful suggestions on how government can be helpful to them.

One year ago, I announced the details of our government's three-year, \$28.5-million youth opportunities strategy, a broad plan to help young people faced with significant challenges achieve success and reach their potential. The strategy recognizes that some youth, particularly those in marginalized and underserved communities, often do not have access to opportunities and supports that would help them to find success.

Our youth opportunities strategy has several components that support young people, including a fully funded summer jobs for youth program which provides real-life work experience, training and support; partnering with

local police services to create exciting summer jobs in a new youth in policing program; youth outreach workers who build relationships with hard-to-reach youth, provide them with advice and connect them with appropriate programs and services; giving young people who have left high school without a diploma a chance to earn credits and gain work experience through the Ontario public service learn and work program; helping high school students under 18 years of age who are at risk of becoming involved or are already involved in violent and/or offending activity increase their chances of success in school; and a new website, youthconnect.ca, that provides a forum for young people to access information, services and resources that will help them make good choices, achieve success and contribute positively to their communities.

In 2006, the strategy's various programs were implemented in underserved neighbourhoods in Toronto and Durham region that were identified as having the greatest need. By all accounts, the strategy has been a tremendous success. Last summer in Toronto, approximately 800 young people embraced the opportunity to apply their talents and develop additional skills in a variety of jobs, such as camp leaders, assistant webmasters, research assistants, tutors, mural artists, child care assistants and mechanic assistants. Another 105 young people worked at interesting jobs with the Toronto and Durham regional police, such as hosting police information sessions at local community centres, cleaning up graffiti, providing car safety checks and demonstrations, as well as fleet maintenance and marine patrol.

Building on these and other successes over the past year, it has been my pleasure to announce that we are continuing the youth opportunities strategy in Toronto and Durham region and expanding it to underserved neighbourhoods in Windsor, London, Hamilton, Thunder Bay and Ottawa. In 2007-08, approximately 1,900 young people will benefit directly from the youth opportunities strategy's various components. In determining where to expand the youth opportunities strategy, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services worked with and listened to community stakeholders and partners, including regional government officials and representatives from the probation, police, recreation, community health and youth employment sectors, to identify the communities that could most benefit from components of the strategy. Factors such as income levels, unemployment rates and crime and education levels have contributed significantly to the selection of specific cities and communities.

As I traveled around the province announcing this expansion, I also had the opportunity to meet with a cross-section of youth in each community to hear about their challenges and to learn about programs and services that are working well for them. Looking ahead, we will continue to listen to young people. We will continue to engage stakeholders and we will continue to create partnerships that benefit the young people of Ontario.

Our government has confidence in our youth. We know that our youth are talented and ambitious and have

great potential. Through the expansion of our youth opportunities strategy, our government is determined to help them harness those talents and realize that potential.

## SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones):** Je suis très heureuse de prendre la parole aujourd'hui pour souligner un autre exemple de l'engagement du gouvernement McGuinty envers la communauté francophone.

En proposant des modifications à la Loi sur les services en français dans le but de créer le Commissariat aux services en français, le gouvernement McGuinty remplit son engagement visant à assurer plus de responsabilité et de transparence à la prestation des services en français. Si elle est approuvée par cette Assemblée, la création proposée du Commissariat aux services en français marquerait une nouvelle étape extrêmement importante dans l'évolution des relations entre le gouvernement provincial et la francophonie ontarienne.

Elle donnerait aux francophones une voix plus forte, de même qu'un mécanisme démocratique par lequel ils et elles pourraient contribuer à façonner le système de prestation des services en français qui existe pour les servir.

Elle renforcerait la Loi sur les services en français en offrant un mécanisme indépendant pour encourager et veiller à l'observation de la loi, promouvoir les services en français et faire rapport des résultats.

More specifically, if adopted by this assembly, the proposed French-language services commissioner's office would have the authority to investigate whether the act is being complied with at his or her own initiative or in response to complaints, report on the results of the investigations, monitor government agencies' progress in providing French-language services and advise the minister responsible for francophone affairs on the administration of the French Language Services Act. At the same time, it would provide the province with an important new partner to work with in our efforts to improve French-language services.

Le gouvernement McGuinty croit fermement à l'importance d'assumer ses responsabilités quant à la prestation de services publics de grande qualité à tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes.

Sous la direction du premier ministre McGuinty, notre gouvernement a maintes fois fait la preuve de son engagement envers l'excellence des services publics en général, et des services en français en particulier.

Twenty years ago, Ontario adopted the French Language Services Act, thereby providing Ontario citizens with the right to receive government services in French. In the preamble of the act, the government explicitly recognized the important contribution of the French-

speaking population to the cultural heritage of this province.

Aujourd'hui, 20 ans après l'adoption de la Loi sur les services en français, nous avons de nombreuses raisons de célébrer la vitalité de la communauté francophone partout en province.

Avec la création proposée du Commissariat aux services en français, sous réserve de l'approbation de cette assemblée, le gouvernement est déterminé à améliorer les services publics offerts aux francophones et à faire le nécessaire pour que tous les francophones de l'Ontario reçoivent les services qu'ils méritent et dont ils ont besoin.

### YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** I'm pleased to inform the Legislature about an important investment that furthers the McGuinty government's support for youth entrepreneurship in Ontario. How we encourage and support our young entrepreneurs will determine the future success of our economy in the global marketplace. It is important that we develop partnerships with organizations that help young entrepreneurs start businesses and help them become and stay competitive.

#### 1400

I am pleased to inform the Legislature that the McGuinty government has provided the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, known as CYBF, with \$2.2 million to aid entrepreneurial development in the province.

I had the pleasure of making this announcement last Thursday at Helicopter Company Inc. This company is Toronto's only helicopter operation dedicated to tourism, and it employs over 30 hard-working staff members. Its rise to prosperity is a success story in every sense.

In 1999, CYBF helped the company get off the ground. The foundation provided co-founders Julia Henderson and Kevin Smith with financing and mentorship, the critical boost they needed to start their business at that point in time.

Year after year, the foundation provides young entrepreneurs like Julia and Kevin with the fundamental tools they need to succeed. These kinds of initiatives and assistance make a positive difference across Ontario.

This \$2.2 million in funding makes the McGuinty government the foundation's main provincial funding partner. I am very proud of this investment, and I look forward to working with the foundation to foster youth entrepreneurship for many years to come.

Our work with CYBF is just one example of what the McGuinty government is doing to foster an entrepreneurial spirit among Ontario's youth.

We have worked hard to stimulate and support an entrepreneurial climate among the young people of this province. Let me just give you a few examples.

The Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition and the Summer Company program provide the

future leaders of Ontario with an understanding of enterprise and entrepreneurship at an early age.

In addition to these existing programs, we are launching Global Edge, an exciting new program that gives post-secondary students international work experience, in partnership with some of the world's most successful and innovative companies. Fourteen young Ontarians will be placed in summer jobs around the world with companies such as DaimlerChrysler in Germany, ICICI Bank in the UK, Tata in India, Bombardier in Mexico, and Aecon in Ecuador. This exciting new program will give participants a global perspective on business and give them the knowledge of what it takes to be successful in the marketplace. I'm sure it will be a learning experience that they will never forget. I can tell you that I'm very proud of this new program.

Encouraging young women to reach for their dreams and supporting them with good programs and useful resources is also a priority for our government.

In February, we hosted our first-ever Young Women Entrepreneurs Conference. This allowed young women to have the opportunity to learn from established businesswomen. Julia Henderson, co-founder of Helicopter Company Inc.; Michelle Planche, president of Paradigm Events; Erin Zagar, founder of EZDimensions; and Neena Kanwar of KMH were among the notable women who spoke at the conference. I know their stories inspired many young women who were in the audience that day.

We are committed to helping young entrepreneurs develop the skills they need to succeed. Our programs develop bright young minds, promote partnerships and provide positive support that makes a difference for up-and-coming entrepreneurs.

I am confident that our partnership with the Canadian Youth Business Foundation and the programs my ministry offers will contribute to many more small business success stories in 2007.

Small businesses account for 97% of businesses in Ontario and generate the majority of jobs. Making sure they succeed is essential.

This is an important task, and I look forward to sharing with you, in the weeks ahead, more information about my ministry's many new initiatives and programs. These initiatives will make major strides toward promoting and supporting our entrepreneurs and keeping Ontario a great place to conduct business.

#### LEADING GIRLS, BUILDING COMMUNITIES AWARD

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** Before we begin, we need to take a moment to recognize our Canadian women's hockey team who became world champions last night in a 5-1 victory against the United States of America as the finalists in Winnipeg. Congratulations to our Canadian hockey team for winning. We're very proud of them.

As minister responsible for women's issues, it's been a great day. It's my privilege to meet a great many of the remarkable women and girls who live and thrive in our province. They contribute so much. Women lead organizations and excel in every occupation. They teach and inspire, they embrace challenges and overcome obstacles with confidence and creativity, and they are the heart of their families and the soul of their communities.

Last year, our government created the Leading Women, Building Communities Award to honour women for their exceptional community leadership. Last month, our government introduced the Leading Girls, Building Communities Award to recognize extraordinary young women who demonstrate great leadership and contribute so much to Ontario. These girls are championing issues in their schools and communities. Immersed in volunteerism, charitable work and social issues, they are role models, coaches and mentors to children and youth. And they are leaders for tomorrow.

Earlier today I had the pleasure of awarding three girls with Ontario's first-ever Leading Girls, Building Communities Award. They are accomplished young women with outstanding achievements. We're honoured that they're in the gallery today, and I hope you'll help me honour them.

Sarah Dell, thank you so much for being here today. Sarah is from Toronto, and receives our award for her volunteer efforts. Sarah has taken on key public roles as a volunteer, including serving as founder and co-host of the Easter Seals scholarship program and as provincial ambassador for Easter Seals. She has generously donated her time and energy on behalf of children and students with disabilities. Thank you so much for coming here today.

Nicole Turner wasn't able to be with us in the House today because she was off doing more work with Kiwanis. She was unable to stay for the session. Nicole is from London, where she makes an exemplary contribution as a peer facilitator. Nicole is active in fighting violence against women and in advocating on behalf of girls with physical disabilities. She is working hard to build a safe, equal society for girls and young women today. Thank you so much, Nicole from London. We are very proud of you.

Jenna Lambert, thank you for being here today. Some of you may remember Jenna's smiling face from the newspapers last summer, when she became the first female with a physical disability to swim Lake Ontario.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** That's an awesome feat, man—awesome.

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** Our Health Minister said, "That's an awesome feat."

Jenna says, "Nothing is impossible if you believe in yourself," and she's right.

Jenna also raised more than \$170,000 through her swim for a new swimming pool for children with disabilities at the Kingston Family YMCA.



What a proud day this is for us in the House. Sarah, Nicole and Jenna, you are an inspiration to other young women across your communities and across all of Ontario. We look forward to hearing more from each of you as you continue being such extraordinary women leaders.

Please join me in congratulating all three of our award winners. Thank you so much.

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

#### YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** I just want to congratulate those girls. It was very inspiring to listen.

On behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, I'd like to respond to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, who has recently been on a rampage of feel-good announcements, though I'm going to note that each announcement has achieved very few results.

Summer job placements for Ontario's youth have been around for some time. While this is a noble idea, it is hardly a feather in the cap of the McGuinty Liberals. In fact, as we watch jobs disappearing in rural Ontario and young people moving away from their communities, I'd like to point out that little has been done in the way of incentives to encourage young people in rural Ontario to stay and work near their homes.

1410

In addition, she has made announcements on children's mental health, and while the funding increases are a start, experts in the field will tell you that her one-off announcements will only delay inevitable layoffs of key mental health workers in Ontario if she is unable to persuade her cabinet colleagues to increase funding so it's sustainable.

She also decided to get ahead of what would have been expected to be a damning indictment by the Ombudsman for her reluctance to support children and youth of military families who are suffering with mental health needs. You'll remember that she claimed the funding shortfall at Phoenix Centre in Petawawa was the federal government's problem and callously passed the buck. But when it became clear that this government couldn't afford another CAS scandal, another Caledonia or another Lottogate, she had to backtrack, and thankfully so, because these kids deserve the treatment that they need.

Finally, this minister has raised in this House the Ontario child benefit, which, as we discussed a few weeks back, means simply that the poor get a pittance under the guise of a grand new scheme. Of course, those children and families living under stressful circumstances will receive a \$250 down payment cheque from the McGuinty Liberals during the pre-writ of this election campaign, but what is particularly sad is that the full program will not take effect until two elections down the road.

Children and youth in Ontario deserve more than phony window dressing, they deserve more than feel-good announcements and they deserve more than smoke

and mirrors. They deserve better, and they deserve real results for the real issues that they have to face, not just a novelty cheque tour which she's embarked upon.

#### YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** On behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, I'd like to respond to the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Last month, another 5,100 manufacturing jobs were lost in Ontario; this from a government that raised small business taxes by 38%. What did you expect, really? The first increase in taxes on small business in 14 years. Small business taxes have been going down for 14 years, creating jobs and economic opportunity.

You have increased fuel costs, input costs and electricity costs. You've hiked hydro rates by over 30%. All small businesses are always over the 1,000-kilowatt-hours-per-month threshold, and yet this is another broken promise. You promised you would not do it, and you did it again.

You increased property taxes. You raised business property taxes by lifting the hard cap on business property taxes, something you said you wouldn't do—yet another broken promise.

You've increased the cost of labour. You've allowed WSIB premiums to continue to increase while this board operates under a cloud of accusations of mismanagement while the unfunded liability again starts to rise.

From the budget just two weeks ago, Ontario's economy continues to suffer under Dalton McGuinty's leadership. In 2007, the Ministry of Finance has reduced their forecast on every major economic indicator—

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** That's baloney, sheer baloney.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** **The Speaker:** I will ask the Minister of Labour to withdraw.

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** I withdraw. I was telling the member to remember to tell the truth.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Economic Development and Trade will come to order, and the government House leader will come to order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to advise the Minister of Labour that I've heard that the defibrillator in the hall is out for repairs—

**The Speaker:** Sit down. We need to have a level of decorum in this place, and that includes using points of order for what are clearly points of order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Points of order are not matters of debate. There's a place for that. The member for Halton is presently trying to debate.

The member for Halton.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Apparently, I'm very trying.

The Ontario economy continues to suffer. Just two weeks ago in the budget, the Ministry of Finance had to

reduce their forecasts on every key economic indicator, from GDP income growth to job creation and corporate profits. Ontario is now last among Canadian provinces in GDP growth and no longer the economic engine of this wonderful country. Is it any wonder that jobs are leaving Ontario in droves as businesses choose to locate in other jurisdictions?

#### LEADING GIRLS, BUILDING COMMUNITIES AWARD

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** On behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to Sarah Dell, Nicole Turner and Jenna Lambert on their remarkable achievements. These three accomplished individuals are indeed proven leaders in their communities and I wish to commend them on their unique initiatives. I'm proud to see that—

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

#### YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** I'm responding to the Minister of Small Business on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Ontario.

If the McGuinty government really wants to help young entrepreneurs, there are two steps it would take immediately. First, they would freeze post-secondary tuition fees because our students are burdened more than anybody else with that, and going forward as young entrepreneurs they need to be freed from that onerous burden. And number two, they would actually reform the business education tax—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. I will not warn the Minister of Economic Development and Trade again. It is necessary that all members are able to hear the contributions of the members who legitimately have the floor.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Here is what Jesse Greener of the Canadian Federation of Students says: "McGuinty has tried to define himself as the 'education Premier' but all voters have seen is a trail of broken promises."

The second step they would take right away is to reform the business education tax to help small business. They're doing nothing for small business. Here is what TABIA, the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, says:

"Budget Fails Toronto Small Business...."

"The provincial government taxes Toronto's commercial property to the hilt, with education levies that it uses elsewhere in the province."

So two moves that this government could do and they do not do: One is to freeze post-secondary tuition and the second is to actually help small business in this community.

#### LEADING GIRLS, BUILDING COMMUNITIES AWARD

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I want to start by adding my congratulations to the success of the two young women who are here—Sarah Dell and Jenna Lambert—as well as Nicole Turner in their accomplishments and the wonderful contributions they've made to their own communities and to us as a whole.

The minister talked about the fact that it's a great day for them, and it certainly is. But it's not such a great day on the campus of the university that that member comes from when we know that women, young women particularly, are being mocked, that their perspectives as feminists are being made fun of, that sexual assault against them is being made into cartoons on the campus. In fact, it's ironic that the very young woman who is being spoofed in the Western university campus newspaper is a young woman who was here in this Legislature with the Miss G\_ Project. Her name is Jenna Owsianik. You'll know that the Miss G\_ Project has been here several times trying to get women's studies and women's issues included in secondary education curriculum. That would be one way that we could, on a continuous and ongoing basis, acknowledge and recognize the contributions that women make to our communities and have made to our communities throughout history, not only for young women but for young men as well. This is one of the ways we can start valuing the contributions of young women in a much broader way.

I hope that the minister responsible for women's issues will speak to the minister responsible for education, who is also a woman, and perhaps we can get this happening in our secondary schools. I think it would be a great honour to put women in the spotlight on a day-to-day basis in our educational institutions.

1420

#### YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** In regard to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, I certainly want to say that the expansion is long awaited, because we all know that as programs were starting up here in Toronto, concerns and problems around violence were spreading out to other communities as a result. I only hope that as the minister went around the province announcing expansion, she announced a heck of a lot more than she announced in my community, which was some 11 positions for youth to partner with police services. From my perspective, 11 positions for youth are simply not going to make much of an impact at all. So although the expansion is welcome, I suspect that many would feel it falls far short. If we really want to deal with some of the ongoing challenges that are facing children and youth, we need to recognize that many of the youth who are coming from low-income families cannot wait another five years for their families to have the increase in the child benefit that this government is waiting

another five years to implement. In other words, while this government is saying, on one hand, "We want to help our children," on the other they're saying to their parents, "But we're happy to keep you in poverty for another five years." Somehow it doesn't quite add up.

Whether it's the child benefit, the end of the clawback or the minimum wage, the bottom line is that challenged kids come from challenged family environments and we need to get at that issue, and this government has failed miserably in that regard.

I also want to make one comment on the issue of the website. This government thinks that websites are a solution to every problem. Well, I've got to tell you: If you're coming from a family that has significant income problems and challenges, it's not very likely that you're going to have a PC and it's not very likely that you're going to have a connection to the Internet. You can talk about websites that connect kids all you want, but the bottom line is that we all know it's grassroots programs and efforts at getting their families out of poverty that are going to make the best results for children in this province.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On a point of order, Speaker: I would like to welcome my constituent, Mrs. Carol Patton, and her daughter Ashley Patton, who is finishing her last year of high school at Country Day School in King. We're also proud to say that Ashley was a recipient of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award last year. Please welcome them.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** In the absence of others, I guess we will look to the Deputy Premier for our regular diet of non-answers. This deals with the Lottogate scandal.

Deputy Premier, since March 26, the official opposition has asked 107 questions about the scandal surrounding the lottery corporation in Ontario—107 questions and zero answers about who knew what, when they knew it and what they did about it. The minister responsible for lotteries and your government colleagues have taken every opportunity to dodge and deflect, dither and deny.

One year ago today, an e-mail was sent to officials in the minister's office, including his chief of staff, advising that the CBC was looking into the scandal. Deputy Premier, please tell us what happened when the minister was advised of this e-mail?

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

want to say to the honourable member that looking for diet advice from me is probably a bit unhelpful at this time.

On the issue at hand, I do think that a lot of the information that people would like to know about is actually, perhaps, in the knowledge bank of the member who sits directly to his left.

One of the things that I think has been very interesting to people is that over the course of these very, very many questions, those which have remained unanswered have got a lot to do with what happened on July 5, 2001. One of the things the Conservatives seem to have worked hard to make people unaware of or forget about is the fact that the whole Edmonds circumstance began on the watch of that party while in government. Accordingly, instead of asking all the questions to a government that has put forward its action plan and been working vigorously, perhaps the honourable member would serve us all well by providing us with some information about how this whole Edmonds affair began by talking to his seatmate.

**Mr. Runciman:** I'm not looking for diet advice; I'm looking for some meaningful answers to important questions.

The tally is now 108 questions, and the answers are, again, zero. This government's insistence on dodging, deflecting, dithering and denying at every turn is unacceptable to lottery-playing Ontarians who want to know that their government did everything in its power to protect the integrity of our lottery system. Will the Deputy Premier confirm for us whether or not his colleague was involved in any conversations with anybody in the Premier's office or the OLGC with respect to the lottery scandal between April 11, 2006, and October 15, 2006?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The question I placed to the honourable member remains unanswered, and I think a lot of people want to know how it is that all of this focus comes on a circumstance about Mr. Edmonds, when at the heart of it, more than two years before our party enjoyed the privilege of governing, the seatmate of the person who is asking the question was the person in charge. So at the root of this—and it's referenced many times in the report of the Ombudsman. There are circumstances, indeed, that date to 1993, and questions could be asked.

But our strategy is clear and it's on behalf of those people who invest their dollar or invest their two dollars. It is to work vigorously to address on point the challenges that have been brought forward by the KPMG work and also that of the Ombudsman. That work remains apace, and the people in the province of Ontario know that we're dedicating ourselves to the necessary action to give them even greater confidence in Ontario Lottery and Gaming.

**Mr. Runciman:** There's no question the government strategy is clear: Dodge, deflect and cover up. That's essentially their strategy.

The minister continues to talk about the former government. I'll tell you, this member and other members of this caucus are not afraid to have a public hearing, which

obviously can look back at past governments' actions or lack of same. We're not afraid to take that look. You're the people, you're the government, who are afraid to take a look, to have a committee of this Legislature take a look at what happened going back a number of years, but including the involvement of your minister responsible, his staff, the Premier's office and your political advisers. Will you today agree to have a committee of this Legislature look into this scandal, the involvement of your minister, your Premier and previous governments?

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Sorry about that, apple crisp.

To the honourable member, he said we want to take a look at the situation. A good, hard look has been taken. It's well informed in a document called *A Game of Trust*, a very substantial report that, along with the work of KPMG, has informed our actions. We're all interested in ensuring that the lottery-playing people of Ontario have confidence in the system. There seems to be a good bit of evidence that they do by the number of people who are playing—record numbers of people.

But the point is, the work has been done. The look has been taken and the work goes on apace, and a very, very vigorous pace indeed, to ensure that we address on point all of those recommendations that have come forward. Many are already addressed, and we will continue to ensure that the people of the province of Ontario can have the confidence they need in the OLG.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Now 110 questions asked; zero answers. Perhaps the Deputy Premier can shed some light on the late August 2006 meeting that was held to discuss the lottery scandal. We've heard that Wilson Lee, the current chief of staff to the minister responsible for lotteries, attended that meeting. Wilson Lee contradicted a statement coming out of the Premier's office saying that there was no recollection of a meeting. Shades of Gomery.

Will the Deputy Premier please advise this House whether or not he, the Premier or the minister responsible for lotteries was aware of that meeting?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I now have a chance of asking another member of the cabinet of the past government: When Mr. Edmonds's circumstance arose in 2001, what was known of it and what was done about it?

The point is that it's not surprising—these people too have had the privilege of governing. When someone like The Fifth Estate is involved in doing an exposé, of course the machinery responds. This is appropriate. Subsequently, a big light has been shone on the OLG and we've learned lots about things that have gone on for too long and must be done better to give greater confidence to the people of the province of Ontario. We've learned that from the good work of the Ombudsman and from KPMG. Accordingly, we're using all the energy that we have to dedicate ourselves to the task, which is what the people of the province of Ontario want to know, which is

that when they put down that buck or two, when they're engaged in something that is about hope and about their dreams, they have a fair chance. We're working very vigorously to give them ever-increasing confidence on a daily basis.

**1430**

**Mr. Klees:** Now 111 questions and zero answers. The people observing this question period must begin to wonder, what is it that the government is hiding? We simply cannot accept the assertion that this scandal was mushrooming under this government's watch and the minister responsible knew nothing about it. This constant dodging, ducking, dithering and denying is starting to send a message, not only to this House but to people across this province. Does the Deputy Premier expect us and the public to believe that a chief of staff, a senior adviser to the minister, attended a meeting and the minister responsible knew nothing about it? Does the Deputy Premier really expect us and the public to believe that?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** What we know and what we're getting ever better evidence around is that the people of the province of Ontario have a tremendous capacity to draw their conclusions and to make judgments. We must look to the number of people who are playing the lotteries themselves as one form—so the expression goes, "People vote with their feet." As best I know, record numbers of people are involving themselves in the opportunity to invest a dollar or two in their dreams and in their hopes and perhaps in their aspirations.

Accordingly, the honourable member likes to talk about vegetables, but the reality is that if he wants to look at where this whole circumstance was mushrooming, instead of looking over this way, he need merely go down to the end and talk to his friend who was the responsible minister at that time. We've learned about circumstances. The big light has been shone and we are action-oriented to address these circumstances point on point on point.

**Mr. Klees:** Mr. Speaker, 112 questions and zero answers—all the more evidence why it's important that this House have an opportunity to get some answers. We need to know what the minister responsible and the Premier knew, when they knew it, what they knew about this situation. I would ask that the Deputy Premier stand in his place and answer this one question: Why do you object to a committee of this Legislature reviewing that information? What are you hiding? What is the government hiding? Why do you not want that examination by a committee of this Legislature?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** It seems rather counter-productive, when you've had reports, when you're in the midst of using your energy to move forward in a fashion that addresses these wrongs that have been ongoing for too long—and they want to stop the process. They want to go back for the purposes of some political show and tell on the offer that the former minister is going to come clean with all that he knows. This is the offer that they made. He's obligated to do so. The opportunity is available.

We've had a report from the Ombudsman, we've had a report from KPMG, and we're working on a diligent basis every single day to ensure that the lottery-playing public in Ontario has every confidence that their dollar invested is giving them a fair shot at their hopes and their dreams and their aspirations coming to life. We think that there's a good measure of progress reflected in the confidence that the people are expressing by ever record numbers of people playing lotteries in the province.

#### KYOTO PROTOCOL

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** This question is for the Minister of the Environment. Minister, across Ontario people are increasingly concerned about global warming, about the kind of environment we're leaving for our children and our grandchildren. What's clear is that the McGuinty government must set meaningful targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions. My question is this: Will the McGuinty government set Ontario's target for greenhouse gas emission reductions at the levels required under the Kyoto accord by the year 2012?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm pleased to have a chance to hear from the leader of the third party with respect to this important issue, because it seems like it is a new topic for him. I think that was reflected at the press conference that he had today. He knows full well that a member of his caucus, the member for Timmins–James Bay, has brought forward an act, a private member's bill, that will be debated this Thursday, and in this House we'll have the opportunity to talk about what may be their plan with respect to climate change. But I can tell the leader of the third party that I have been working to develop a comprehensive plan for this province to build on the groundwork that we have laid since 2003. We look forward to building on the successes that we've had to date with respect to the plan to close coal, our greenbelt strategy and historic investments in public transit. We will have a real and meaningful plan and not play political partisanship with such an important issue to Ontarians.

**Mr. Hampton:** The question is very clear: Is the McGuinty government going to set targets according to the Kyoto accord or are you not? You have a record of inaction. What you've got is four years of inaction on this file. So the question remains the same. Kyoto is the internationally recognized standard by which all climate change plans are judged, and either the McGuinty government supports the Kyoto accord or you don't. The question is: Is the McGuinty government going to support the Kyoto accord or are you not going to support the Kyoto accord?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Perhaps my friend has been absent for a number of years as we talked about the historic and important issue of climate change. Myself and Minister Cansfield, then Minister of Energy, were at the MOP/COP meetings in Montreal, the historic continuation of those climate change discussions. We have par-

ticipated in those discussions, and we are a government that has committed to and supports Canada's meeting its international obligations under the Kyoto agreement. We've said that in this House before; we'll say it again. We are doing our part in Ontario. We are committed to phasing out our coal, we have protected a historic greenbelt, we have made historic investments in public transit and, unlike you, sir, we believe in building public transit and we believe in the importance of expanding a subway in this city of Toronto to make sure that commuters can get from the north into the south.

In your next question, I look forward to having a chance to talk to you about some of the many other—

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

**Mr. Hampton:** I still didn't hear this magic word. We hear a lot of discussion, and we know that the McGuinty government is good at discussion. We've seen a lot of photo ops, and we know the McGuinty government is good at photo ops. But the question is, are you going to set greenhouse gas emission reduction targets according to the requirements of the Kyoto accord or not? Which is it, Minister? Does the McGuinty government support the Kyoto accord? Are you going to set emission reduction requirements according to the Kyoto accord or not? Where is the McGuinty government on the Kyoto accord?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I guess I will say to my friend again that this government is committed to helping Canada meet its obligations under that international agreement. We have said that for a number of years and we are one of the provincial governments that is taking real and concrete action. Unlike you, if you take a look at the climate change plan you propose to put before this House tomorrow, we are not going to do Canada's obligations on the back of Ontario and let Alberta have a free ride. The last time I checked, Kenora–Rainy River wasn't in Alberta. I'm fighting for Ontario. We believe in cap and trade and ratchet down, and we will continue to take significant steps with respect to meeting our commitments here in Ontario.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Minister of the Environment: I take it, then, that the McGuinty government wants to adopt something akin to Alberta. If that's the case, then you are way off the Kyoto accord. Look, Minister, you can't weave and duck and dodge on this.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. We need to have a sense of decorum in here. I would appreciate the Minister of Energy and government House leader respecting that decorum and respecting other members. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** The climate change act that we have put forward would set targets according to the Kyoto accord by 2012. It would also make the environment commissioner a climate change watchdog with the power and resources to hold the government accountable if it fails to meet the Kyoto targets. So my question is even

more straightforward, Minister: Will you and your Premier be voting in favour of the Ontario Climate Change Act? Will you be setting targets in compliance with Kyoto or not?

1440

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I would suggest that my friend read the act that he proposes to debate in this House tomorrow, because that act excludes action with respect to the forestry sector, somewhat like the work being done by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Our climate change plan, I can assure you, will take action and will ensure that there's a role for our forestry sector in carbon management here in Ontario. We take that very seriously, and we will take action.

Again, I suggest to you that you should read the act, because your subsection 3(3) states that if Canada does not meet its Kyoto obligations—and who does that mean? Alberta—by 2012, Ontario must further reduce its emissions due to the failure of the other provinces. Let me tell you, sir, I'm taking action here in Ontario. We will do the work that we need to do. We will set out a comprehensive plan that makes sense for Ontario and helps Canada meet its international obligations.

**Mr. Hampton:** We know that the McGuinty government is very good at holding phony photo ops with respect to the environment, but I didn't know your reading skills were deficient as well. Minister, the question is this: Is the McGuinty government going to set realistic targets for greenhouse gas emissions for Ontario which comply with the Kyoto accord or not? In terms of you and your Premier, are you going to vote for the climate change act which we have introduced, which will set Kyoto as the target, or are you going to vote against it? Which is it, Minister?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Ontario will continue to take a leadership role in this country with respect to helping Canada meet its international obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. We will not have a made-in-Alberta solution; we will not have a made-in-Texas solution. We have been straight and consistent with respect to our goal of capping and ratcheting down based on real targets. That is the way you fight climate change. That is the way you break the back of carbon and you reduce your CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Let me tell you about some of the announcements that you describe as photo ops that we have made. We have protected 1.8 million acres of greenbelt. We have contracts in place for 18 projects representing 1,300 megawatts of renewable power. We have invested \$838 million to expand and modernize public transit in the GTA. And we will support investments in public transit, such as the York subway, that you do not.

**Mr. Hampton:** And virtually everything you talk about amounts to nothing more than promises to someday, perhaps, maybe take future action. That's the problem with the McGuinty government. You sign on to an American accord, which is not even Kyoto lite, and want to pass that off as somehow meeting the Kyoto requirements.

My question, again, is this: You're going to vote on this. Other members of the McGuinty government are going to vote on this. Are you going to vote to set Ontario's greenhouse gas emission targets according to the Kyoto accord or not, Minister? What's it going to be? You can't keep talking and doing nothing on a continuing basis. Are you in favour of Kyoto? Are you going to set Kyoto targets, or are you going to try to continue to spin the line?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I'm going to suggest that my friend pay closer attention to the actions being taken by our government, because last week, when we made our announcement that we would be undertaking discussions with American states that are taking leadership with respect to climate change, such as Governor Schwarzenegger, such as Governor Spitzer, I can tell you, sir, that I don't think Ontarians and folks around the world who know about this topic think that those individuals are not taking real action with respect to climate change. They have put in place a regime that has received accolades from the David Suzuki Foundation and the Pollution Probe executive director. Let me tell you, I would prefer to take action that is receiving accolades from those two individuals than from you.

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** My question is to the Deputy Premier, and it's on the lottery scandal issue. Minister, you are well aware now that we've had 113 questions, and we still have zero answers. The dodging, deflecting, dithering and denying continues, but the people of Ontario deserve better, and you know that.

We have established that the minister was aware, and does not deny, that meetings did occur in late August 2006. Perhaps the minister would tell the House today who attended those meetings and what was discussed.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** It's good to have the opportunity to have another member of the former government on record, standing in his place, taking absolutely no responsibility for a circumstance relating to Mr. Edmonds that happened on his party's watch.

We've taken very seriously the responsibility for ensuring that the confidence of the people of Ontario who are investing that dollar or two a week in the lottery is appropriately placed. And the evidence is that they're doing that in good numbers. I would assert that perhaps this is, in part, because we've taken so seriously the advice that came from KPMG and from the Ombudsman himself. We'll continue apace to implement all the recommendations that are there and continue to give confidence to the lottery-playing public of the province of Ontario.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Now we have 114 questions and still zero answers. The stonewalling and the covering up are the reasons why we want this matter referred to a stand-

ing committee of the Legislature for review. We need to have a process where we can get the answers required to restore the confidence and indeed the integrity of the lottery system.

Deputy Premier, if there is no cover-up and there's nothing you have to hide, and if this government is truly interested in transparency and accountability, then you will support our call to refer this whole affair to a standing committee. Will the minister support this motion in this House today? We're looking forward to an answer.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I too am looking forward to an answer. I want to know very badly why it is that the honourable member who sits in the front row remains silent on the circumstances associated with his very ministerial responsibility.

We have a good bit of information. The Ombudsman has investigated the circumstances rather thoroughly and, along with KPMG, has given very particular advice about the steps that should be taken, and we're taking those steps. In fact, they don't want to hear the quote, because they've heard it a lot, about the progress that was already in place—

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I want to hear it.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I don't have it at hand.

Subsequently, we're going to continue to pound away and to address the challenges that have been brought to everyone's attention in a very transparent fashion.

If the honourable members, in their conscience, have some recollection of the things they did or didn't do in government, then they should clear their conscience and let everybody know.

#### CITY OF TORONTO

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** In the absence of the finance minister, my question is to the Deputy Premier. Today, the Minister of Finance was to meet with the city of Toronto's budget chief, Shelley Carroll, for what your officials describe as a listening exercise. What Toronto needs is not a listening exercise, but a government that is willing to take some action. Toronto needs the finance minister to step up to the plate now so the city can provide badly needed light rail transit expansions, improve access to child care and recreation, and provide all the services for which it is responsible without the ignominy of having to raise taxes. Why have you and your government chosen to run a surplus budget for the province and let the city of Toronto do without?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** First off, it should come as absolutely no surprise to anyone in the province of Ontario that the NDP is against the idea that a government should have its books in balance. It's striking that in this place, after their failed five years, some in their party got it and left—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, Bob got it. He's not stuck where you're stuck, which is in the idea that deficits are the norm. We believe fundamentally in a balanced budget. We're proud to be taking the steps to get there.

Along the way, the city of Toronto has received not only incredible respect and an acknowledgement of the crucial role they play as our province's capital, they have received new tools in the form of the City of Toronto Act, and they have received copious amounts of new resources from our government each and every year.

I represent Toronto, and I am very, very proud of the work that we've done. I'm proud as well, of course, that the finance minister continues to work with our partners at the city of Toronto to enhance the quality of life and opportunity in this fantastic city.

**1450**

**Mr. Prue:** Mr. Deputy Premier, the only way that you were able to balance your budget was on the backs of the municipalities of this province. Toronto council has laboured over its shortfall throughout your government's entire mandate. You have bills to pay. You promised to fix the download of provincial services onto our cities because you said it was unfair, and you have singularly failed to do so. When will you start to pay your bills and relieve Toronto's hard-working property taxpayers of the burden of the \$71 million that your government owes to them?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Let's just take a look at the facts and let's see what the city of Toronto has received from the province of Ontario this year alone: \$26.7 million in housing funding; \$222 million in TTC capital infrastructure; \$200 million for TTC fleet modernization; in Ontario municipal partnership funding, OMPF, money they never received before, \$79.4 million; \$161 million in gas tax money, which they never received before this government came into office either; \$200 million for TTC subway operations; \$150 million for TTC vehicle replacement.

We believe in the city of Toronto. We're investing in the city of Toronto like no other government has done before, but they've got their own revenue tools as well. They should be looking at them the way they have, and that way, the city of Toronto can remain a viable—

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

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

#### VIOLENCE FAMILIALE

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. First off, I'd like to join you in commending the first winners of the Leading Girls, Building Communities Award. It's great to see our government rewarding such outstanding young women for their wonderful achievements in

promoting social change in their communities. It's also really great to have them here with us in the House today.

As we talk about their success and the success of our women's hockey team, I also want to bring to your attention and to the attention of those in the House the issue of other women in our community, women in my riding, but all across Ontario, who are suffering from domestic violence. This is a problem that I feel we must continue to work to prevent if Ontario is to be a safe and inviting place for women to work and live.

I know that much of the problem with domestic violence is that the signs of abuse go unnoticed by the people closest to the victims, whether they be neighbours, friends or even family members. Even more troubling is that even when the abuse is outwardly evident, many of those who are witness to it do not know what they can do to help the victim.

Minister, like other members in this Legislature, I would like to be able to instruct my constituents on what they can do if they suspect abuse is happening. I—

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

**Hon. Sandra Papatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I applaud the member from Nipissing for her interest in this matter. What is of great concern to us is that we move in the area of training, and that is training for all people on the front lines to help us identify when domestic violence may be going on.

One of the areas of training that is brand new to the government is assisting friends, neighbours and families in identifying signs of domestic violence. To that end, we have actually launched a program around neighboursfriendsandfamilies.ca. They can come to a website and they can get hold of pamphlets. The pamphlets are actually written in 14 different languages already. There are public service announcements already. This campaign is being launched in 70 different communities so far, with more communities signing on all the time. We're very pleased to see such a great take-up on this. It's information that neighbours, friends and families need to know.

**M<sup>me</sup> Smith:** Je sais que le gouvernement McGuinty s'est engagé à plusieurs reprises de bien représenter la population francophone de l'Ontario. Nous avons non seulement accordé l'autonomie à TFO, mais nous nous sommes engagés à doubler la grandeur de l'hôpital Montfort. Nous avons aussi entendu parler aujourd'hui des bienfaits du nouveau Commissariat aux services en français proposé dans le budget.

Mais je me demande, en plus du financement et des programmes en place pour les femmes violentées dont nous venons d'entendre parler, qu'en est-il des services aux femmes francophones qui cherchent désespérément à s'échapper à la violence? Qu'avons-nous en place pour aider ces femmes et pour subvenir à leurs besoins uniques?

**L'hon. M<sup>me</sup> Papatello:** La ministre des Services sociaux, s'il vous plaît.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones):** Moi aussi, je voudrais féliciter M<sup>me</sup> Smith de la circonscription de Nipissing pour son engagement envers les femmes qui sont en situation de violence. La violence faite aux femmes est une problématique humaine et sociale qui nous interpelle tous.

C'est pour cette raison que dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du plan d'action contre la violence familiale, le gouvernement McGuinty s'est engagé à améliorer l'accès aux services en français d'intervention en situation de crise. Nous avons fait des investissements ciblés de l'ordre de 3,5 \$ millions, dont 2,5 \$ millions représentent du financement de base. Par exemple, nous avons aidé au financement pour que les femmes aient un seul numéro de téléphone sans frais, 1-877-FEMAIDE, permettant aux femmes francophones victimes de violence provenant de n'importe où en province de composer un seul numéro de téléphone pour recevoir du soutien et obtenir de l'information sur les services disponibles en français dans leur communauté.

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean-Carleton):** This is for the Deputy Premier—115 questions, zero responses.

There was a meeting on October 29, 2006, that was attended by top Liberal fixers Don Guy, Warren Kinsella, Bob Lopinski and Jim Warren. Media reports indicate that this meeting was held for the purposes of trying to spin the scandal. Rather than trying to fix the problem, it seems they tried to cover it up. This is not the action that Ontarians want or expect from their government, not when it comes to lottery tickets and their chance at the million. Will the Deputy Premier please tell us why the first instinct of his government was to cover this up rather than clean it up?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I thought that the early part of the member's question was interesting, because it said "media reports." She's depending upon something that is not verified. But then she used the words "fix the problem," so here's the way I figure it: KPMG did a body of work and came back with an action plan. Subsequently, the Ombudsman did a very exhaustive investigative look at the circumstances. He indicated that those circumstances had been ongoing for more than a decade, traced back over a long period of time. As a government, through the leadership of the minister and the leadership at OLG, we've been driving forward on the changes that have been recommended.

If anyone comes up to me on the street—and, by the way, I walk back and forth to work and the like and nobody has—I'd clearly say to them that we got a report. The report showed us—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I'm indeed very approachable. You're not very nice today.



But I'd just let them know that the report came back and said there's a bunch of stuff that needs to be done, and I'd let them know that we're bringing all the vigour in the world to get all of that done as fast as possible.

**Ms. MacLeod:** We all know the refrain by now: 116 questions and how many responses?

**Interjections:** Zero.

**Ms. MacLeod:** Zero. Dodge and deflect, dither and deny. This is why we need a standing committee of this Legislature to look into this matter so we can get the real answers without the stonewalling we're getting today and we've gotten every day for the past two weeks. If there's nothing to hide, if they did everything properly, if their first response came up in April of last year, if their instinct was to clean this scandal up rather than cover it up, there should be no problem with a committee investigation into what the minister's office knew and what the Premier's office knew and what they did about it.

So I'm going to ask it again: Will the Deputy Premier support our call for an investigation?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** As I've had the chance to say to many of the member's colleagues, I don't know what the member from Erie–Lincoln knows. She should ask him. If he's got anything that would be of benefit for everybody else to know, he should let them know.

The point is, the Ombudsman—the great, big, shiny light—went in there, took a good, hard look at the circumstances, developed an action plan, said he sees good results to date and encouraged us to move forward, and indeed we have, to restore the confidence of the lottery-playing public. And they are playing in very, very high numbers. So we agree: lots of problems there. They were there over a long period of time. We've got a really good plan and we're moving forward vigorously to implement it on behalf of the people of Ontario in an accountable fashion and consistent with our responsibilities.

1500

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** In the absence of the finance minister, my question is to the Minister of Housing. Minister, we know that when it comes to affordable housing, your budget is a flimsy one. There is not a single new cent in this budget for affordable housing; it's all federal money, courtesy of the NDP's federal budget passed in 2005.

Minister, we've learned that your meagre monthly housing allowance violates the federal government's operating principles for how federal money can be spent, failing to use it to create and build new affordable housing. Minister, will you admit that your affordable housing plan does not add up?

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Only the NDP can possibly say, in a budget that contains \$127 million of new housing funding to our municipal partners and \$181 million of housing allowances for 27,000 low-income-earning

families in this province, that that's not good enough. We're saying that it's a darn good start. It's going to live up to our housing commitment to create 20,000 new units of housing in this province and 35,000 housing allowances in this province.

We believe that the investments we're making to help the low-earning wage earners of this province is good for the economy and it's good for those individuals who need that housing support; 27,000 families are going to benefit from this across the province. We think that's a darn good start to deal with these issues.

**Mr. Ferreira:** The minister's answer, indeed, is not good enough. In fact, it's pretty thin gruel that this government is offering low-income Ontarians, who are in desperate need of real, affordable housing.

The minister dodged my question, so I'm going to quote for him an answer from the federal Minister of Finance on his half-baked plan: "The new funding is not intended to support ongoing operational funding for existing social housing stock, rent subsidies, or to replace provincial and territorial investments in affordable housing."

My question to the minister is, will he admit that even though the NDP came through in the 2005 federal budget, your government has not delivered on affordable housing in the way that it was intended?

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** I know this member is a new member, and the first question he should really answer for the students in his riding is why he is against the subway expansion to York University.

We believe that after many years of inactivity, both at the provincial level and the federal level, in the housing area, we have over the two and a half years since we signed the agreement with the federal government done more in housing than any other government in recent memory.

We believe that the 27,000 housing allowances that are going to help low-wage-earning parents and families in this province, as well as the \$127 million that we've given over to housing providers across this province to utilize in the best way they know how to actually deal with housing issues that may be different from community to community, is a darn good way to help low-income families. We are proud of this program, and we know that many families in this province will benefit from the program that we announced in the budget.

#### IMMIGRANT SERVICES

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Ontario is the great province it is today thanks in large part to the contributions of newcomers from all over the world. The recent release of the 2006 census data indicates that the country is becoming increasingly reliant on immigration to meet population growth targets and labour market needs. In fact, over the last three years, the London area has welcomed over 7,000 newcomers and will, I trust, continue to do so.

Newcomers now account for over two thirds of Canada's population growth, and with our aging population and low birth rates, immigrants will actually keep our population from declining in the future. But most newcomers settle in only a few urban areas. What are we doing to encourage newcomers to settle outside the GTA?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I want to thank the member from London North Centre for her question. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the member from London North Centre has done some cutting-edge, widely acclaimed research on demographic trends in Ontario, so she knows what she's talking about. One of the key things we've done in our government is that we've established immigration gateways across Ontario, so we are encouraging immigrants to look at centres for settlement other than Toronto. We get enough in Toronto, but we're trying to encourage immigrants to go to London, to Windsor, to Ottawa, Sudbury and Brantford because we think those are great communities. That's why they've established international web portals in London, access centres and more program enhancement in those centres outside of Toronto, including Niagara, to attract immigrant investment, immigrant families to go to those great Ontario communities.

**Ms. Matthews:** Now, as Mary Williamson of the Cross Cultural Learner Centre in London indicated in the London Free Press, London wants to attract more skilled workers and people who are making choices as to where they live in the world.

You were recently in London for the launch of London's immigration portal and also the new access centre at WIL, a one-stop resource centre for immigrants and for employers. Minister, how is this access centre going to assist newcomers to come to and settle in London?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The one-stop access centre for newcomers that is now established in London is a model of the one that's already established in Toronto and the GTA on the TRIEC model. The access centre connects employers with newcomers and provides services to both so they can go to one stop and get all the information so they can follow a career or open up a business or find settlement services in London. London is a model city because Middlesex and London and the mayor, Anne Marie DeCicco-Best, are leaders in ensuring that they say to the whole world that London is a welcoming place for newcomers. They've got the services now, they have the coordination of all the different community groups, so London is the place to go if you're looking to settle in Ontario, as is Mississauga, as is Mimico, as is Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie. Come to Ontario; we want you.

ONTARIO LOTTERY  
AND GAMING CORP.

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** My question is for the Deputy Premier. Just in case any-

body has lost count, we're at 117 questions now and no answers on this lottery scandal.

Murray Campbell in the Globe and Mail last week: "It's just too patronizing for words." We know of the April 11, 2006, e-mail to the lottery minister's office. That was one year ago today. Minister Caplan said that this was just another routine FOI e-mail, there was nothing to it, that his office didn't get involved. But the Deputy Premier just a short time ago in this House said the appropriate machinery responded. Perhaps the Deputy Premier will tell us what the appropriate machinery was and how it responded one year ago, on April 11, 2006.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to comment on the fact that the opposition party today has moved a lot of their questions around, but I find it very interesting that the former minister is not amongst those who's being given the opportunity to ask the questions. Perhaps it is because he knows all the answers. But the reality is that we're enormously grateful for the leadership of our colleague the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, and the team has worked to address issues of confidence that were developed in the reports by the Ombudsman and KPMG. It indicated that there had been a pattern over a long period of time. Way more to the point, it gave us precise direction about how to move forward. We're addressing those on point, and I would say to the people of the province of Ontario that through the good leadership of the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal confidence in the lottery corporation is stronger and getting stronger each and every day.

**Mr. Barrett:** Well, 118 questions now, zero answers. We know they're deflecting, dithering and denying. That's why we need a committee of this Legislature. We need a committee to take a look into the flow of information between the Premier's office, the minister's office and OLGC. If there's nothing to hide, if everything is above board and there's no cover-up, there should be no problem to have an all-party standing committee of this House.

Deputy Premier, my question: Will you support our call for an all-party committee to get to the bottom of this?

1510

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The member likes the use language like "cover-up," and the thing that concerns us a lot is that we have a report from the Ombudsman that was written recently, after a very, very exhaustive bit of investigative work.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Oh, excuse me.

The problem we have is that from over there, they keep raising the spectre of a cover-up, which leads us to wonder what it was the member for Erie-Lincoln was up to. I really think that this is a matter for inside the family of that political party. They should ask those questions.

For our part, we've got a couple of reports from KPMG and the Ombudsman, and we're pounding for-

ward vigorously on implementation to ensure that confidence, which is good today, gets better each and every day, and that more people invest their dollar or two in their hopes and in their dreams.

#### ONTARIO ARTISTS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Minister, today the Ontario Federation of Labour was here representing thousands of cultural workers in this province. They were angry about the status of the artist act you introduced, because it is completely and totally inadequate. Instead of making meaningful change for the artists in Ontario, this government has done nothing other than celebrate artists for one weekend.

When are you going to keep your promise and introduce status of the artist legislation that actually improves the lives and incomes of Ontario's artists?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to just illuminate an issue for the benefit of the Toronto members in the back row of the NDP—a quote from Mr. Howard Hampton this morning: “We don't need another subway mega-project that might perhaps happen sometime four, five years or six years from now extending the subway line into a lightly populated York region.”

This is a very important moment to mark: that the historic position of the New Democratic Party of at least 12 or 13 years in our city has been reversed today by the member from remote northwestern Ontario. He's against Toronto, and he's against the idea that we have public transit that allows us to move.

On this issue of status of the artist, here's a quote from Rosario Marchese circa 1991: “I am committed to working with the arts community and my colleagues in other ministries to develop a strong and effective status of the artist policy in Ontario.” Rosario Marchese, June 1991.

**Ms. DiNovo:** This is a new low across the aisle. Mr. Marchese's—

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** Don't worry, we know; we know that—

**The Speaker:** The government House leader.

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** It's not a new low. I wouldn't talk about your colleagues like that.

**The Speaker:** The member for Ottawa Centre.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** We'll just wait.

The member for Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. All those Ontario cultural workers and artists are listening to this, and they're going to be reading the Hansard, and this is what you haven't done: You've done nothing to put into place recommendations of your own status of the artist report; you've done nothing to help child performers or to

address the concerns of my Bill 191; you've done nothing to address housing issues for artists in Ontario; and you've done nothing to address collective bargaining issues for artists in Ontario. All you've done is a weekend in June. This government should be absolutely appalled at their own inaction and the ridiculous answer we received which had nothing to do with the question.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The honourable member ought to borrow a little machine from the member in the front row. As one example, she says, “Nothing for housing for the artists.” What about the TTC Wychwood barns project that you never had the capacity to move along? Housing for people in the arts is just one small example of our dedication to artists. Community museum operating grants up; cultural renaissance; investments all across the landscape in Toronto; Ontario Heritage Act; status of the artist legislation; entertainment and creative industries; arts education, \$25 million; community libraries, \$15 million; and a 38% increase to the Ontario Arts Council.

When those artists read the Hansard and they see the hollow kinds of questions the new member is sending, they'll understand everything about the dart from the Toronto Star that this member proudly received recently.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. New question.

#### WATER PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I have a quiet, soothing, refreshing question for the Minister of the Environment. Thanks to the Clean Water Act, we now have some of the safest and best-protected drinking water in Canada. I am still surprised that the Conservative and NDP members voted against legislation that implements 12 of the recommendations from the Walkerton inquiry.

I'd like to highlight that the Clean Water Act also protects the Great Lakes. Proximity to the Great Lakes is one of the many benefits of living in my riding of Essex. Protecting the Great Lakes is very important to my constituents, and I'm proud to be part of a government that is committed to keeping the Great Lakes for generations to come.

Minister, you recently introduced an important piece of legislation, the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act. How will that act benefit Ontario?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm very pleased to have a question that allows us to talk about the importance our government places on protecting the environment and protecting our sources of drinking water, rather than playing politics when it comes to water or the environment.

I know where the Harris-Eves-Tory party stood for many years and continues to stand today. They say that Ontario should give away its water for free. They say that water bottlers, slurry makers and other heavy consumers of water who make profits from those sales should pay nothing—nothing—for Ontario's water. We disagree,

and our government says it's about time that industry pay its fair share to protect Ontario's most precious resource, and that is a legacy that we will be proudly leaving for generations to come.

The proposed water charges are in line with the actions taken by many other jurisdictions in North America. We are going to conserve and protect our waters in the Great Lakes and around Ontario for generations to come.

**Mr. Crozier:** We are all aware of the fact that 70% of Ontarians get their drinking water from the Great Lakes, and I'm pleased that you were able to explain why we are having to implement a modest water-taking charge. But I also know that you have travelled across the province, that you've met with important rural representatives in my own riding, in the riding of Chatham-Kent Essex and in others across the province, and it's clear that you have the best interests of rural Ontario at heart.

Since we're on the topic of clean, safe drinking water, would you mind clearing up some of the misconceptions out there that the members of the official opposition and the NDP caucus are perpetuating throughout rural Ontario about the important steps the McGuinty government is taking to protect drinking water in our great province?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** We have a history in this province that has brought very much to light that it's not easy or inexpensive to have high standards for our drinking water. We learned those lessons from Walkerton and we've learned them from Justice O'Connor.

I have to say that I'd ask the Conservative Party, the party of John Tory, to stop fearmongering in rural Ontario. We've committed \$120 million for source protection already. Our Clean Water Act includes an Ontario drinking water stewardship program that will provide rural Ontarians with \$7 million in 2007-08 and \$21 million over the next three years to allow for outreach education and to fund early action to protect drinking water. Ron Bonnett, past president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, says, "This first-stage financial assistance goes a long way toward addressing the concerns of the farming community."

Our government is listening to rural Ontario. I'd like to reassure rural Ontarians that we are not planning on metering their private wells, and I would encourage the members of the opposition to stop scaremongering.

#### ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is for the Deputy Premier. One hundred and nineteen questions so far and still zero answers. The dodging and deflecting, dithering and denying have got to stop. The people of Ontario need to have their faith restored that this government acted to close the barn door before the horse fled, not after. But as we've seen over the course of the last two and half weeks, over the last 119 questions, this government has refused to come clean about when it knew it and what it knew. That's why we need a committee to investigate. Will the minister agree

to refer this matter to a committee of the Legislature so we can clear up this matter once and for all?

**1520**

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I'm grateful for one more opportunity to answer this question, but somewhat disappointed that yet again it hasn't come from the member for Erie-Lincoln. He likes to talk. He likes to talk about hiding under the desk, and it seems that he's become rather expert as this issue has been around the Ontario Legislature. Perhaps—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Oh, he is here, Mr. Speaker, only not in his seat.

The Ombudsman and KPMG have given us awfully strong advice about the steps that must be taken to restore all the confidence that may have been put at risk as a result of the challenges at the OLG over a long period of time. We've made really good progress already, and we're very dedicated, on behalf of those players in the province of Ontario, to move forward on all of the recommendations. We will continue to dedicate our daily energy to building on the recommendations that have been made. We think that the big light has been exposed, and it's our responsibility to move forward as swiftly as we can to address the recommendations on point. That's what we're doing.

**Mr. Miller:** One hundred and twenty questions; zero answers. The minister continues to dodge and deflect, dither and deny, and the questions go unanswered.

If there's nothing to hide, if everything was above board, if when they first found out they acted to clean it up rather than cover it up, there should be no problem with an investigation into the minister's office, the Premier's office and the OLG. What are you afraid of? Why won't you act to clear the air and agree to send this matter to committee?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** That's 120 opportunities when members over there made a determination that it was better to pursue this than to offer Ontarians a piece of public policy, as an example, or to ask questions in the Legislature about matters related to health, education, the environment and circumstances for children. Those are their choices and we respect that, but our obligation is to address the information that's been made available as a result of the exhaustive work of the Ombudsman and the advice of KPMG. Everybody who's been around a long time knows—no one perhaps as well as the member from Erie-Lincoln—or has reviewed the Ombudsman's report. They know there are concerns that have been raised, and anyone who's been interested is very well aware of those. Our responsibility is to move forward, in as prompt a fashion as possible, to address on point the recommendations that were made, and we will continue to bring all of our energy dedicated to that very task.

#### NUCLEAR WASTE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** A question for the Deputy Premier: In the last month, the Nuclear

Waste Management Organization has said that it would accept burial of nuclear waste in sedimentary rock in southern Ontario. Can you tell us if any community in Ontario will be exempted from being an area that may be considered for the deposit of nuclear waste; for instance, London?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I know that the Minister of the Environment and others will look forward to the opportunity to address that question with the honourable member, building on past responses to it. But I would like to take the opportunity to speak to him as a Toronto member. I'm very puzzled why your party leader has today reversed a long-standing NDP policy to build a new subway line to York University and beyond to York region, and especially why your party's fascination and fixation on issues in northwestern Ontario related to employment have not mattered one little bit for the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of workers at plants in northwestern Ontario who will be put out of work as a result of this policy reversal. Why doesn't the honourable member—a Toronto member with that weak-kneed Toronto back row—stand in his place and tell us, is he in favour of the subway line to York University and beyond to York region or does he stand with the historic policy reversal of his leader, who has abandoned the workers of northwestern Ontario?

## PETITIONS

### SMOKING LOUNGES

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** I have a petition set up by Jack Murray from Norview Lodge to maintain smoking rooms at Norview Lodge.

“Whereas Norview Lodge constructed their new home, including two designated smoking rooms, in compliance with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care design standards, 1998;

“Whereas it would cost the county taxpayers \$60,000 to renovate the existing rooms to meet smoke-free Ontario design requirements;

“Whereas we do not feel it's safe to force residents outside to enjoy a cigarette;

“Whereas Norview Lodge becomes the home of the residents and they therefore should be afforded the opportunity to smoke in their home;

“We, the undersigned, petition the provincial government to provide for grandfathering in the legislation to allow smoking rooms that were built in compliance with the most recent design standards to remain open.”

I agree with the sentiments and affix my signature.

### FRAUD

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** I have a petition signed by 331 people from the community of Val

Rita in regard to a particular issue within the municipality dealing with fraud, and I table this with the Legislature.

## REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly regarding the regulation of zoos to protect animals and communities.

“Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

“Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

“Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

“Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

“Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act.”

In support of it, I put my signature to the petition.

## VISITOR

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'd like to take a moment to introduce, in the visitors' gallery, James Moffat, the training and trades coordinator for the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers' and Roofers' Conference, and welcome him to the chamber.

## LAKERIDGE HEALTH

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm also reading a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Whereas Durham hospitals currently receive” \$279 “per person less funding than the rest of Ontario hospitals; and

“Whereas our hospitals need strong community support to address the issues of hospital funding inequity between hospitals in Durham region and hospitals outside the GTA 905 corridor; and

“Whereas the Ontario” McGuinty “government, by providing \$7 million in ongoing funding and a one-time ... \$1-million cash infusion, is forcing Lakeridge Health to cut costs by \$8 million; and

“Whereas these cuts come in the form of (1) major reductions in addiction care, child and adolescent mental health and crisis intervention services; (2) coverage of payment to physicians; (3) potential consolidations of some services from smaller sites” in “Bowmanville and Port Perry ... and other so-called ‘efficiencies’;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the CAW, Local 222, Retired Workers Chapter, representing some 9,500 retired auto workers and their families in Durham call on

the Ontario government to support Lakeridge Health to (1) maintain essential core services at each site according to their current health service plan; (2) maintain their current addiction and mental health programs; and (3) maintain the current level of Lakeridge Health staff positions, volunteers and foundations whose caring, hard work and dedication have helped Lakeridge Health rank in the top 25% of hospitals in terms of efficiencies.”

This petition has been submitted to me by Bernie Heming and a number of other retired workers from the CAW in the riding of Durham. I'm pleased to support this and present it to Alex.

#### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** There seems to be great support across Ontario for MPP David Zimmer's bill.

“Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

“Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

“Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

“Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

“Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act.”

With a world-renowned zoo in Peterborough, I will affix my signature to this petition.

1530

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario will not meet the needs of its aging population and ensure access to hospital services unless long-term-care homes can provide the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas staff are now run off their feet trying to keep up and homes are unable to provide the full range of care and programs that residents need or the menu choices that meet their expectations; and

“Whereas dietary, housekeeping and other services that residents and their families value are being put at risk by increasing operating costs; and

“Whereas some 35,000 residents still live in older homes, many with three- and four-bed ward rooms and wheelchair-inaccessible washrooms; and

“Whereas, on November 23, 2006, this Legislature unanimously passed a private member's motion asking

the government to introduce a capital renewal program for B and C homes; and

“Whereas such a program is required to support the limited-term licensing provisions in the proposed new Long-Term Care Homes Act;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$390 million in 2007 and \$214 million in 2008 to provide an additional 30 minutes of resident care, enhance programs and meal menus and address other operating cost pressures, and introduce a capital renewal and retrofit program for all B and C homes, beginning with committing to provide \$9.5 million this year to renew the first 2,500 beds.”

I'm happy to sign this and support it.

#### SALE OF DOMESTIC WINES AND BEERS

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** I have 28,000 signatures on the following petition that I want to submit. The petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario restricts the sale of domestic wines and beers to the LCBO, the Beer Store and a few winery retail stores; and

“Whereas other provinces (notably Quebec) have been selling beer and wine in local convenience stores ... without any harm to the well-being of the public; and

“Whereas it is desirable to promote the sale of 100% Ontario VQA wines and Ontario brewed beer in a convenient manner consistent with a contemporary society, to promote locally grown and produced products, and support local convenience stores; and

“Whereas it is obvious that the market trends of selling wines and beer in convenience stores is not ‘if’ but when;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Liquor Control Act to permit the sale of 100% Ontario grown VQA wines and Ontario brewed beer in local convenience stores to the public throughout the province” of Ontario.

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

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm pleased to present a petition, and with your indulgence, it's from Strathaven Lifecare Centre, Marnwood Lifecare Centre, Fosterbrooke community nursing home in Port Perry, Wynfield in north Oshawa, and from their administrators, community advisory councils and the residents in the long-term-care facilities in my riding. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario will not meet the needs of its aging population and ensure access to hospital services unless long-term-care homes can provide the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas staff are now run off their feet trying to keep up and homes are unable to provide the full range of care and programs that residents need or the menu choices that meet their expectations; and

“Whereas dietary, housekeeping and other services that residents and their families value are being put at risk by increasing operating costs; and

“Whereas some 35,000 residents still live in older homes, many with three- and four-bed ward rooms and wheelchair-inaccessible washrooms; and

“Whereas, on November 23, 2006, this Legislature unanimously passed a private member’s motion” requesting “the government to introduce a capital renewal program for B and C homes; and

“Whereas such a program is required to support the limited-term licensing provisions in the proposed new Long-Term Care Homes Act,” Bill 140;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$390 million in 2007 and \$214 million in 2008 to provide an additional 30 minutes of resident care, enhance programs and meal menus and address other operating cost pressures, and introduce a capital renewal and retrofit program for all B and C homes, beginning with committing to provide \$9.5 million this year to renew the first 2,500 beds.”

I’m pleased to present this to Craig and sign it on behalf of my constituents.

#### TUITION

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** This petition is:

“To Stop Tuition Fee Hikes and Improve Access and Quality in Post-Secondary Education

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Liberal government cancelled the tuition fee freeze after only two years and approved fee increases of up to 36% over the next four years; and

“Whereas tuition fees in Ontario have increased by more than four times the rate of inflation over the past 15 years; and

“Whereas a majority of Ontarians oppose tuition fee increases and support greater public funding for colleges and universities; and

“Whereas improvements to student financial assistance are undermined by fee increases; and

“Whereas the Ontario government’s recent increase to student loan limits is set to push student debt to approximately \$28,000 for a four-year program; and

“Whereas per student investment in Ontario still lags significantly behind the vast majority of jurisdictions in North America;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, support the Canadian Federation of Students’ call to stop tuition fee hikes and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“—reduce tuition fees to 2004 levels for all students in Ontario and implement an immediate tuition fee freeze;

“—increase public funding for post-secondary education to promote access and quality;

“—expand access to financial aid in Ontario, especially for part-time students; and

“—double the number of upfront, need-based grants for Ontario students.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature hereto.

#### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** This petition is on behalf of constituents in Wallaceburg, Petrolia, Strathroy and Chatham.

“Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly

“Regulate Zoos to Protect Animals and Communities

“Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

“Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

“Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

“Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

“Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer’s bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act.”

I affix my signature to it as well.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare funding, and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas demand for health services is expected to continue to rise with a growing retirement population in Muskoka-East Parry Sound; and

“Whereas studies indicate that overcrowded emergency rooms result in higher mortality rates; and

“Whereas growing demand and lack of availability of long-term-care beds place increased pressure on acute care beds; and

“Whereas the operating budget for MAHC must reflect the growing demand for service in the communities of Muskoka-East Parry Sound;

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

“That the McGuinty government and the Minister of Health provide adequate increases in the operating budget of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare to maintain current health services for the people of Muskoka-East Parry Sound and allocate more long-term-care beds for Muskoka-East Parry Sound.”

I support this petition.

## GRAVESITES OF FORMER PREMIERS

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** I have a petition presented to me by some members of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Premiers of Ontario have made enormous contributions over the years in shaping the Ontario of today; and

"Whereas, as a result, the final resting places of the 18 deceased Premiers are among the most historically significant sites in the province, but have yet to be officially recognized; and

"Whereas, were these gravesites to be properly maintained and marked with an historical plaque and a flag of Ontario, these locations would be a source of pride to the communities where these former Premiers lie buried, and provide potential points of interest for visitors;

"Now therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 25, An Act to preserve the gravesites of former Premiers of Ontario."

As I agree with this petition, I have affixed my signature.

1540

## OPPOSITION DAY

### BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the 2007 Ontario budget fails to address the pressing need for border infrastructure in the Windsor region; and

That, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government must immediately commit to funding the Windsor-Detroit corridor infrastructure, including tunnelled access to the next border crossing, and guarantee that there will be no toll roads.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Mr. Hampton has moved opposition day motion number 2. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** The most recent provincial budget of the McGuinty government failed a lot of people in Ontario. It failed low-income Ontarians who work for minimum wage. They work hard and play by the rules but can't get ahead because the McGuinty government continues to insist on a minimum wage that is, frankly, too low. It failed Ontario families who need a real child care plan. It failed to fix the school funding formula. It failed a number of communities.

Today I want to raise the issues surrounding how this budget failed a particular region: the region of Windsor–Essex.

Windsor and District Labour Council president Gary Parent was quoted in a recent *Globe and Mail* article as saying that Windsor is an economic barometer, that

where Windsor is going, the economy of Ontario is sure to follow. That is not good, because as of March 2007, the unemployment rate in Windsor has now reached 10.6%, one of the highest unemployment rates the city has experienced in many, many years and one of the very highest unemployment rates in the province. With that kind of unemployment rate, Ontario is in trouble if Windsor is a barometer.

In contrast to an unemployment rate of 10.6%, I believe in a good job for everyone. That's because a good job is the best way to make sure that working families share in the province's prosperity. In Ontario, manufacturing jobs are some of our very best jobs. But there is a very clear crisis in Ontario's manufacturing heartland: a jobs crisis. Since June 2004, over 140,000 of Ontario's good manufacturing jobs have been lost, and Windsor has been hit especially hard.

These aren't just numbers. These are people with families, mortgages, car payments; people who work hard and who play by the rules so they can make a decent living. The McGuinty government is letting these people down. The McGuinty government's failed policies are responsible for the destruction of 140,000 Ontario manufacturing jobs; jobs with good pay, good benefits, decent pensions. The McGuinty government refuses to do anything to address these issues—other than the Premier giving himself a \$40,000 pay raise.

People from Windsor know that when manufacturing plants close down and auto plants lay off workers, those lost jobs will have an impact far greater than the immediate number.

These problems are affecting Ontarians throughout the province, but in particular, they are hurting people in the Windsor–Essex region.

Windsor is facing some very difficult circumstances, as I say, with an unemployment rate in March 2007 of 10.6%. This is very serious. While Windsor needs action on a variety of fronts, inconsistent crossing times or delays for trucks at the Ambassador Bridge, which handles 25% of our nation's trade with the United States, cost the Windsor–Essex region and all of Ontario millions of dollars in lost manufacturing investment and jobs.

It's very clear: Windsor needs better border infrastructure to sustain jobs. For a decade, the people of Windsor have suffered because governments have tried to cut corners at the border. Once again, sadly, it looks like it's going to happen under the McGuinty government—a McGuinty government that is taking Windsor for granted. This is why I and my NDP colleagues have decided to raise the border infrastructure issues in Windsor today.

The McGuinty government could have done something about this in its recent budget but decided not to, so we want to make sure that the people of Windsor, the workers in Windsor, are not alone in calling for action now. The people of Windsor have noticed the McGuinty government's failure on this issue. They've noticed the fact that while a lot has been said, nothing much has happened.



Within a day of the provincial budget being tabled, members of the Windsor media were already calling the budget a failure and demanding action from Windsor's two absentee cabinet ministers. In the Windsor Star, Gord Henderson wrote that Dwight Duncan had been hung out to dry by his cabinet colleagues, and that if Duncan's contention "that the province's commitment to a third crossing is 'real and unequivocal,'" then "why didn't Sorbara refer to it in his budget speech and attach a price tag?"

The Windsor Star, in an editorial the day after the budget, said, "It's about time that Dwight Duncan and Sandra Pupatello showed finance minister Greg Sorbara a map of Ontario that includes the city of Windsor. If they can still remember where Windsor is, of course, because it is hardly to be found in Ontario's budget, which doles out cash for infrastructure projects in pretty much every region of the province except for Windsor and Essex county."

The people of Windsor know the McGuinty Liberals didn't stand up for them in this most recent provincial budget. They also know that their real allies in their battle for fairness have been their two federal NDP members, the only people who have consistently called for real action to address border infrastructure in Windsor. Windsor's two NDP MPs, Brian Masse and Joe Comartin, have been calling for action immediately to address Windsor's border infrastructure challenge, and they have been successful because they've forced the federal government to start taking this issue seriously and commit some \$400 million towards the creation of a third Windsor border crossing. Contrast this with the two Liberal MPPs, who are both in the McGuinty government cabinet and who should both have the ear of the Premier, but have failed in comparison. They have not forced the McGuinty government to take this issue seriously and they have not stood up for the needs of their constituents.

They have a relatively simple proposition before them. Windsor New Democrat MPs have already forced the federal government to agree to a new bridge. They have even convinced the federal government to contribute 50% of the funding for the new access route, which is a provincial responsibility. All the McGuinty government needs to do is to pony up the rest of the money for the access route.

Will the province provide funding for the access route to the bridge? When asked that question, the McGuinty government and the local representatives of the McGuinty government in Windsor simply refuse to say. Will a new access route tear through neighbourhoods, increasing smog and dangerous traffic? The McGuinty government and the two local McGuinty government MPPs won't say. But ask them what they think of ridiculously inflated estimates for a tunnel that is supported by the local councils, local mayors and families in the community, ask them what they think about cooked reports claiming the public is worried about the artificially inflated price tags, and lo and behold, the two local Liberal representatives have lots to say. They suddenly find their voice.

## 1550

They won't stand up for their constituents in supporting a tunnel and supporting a new border crossing. They won't stand up to the bureaucrats opposed to a border plan that families in Windsor want. In effect, Windsor's two McGuinty cabinet ministers are taking their own city, their own region, for granted. They are telling the people of Windsor that their needs, Windsor's needs, aren't important, that they expect to get re-elected without doing what they were elected to do—stand up for their constituents. Well, I think people in Windsor deserve better.

The solution, I believe, is reasonably clear. All the reports, media and the people of Windsor are unanimous: Windsor needs to be able to get goods across the border. Windsor needs improved border infrastructure. As importantly, it needs to be done right. It needs to respect the families of Windsor and ensure their air is clean and their streets are safe for their kids. What Windsor needs is a third border crossing connected to the 401 by an access tunnel, so that the west end of Windsor is not bisected by another truck transport thruway. Windsor needs this so that its manufacturing sector can be sustained and begin to take off again. Windsor needs this and Ontario needs this. New Democrats are going to continue to raise the issue in Ottawa and here in Toronto so that Windsor's needs will be addressed and so Windsor's voice will be heard in the provincial Legislature.

I call upon the McGuinty government, where is the funding? Where is the commitment of the McGuinty government to the improved border infrastructure, the improved border crossing that the people of Windsor have been very patient in asking for and very patient in working for? Where is the McGuinty government and where are the McGuinty government MPPs on this issue when it comes to speaking up for and standing up for the people of Windsor?

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Ottawa–Orléans.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** I appreciate the opportunity to speak about the motion introduced by the leader of the third party today. The member for Kenora–Rainy River makes three claims today: (1) that the Ontario budget fails to address the need for border infrastructure in the Windsor region; (2) that the funding for the Windsor-Detroit infrastructure be committed immediately; and (3) that there be no toll roads. I'd like to address each of these points in sequence.

First of all, the leader of the NDP suggests that we have not mentioned any commitment with regard to the Windsor-Detroit border in the budget tabled on March 22, 2007. As part the Ontario budget announcement some three weeks ago, the provincial government reaffirmed its commitment to the Windsor-Detroit gateway and stated that our first priority is increasing capacity at the Windsor corridor.

Of course, Windsor-Detroit crossings handled \$158.7 billion in trade in 2004. That's over 28% of the total Canada-US trade. So obviously we would mention it in

our budget. I'd just like to read from the budget prepared by Mr. Sorbara:

"Border Improvements....

"In Progress:

"—the Let's Get Windsor–Essex Moving strategy, announced in March 2004, including \$300 million to improve local roads and highways, and improve the Windsor–Detroit Tunnel Plaza"—those projects are underway.

"—environmental assessment studies and community consultation on a new Detroit River crossing and on access-road options"—again, that is underway.

"—over \$200 million invested to widen Highway 401 from Windsor to Tilbury, in partnership with the federal government."

So, in total, \$500 million presently working to improve the border crossing.

In fact, the Ontario government has taken a leadership role and significant progress has been made in the identification of an end-to-end crossing system connecting Highway 401 to Interstate 75. Furthermore, the budget document promises that construction of the new Windsor–Detroit crossing will be completed in 2013.

The Detroit River International Crossing Study, comprised of federal, state and provincial agencies, is a complex and ambitious undertaking. It is on track to be completed more quickly than comparable projects would have been in the past. We would all like this process to move along even more quickly. However, we must ensure that the environmental assessment process is followed and that this process meets the standards outlined in Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act and other environmental legislation.

If we were to rush to make a decision the way the member for Kenora–Rainy River has suggested, we would be rushing a process that I'm sure he knows cannot be compromised. The honourable member is asking that we undermine the environmental assessment process governed by legislation. As we all know, an environmental assessment is a transparent decision-making process that includes close consultation with all the affected parties and agencies and offers many opportunities for public input. As a matter of fact, this EA included extensive public consultation, with more than 150 engagements to date.

It also requires the consideration of all reasonable alternatives and the assessment of all impacts, whether they are social, economic, health-related or environmental, just to name a few. This particular environmental assessment will meet the requirements through the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and the Canadian environmental act. In the United States, the environmental impact study will meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

The border transportation partnership identified 15 possible river crossings in June 2005. This is part of the process. All alternatives must be considered. There were 15 different crossings that had to be looked at initially. Through systematic analysis and evaluation, this list was

reduced to the practical alternatives currently under consideration: three river crossings; three plaza locations on the Canadian side; five options for the access road, including at-grade, depressed and tunnelled roadways on our side of the river.

I'm sure that the member for Kenora–Rainy River would agree that this makes for a complicated environmental assessment process with numerous players and multiple levels of government involved. However, we must ensure that the environment is a priority throughout the planning stage and observe the legislation governing this process. Particular concerns of note include the study of soil and groundwater conditions and, of course, air quality. I would think that this would be a priority for the leader of the NDP as well. I'm sure that the impacts on public health and safety would also be of interest to the leader of the third party. Despite all these considerations and all the parties involved, we are moving ahead according to the schedule.

The Detroit River international crossing EA commenced in 2005—that's the selection process under the environment assessment—and it is expected that the preferred alternative to connect the 401 to I-75 will be identified late this year. This is moving at a rate that was planned and according to applicable legislation. It is a priority for Ontario and it's certainly a priority for this government.

Allow me to remind this House that it was under this government that the EA for the Detroit River international crossing was initiated and it is this government that is moving the project forward.

I would like to let the member for Kenora–Rainy River know that the commitment to the Detroit River crossing was reiterated in the budget and, further, that the McGuinty government and its partners have funded the planning need and feasibility study and the EA for a total of \$4 million.

The second and third points that the member for Kenora–Rainy River makes are related. The leader of the third party suggest that funding for this project be committed Immediately. First of all, the border transportation partnership is on schedule to identify a single preferred option for a new access road in Canada linking Highway 401 to a new inspection plaza, a river crossing, a US inspection plaza and the US interstate system this year. Once the preferred alternative is selected in 2007, the design for this project will proceed in 2008 and probably be completed in 2009. Construction can then start and the entire project will be completed, as it says in the budget document, in 2013. This is the planning of the four governments—the US, Canada, the state of Michigan and the province of Ontario. This is their planning, to have it done in 2013.

This process, as with all major transportation projects in Ontario, will see the budget determined during the design process. If we were to allocate funds to construction at this time, it would be premature and could possibly prejudice the outcome of the environmental assessment. The cost of this project—there are still five

alternatives—ranges from \$620 million on the low side to \$3.8 billion on the high side. I just ask the member for Kenora which he would choose, which he would fund. Of course, during the environmental assessment process we haven't determined the selected alternative, we haven't been able to fix the dollar value, and committing funds before the process is complete is against the environmental assessment.

**1600**

What we can tell you at this point is that the Ministry of Transportation will commit to 50% of the cost for building the access road for a new Windsor-Detroit border crossing, with the other 50% coming from Transport Canada; that's by agreement. This funding will be provided alongside previous commitments of over \$500 million to the Windsor-Essex area for transit, highway infrastructure, municipal roads and bridges, and a border transportation partnership since October 2003. These are investments to be proud of.

With regard to tolling, it would be premature for a final decision on this issue as well. The cost of the crossing itself will be absorbed by the federal governments of Canada and the US, and it is too early to prejudge a decision on tolling from either the Canadian or US side of the bridge.

To summarize, it seems as though the leader of the third party is anxious to circumvent the environmental assessment process and essentially have the government break the law. He is willing to commit funds prematurely to a project which has not been defined by the environmental assessment process and whose cost has not yet been determined. He's asking us to promise not to introduce tolls without consulting the other parties that will be funding the crossing. In short, he is asking us to break the rules and to undermine public health and safety, to the detriment of the environment. Taking all of this into consideration, I would have to do no less than ask the leader of the third party to withdraw this motion.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I'm pleased to participate in the debate on the motion put forward by Mr. Hampton. I would say at the outset that I certainly support—we support—the intent of this motion to finally see the government take action on a file that is suffering decision gridlock by this government. What is surprising about the government's lack of action on this file is that we have a former Minister of Finance and a Minister of Economic Development who represent Windsor, both of whom know full well the importance of dealing with the gridlock that we have at the border crossing. We shouldn't have to educate either of those ministers or the current Minister of Finance to remind them that some \$570 billion of two-way merchandise trade takes place at that Windsor-Detroit border. The fact that there is such gridlock there now is not only affecting the economy, it's also affecting the quality of life of the people who live in Windsor.

I can tell you that as far back as July 24, 2003, the government of Ontario recognized at that time the importance of moving forward with a major infrastructure

program. At that time, on an interim basis, the province of Ontario committed \$300 million. That was matched by the federal government at the time. There was a nine-point strategic plan that was announced by the Minister of Transportation at the time, as well as the federal minister, who was Allan Rock. I happen to know personally about that announcement because I was there as Minister of Transportation. At that time, I had discussions with both members from Windsor, who I referenced. They were supportive of that nine-point plan. I think what's happened here in the meantime is that neither member is willing to take a position on what in fact is the right thing to do.

The reality is that there will be people who will not be happy with whatever decision is taken, because there will be an interference with some quality of life along the corridors that ultimately are determined to be taken. That is unfortunate, but the reality is that this is a matter not only of importance to the local economy; it is a matter of impacting the Ontario economy and, in fact, the national economy. So I recall well being involved in the discussions at the time that the decision was taken by the provincial government of the day and the federal government of the day that this is an issue where we will have to override many of the localized objections that will naturally take place when a decision is made about what this new crossing or the multiple new crossings are going to look like. That's unfortunate, but that's a responsibility of leadership.

My concern here is not so much that the funds aren't designated in the budget; the real issue here is a lack of leadership on the part of this government. I think what we have here is a hesitation, because we're now three and a half years into the mandate of this government. They've had the responsibility to make these decisions as a government for three and a half years, and they have done nothing other than to shuffle the cards on the table. It's not the first time that we hear from this government, "Oh, we're doing a great deal. We have this study happening and that study happening." And while the studies are taking place, the problem continues to get worse; the impact on the community continues to become more desperate.

What we're calling on the government to do is to make a decision, to move forward. They're prepared to accelerate environmental processes in a number of other areas. We've heard from the Minister of the Environment in this place over the last number of months on numerous occasions that because of the importance of a particular project, they're prepared to streamline, accelerate and move environmental processes forward. Why not in this case? I'll tell you why: because we're too close to an election—again, too close to an election. Neither member from Windsor wants to be negatively affected. That's really what this comes down to; it comes down to election politics. Rather than demonstrate leadership, what we have is non-decision and all on the backs of the local economy, the provincial economy, the national economy. More important than all of that is the quality of life for

the people who make their homes in the Windsor area, because while they continue to allow the gridlock to happen, the impact on the environment, the pollution that takes place, the frustration within that local area for residents—because the entire corridor is bordered by residential areas—until such time as the government takes a decision to create an appropriate gateway and ensure that the transportation corridors are appropriately constructed, will continue to get worse.

So I say to the parliamentary assistant, with all due respect, I appreciate his defence of the non-action on the part of the government, but it's not going to wash in Windsor. It's not going to wash with the trucking industry that has been urging provincial and federal governments to get on with this project for years. We thought we were there, we thought we had a program in place in 2003, announced we were looking for the international study group to come forward with the recommendations for the long-term solutions, and I'll tell you what we have now: Three and a half years after this government was sworn in in this place, we have nothing more than more studies.

At some point, the people are going to wake up and realize that two supposedly powerful cabinet ministers on the front benches in this place are folding their hands, are washing their hands of this because they simply don't want to take a stand. They don't want to go into this next election and have people point the finger at them and say, "You're doing something I don't like." There is a void of leadership on the part of this government, particularly with something as important as an international border and gateway. I believe that that is unconscionable. It's why people are elected to this place, to make those decisions that are not only right for the short term, but for the long-term benefit of our communities, of our province and of our country.

#### 1610

So I will be voting in favour of the resolution, but I do want to go on record as saying that there's one aspect of this resolution that I do take exception to, and that's the reference to no tolling. The reason I say that is that we have to be practical. I think it's something that the government is starting to learn, because when they were here, they sang the same song: no tolls, no involvement of the private sector, everything has to be paid by the taxpayer. What they're realizing now as they're sitting around the cabinet table is that that's all nice and good, and it sounds good when you're out there on the campaign trail, but when you come to the reality of governing, it's unrealistic. Somebody has to pay the toll. I happen to be one who believes that a user should pay a toll, pay a fee. I believe that in this particular case, knowing what I know about the cost that will be involved in finally getting on with the project, there is a responsibility, and should be a responsibility, for an appropriate measurement of the cost that should be assessed to a user of those border crossings. It's taking place now. You go to the bridge that's there, you go to the tunnel that's there, and you pay your toll. People simply accept that as

a matter of fact. So I fully expect that in the real world that will also be a component of any future border crossing.

Having said that, I want to thank the leader of the third party for bringing this forward, for pointing out, not only to the people of Windsor but to the people of the province, that this is a government that refuses to take the difficult decisions, and because of that, they continue to create more and more problems, not only for individuals, for communities, for businesses, but for our entire province and our competitiveness in a very competitive world.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** It's an honour to follow Howard Hampton, the leader of the New Democratic Party, and to support, of course, this opposition day motion. It was also interesting for me to hear the comments of the member for Ottawa–Orléans and also, with a great degree of interest, the member for Oak Ridges.

Just for the sake of those who are watching at home, I thought I'd, to coin a phrase, back up the truck a little bit and talk a little bit about the history that this is predicated upon. The Detroit River International Crossing Study group assessed the environmental impact. The member opposite was asking about environmental studies. Well, there was one done on the impact of a newer, expanded Detroit River crossing.

The new bridge, hoped to be built by 2013, would also involve the construction of new customs inspection plazas and connecting highways. Construction could start as soon as next year, they ascertained. The DRIC considered three locations for a new border crossing at that time and has decided a new border crossing should be built somewhere in west Windsor, with the trucks from Highway 401 accessing it down Huron Church Road and Talbot Road. Access may come via a tunnel, a road "at grade" or one "below grade." Tunnelling is overwhelmingly the preferred option, endorsed by local councillors, the mayor and both NDP MPs. This speaks to the lack of a study that's been done. Clearly, it has been studied, and clearly a decision has been reached.

In the 2007 federal budget, the Harper government allocated \$400 million for the Windsor gateway border crossing. The funding is earmarked to support construction of the new access route. Again, concerns about funding: There's \$400 million waiting. When local NDP MPs Comartin and Masse criticized the Harper government for only allocating one year of funding, they of course held the greatest degree of scorn, not for the Harper government in this instance but for the McGuinty budget that did not even mention the border at all, much less allocate any funding. So funding studies: both done, and no action for Windsor on behalf of the McGuinty government or the members from Windsor.

Just to follow up on this, to talk about what Windsor wants, Mayor Eddie Francis and other local politicians say they are ready to push senior government decision-makers into building a tunnel to keep border-bound trucks off city streets: "Tunnelling is the best solution we've seen thus far," Francis said."

Essex county warden Nelson Santos also supports a truck tunnel: “‘This infrastructure will be important for the county and region as a whole,’ Santos said. ‘I view a tunnel as the least intrusive on the community. There is a need to remove trucks from local streets, and tunnelling provides the best opportunity. It’s the one that provides the largest amount of health and safety benefits.’” Another vote of confidence for this project.

To continue, on April 2, city council endorsed tunnelling for the traffic corridor leading to a new border crossing. Council unanimously supported a resolution that a binational commission, the Detroit River international crossing team, assigned to fix the city’s international truck woes, “be advised they must have a tunnelled solution.”

So it seems that as far as Windsor is concerned, the jury is in. They have made their decision; they’ve made their call. But what they’ve met with on behalf of the McGuinty government is complete and utter inaction.

My colleague Howard Hampton, leader of the New Democratic Party, started to read some quotes from the Windsor Star, and there have been many. I will continue reading other quotes from the Windsor Star.

This is more generally about the budget in which they were ignored completely and totally. Here is another one, from March 23 of this year: “When you read the budget document, it’s as if you’re living in a place where there’s prosperity all around and plenty of jobs.... By not acknowledging the issues facing Windsor, you aren’t acknowledging that those issues exist and need to be addressed.” This was by Lydia Miljan, associate professor of political science at the University of Windsor— an authority, one might say.

I go on to quote from Lloyd Brown-John, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Windsor, who said, “[Duncan and Papatello] obviously don’t have very much; you’d think they’d have some influence.”

Continuing other quotes from the Windsor Star—these are all from March; just one month’s worth of quotes— “If there is no line item funding in this budget for an access road, residents would be justified in asking what, exactly, Papatello and Duncan are doing in Toronto.”

Finally, from Gary Parent, president of the Windsor and District Labour Council: “They were silent in regards to Windsor, which has the highest unemployment in the province. I am mad. I’m angry that someone, somewhere, didn’t instill that in someone’s mind.... Obviously I’ll be asking our area MPPs, ‘What is good in this budget for someone in Windsor?’” A good question indeed.

Certainly what is going on in Windsor, what’s happening in Windsor, is indicative of what’s happening across the province. That’s why it’s so important that we speak to this motion, that we speak about Windsor this afternoon.

As you heard my leader say, we’ve lost over 140,000 good manufacturing jobs in this province. Certainly the people across the aisle tout figures that they’ve replaced them with more jobs. But when you actually look at the jobs they replaced them with, they are service sector jobs,

precarious employment jobs, part-time jobs; these are not in any way equivalent to the good, high-paying manufacturing jobs that this province has lost. Of course, we all know that what we need in this province is someone to look at this situation, not to walk around it as this government done. What the New Democratic Party has proposed is a jobs commissioner to look at exactly the issue of lost manufacturing jobs and actually do something about it.

#### 1620

The other night I was on the town hall circuit promoting the \$10 minimum wage, which we do not have yet and won’t have for three years. We are still, and so are many thousands across Ontario, asking for a \$10 minimum wage now—not in three years, not sometime never, but now. I was speaking, in this particular instance, in Newmarket to a group of United Church women, the average age being well in advance of 65— women in their 70s and 80s, a delightful audience at Trinity church in Newmarket. Some of the comments these women were making were drawn from their own experiences.

I asked them, “Do you remember when you were younger that in the province of Ontario you could actually survive as a working family on one income; you could have a house with a car in the driveway on one income?” And I said, “How many of your children can do the same? For those who have grandchildren, how many of your grandchildren can exist as a family on one income and be able to afford a house and a car on one income?” They all admitted that none of them could. Now that’s a palpable change.

Of course, there are other palpable changes that we see over the course of time in this province: job losses, which I’ve just referred to, and an increase in poverty. We are now dealing with a poverty level of 15% to 17% in this province. This budget does nothing to affect that.

I’m sure that those people from Windsor who are listening and who will be reading these transcripts are most concerned, because they live in the area of highest unemployment, as you’ve heard. So again, what happens in Windsor is indicative of what’s happening in this province: a loss of good jobs and the necessity to work two and three jobs just to keep a roof over your head and feed your children. That’s the situation right now.

I’m going to leave some time for my colleagues to speak to this motion. Certainly, I’m in favour of it, and more generally, I’m in favour of seeing some action from across the aisle on the issues that really mean the most to hard-working Ontario families. We’re not seeing that. We’re not seeing it for Windsor, we’re not seeing it for Newmarket, we’re not seeing it for Parkdale–High Park, we’re not seeing it for York South–Weston. We’re not seeing any of what we want to see to address the problems.

In the case of Windsor, the classic symbol of this is their inaction on this border-crossing, which is why we bring it forward. It’s the symbol par excellence of what this government should be doing and is not doing.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, despite the community asking for it, despite all of the studies that have been done and despite some of the money already being there, they're not acting.

Yes, I support the motion. I would like to see it happen immediately, and I urge everyone here to vote with their conscience and vote for Windsor.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** It's a pleasure for me to stand today to speak in opposition to this motion, and I'll give you a couple of reasons for it.

It's always interesting to me that those who are furthest from the problem always have the simplest and best solution. I suspect that anybody on that side of the House who has spoken today or who will speak hasn't had a briefing from the Ministry of Transportation on this issue.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I have.

**Mr. Crozier:** You have? Good. I'll be anxious to hear from you.

In the context of this motion, I agree with the member for Ottawa-Orléans: What Mr. Hampton is asking for is irresponsible. It's almost as though he either has forgotten or never knew what the words "due diligence" mean. I think the same goes for the member for Oak Ridges. He mentioned that he was the Minister of Transportation when all of this started. And do you know what? I thought, at that time, that he bought in to the plan that would have a new international crossing by the year 2013. It sounds to me like he has changed his mind and that he too has forgotten what due diligence means. Those are just a couple of reasons why I won't be able to support this motion.

The McGuinty government, I can assure you, and I assure my residents who surround the city of Windsor, is thoroughly and resolutely committed to the Windsor-Detroit gateway under the ReNew Ontario plan, and our first priority is increasing capacity in the Windsor corridor. Ontario in fact has not only taken the leadership role, but has been given the leadership role in this by the federal government. I'm proud to say that our current Minister of Transportation has visited the Windsor area every month, if not more, but I know it's been at least every month, with this issue being a top priority.

Again I'll go to the member from Oak Ridges, who, as he reminded us, was a minister in the former government. The only time I can remember him coming down, other than when he was at the announcement of the Windsor gateway plan, was during the election, to say with little confidence that they would look at the four-laning of Highway 3 from Leamington to Windsor—which, by the way, carries a great amount of produce from the Leamington area, a great amount of automotive products from Leamington, for example, to and across the border. You know what? Our government didn't just say they would look at it; our government, under the current Minister of Transportation, Donna Cansfield, announced last fall—and it's now in the design phase, for construction to begin this summer—\$80 million for an improvement to Highway 3, running from Leamington to Windsor, to

hook up with this route that will go to the border. That's action, and that's even outside what you folks are asking for. So not only are we doing what should be done in the appropriate way, but we're doing even more.

The Detroit River International Crossing—or DRIC, as it's known down home—Study is comprised of federal, state and provincial agencies, and municipal agencies as well. It's a complex and I would say ambitious undertaking, and it's on track to be completed more quickly than comparable projects have been in the past. Here again I want to point out to those who are calling for it to be done yesterday that we all would like it to be done yesterday. Any time we decide to do something, we decide that we would have liked it before. But that crossing, like the current Ambassador Bridge and tunnel, is going to be there for years and years. If we weren't to do the due diligence and we were to do it wrong, where would we be? To hurry up: that's the simple answer. Of course, we'd like it done sooner. We have a position. We'd like to see the process move along more quickly. But the DRIC Study, the Detroit River International Crossing Study, is a process that's been open and transparent and has had extensive public involvement. A full analysis of how best to design, construct, operate and finance the access road is under way, is on track and is on time. This will include as well the involvement of the private sector.

I want to mention one thing. It would appear as though the member for Oak Ridges is in favour, on the one hand, of tolling, because he said he had one problem with the resolution, and that was where it came to tolling. He went to some great length to explain to us all about something we know very well: that there will be tolls on this bridge. But that, to the member for Oak Ridges, is not what the resolution is talking about. It's talking about tolls on the roads that lead to the bridge. I would suspect he's one of the ones over there, at least, who hasn't had a briefing on this, or he would have known that. To my knowledge, in the years that I've followed it, there is nothing on the table about toll roads. So I don't know where the member from Oak Ridges is coming from, and whether he really knows what it is he opposes or not.

**1630**

In any event, the analysis that I spoke about of the design, construction, operating and financing of the highway will follow the principles of this government's Building a Better Tomorrow framework, and it will, in its most important area, protect the public interest.

The DRIC Study team is completing a thorough and systematic study of five options for the access road, three possible river crossings, and associated inspection plazas. And this is important—and it's interesting that the leader of the third party doesn't understand this; he was in government at one time, and I wouldn't think he has forgotten the kinds of obligations the government has, but I guess he has—that to allocate funds for construction at this time would be premature and could possibly prejudice the outcome of the environmental assessment. If what Mr. Hampton wants to do is prejudice the out-

come of the environmental assessment, I wish he would stand up and say that.

The DRIC Study team is looking at five options for the six-lane freeway access to the new crossing, including at-grade, depressed and tunnelled options.

The design and preliminary cost estimates of the access road, plaza and river crossing will be developed as the study team moves through the final stages of the environmental assessment process.

Isn't that what we want? Apparently not, according to the leader of the third party. He doesn't want to bother with these things: "Let's jeopardize the environmental assessment. Let's not look at the options in a transparent way." In fact, I think there have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of 150 public meetings on this issue. The design and preliminary cost estimates will take all of this into consideration.

The border transportation partnership is moving forward and on schedule to identify a safe, secure and efficient international crossing system, extending from Highway 401 in Ontario to the interstate system in the United States.

Again, if the leader of the third party doesn't want to do any of that, doesn't want to take the time to do it right, I guess it's his right to ask that this be done the way he's looking at it. But I don't agree with him. That's why I agree with my friend from Ottawa-Orléans that this should just simply be thrown out. I would have thought, at the very least, that if you wanted to talk about this issue, you would have had a more comprehensive, better-researched and better-understood motion before us today.

The border transportation partnership, as I said, is moving ahead on schedule. To date, the DRIC Study team has reached project milestones. These include narrowing the initial 15 alternative river crossings to an area of continued analysis; identifying practical alternatives for the access road, inspection plaza and river crossing; and updating the public on the status of the study at key points along the way. Four public information houses have occurred, with more to follow, but there have been 150 meetings that have involved the overall project.

The DRIC Study team is continuing the technical analysis of the practical alternatives. This work will provide the information necessary for the study team and the public to understand the benefits and impacts associated with each of the alternatives. The study team has made significant progress on all of the technical information.

I want to say, in closing, that it's interesting—I'm not surprised—that the leader of the third party would ask that we allocate funds in this budget for construction at this time, when to do that would be premature and, quite frankly, might prejudice the outcome of the environmental assessment. And I will have no part of that.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to the NDP opposition day motion. On behalf of John Tory and the Conservatives, and as the critic for transportation, I respect the issue that the leader of the NDP has brought

before the House in the form of this motion. In fact, I would say that work continues.

I'm just going to give for the viewer today a bit of the background, much of which has been mentioned by the previous speaker, on behalf of John Tory as Leader of the Opposition, Frank Klees, a former Minister of Transportation. The previous speaker, the member from Essex, Mr. Crozier, mentioned that there were improvements in that stretch of the 401 westbound towards Windsor. In fact, I could demonstrate that for you in their capital plan, indeed flowing out of commitments made in that border agreement that Minister Klees at that time announced. I have that press release here with me, if Mr. Crozier would like a copy. That money actually is building lanes in your riding today that flowed back during his time. That was part of the Windsor action plan.

As I said, I have been briefed by the ministry as critic. We're all concerned with how important this particular aspect of the highway system is. This report was issued by the ministry—some very good staff over there, and the assistant deputy minister particularly is very forthcoming, provided you have the right questions, in providing a good response. Now, this is a southern Ontario highway program between 2006 and 2010. These are their capital commitments. There are maps and accompanying explanations for almost every mile of highway under the control of the province of Ontario that's getting some attention.

I thought it was appropriate, for this debate, to look into this capital plan and to see what it says, what their promises are. I don't want to get into that, but when the Liberals promise something, quite frankly, you may expect to be disappointed—a sad thing to say, and as we approach an election, we know that's more and more probable each day. We see it in Lottogate. We see the doors opening towards—avoiding answering the questions. We're at 120 questions on that issue with no answers.

I'm going to read from this report, which is put out by the ministry—and due respect to the hard-working staff there that I hope to have the opportunity to work with when in government. But I will read it. Under this section, there's Windsor, Simcoe county, London, Sarnia, and there are specific references to each area of the province, and there are these maps—again, I repeat—actually by project. There are project numbers and you can actually track. The problem is that some of these target dates to be completed are two elections away. It's troubling. We're hearing that in the budget for children's services, community services and things like that. They have promised that two elections away they will actually deliver the final dollar; the down-payment has been made in advance of the election, of course.

But I'm going to be very specific in response to the opposition day motion, taking upon it a general review and more specifically towards the tunnel project, which I've been following and have been there just recently. In fact, I was there this summer and met with a former MPP from that area. We met with some constituents from that

area, some of the constituents of two current Liberal ministers, Minister Papatello and Minister Duncan—sort of absentee landlords—and Ms. Di Cocco as well. The fact is that the three—even in the Sarnia–Lambton riding—basically are here most of the time and I’m not sure they even read the Windsor Star. If they read the Windsor Star, they’d be somewhat concerned, quite frankly, with the disappointment with any sign of leadership or a plan.

**1640**

But even as I refer to this document, on page 9—I think it’s important to read because I’m sure Dalton signed off on it. It’s got the nice colours that they use on the election signs, the matching kind of—you know, the Liberal colour is maroon; that is what this is. So their signature is all over it. Here’s what it says—Windsor, this is their plan. This is the commitment from McGuinty to Windsor, so if anybody from Windsor is listening—and I suspect Elizabeth Palotas is listening. She has written to most of the Liberal members, including probably Mr. Crozier.

It’s so short that with the limited time I have—this section on Windsor is so short it’s actually embarrassing; it really is. It’s frightening. In fact, there’s no money. Actually, there’s not just no money, there’s no vision. There’s no plan to complete this project. Yet I got into the economics of this important border part of Ontario, the auto sector and all. What it says here is, to get to the point, they’re going four- to six-lane widening of the 401 from Essex—Road 27, Mr. Crozier—to Highway 77 near Windsor. This is a federal-provincial cost-shared project under the strategic highway infrastructure program. The acronym is SHIP. Expanding this stretch of highway will improve safety and traffic flow on Ontario’s most important trade corridor. Expected completion, 2007—probably somewhere around a photo op time prior to the election in October. You become cynical after some time in this job. The overall plan, improvements relate to the 2006 construction plan.

I’m just going to go back here, for the viewers primarily, if you give me a moment here. I went to Mr. Klees’s action plan on Windsor when he was minister. I actually have the announcement. I actually have the federal announcement on the gateway. I also have the joint commitment by the federal and provincial governments at that time of \$300 million. It’s the \$300 million committed when we were government that’s being used by the ministry today, as it should be, years later. It takes five or six years for these projects to come from concept to delivery of final service and product. That money was put in when Ernie Eves was the Premier of this province, into the Ministry of Transportation budget for the long-term planning. Theirs is 2006 to 2010. There is a plan that predates this which deals with this issue.

Now, more importantly, as you bring this thing a little closer to home, there are more details on that announcement. If members of the government side would want it, I’d ask and encourage you if you represent anything close—I know the member from Ottawa–Orléans

doesn’t; he represents an area that has other problems. Certainly there are many problems: gridlock, congestion, no plan for transit, just an absolute vacant record in terms of many, many issues. I could tell you right now—I witness it—many people who are listening today are stuck in gridlock as we speak: the Don Valley Parkway and the 401, or the 427, the bus accident today.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Those are parking lots.

**Mr. O’Toole:** The evidence is clear—not just at Windsor—that it is a problem for the economy of this province. It’s not just the board of trade in Toronto, it’s the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. They’re all saying, “Wake up.” The arteries of the economy are our highways and transportation infrastructure. It has been defined as gridlock or, as the member from Timmins–James Bay says, in many cases these thoroughfares are parking lots. We haven’t seen to any great extent a new or expanded vision or plan or money.

I just want to go back to reminding members that the issue here, the opposition day motion by Mr. Hampton, is critical. Now why would I draw—as a Conservative, we’re very engaged in this debate because of the important link between the standard of living we all wish for and want and having a strong, vibrant economy without the chains and shackles that the McGuinty government has put on in the current budget and the previous budget. All of this shows up every single day. When I listen to announcements day after day after day, they’re post-dated cheques until after the election, for the most part, for children’s services, for mental health services. The Lakeridge hospital in my riding was told and instructed to cut \$3 million from children’s mental health services within the riding of Durham. I’m appalled. And yet, Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, this whole issue is tied together: the border, the economy and the reduction of services in Durham riding and Durham region.

I was at a rather gracious open house for the LHIN, the local health integration network. It’s anything but local; I think their head office is in Algonquin Park. But I was at the opening and they had lovely sandwiches and things like that, which is important, and I think everyone should have a party, but I’m not sure what the plan is. Here we’ve got all the hospitals, the hospital boards, the hospital foundations. In Durham, for instance, they are shortfalled on the operating side. You look at the GTA/905 report; we are \$280 per person less than our counterparts in other parts of the province.

I’m prepared on that health care debate to say this: Let’s say I recognize Sick Kids Hospital and Sunnybrook and some of the centres of excellence, in Toronto for the most part, but there’s the heart institute in Ottawa, there’s the London Health Sciences Centre. These should be excluded from that health/hospital budget stuff. The Ontario Hospital Association should isolate what it costs for a teaching hospital. We need them, we want them, we support them, but they shouldn’t be part of the overall.

Then let’s say what the average money left is for every one of the community hospitals, whether it’s in Port



Perry, Bowmanville, Whitby, Oshawa, Kitchener or North York—wherever. We want our fair share. Some say that \$280 is not exact or it's a misleading number. That could be done by the high-paid bureaucrats in the ministry before they get to the LHINs.

I'm going back to the border issue. The link is that it's affecting our health care. The failure to deliver a plan and the resources to solve the border is a factor that's affecting our economy in Durham, and I put to you, every member here today should be standing on their feet and standing up for their constituents because of the failure of—no plan, once again, by the McGuinty government on the border.

Why do I relate this? Here it is here, the importance of the trade barrier. These are accurate, statistical, non-biased numbers. These are from Statistics Canada, and partly from Mr. Chudleigh, our critic in that area. In US dollars, there's an estimated \$1.2 billion in trade across the US-Canada border daily. Do you realize how important that artery is?

How do I visualize this amount of money? Over 40% of it—that's \$480 million—is at the international land border crossing in the Windsor-Detroit region. What does that mean at \$480 million? On this daily trade route it is as much as \$234 million, or one fifth of the total trade in the automotive sector alone. When I look at the automotive sector, they are in a state of siege. I know we had Dura Automotive last week announce its closing, and I personally know two young, well-trained, well-educated, disciplined engineers who work for Dura Automotive. They are now without a job.

Possibly the competitiveness of Ontario in the auto sector can be directly traced to the lack of a plan by the McGuinty government, let alone the poor Minister of Transportation. She hasn't been given the tools or the resources or the authority to solve this problem. Why do I say that? The response in the Windsor Star—and I see the Minister of Energy is here and he would know that. The Windsor Star, when the federal government in their last budget announced \$400 million toward the ongoing completion of this project—and I could quote that. He said that the whole project is now in the lap, I would say, of the McGuinty government. He said that it's a provincial area.

I fully understand the international problems and trying to find resolutions to this because there's the federal government in Canada, the federal government in the United States—because it's an international issue. So I'm not flogging the whole thing on to the McGuinty government, but they've got to show some leadership. At least make a statement in support of Mr. Hampton's motion here today. Let's get on with it. We're looking for somebody to make a decision.

I see both members here from Windsor. I'm sure they're here because of this debate and I hope they take time to speak. But I'm more interested in how they're going to vote. I will be watching and I'd encourage the viewers to look that up on the online Hansard just to find out how that happened.

I would say that this important link with the economy and this border issue—Canada and the US enjoy the largest bi-national trading relationship in the world. It's valued at \$531 billion. These are huge numbers. Forty-five million vehicles use Ontario-US borders every year. The importance of these links have been somewhat not given the recognition they deserve. It's important to recognize that the infrastructure funding for a new Windsor-Detroit border crossing was a priority in the Windsor and District Chamber of Commerce submission at the pre-budget hearings. I participated in those hearings. They were there. They made their positions known. In fact, the mayor of Windsor made his position clearly known. What's missing here—you wouldn't want Stephen Harper coming, when he's representing Canada and the territories, and telling Dalton or Minister Cansfield what to do. They have given them money, and what we need is a vision. We need some kind of commitment. For those who find this issue a little bit stale or perhaps not interesting, the important link of this has been made with the economy, our quality of life, the competitiveness of our economy, of this one decision.

#### 1650

We asked 120 questions on the Lottogate scandal, the lottery scandal. We haven't had one answer. This is one question here today that the opposition, the NDP, has raised in this motion about the importance of that Windsor border-crossing issue.

If you look at it, there's quite a good article, quite frankly—this one here is from the Windsor Star, so these are local comments. This is a response to "New Border Route Could Begin Next Year." This is important; the Premier should be listening. If he doesn't, I'll send a copy of Hansard.

It says, "Ottawa's \$400-million federal budget allocation for the Windsor gateway border crossing project is earmarked to support construction of the controversial new Huron Church Road ... superhighway, confirmed federal transportation and finance authorities...." That would be Minister Flaherty and Lawrence Cannon, the Minister of Transportation: excellent members. Harper is actually focused on this. This is one part of a huge country he's trying to govern. He's got to do Dalton's job.

"The feds have also provided \$10 million over three years to Transport Canada staff," to be in Windsor to support this effort to get the project moving along. So there is a note of urgency. This is a report from march 20, so it's fairly current.

It goes on, and I quote: "'This shouldn't be considered final funding,' said Mark Butler, spokesman for Transport Canada. 'It's an initial set of funds and there could be substantially more.'"

So they're saying it. They're committed; they're behind it; they're with it. They have the plan, the energy, the vision.

All of that—that's the tragic point of this debate—is missing in action. It's troublesome. What's the problem? They're coming up to an election and they don't want to

rock the boat. What's the rocking the boat issue about? I'm going to get to it.

In the budget, the federal government unveiled money, pledged 50% towards the cost of the new border access road that will cut through south Windsor from the end of Highway 401—you're familiar with that if you travel that area—to the new border crossing planned somewhere in the Brighton Beach area.

It goes on to say, "But the feds"—here is the important thing—"have conceded authority to the province of Ontario...." There you have it. They've said to you, "Here is some money." We are promised 50%. What's the plan? It's like question period: There's never any answer.

It's tragic, what's happened. I think they're waiting, trying to not make any mistakes, until October 10, when the election is. Of course, the election was supposed to be October 4, I think, but they changed that, like a few other mistakes they've made as well. But the feds have conceded this. The highway stretches roughly six kilometres, from Howard Avenue to the E.C. Row Expressway. Listen, this is the issue, this is the decision Dalton and his cabinet colleagues have to make, and I would suspect that Mr. Dwight Duncan, minister, and Ms. Sandra Pupatello, minister at the cabinet table, should be forcing this decision: Will the expressway be at-grade or below-grade or tunnelled? It comes down to this. They won't make that one critical, pivotal decision to move forward in case they upset someone.

Well, let me tell you, leadership is about making difficult decisions. Cutting the ribbon, photo ops, you could get your children to stand in. Making tough decisions is quite another issue. You're liable to upset someone. But to move forward for all of the citizens takes leadership. And that leadership, I can tell you, is what's missing. People on the other side perhaps could yell or barrack. The only time you actually upset someone is when you make a difficult decision—the only time. When you're giving out the cheque, you're not likely to get too much criticism at that sort of venue.

Here's an interesting thing in this article, along with hundreds of articles that I have on this: "A binational commission assigned to solve the border traffic problem—the Detroit River international crossing team"—that's the DRIC; you'll hear these terms if you're paying attention—"claimed tunnel construction costs for that stretch would be ... \$3.8 billion." Let's keep it simple here: I would say the tunnel is probably in the \$4-billion range. That's quite frankly the decision. On the other side of that, the at-grade cost—this is without the tunnel—was listed by the Detroit River international crossing team as costing around \$920 million. So it's four times more expensive to build a tunnel. That's the issue. That's the issue where there's a lack of leadership and decisiveness. There's a lack of presence at the cabinet table.

All of this lack of decisions and having a vision is affecting the very economy of Ontario. Not just the auto sector—it's the main link for the manufacturing sector of this province to our major trading partner. And what sector is suffering in this province? The manufacturing

sector has lost almost 150,000 jobs when McGuinty's been in government. Not all of them are caused because of the health tax, the \$2.5 billion they grabbed out of people's pockets, hard-working families; or the capital tax. I could go on about the other taxes they have increased. I'll leave that to others, because there is a budget debate tonight, and I look forward to having an opportunity tonight to bring some more detail that I'll try to relate to this important lack of decision.

I think it took Howard Hampton, the leader of the NDP, to bring forward this resolution and try to get some answers, at least some glimmer of hope. We have it from Lawrence Cannon, Stephen Harper and Jim Flaherty in their budget. It's there. We have it from the Leader of the Opposition. You have it here today linking the plan, going back to the 200 to 2006 plan. I have the books, which I've shared with members, on the capital plan. There's nothing in there—nothing. I have them. They're not in there. There's nothing. There are a few words, and a bit of pavement that was all paid for when Frank Klees was minister.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** The member for Ottawa–Orléans is laughing. I think he is an engineer and I think he also may be the parliamentary assistant to this file. Get the briefing. In fact, I take it from your remark that you are challenging your own ministry personnel. This capital project outlines all projects in that area. There is nothing—this is important. I want to file this as confirmed information from the ministry, accurate information. There is absolutely nothing from the McGuinty government, despite what his seals—the trained animals here—say. There's nothing.

If they get up to say more, it's like one of the promises they made during the election. Don't trust it. I'm telling you, it's in the book. It's outlined, project by project. There are a few kilometres of asphalt, period. There's the map. There's Windsor. There's nothing. You're absent. Mr. Hampton must have spotted this, and I give him full credit. I've tried to relate this to the lack of decision-making at the cabinet table with three members from that area at the cabinet table. Nothing happening. I see the Minister of Energy still here. He's a good member and works hard, and on the energy file he's been misled by someone on the coal file.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** No, by someone—

**The Acting Speaker:** No, no. To be fair, I just want you to be very careful with your words. I recognize that you did not allege the minister was misleading but that he was misled, but please be very careful.

**Mr. O'Toole:** That's exactly—you did point out that I said it correctly. That's what I meant. I think he had an advisory crew. But Mr. Yakabuski, our critic in that area—I should know—from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, asked the minister a question, and it plays every day on the parliamentary channel. "Minister, tell us the names"—

*Interjection.*

1700

**Mr. O'Toole:** The Minister of Energy, who works hard on the file—it's a complex file; I appreciate that and I respect that too—was asked in estimates to provide the list of the advisers who told him he could close the coal plants by 2007. In the estimates process that member from Windsor promised to deliver to this House the names of those advisers. To date, he has refused. Yet in their election booklet, that maroon booklet they had, full of all of the mistruths—is that an appropriate word?—but promises. In that booklet they had 143 commitments, one of which was to close the coal plants by 2007. I'm listening. There's silence. They've changed that three times.

On the border, not only have they not made a promise—the only reason they haven't is because they'd probably break it—they have no plan. That's what's lacking, quite frankly, in this government on a consistent basis that I observe every day.

After 121 questions on the Lottogate, no answer, no plan and complete avoidance of any accountability and transparency at all. For a government that ran on those very principles, they run for cover. The minister has been out of the House a bit; Dalton has been away for a few days. In fact, the Deputy Premier today had to take all six or seven questions on this issue.

Now, I guess I want to recognize the work that has been done by others. As I said, the members here from the government side, I feel sorry for them, because they either haven't been up to the job or have failed to do the job. Either way, I question—there's an article here about the next election and what the members Dwight Duncan and Sandra Pupatello should do. They should tell the people—in fact, there's an editorial piece here about one of the members, asking them to be straightforward: “Just tell me the answer, whether you want the tunnel or you want the above-grade.” That's what they're asking for. This is being debated. I believe this very issue is the top megaproject in this province. It's the top megaproject in their ridings.

Where are they? “I know nothing, I see nothing, I say nothing.” It seems to be the standard mantra of a government in decline. The closing days, the last few days of the World Series, and they're not at the game. That's the problem. I think they're out preparing notes or something.

In my brief time—in fact, my speaking time has been cut, unfortunately, because there was only 41 minutes. So I'm explaining to the viewers that normally I'd have made my points more thoroughly if I had been given more time.

Quite frankly, this is from a blog site. It's on one of the reports involved in this file. It's called the WindsorCityOn blog. This blog continually—ritualistically actually—talks about that issue. It's the number one issue—they can't imagine. They say they read the Windsor Star. They must be reading the Windsor Star from another country, because if they did, they would be up on their feet today voting for Mr. Hampton's resolution on behalf of the people they're elected to rep-

resent, the people who pay them. No, they're being whipped into a responsible, disciplined—do anything, avoid everything.

The blog goes on. “The real news about Senator Kenny's report”—and this is a blog, so it does deserve to be recognized as such. “I hope you are hungry and thirsty because I have a lot for you to read.... I hope you're having your breakfast ... the Kenny report on ‘Border Crossings’ that I have copied and pasted below.

“You may even be shocked by testimony I quote from the last go-round at the Senate committee hearings” on this issue “which may help explain the fun and games we are suffering through in Windsor from inaction. It may also explain why the Bridge Co. is being persecuted.

“Now I will bet that you are surprised by what I said compared with the Star coverage”—because the Star is covering this thing in detail. “Sure the report talked about customs officers spending less time ‘looking for extra bottles of duty-free whisky and more time trying to identify people who might be a genuine threat to Canada.’”

The thing goes on to say that who's missing from the whole thing are the two ministers that I named before.

So this opposition day motion points out an important lack of leadership and ability to make difficult decisions. Dalton McGuinty and Minister Cansfield and the three ministers from that area: “I know nothing, I see nothing and I say nothing.” Quite frankly, I look forward to their statement to be to vote in support of Mr. Hampton's motion.

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** I'm delighted to be able to rise today to speak for a few minutes on this important motion put forward by my leader, the member for Kenora–Rainy River. I will be echoing some of the comments made by my colleague from Parkdale–High Park. I know that my comments will then be followed by contributions from a couple of my other colleagues here on the NDP side of this House. I'm also glad to see that our two colleagues from across the way representing Windsor have joined us for the debate, and I'm hoping that their contributions subsequent to mine will perhaps shed some light on the inaction, the inertia of their government on this particular issue.

If Windsor is to be represented as the mine shaft and the Ontario economy is the canary, then I would suggest that there are ominous signs ahead for all of us, because the health of Windsor signifies in many ways a precursor to the health of the entire province. And what we're seeing right now is a worrying, disturbing trend.

I want to start off my comments by reading a couple of quite worthwhile paragraphs from a recent article that appeared in the Globe and Mail:

“Windsor's unemployment rate is nearly in the double digits.

“Companies, especially manufacturers, are shutting their doors or treading a fine line of solvency. The bingo halls have turned out the lights. Charity money is drying up. The food bank is busier than ever.”

It goes on: “Food bank usage is up, charities have had to cancel programs, the downtown theatre has had to

hand over its keys to the city, and there's a growing sense of desperation among business."

Those are signs of a key city, a proud city in this province, that is looking for answers, that is looking for action. I'm pleased to be able to stand shoulder to shoulder with the proud residents of Windsor today by supporting this motion and calling for that action. The people of Windsor have taken an active interest in this issue, on the need for an additional international border crossing. I understand from reading the local newspaper that just in February, in fact, more than 1,000 of them came out to a public meeting to convey their thoughts and views on what they see as being the logical solution to this problem. And as my leader from Kenora-Rainy River has pointed out, it is a tunnelling option. The 1,000 people who came out to that meeting made their views quite clear.

I was glad to see that just last week the members of the city council of Windsor followed suit and spoke on behalf of their constituents and voted unanimously to endorse tunnelling as the solution to the traffic woes that plague that city and in fact plague the entire province. I say "plague the entire province" because Windsor is an economic gateway for all of Ontario. It gives us access to the Midwestern US market and further afield. Each and every day, 10,000 big rigs cross both to the US and to Canada.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** They try to.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Or they try to, as my colleague from Hamilton East says. And that represents an enormous impact on our economy. In fact—this figure may have been quoted earlier, but I think it's important to quote it again—in the Windsor region alone, it impacts 150,000 jobs and provides \$13 billion in annual production just on that traffic.

My riding of York South-Weston may be separated by four or five hours' distance, depending on how fast you drive on Highway 401—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ferreira:** I always drive the speed limit, and I want to thank my colleague from Hamilton East for pointing that out and reminding me of that fact. We may be four to five hours separated, but in fact the border crossing at Windsor has a tremendous impact on the people in my riding. Hundreds of my constituents are directly employed in the trucking industry, and they pilot some of those big rigs that regularly cross that border. But it also affects manufacturers and other enterprises in my riding that need access to the US market through the 401 corridor. I can tell you that in my riding we have seen the loss of thousands of well-paying manufacturing jobs just over the past few years, and some of these companies have located elsewhere in North America. One of the reasons that they quote for pulling up stakes and for taking away the jobs is, frankly, the haphazard situation that we're currently facing with border crossing, specifically at Windsor-Detroit. It speaks to why this is an issue that has profound importance across the entire province, indeed from Windsor all the way across to eastern Ontario.

**1710**

We have a government that has been unable or unwilling to address this issue. This is despite the fact that on their front bench are two senior ministers from Windsor. I see that the local newspaper has taken them to task for the inaction, the lack of action to address this issue. It's interesting that it's my caucus, led by the member from Kenora-Rainy River, that is showing a real interest in furthering a solution that would help the people of Windsor and, by extension, the people of the entire province of Ontario.

There was an interesting editorial that appeared in the Windsor Star about five or six weeks ago. It points out the failings, perhaps the negligence, of those two senior members of the government opposite. I want to quote the last two paragraphs, which are quite insightful:

"Duncan and Papatello have been mute and meek on this file for too long. They have a voice and they have a duty to speak on behalf of this region and its residents. They shouldn't be content to let bureaucrats do the talking for them. Especially when those bureaucrats can't get the facts straight. The fate of a project that will define this community for generations to come is simply too important.

"Duncan and Papatello need to take an aggressive stand. They have dithered for too long already. Standing on the sidelines is no longer good enough."

We'd like to see some leadership from the members on the side opposite. We haven't seen it to date. The leadership has been coming from here. I'm glad that my friend from Durham, who made some very insightful comments, acknowledged that in his comments—the leadership that my leader from Kenora-Rainy River has shown on this particular file. He's been joined, as we know, by our two very capable New Democrat members of Parliament from Windsor, Mr. Masse and Mr. Comartin, who have similarly called for action and for leadership on this file, which we have not seen for the past three and a half years from this government. It doesn't surprise me, because in the budget that we saw tabled here just a couple of weeks ago, we didn't see much in the way of solutions on housing, on transit, on some of the most important and vital issues facing the people of this province. So it shouldn't surprise anyone that we haven't seen any action or talk of action or a plan or a strategy to deal with this most important issue of an added border crossing at Windsor.

I know that a couple of my colleagues want to have some time, and I do want to be generous in giving them some time at the end. But as I say, I am pleased and proud to stand up in this House and speak on behalf of the people in Windsor. I believe that they have a number of things in common—dreams, aspirations and goals—with the people of York South-Weston. I know that my colleagues here in the NDP caucus will continue to effectively and forcefully speak out for their interests and for a better life for the people of Windsor.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** To the request about what I'm going to do on this, I'm going to

vote against what is a pandering piece of poppycock. It fails to deal with facts; it fails to acknowledge the work and effort that has gone into the border file at Windsor; and it fails to acknowledge that members from Toronto can come to Windsor and tell us all they want and pretend to feign that they care—we know they don't. It's cheap grandstanding.

I want to give you a bit of a history lesson, just so everyone in the House understands what actually happened here. When this party came to office in 2003, the previous government had committed to a nine-point plan that would have seen trucks go across the E.C. Row Expressway, through the heart of our city, leading to an above-grade crossing that would have taken traffic through a tunnel under the river. We proudly killed that. We killed it because it was wrong for our community, and our community had spoken out strongly against it.

In order to deal with this appropriately, we had to assess—because what the NDP is asking us to do is not do an environmental assessment. That's what the DRIC process is. They may not understand that, and their wording certainly leaves them a lot of outs, including tunnelling. But they're saying with this resolution, "Kill the environmental process."

Let me tell you what the DRIC process has already done. It has eliminated almost 20 options that would have gone through other parts of our community. Do they want those back on the table? They might, because they don't know our community. These members from Toronto don't know Windsor; they don't understand it. I worked in an auto factory. I spent time there. My neighbours are being laid off, and no government is standing up more forcefully than this government is. I'll just remind my friends opposite of what Mr. Hargrove has said about this government. Buzz Hargrove says that the Dalton McGuinty government is the only government that understands the auto sector.

The leader of the third party, not one to let the facts get in the way of a good grandstand, suggested there was no mention of the Windsor border in the budget. I will table pages 89, 90 and 91 of the budget, which clearly identify the border, which clearly earmark money for it, and remind the New Democrats in the House that they voted against the 2005 budget, which included money for the border. They voted against providing money for the border crossing. They voted against the money for the roadbed capacity leading to the border.

They throw in some other straw men. They raise the issue of tolls. There's been no talk about tolls. We have publicly said that the people of Windsor won't have to pay tolls. We have publicly said that tunnelling is still being considered under the environmental assessment, and when that report is done, and I expect it will be done soon, we will address it. Then we'll see. I can tell you that the people in my community—we've had hundreds of meetings. I believe the minister told me there have been more than 175 public meetings on this issue. I've had the opportunity to attend many of them, unlike Mr. Hampton, who has attended none. We will respond when

our community sees that, when the environmental assessment is complete.

Maybe the NDP missed this morning's Detroit Free Press. I suspect they did, because they didn't read the budget; they didn't read the three pages of reference here. We were reminded today that the mayor of Detroit and the governor of Michigan want to kill the DRIC process. They want to twin the Ambassador Bridge. They would like nothing more than for this Legislature to pass Mr. Hampton's resolution, which will give them an out, which will set us back years. I won't be party to that. I won't be party to a resolution that will harm my community. I won't be party to cheap grandstanding by Toronto members trying to scrounge up votes in the next election. I'll take our position to the people during the election and I will have a position that will respond to the needs of our community.

You know, the NDP opposed it when we expanded Casino Windsor. They said no, that was too much money. They voted against it. They voted against the new medical school we're putting in our community. They voted against putting the money there. They voted against it. They sent Toronto members into Windsor, pretending they know something about our community. They don't.

**1720**

So I look forward to that report coming out, and I look forward to continuing to work with our city council, our mayor, as we have all along. Once I hear their response to the DRIC recommendations, I will take my community's voice to the cabinet table, to the Legislature, to the people of Ontario, and with the Honourable Sandra Pupatello and Bruce Crozier, we'll do what's right for Windsor. We won't grandstand, we won't take the petty shots, and we won't set the process back the way the New Democrat Party wants to.

I stand proudly ready in this House today, ready to vote against this cheap stunt that does nothing but pander. It does about the same amount as the federal NDP have done on the border file: absolutely nothing. The fourth row of the fourth party—no voice in Ottawa, none whatsoever.

I want to congratulate the federal government and the federal finance minister—and I see his successor, shall we say? The federal government is committed to paying for the Canadian half of the new border crossing. They committed \$400 million to the roadbed capacity leading to the border. Now, they're not clear whether that's the final amount of money they're prepared to put into the roadbed capacity. They've pledged \$400 million. We've asked them to clarify that and we haven't had a response yet. One official said yes; one official said no. I wrote to the finance minister, and we'll look forward to his agreeing to pay the rest of their share, which is considerably more, especially if tunnelling is the chosen option.

I want to finish with a couple of quotes from some Windsor city councillors and what they have to say. I'm going to start with—if I can find them here, Mr. Speaker.

**Interjection:** Make them up. That's what the NDP does.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Yes, the NDP would make them up, but I don't want to do that.

Councillor Bill Marra has said that he counts on and trusts Dwight Duncan, Sandra Pupatello and the McGuinty government to do what's right for Windsor. He was the author of the tunnelling motion, which doesn't, by the way, define whether it should be entirely tunnelled; it doesn't define that. The New Democrats wouldn't know that because they really don't know the issue. They're johnny-come-latelies. They don't get it. They send Toronto members down. They send down people who don't know our community—people who have never worked in an auto factory, people whose neighbours aren't getting laid off—and try to pretend that they know what they're doing.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** They try to pretend they know what they're doing, and they don't. They don't know what they're talking about.

I will acknowledge that Councillor Marra has been a supporter of our party, but let me talk about Councillor Alan Halberstadt, who has on many occasions criticized this government. I'd invite NDP members to go to his blog—it's up today—talking about pandering, talking about grandstanding, talking about the challenges we are dealing with.

In three years, we have moved this file forward. We have done so with the community every step of the way. We have invested over \$300 million in the border already. We're doing projects that no previous government contemplated, even though they were asked to do them.

So I look forward to the DRIC recommendation, I look forward to my community's response, and, most of all, I look forward to continuing to work with Bruce Crozier and Sandra Pupatello to defend the interests of our community—and, by the way, the interests of this entire province, because that border crossing has been and continues to be our government's top capital priority.

**Mr. Bisson:** I always look forward to the comments from my good friend the Minister of Energy. He professes so loudly in his comments in regard to this debate about the position that New Democrats have taken, both locally as far as Mr. Comartin and Mr. Masse but also what the provincial NDP caucus has put forward today in the name of our leader. I would say that he professes very loudly because I think he's got a lot to answer for in the community of Windsor.

The reality is that I remember—je me souviens—this very same member would stand in the House when the Conservatives were in government and the Conservatives couldn't move fast enough on this issue. They were challenging the government to do what needed to be done in order to get the next crossing across the river into Windsor at lightning speed. They criticized the then-Ernie Eves government for putting money forward in a budget that they said didn't meet the needs of the

community to get where it had to go in the timely fashion necessary.

Then they got elected. Well, they did what most Liberals do: They say one thing during an election, and then, if they're fortunate enough to be able to form a government, they say something quite different. That's what has happened here. In three and a half years, this file has not moved forward. We are bringing forward this motion on behalf of the community of Windsor because many people in the community feel that this government has not taken the action necessary to move this file forward.

I am heartened by the fact that the Minister of Energy was so upset today, because it tells me that he's feeling it back home and that, in fact, a number of people in the community of Windsor—and I would argue that it might be a larger crowd today than it was yesterday—are recognizing that this government is basically setting something up that's going to be akin to another of those election promises that were made in the previous election.

I want to be clairvoyant. I don't often profess to be clairvoyant, but this time I will. I want to think into the future about what might happen.

The Liberals, in opposition, when Mr. Duncan was the opposition member from Windsor, and, I believe, Madam Pupatello—I'm not sure; I'd have to go back and look at the Hansard—professed that the Conservative government wasn't moving fast enough on this particular file and that if we were to elect a Liberal government, things would happen.

Here we are; it's the last hour of this government's life. We're in the last session. This is the last chance they get at fixing this. They brought a budget forward, the fourth budget of this government, and nowhere in the budget is the money to fix this problem, and they've had three and a half years to do so. Where have they been?

So here's what they're going to do. I want to be clairvoyant. I know I've not been known to be clairvoyant. I feel an election promise coming, and I feel a press conference coming, and it's going to be in Windsor, and it's going to be in, oh, maybe August 2007, and Premier McGuinty will stand along with the Minister of Energy, Mr. Duncan, and along with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Madam Pupatello, and they might even invite Mr. Bruce Crozier from the backbench, if Dwight and others will let him stand there, and they're going to say, "In the next term, we're going to fix this problem."

Give me a break. We can't fall for that twice. People understand, and that's why people in Windsor are saying, "We want to see action now. We don't want to wait for another election promise that you may break if you're lucky enough to form the next government," which I think in this case ain't a guarantee, for sure. People want to see this government, in this term, take some action.

What did they want? They wanted to see in this budget a commitment to fixing this problem. Was it there? No, it wasn't. They want to see something concrete, where the government is prepared to do something to move this forward, and they haven't done it up to now.

So I stand in support of my leader, Mr. Howard Hampton, with regard to this particular motion. It's a very simple motion. I'll read it again, and I want members of the government to really understand that what we're asking for here is nothing short of what you promised in the last election:

"That, in the opinion of this House, the 2007 Ontario budget fails to address the pressing need for border infrastructure in the Windsor region; and

"That, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government must immediately"—and the word is "immediately," not "for the next election"—"commit to funding the Windsor-Detroit corridor infrastructure, including tunnelled access to the next border crossing, and guarantee that there will be no toll roads.

"Addressed to the Premier of Ontario."

I say to my friends in the Liberal caucus—I didn't say "good" ones; I said "friends," because you'd only be good if you kept your promise—you need to do it now. We don't want to see another press event in August 2007 where you're going to promise something yet again, and should you be elected to government—which is not guaranteed at this point—you're just going to lead them to the altar, as you did in the previous election, and break yet another promise.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? Further debate? Is there any further debate?

Seeing no further debate, Mr. Hampton has moved—  
*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** There was no further debate. You've missed the time. I asked three times; there is no further debate.

Mr. Hampton has moved opposition day motion number 2. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1730 to 1740.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Hampton has moved opposition day motion number 2. All those in favour, please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Ferreira, Paul	Martiniuk, Gerry
Bisson, Gilles	Hampton, Howard	Munro, Julia
Chudleigh, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	O'Toole, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
Elliott, Christine	Martel, Shelley	Tabuns, Peter

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

#### Nays

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Gravelle, Michael	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Kwinter, Monte	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bountrogianni, Marie	Leal, Jeff	Racco, Mario G.
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Ramal, Khalil
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Ramsay, David
Caplan, David	Matthews, Deborah	Rinaldi, Lou
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Sandals, Liz
Craitor, Kim	McNeely, Phil	Sergio, Mario
Crozier, Bruce	Meilleur, Madeleine	Smith, Monique
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Takhar, Harinder S.
Duguid, Brad	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Van Bommel, Maria
Duncan, Dwight	Oraziotti, David	Watson, Jim
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Parsons, Ernie	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Patten, Richard	Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 15; the nays are 48.

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

The business of this afternoon now having been completed, this House stands recessed until 6:45 this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1743.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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