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**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 1845.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House related to Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters, when Bill 187 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; and

That the standing committee on finance and economic affairs shall be authorized to meet, in addition to its regularly scheduled meeting times, on April 25, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and following routine proceedings until 6 p.m. if needed for the purpose of conducting public hearings on the bill and that the committee be further authorized to meet on May 1, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and following routine proceedings for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 12 p.m. on April 27, 2007. No later than 5 p.m. on May 1, 2007, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than May 2, 2007. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That at 5:50 p.m. or 9:20 p.m., as the case may be, on the day that the order for third reading of the bill is called as the first government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That no deferral of the second reading vote pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

That in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, except in the case of any vote deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h), the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Caplan has moved government notice of motion number 323. Mr. Caplan.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** It's indeed a pleasure to join in the debate. I did not have a chance earlier to speak to the budget motion, which was in fact supported and endorsed by members of this House. I think it was quite an outstanding budget that the finance minister presented to this House.

I reflect back on previous budgets where this government has rolled up its sleeves to deal with a health care deficit, an education deficit, an infrastructure deficit and now, of course, a social deficit that was unfortunately left by previous governments. This government has taken decisive action to deal with lowering wait times, lowering class sizes, rebuilding the province of Ontario, and now helping and supporting those Ontarians as they seek the aspirations which we all have for ourselves, for our children and for our children's children.

**1850**

These budgets, taken together, speak to the values of all Ontarians. I know in my portfolio as Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal I've had the great pleasure to work with my colleague ministers and with all members of this House to literally rebuild—in fact, just in the past weeks we've had wonderful groundbreakings at the Sudbury Regional Hospital, in North Bay, and soon to be in Belleville, in Sarnia and in Sault Ste. Marie; indeed, literally over 105 hospital projects from one end of this province to the other. I see that the member for Parkdale—High Park, of course, would want me to note that the Runnymede hospital too will be rebuilt because of the actions of these budgets.

These are important works, but it doesn't just end there. Transit, of course, is an enormous priority which was found in this budget: extensions of subways, extensions of roadways, significant investment in our borders, our number one priority.

I want all Ontarians to understand how in education, health care, infrastructure and the social fabric of this province it's not just fine words, but actions and resources that are behind those words.

I'm hoping that all members will support this motion and support the budget bill when it does come to a vote.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight, although I'm disappointed that it is a time allocation bill.

There are two things I want to put on the record early in the debate, and they're very important to me. I want to let the House and all Ontarians know that the riding I represent, Simcoe North, is now home to the world curling champions. I'm extremely proud of these guys: skip Glenn Howard; vice Richard Hart; second Brent Laing; lead Craig Savill; alternate Steve Bice; and the coach, Scott Taylor. They all curl out of the Coldwater curling and recreation centre, which is the home of—I should point out, I don't know how many of you folks have fundraisers in curling, but I have a fundraiser called The Tories Rock and it helps me each year raise funds. I can tell you that I'm extremely proud of the fact that the Coldwater Curling Club is host to the world champions. They've done a remarkable job.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** Glenn Howard and his brother Russ have remarkable careers in curling. I'm hearing some comments from opposite. I guess they're jealous or they don't even know what curling is, but curling is a great Canadian sport.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's disappointing to hear—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, order.

**Mr. Dunlop:**—the Liberal members heckling me on the world champions of curling, you know? You would think the least they could do is support a sport like curling in our wonderful country and our wonderful province. And I've got to tell you that all of north Simcoe, all of Ontario—with the exception of a few people in the House tonight, most Canadians are very much behind Team Glenn Howard and their accomplishments of a couple of weeks ago.

I also want—

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: That's not true. We are very proud of our Canadian curling team. Very.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That's not a point of order, and Meghan Agosta on the women's national team is from the riding of Essex, too, but there we go.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I apologize if I took your heckling out of context. It sounded like you were against Team Howard. But I can tell you that we are very proud of him.

The other thing I wanted to bring to the attention of the House is that this coming weekend, and I think a lot of people probably know this—maybe a lot of you members are involved in the Zehrs MS walkathon, raising a lot of money for multiple sclerosis. I happen to be an honorary chair. It sounds like Mr. Levac, the member for Brant, is also. Get out and support this. I can tell you it's something we're proud of in our communities. Each year we raise more and more money and we draw more attention to this disease. What's really important is that year after year we see a lot of participants who actually have MS, and I can tell you that they're out there doing the best they can, raising money and drawing attention and, of course, drawing more and more people into this walkathon.

Tonight we're here debating the time allocation motion. I find it almost disgusting, after only three days of debate on this budget—a \$91-billion budget—that here we are, bringing debate to closure. I know a lot of my members wanted to speak to this bill. I don't know what the rush is, but when I look at what's happened in the past few days in the House here—the leadership we've seen on Lottogate, the complete lack of respect for this House as far as the actions of the Premier and the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, who actually moved this closure motion. I feel somewhat let down by this Parliament. We're falling behind in our respect for the actions of government and for the actions of the people that we represent here in the province of Ontario.

I want to talk a bit about this whole idea of the minister's responsibility in this House. I look back at three particular cases. I think we've asked 122 questions—I could be wrong on that—around this whole area of Lottogate. In a lot of cases, the questions have been around the minister's actions and his refusal to step aside while some kind of an investigation takes place. And I keep thinking of the evening—and maybe some of you folks can help me; maybe Mr. O'Toole can as well—when one of our members made a statement and named a young offender in this House. I can tell you that Rob Sampson, who was the minister of corrections and not even present at the time—Rob Sampson, who I have a great deal of respect for—stepped aside because the name of a young offender was used in this House.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** Bob Runciman stepped aside because the name of a young offender was used in a throne speech. Now we have what we consider to be a scandal taking place, and what's happening? The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and the Premier are hiding behind an Ombudsman's report. I find that disgusting, I find it disgraceful for the actions of this parliament, and I think we've certainly lowered the bar as far as what people expect from their parliamentarians.

I want to talk about the budget and what I feel are areas that are strong. The first two things I'm going to

say are what I consider to be somewhat positive in how they impact my riding. I want to be upfront about this because I know that we always talk about all the negatives on each side, but I was happy with the fact that the government plans on rebuilding the Oak Ridge facility at Penetanguishene. That's part of the divestment program that's been going on for about the last 10 years. I can tell you that we are happy that that is taking place. It's important that those jobs will remain in Penetanguishene. Although there was an 18-month delay in the process, I'm still happy that they've made the announcement and will go ahead with that at some point. I'm expecting it to start this year, and I'll be pleased if it does. If it could start even over the next 18 months, I'd be happy as well.

The other thing that I thought was fairly positive for a program that I'm very supportive of—and I attended a function tonight—is the increase in some funding for the Ontario Trillium Foundation. I think we can all use more money in that program. I think it's a great program and it has been for 25 years; they're celebrating the 25th anniversary tonight. I can tell you that that money is well spent, particularly by the people in my community. I go to announcements all the time and I certainly take part in the applications and supporting the organizations. I'm happy that more money will flow into that particular area, because it is an area that I consider to be somewhat important to a lot of the small organizations in our communities.

#### 1900

Then we get to the areas that I look at as a member of provincial Parliament for the riding of Simcoe North and the strong support we receive in the county of Simcoe. I take a look at what has happened with some of the restructuring—and I see the Minister of Municipal Affairs is here tonight. We talk about the leapfrogging. I know he's very proud of his greenbelt legislation. If I was the minister in that particular area, I would probably be promoting it as much as possible. But I can tell you—

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** You voted against it.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I hear the minister heckling me. I can tell you why I voted against it. It's because there was no plan put in place for the leapfrogging effect that would be caused by the implementation of the greenbelt legislation. What has happened is that the developers are leapfrogging over the greenbelt, and they're going into other areas. One of the prime areas is the county of Simcoe. I'm going to tell you that we did not see in this provincial budget any type of assistance that would indicate that the government supports the infrastructure that has to be put in place in the county of Simcoe as a result of the leapfrogging development. When you start adding 300,000 or 400,000 people, almost doubling the size of a population of the size of the county of Simcoe, we have a real problem. I'm going to tell you, we need infrastructure investment, and that means things like highways, sewer and water, hospitals, schools, landfills—you name it. We absolutely have to have that. That was not part of the budget. I thought, as the government rolled out their

budget close to the election, that we would see at least something in that. I was disappointed in that, and I know a lot of the municipal mayors and councillors are extremely disappointed that although there was some money set aside a few days ago for some rural infrastructure, it's a pittance compared to the kind of money you need to handle 300,000 people.

The second thing—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** The second thing, and I know I'm getting under their—already they're upset with my comments. I'm only asking that Simcoe county be treated fairly. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. The second thing, of course, is the environmental protection of Lake Simcoe. The federal government found a way to find \$12 million. I thanked Jim Flaherty, the Minister of Finance for the federal government. I thanked Stephen Harper. They found \$12 million to help out on a national water strategy, and \$12 million went to Lake Simcoe.

We in this House passed a resolution unanimously—it was my resolution—asking for Lake Simcoe to be considered a priority. That was only last fall, on November 23. Surely they hadn't forgotten that by the time of the budget, March 22; obviously they have, because Lake Simcoe wasn't mentioned. I would have expected at least \$12 million to equal the federal investment. The leapfrogging effect of development will have a direct result on Lake Simcoe. It will have a major impact on Lake Simcoe, and I think we have to address it. I have to put on the record tonight that I'm disappointed that it didn't happen. My time is going here quickly.

Agriculture: \$191 million cut from the budget. I don't think this is propaganda, because it's a government document. But everybody who has seen Update 2000, the glossy brochure put out by—it's nothing more than Liberal propaganda. It's absolutely sickening, and in here they make it sound like the farmers support the government. Do you know what? I talk to farmers every day, and do you know what they tell me? The Ministry of Agriculture and Food, what they call One Stone Road, has become a joke for the farmers, a complete joke. It's nothing but a bureaucratic nightmare. They're centred only on themselves. They do not care about farmers. They put out glossy brochures—Strong Rural Communities. Talk to the farmers. All you rural members should start talking to your agricultural friends, because they don't believe for one second—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hold that up one more time and we'll have it taken away.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Pardon me?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hold that up one more time and we'll have it taken away as a prop.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I really apologize. I thought a provincial document, in this House, was—

**The Deputy Speaker:** No, no. I'm not going to debate. We just don't allow props, and I would appreciate it if you would get on with the debate.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't need to put the prop up any more. I don't need to tell you that the

Liberal government probably spent a million dollars on this particular document, trying to build up rural communities, and what have they got out of it? A million dollars has been wasted. A million dollars that could have gone into the pockets of farmers in this province has been spent on Liberal propaganda, and I can't even raise that document in this House. That's pretty sad.

Second, around agriculture, we absolutely have had a disaster occur with the Ontario Harness Horse Association. I look at Georgian Downs.

I want to read from a document—and I hope I can read from something. I'm going to tell you that the Ontario Harness Horse Association has basically been left alone or ignored by the McGuinty Liberals since last fall. They lost a number of racing dates because a big company—I guess it's called the Great Canadian Gaming Corp.—has taken over a lot of the racetracks in Ontario. I can recall the slot programs going into the racetracks. The document said, "The slot program at racetracks is intended to promote live horse racing in the province and subsequently benefit the agricultural sector in Ontario and the OLG supports this endeavour." The source was the original site-holder facilities agreement. And now do you know what we've done? We've taken \$50 million out of the agricultural community. Not only \$191 million in the budget, but another \$50 million has been taken out of the harness horse races. They finally had to sign on the dotted line, and do you know why? They had to feed the horses. They had barns full of horses with no racing dates in places like Georgian Downs, and they gave up dates to sign.

The Minister of Government Services and the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal knew all about this, and so did the president of the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., and they let the farmers slip away. The McGuinty Liberals never came to the support of the harness racers, and I'm disappointed in that. You wrote all kinds of letters saying the lovely things you would like to do, but in the end the harness racers lost and agriculture lost in Ontario, to the tune of at least \$50 million a year, and I don't know how you're going to replace that.

But I'm going to tell you right now, if a John Tory government is elected this coming fall, I will do everything I can to replace those racing dates. I've been at all their meetings. I've seen the pain on the faces of the harness racers, as they wanted to get back racing and they had to step aside while this agreement took place. What happened? A great big company from BC, the Great Canadian Gaming Corp., won and nobody stood behind the harness racers in Ontario.

I would like to talk about another failure that I noticed in the budget. I know you guys, you people on the other side, are really interested in my comments, and I'm glad to see you're all here enjoying this tonight. I'm disappointed the Premier didn't come to hear about this, but the closures of these regional centres—did anyone on that side think about this at all? Did anyone actually think what was happening?

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** You started it.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Here they are. The minister is over there. They're heckling me. Do you know what? If they knew the whole history of this thing, they would be upfront with everybody, but the reality is that nobody closed the final three centres. No one closed Rideau, no one closed Southwestern and no one closed Huronia, because there was no plan put in place for where to put the people, the clients. It hasn't happened. It's still not happening. It's destroying communities.

I thought the very least this budget would do—the very least it would do—would be to maybe put some type of a master plan in place for the lands to maybe be able to help compensate the communities for the loss of millions of dollars. In the Huronia Regional Centre alone the loss of the payroll is \$30 million to our community, and that's just the payroll itself. There are all kinds of other organizations, other agencies, like Lakehead University, like Georgian College, like probably even the OPP, that would like to have access to some of that property. It hasn't happened. There's no master plan—the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal has been too busy ducking the questions in the House—and that's his responsibility. I think that we need to come straight with these communities like Smiths Falls and Chatham and Orillia and make sure that we can come up with good master plans to help compensate these communities for the loss of their payrolls.

#### 1910

The reality is that who's really being hurt are the clients, the residents. A lady came into my office on Friday morning of last week. I met her specially at the office because it was Good Friday and she wanted to talk to me because she had to have this document signed. She has a brother at the Huronia Regional Centre in Orillia. All kinds of meetings have taken place without her permission. She mentioned to me that she's had some fairly heated arguments with the supervisors in that particular area. She mentioned one case to me, a fellow who had lived at the Huronia Regional Centre all of his life, and he'd been shipped off last week to Niagara Falls. She said it would bring tears to your eyes. She talked to a staff member who couldn't be identified because if you identify yourself and come forward, you've lost your job; you're out. But this person had dropped the person off at Niagara Falls and had mentioned that the conditions this gentleman was going to would actually bring tears to your eyes and how sad it was, the difference in the level of service from the Huronia Regional Centre to some kind of group home in the Niagara Falls area that she mentioned. It's not right, it's not fair, and it's inhumane. I'm completely disappointed that the government would make this decision and not really bring the families into the fold and, of course, not bring the communities in.

Of course, the ultimate shot was not having any kind of a master plan in the budget or in the budget bill that would help compensate these communities for these huge losses which are parts of the culture. I think we all know about Smiths Falls as well. It's the area that's lost the Hershey plant as well. Things are pretty tough up in that

area, and I think government has a responsibility to revisit all three regional centres and take a close look at them, and particularly to compensate the community as well.

I know I'm already over my time, but I felt it was important that these issues be put on the table. It's a time allocation motion. I have a number of members here tonight who want a chance to speak to this. They're not getting that opportunity. If you can imagine—this is not some pit bull legislation that you're trying to ram through. This is a \$91-billion budget, a budget that is costing the average taxpayer—every man, woman and child—an additional \$1,600 per year in increased taxes since the McGuinty government took power.

I guess the question most people would ask is, are they getting good value? You know what? I don't think they are. They're getting \$1,600 of propaganda that I can't put up in front of you. I've got a number of those pieces of propaganda, but I don't think the people are getting their value for a \$91-billion budget. I think there's too much waste. I think there's too much propaganda. I think there are many press conferences and press releases, re-announcements over and over and over again that would indicate this government is actually doing something.

What bothers me is when I look at the statistics from job creation in the country and I see that we've lost 130,000 jobs in the last 18 months, when I see we're now last on the list, when I see that we're one of the most overtaxed provinces in the country. I get worried about our future here. But you know what? I think the citizens of Ontario will have an opportunity on October 10 to change all that.

I want to say that I'm going to be fully behind our leader, John Tory. I want to elect John Tory as the new Premier. We've had enough of this nonsense. We've had enough waste.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** We've had enough of the heckling and people who know nothing about what they're talking about. John Tory has a business background. He will make an excellent Premier for the province of Ontario. We're all going to get behind him, and I hope all Ontarians will get behind John Tory, make him the leader and get rid of this nonsense of increased spending of \$1,600 for every man, woman and child and not seeing any results from it.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** I listened with interest to my friend from Simcoe North, in particular to his discussion about time allocation. Certainly, this was a party that when Harris and Eves were in power railed against time allocation, especially on important bills, and now we see that they're following suit and bringing it in.

I'd like to take the bulk of my time in actually talking about the budget, but before I begin, I wanted to remind the House of a wonderful fairy story. It's one of my favourites. It's called the Emperor's New Clothes. We all know this, but perhaps we've forgotten some of the details of the story. I had, so I went back and refreshed

my memory. Basically, two swindlers come into a town. It's a town where the emperor is a little bit on the vain side. They had their work to do, but not too much work to do. Basically, they tell everybody—and I'm quoting right from Hans Christian Andersen himself—that they were weavers and they could weave the most marvellous cloth. Not only were the colours and the patterns and the material extraordinarily beautiful, but the cloth had the strange quality of being invisible to anyone who was unfit for his office or unforgivably stupid.

We probably all remember what happens after this, but a detail that is very interesting in the story to me is that these swindlers worked really hard. They're working night and day, they're always there, and whenever anybody asks them a question, they always have a ready answer. It's a ready answer about how beautiful the cloth is that they're weaving, how exquisite in detail it is. Again, they reiterate every time anybody questions them that somebody who can't see this cloth is clearly unfit for their office or unforgivably stupid.

So of course, we fast-track towards the end of the story, where the emperor is actually walking down the main street with the clothes, and we want to note that all the courtiers around the emperor are saying things like, "Oh, they suit you. A perfect fit," they all exclaim. "What colours, what patterns. The new clothes are magnificent." And the two gentlemen—a lovely little detail—of the imperial bedchamber fumble on the floor, trying to find the train, which they were supposed to carry. They didn't dare admit that they didn't see anything, so they pretended to pick up the train and held their hands as if they were carrying it. None of them were willing to admit that they hadn't seen a thing, for if anyone did, then he was either stupid or unfit for the job he held. Never before had the emperor's clothes been such a success—except, of course, for the little child. "But he doesn't have anything on," said the little child. And the little child's proud father said, "Listen to the innocent one." And the story ends happily. The people whisper among each other, repeat what the child had said, and then they all repeat in unison, "He doesn't have anything on. There's a little child who says he has nothing on."

Well, what we have in this budget is a very good rendition of Hans Christian Andersen's fable. What we have is a lot of jumping up and down. It was very interesting to see the Minister of Finance dancing up and down in his \$256 shoes, which were \$6 more than poor children get this year in July, exclaiming—again, the benches were full here, the galleries were full with a lot of people saying, "What a wonderful budget. What a budget for the poor."

I have this image of this little child in my riding, in all of our ridings, who is saying, "But it's not making any difference to my life whatsoever. The emperor has no clothes on. Nothing has changed," because as that little child woke up, what has changed?

First of all, this budget has not raised the minimum wage. All of those people in Ontario who are working at minimum wage, some 200,000 of them, two thirds of

them women, 1.2 million Ontarians who make under \$10 an hour, at the end of this week collect their paycheque, and guess what? No change, not one penny in change on the minimum wage.

Interestingly enough, even the promise—we have to remember that it is just a campaign promise for three years down the road when it will actually get to \$10.25, which is a princely sum of 75 cents a year for the poorest. We contrast this with the \$40,000 raise that the Premier gave to himself—75 cents a year. You know, the child cannot believe it—75 cents a year by 2010.

The whole point of the \$10 minimum wage now that has gained such momentum across the province is that this will actually take minimum wage earners just above the poverty line. Does this budget take minimum wage earners above the poverty line, even if you believe the promises in three years? No. Every single marker along the way, every single raise keeps minimum wage earners below the low-income cut-off, below the poverty wage. So ultimately a \$10.25-an-hour person working 40 hours a week would earn \$21,320, which is still below the low-income cut-off, still poverty. The child who looks at the emperor and says, “The emperor is not wearing any clothes,” is still going to be poor in three years.

#### 1920

More bad news for that child who could actually see what’s going on: This budget has not ended the clawback of the national child supplement. Again, I’m reading here from the Income Security Advocacy Centre, who should know because they work with poor children all the time. They answer very direct questions in the information they put out post-budget: Does the new Ontario child benefit end the clawback of the national child benefit supplement? The answer is very simple; the child who’s looking at the emperor could understand it: No. When fully implemented in 2011, a single parent on Ontario Works with one child will be better off by \$50 a month, not \$122 a month, which is what they would get if this government ended the national child supplement clawback and which we have been asking for, which I have a resolution about, which anti-poverty activists across the province have been demanding ever since this government was in office and promised to do it back in 2003.

What else? This budget has not raised their ODSP or OW rates. How can I say that? Well, the budget has raised it 2%. Two per cent is not even the inflation rate. In fact, I’m going to read some excerpts from a wonderful document. This is the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ Ontario alternative budget and they say right here: “Families and individuals receiving social assistance—both Ontario disability support program ... and Ontario Works ... benefits—are actually receiving less in provincial benefits, when inflation is taken into account, than they were when the McGuinty government was elected in 2003.” That’s shameful. That’s appalling for the emperor who says he’s wearing clothes. For the McGuinty government who says they brought in a poverty budget, this little child is naming it very clearly: “This emperor has no clothes.”

It goes on to say, “Ontario’s poorest citizens had been falling behind for 10 years when the McGuinty government was elected. Nearly four years later, the poorest among us are still falling behind. Even the government’s crystal-clear commitment to end the clawback of the federal child benefit supplement from the poorest Ontario families disappeared as it redefined the commitment as a promise to pass on only any increases in the child benefit supplement during its first term in office.” So the child is right yet again when it comes to ODSP or OW rates: no clothes.

This budget has not put one provincial penny into housing or child care. Child care is particularly lamentable because this government in 2003 promised \$300 million for child care. Instead, they get from the federal counterparts \$100 million. Guess what? They give \$25 million of it in this budget—no clothes, not a stitch of clothing, not one item of clothing that would answer the problem of poverty in this province, and particularly the answer in this case of child care. In fact, they’re clawing back three quarters of the federal dollars that should be going for child care. That’s the reality. That’s what the child sees when this child sees this budget.

By the way, there are some very interesting numbers where housing is concerned: They got \$392 million from the federal government for housing, and in fact have only committed \$127 million of that for public housing. Again, they’re clawing back money from the poorest citizens of this province. They’re not giving money, not one penny. They’re clawing it back.

It’s interesting, because I received a communiqué from the tenants and community organizers supporting a tenants’ campaign to address the issue of capital repair funding for Toronto Community Housing. You know, just the repairs in Toronto alone would cost \$300 million of community housing already built, just the repairs, and this government is allocating in this budget—this fake-clothing-on-the-emperor budget—\$127 million. That’s not their money anyway, so it wouldn’t even pay for the repairs on the housing we already have. Again, this is against a backdrop of 67,000—and I’ve recently heard 70,000—households in the GTA waiting for affordable housing and 122,000 households, not individuals, waiting for affordable housing in Ontario.

I had a woman e-mail me just today. She has three children and is a single parent. She has been waiting 10 years for affordable housing, and this budget is not going to make one iota of difference for the children in that house. That child in that house woke up this morning and said, “That emperor doesn’t have any clothes on, not one stitch of clothes on.”

This budget has not given small business in this province any assistance. How can I say that? After all, the budget is full of spin on what they’ve done for small business. I was asking in my resolution that the business education tax be addressed. It’s a clearly unfair tax on Toronto’s small business. What did they do? They said, “Oh, well, we’ve eliminated it.” But then you read, of course, the fine print. You read what they’ve actually



done, not what they say they're wearing but what they're actually wearing. They ain't wearing nothing, as I've said before. They didn't do anything. The reality is that whatever they're going to do, they're going to do in seven years. Again, it's a campaign promise, not even worth the paper that it's printed on—no clothes.

I read from the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, TABIA. They represent small retailers, small business across the city, and here's what they say:

"The provincial government taxes Toronto's commercial property to the hilt, with education levies that it uses elsewhere in the province. This overloads our membership, most of which is comprised of small retailers, with tens of millions of dollars in property taxes. Ever since the provincial government introduced current value assessment, most of these retailers have seen their property taxes increasing annually at rates which are double and triple the inflation rate. Between the annual assessment increases, usually 5%, plus the city's rate increases, 1.5%, many of these retailers are struggling to stay afloat.

"The provincial levy is hurting Toronto very badly," adds Mr. Miskin. "It is contributing to the erosion of the city's commercial base, making it more and more difficult for the city to raise the revenues it needs."

This is TABIA, the association of small business, under the title "Budget Fails Toronto Small Business." So that's small business.

This budget has not provided artists or cultural workers with protection, housing or tax relief. They have not provided status-of-the-artist legislation, even though that was something they clearly promised back in 2003. Today, we had a media event with the Ontario Federation of Labour representing their thousands of cultural workers, the Fashion Design Council of Canada—many in attendance, all very angry at what this government has produced, which is called the Status of Ontario's Artists Act, which is two flimsy little pages. All it says is basically, "We love artists. Aren't artists great? We'll dedicate a weekend for them in June." That's not what artists need. Again, a child who was the child of an artist might wake up this morning and say, "This emperor ain't got no clothes."

Here's what we're really looking for for artists. We're looking for "labour standards and taxation measures to immediately improve the working lives of artists in Ontario," who are among the poorest in Ontario, might I add.

"—protection for child performers": We have no legislation in this province that protects child performers. That's shameful. That's appalling.

"—access to training and professional development programs and funds;

"—tax measures favourable to artists: income averaging and/or certain exclusion of certain incomes from provincial taxes; and protections for senior artists."

We have artists here who one year—and you know that this is the life of artists—can make a great deal of money one year and the next year make nothing and have to pay taxes based on last year's income. This is clearly

and patently unfair and needs to be addressed. And of course, senior artists, like everyone else in the province, need affordable housing.

Finally, they ask for "a consultative process leading to the creation and enactment within 24 months"—remember, this was way back in 2003 that they were asking for this—"of an appropriate labour relations mechanism encompassing a collective bargaining procedure for ... professional artists and producers/engagers in the province of Ontario."

Did we get that? No, we did not. In fact, artists in this province got not much. Of course, this government values the amount of money that they did give. What they don't talk about is how the culture budget has been slashed and the fact that they've given back a very small percentage of what was slashed to those who need it most. Of course, those who need it most did not get what they asked for. They got half of what they asked for, or whatever the case may be.

Bottom line: Artists are no better off. Bottom line: The child of an artist woke up this morning, looked out at the emperor strutting down the street and said, "This emperor has no clothes."

### 1930

This budget has not put money into renewable energy or toward eliminating greenhouse gases. Nuclear reactors will still get over \$40 billion. Again, that's shameful.

So what was needed?

The government missed an opportunity to present a real green climate change plan. Instead, they promised that this spring the government will present a plan.

They also missed an opportunity to announce a major climate change initiative by closing Nanticoke, Ontario's biggest polluter. If there ever was a broken promise, that's it. They promised to close Nanticoke. Now, of course, we don't even get a promise in this budget. They're not even promising anymore.

So, again, a child who might be interested in possibly having a future, maybe a child with asthma in the city of Toronto, woke up this morning and looked at the emperor strutting down the street and said, "I don't know what everybody is so excited about, because"—no clothes.

This budget has not fixed the flawed funding formula that keeps our schools poor.

Let's look to—there's no one better—the students themselves: the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario.

The heading here is, "Ontario Budget Forecast for Students: Higher Tuition Fees and More Debt." That's what a child who is maybe a little older, who is going to university right now or looking at going to university one day, sees with the McGuinty government. They see higher tuition fees and more debt.

I'll quote Jesse Greener, the president of that organization: "This year the government heard overwhelmingly from students and their families that McGuinty's tuition fee increases were clawing back financial aid and closing the doors on many students from low- and middle-income families.... We are really surprised that McGuinty has ignored those voters"—and there are a lot of them.

They did a poll asking Ontario voters what they thought about tuition fee reductions, and 75% of Ontarians support tuition fee reductions. Jesse was really quite profoundly surprised that the McGuinty government ignored the 75% of Ontarians who asked for a break on tuition fees. That's sad, especially from someone who wants to dub himself the education Premier.

All voters have seen is a trail of broken promises.

All that child watching the emperor strut sees, as the education Premier is—you know what it is—is no clothes.

This budget has not uploaded the downloads, so our cities continue to struggle. This is a huge slap in the face for the city of Toronto, among other municipalities. What was presented here was really just that: a shameful slap in the face.

I hear from my councillor friends in the city of Toronto that the jury is in: They're not even going to get the \$71 million that the city is running short this year. Again, this is appalling. This government is literally starving my city, the city of Toronto, that I grew up in. It's starving my riding.

This is not even a partisan issue. There are Liberal members on city council who are absolutely appalled and shaken to the core. They thought that this government might actually listen to them. After all, they are members of the same party. But, no, this government is not listening to them. They're not even listening to members of their own party. They're not listening to the councillors in the city of Toronto.

They are starving the city of Toronto. That's what children woke up to this morning. We can only imagine how that's going to trickle down to the poorest children. The city is picking up the tab for what the province mandates, which is clearly and patently unfair.

It's hard to know where to go, but I do want to end on a positive note, because there is such a thing as real clothing. You don't have to cave in to the swindlers. You don't have to pretend to wear clothing. You can actually put on some real clothes and walk down the street so the child doesn't have to point at you and say, "Ain't got no clothes." You could actually bring in a budget that was really a budget for the poor in Ontario, small business, artists, the city, the environment, others.

First of all, what would it look like? It would immediately bring in a \$10-an-hour wage, but it wouldn't stop there. It would actually set it so that, annually, a person working 40 hours a week at the minimum wage would earn an amount equal to or greater than the low-income cut-off for a single person living in Toronto, as determined annually by Statistics Canada—a very simple thing to do. They could do it immediately; they don't do it immediately. There are all sorts of excuses given for why they don't do it immediately. They gave themselves a raise immediately—that was easy to do—but not for the poorest.

They could immediately eliminate the national child benefit clawback. They could immediately do that. They could simply pass along the money that they already

received to the province's poorest children. That would be so simple; the money is there. They don't have to raise any more; they don't have to tax any more. They just have to give the money they already received to the children for whom it is intended.

They could build housing. How about that? That's radical. That's clothing. They could build housing for the 122,000 who are waiting on those lists, who are waiting and dying, many of them, on the list for affordable housing, the 70,000 in the GTA alone who are waiting for affordable housing. They have \$392 million of federal dollars to do it. They could allocate all of that right off the bat. They could do that. And then maybe, just maybe, if they were a little bit generous, they could spend a penny or two of their own money, of provincial money, on housing. We certainly need it. With a poverty rate of 15% to 17% in the province, we certainly need it.

What could they do? They could upload the downloads and give small business a break. They could rationalize the business education tax, reform it—it is desperately in need of it—not to mention our property taxes, a whole other discussion, and I would definitely direct anybody watching this to [ouchassessment.ca](http://ouchassessment.ca) to see how easily that could be done. So give those who pay property taxes now a break and also give small business a break. And most importantly, give the city of Toronto a break and all the municipalities a break. If you're going to mandate social service programs, then you should pay for them. Even a child watching an emperor walk down the street could tell you that. If you're going to mandate programs and insist that the city carry out those programs, then you should pay for those programs. It's common sense.

Obviously, we need better health care. I haven't even touched on health care. I want to leave some time for my friend Gilles Bisson, who will be in a little later.

Certainly, there's post-secondary education. Freeze tuition fees. My goodness: Manitoba has done it; Nova Scotia has done it. It can be done. Give our students a break. The average debt is going to be around the \$30,000 mark. We heard earlier about young entrepreneurs. How can you be a young entrepreneur—imagine graduating from university and wanting to start a small business and being saddled with \$30,000 worth of debt before you even get out the door. Where are you going to get the funding then for your small business? You're going to be using every available penny just to pay off your student loans. It's kind of classic. I look at my own children: my daughter, who went through in social work and who makes more money as a bartender than she would as a social worker, and my son, who's going to graduate in East Asian studies. Because he's going to speak some Mandarin, his job opportunities are better in China than they are in Ontario. That's where we're exporting our brilliant young people: We're sending them to China. Most of his friends who graduate from university go to the Orient. Why? Because they can make more money there. They can teach English there, at least. Here, they can't get a job, not enough to pay back the

\$30,000 student loan that they are carrying; that's for sure.

And what can we do? We can close the coal-fired plants. This is an election promise whose time is well past due. And instead of putting \$40-billion-plus into nuclear energy, perhaps redirect that money to renewable energies, the things that we all learn in school: reduce, reuse and recycle, the three Rs. Perhaps they could do that, what they teach in school. Perhaps they could practise the three Rs themselves in terms of the environment, and perhaps they could meet Kyoto targets, simply meet Kyoto targets here provincially. This is what the world is demanding of us.

But there's a reason that they don't do any of this, and that's very clear. That comes across, because he who pays the piper calls the tune, and of course all of those people who are fawning over the emperor who is walking down the street with no clothes on have jobs to protect. I'm going to paraphrase what Upton Sinclair said. He basically said that people are loath to gain understanding when they get their salary from a lack of understanding. So we have to look at who is making money going along with the dance that the emperor is actually wearing clothes. Who is going along with the myth? Who's going along with the swindlers who say, "Oh, look at this brilliant budget. Look at the beautiful clothes the emperor is wearing"?

#### 1940

Why are they doing that? Fear is a great motivator, but I have incredible faith in humankind. I have incredible faith in my colleagues across the floor. I have faith that they will not lockstep behind the emperor, that they won't all look at the emperor and say, "Yes, the emperor is wearing clothes." I have faith that they will actually exercise their democratic right and vote against not only this time allocation measure but against the budget itself because they see it for what it is. They see what the emperor isn't wearing. They can't help it. If they've actually read the document, they can't help but see it. They can't help but hear the voice of that small child who is still pointing at that man without clothes walking down the street. They can't help but hear from their constituents, who are saying: "Guess what? My paycheque still looks the same." "Guess what? My property tax bill still looks the same." "Guess what? I'm still paying business education taxes." "Guess what? Look at the environment; nothing is happening." "Guess what? Our schools still can't pay their heating bills." "Guess what? The city is struggling just to balance its budget." That child's voice, they can't help but hear.

So I have great faith that this will not be partisan; that people will do the right thing; that they will see what the emperor is not wearing, not what he pretends to wear; that they will vote against the time allocation measure; and that they will vote against the budget that isn't a budget for the poor, certainly not for small business, certainly not for artists, certainly not for the environment, certainly not for the city, certainly not for the health care system, certainly not for the education system, and

finally, certainly not for that small child, that child who actually tells the truth.

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge):** I'm going to take only a very limited amount of time because we certainly want to ensure that members have the opportunity to speak to the time allocation motion and/or the elements of the budget they might not have had the opportunity to speak to.

It's a particular pleasure to speak to a time allocation motion. I remember just after I was nominated in 2003, we had the Magna budget, and at that time there was no debate in the House. In fact, the budget wasn't in the House. How could you debate it? There was no real discussion about allocating time for debate because all the debate was around finding the government of the day in contempt of the Legislature. The budget got no debate. There were no committee hearings. So I'm pleased to stand and speak to the time allocation motion.

We're going to ensure that a few things happen: (1) that members have time to speak to the budget; (2) that we have the opportunity for committee to hear from the public in public hearings.

I want to give an example of some of the folks and the types of organizations we want to hear from in committee. That's why I want to have this in the standing committee, to have the hearings, to debate, so the committee can report back to the House. The kinds of folks we want to hear from in committee are folks like Len Crispino from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. We want to hear the kinds of things small business has to say, things like the reduction in the business education tax "will lead to increased productivity, job creation and output. Over 300 communities across the province will benefit from reduced industrial and commercial tax rates." I want to hear from the business community at committee, and I want other members of the Legislature on the committee to have that same opportunity. We didn't have the opportunity in 2003. We've had it since, and we want to have it in 2007.

I want to hear from the faculty at the colleges, from the likes of Anne Sado, who said, "We're pleased with the research funding.... We salute the Ontario government for actually making the funds available for the purposes for which they were intended."

I want to hear from the students at the colleges and universities. I want to hear from the likes of Tyler Charlebois, who said, "After 15 years of underfunding ... the McGuinty government is investing additional funds to renew our learning institutions for the future."

I want to hear from the public at committee, I want to hear from the members here, and I want to ensure this comes back with a committee recommendation for this House to debate yet again.

I want to hear from the health community. I want to hear from the likes of Dr. David Bach, the president of the Ontario Medical Association, who said, "Doctors Applaud Commitment to Expand Wait Time Strategy. The provincial government has made progress in reducing wait times."

I want to hear from the social sector. I want to hear from the likes of Jacquie Maund, Ontario coordinator, Campaign 2000. She said, "There are a number of steps forward taken in this budget that are key areas that we have been calling for."

I want the public to have a chance to say that to the standing committee, not just the discussion we have here. I want the chance to hear from education, I want a chance to hear from the likes of Hilda Watkins, the president of the Ontario Teachers' Federation: "Today's budget recognizes responsibilities beyond the school playground for improving student learning." We need to hear that at committee. The public of the province of Ontario need the opportunity, through committee, to be able to present to us.

I'm not sure how much time I've allocated, only about a very few minutes, but I definitely want to hear from the likes of those in the financial sector, such as Janet Ecker, a former member, and president of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance. She says, "By committing to legislation to eliminate the" capital "tax by 2010, the government will finally knock down this barrier to investment."

I can go on and list ad infinitum those out there in various sectors that come to this from the sectors they're engaged with, whether health or social services or business or financial services or education or students. We have the opportunity through this motion to allocate time at committee, a chance that didn't exist in 2003 for a committee to hear, for a committee to make a recommendation to this House to debate that matter before we get to the final vote on the budget bill. I hope at the end of the day that this House unanimously will see the value of the things we're putting in this budget and will find themselves in a position, after hearing from the public and hearing from their colleagues in standing committee, to actually support this budget when we bring it back for third and final reading.

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** Here they go again. For more years than I would care to admit, I've sat in this House and listened to the member for St. Catharines. No one would question his political stamina, given his 30 years of service in this House, most of which has been spent on this side of the House as opposed to the government side. No one would question his commitment to his constituents, having been re-elected by them so many times. No one would call into question his sense of the traditions of this House. And no one would question his loyalty to his beloved Buffalo Sabres. However, we must question: How many times while serving in opposition did he complain about any restrictions or limitations on debate, and how many times did he lament the bypassing of the democratic process, which he said was inherent in these kinds of time allocation motions?

This motion we're discussing tonight to curtail debate on Bill 187, the budget bill, stands in his name. He must accept political responsibility for its contents. He must explain why the government believes it is necessary to ram this bill through the House before all members who

may wish to speak to it have had a chance to do so. I have to say that so far, the case that has been put forward by the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and the member for Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge has not been very convincing.

This spring sitting of the Legislature will most likely be the final sitting of the 38th provincial Parliament of Ontario. In fact, six months from today, we will be taking down our election signs, a new Parliament having been elected the day before. This fact is not lost on the staff in the Premier's office and the Liberal Party's campaign team—none of whom have been elected but who are now calling all the shots in the McGuinty Liberal government. They are now in charge of all of the strategic and tactical decisions of the government, rendering the elected MPPs and even the executive council of Ontario redundant.

We know that the member for St. Catharines didn't dream up this time allocation motion. It originated in the Premier's office. We must ask, why the rush? Is it because they plan to shut the House down early, to deny the opposition the chance to hold them to account? The House calendar would have us here until the end of June. Are they planning to ignore it? Have they become so cynical and so bereft of new ideas that they will truncate this session and then have the audacity to ask the people for a second mandate when they couldn't even properly finish off this one?

We oppose this motion, and we will vote nay at 9:20 tonight when the Speaker calls the vote. We oppose it because we oppose in general the budgetary policy of this government, and we are not prepared to give them the benefit of the doubt. In saying this, I believe that I am representing the views of the majority of the people in Waterloo, Wellington and Halton Hills. If this motion passes, the standing committee on finance and economic affairs will be tied up with Bill 187 most likely until May 2.

As a member of this committee, I have to express my disappointment that we have not yet commenced public hearings on the issue of the loss of manufacturing jobs. I have been raising the need for these hearings for almost two years. My private member's resolution was tabled in this House in May 2005, because I was convinced that we faced a crisis in manufacturing and that the government had no plan to avert it. My resolution was finally passed by the House on November 30, just over four months ago. In the finance committee's pre-budget deliberations during the winter, the committee itself endorsed my proposal and included a recommendation for public hearings in our final report to the Minister of Finance. We are now in the fourth week of this sitting, and the finance committee has not yet met since we've returned. It would appear that the government does not want to hold public hearings on the loss of manufacturing jobs, because it would expose their abdication of leadership. It's unfortunate that they care more about their public image than they do about the more than 124,000 workers who have lost their good-paying factory jobs.

**1950**

The words “abdication of leadership” best describe the government’s approach to tourism, as well. The Minister of Finance should be embarrassed that his 2007 budget papers document and his fall 2006 economic outlook background papers, when compared together, show a confused and distorted view of the tourism industry. One document says that there were 257,000 people employed in the tourism industry in 2006; the other says that there were 175,500 employed in tourism in that same year. This is a discrepancy of 86,500 jobs. One document says the tourism industry contributed \$6.3 billion to Ontario’s GDP in 2005; the other says that tourism is worth \$11 billion to the GDP that same year. This is a difference of \$4.7 billion. Which one is it? Does anybody know over there? It’s no wonder they’ve had so much trouble balancing their budget.

One thing that is clear is that the Ministry of Tourism’s budget was slashed from \$210 million to \$191 million, year over year, in the fiscal year just ended. This indisputable fact from page 166 of their budget papers document would seem to contradict the McGuinty Liberal government’s repeated claim that they are committed to promoting the tourism industry.

As I have always believed, the potential for tourism in Ontario is infinite. With visionary leadership, there should be no limit to the number of visitors who would want to come to Ontario for their holidays. With our scenic beauty and abundant natural resources, outstanding hospitality, world-class attractions, geographic location, vibrant cities, and quaint and picturesque small towns, Ontario should be leading the world in the growth of tourism visits. Instead, we are lagging behind, and this government must acknowledge its responsibility for this fact.

As I informed the House before Christmas, same-day car trips to Canada from the United States are in steep decline according to Statistics Canada. Last fall, we hit a record low. Unfortunately, the most recent data I’ve seen shows no real improvement; in fact, we are continuing to lose ground. The situation is not helped by the fact that the McGuinty Liberal government has virtually given up on the American tourist market. Instead, there is a marketing campaign which purports to encourage Ontarians to plan their vacations within their home province. In reality, it appears that the marketing campaign was initiated in an attempt to make voters feel good about the province and to try to soften them up to support the McGuinty Liberal government in six months’ time. If that is its real objective, I predict it will fail.

As the PC critic for the Ministry of Tourism, I welcome any new investment in tourism marketing, provided it is well planned, effective, non-partisan and shows the best of the entire province. We should include every region from east to west and north to south, with special emphasis on the communities and regions which are particularly dependent on tourism for their local economic success.

A few months ago, I received a great deal of input from our Ontario tourism partners. I want to thank all of them for their responses and today mention the advice I received from Mr. Gary Clarke of Sam Jakes Inn of Merrickville, in eastern Ontario. He put a lot of effort into consulting with many of his colleagues and wrote a very thoughtful, compelling report which he shared with me. He addressed issues of improving the prosperity and competitiveness of Ontario’s tourism sector. He encouraged new measures to increase investment and decrease the burden on families. He called for tax relief to stimulate growth, and drew attention to the need to invest in our neglected tourism infrastructure. He suggested changes to our labour laws and highlighted the need for upgrading skills training and education.

This is the kind of action we need from our next minister responsible for tourism in a John Tory Progressive Conservative majority government. This is the hope we offer the tourism industry, as together we embrace the promise of the future.

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay–Atikokan):** Before I begin my remarks on the budget bill tonight—unfortunately, he has left the chamber, but the member from Simcoe North made reference earlier to the World Curling Championships and I just assure him that I and I’m sure most members of our caucus offer our congratulations to the world curling champion Glenn Howard from Coldwater, I think. The member probably would know, if he knows a little bit about curling history, that Thunder Bay was also home to the two-time world curling champion, Al Hackner and his rink, twice in the 1980s, who came within a stone just last week—I ran into him in the airport—of winning the senior championship out in Edmonton; also the world women’s champ, Heather Houston from Thunder Bay—a long history of curling success in Thunder Bay.

While we’re on the sports theme, I should congratulate Katie Weatherston from Thunder Bay, a member of the women’s world hockey championship that just kicked off in the United States last night, 5-1. Congratulations to Katie Weatherston. Congratulations to Jordan Staal, as well, who’s getting ready to get on the ice with the Pittsburgh Penguins; in fact, they’re probably playing now.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Mauro:** He is. He spent a lot of time with the Sudbury Wolves and is a great Thunder Bay person as well. So I offer my congratulations to them.

I’m happy to rise this evening and offer a few comments on the budget. Of course, it’s important for me to first offer my congratulations to the Minister of Finance, Greg Sorbara; to Premier Dalton McGuinty; and in fact, to our entire caucus, who have had a lot of input into the drafting of this document as it’s come forward over the last 12 months. We’ve had a lot of broad-based consultations, a lot of discussion in caucus, and I think this budget is a reflection not only of just a few ministries but clearly of all of the wishes and ambitions of most of the members of our caucus. So I want to congratulate the

minister and the Premier for listening very closely to concerns of all of us.

I think it's also very fair to say that by most people's objective observations, no matter whom you talk to—business, those who advocate on behalf of the disadvantaged in our province, the middle class—most people are generally very supportive and think that this particular budget was indeed a Liberal budget, perhaps the first one that could be so described that's come forward in this province in quite some time. It speaks to Liberal values, so in that context alone, I think we're all very proud of it. We spoke to the minimum wage in a very clear way and in fact enhanced what we had done in our 2003 campaign by following through to an increase in that from \$8 to \$10.25.

The Ontario child benefit—and I would like to take a moment to congratulate my seatmate Deb Matthews for all the great work that she did on that. Increases to the ODSP, increases to OW and legal aid—I've received calls from the law society in Thunder Bay, the local chapter, congratulating us on the work that we did and the money that we put into that particular area as well. So lots of people, representing a lot of different, diverse groups in Ontario, on a broad-based, non-partisan nature, have phoned me and offered their support for what they see as a very positive and terrific budget for all of the people of Ontario, not just a few individual sectors.

I would like to talk just a little bit about a few of the things that are particularly interesting and intriguing for me that are in this budget, that help my community of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. What we had in here were three more great projects of an infrastructure announcement. We know that coming in in October 2003 when we were first elected, there were several deficits facing us besides the fiscal deficit. One of them was an infrastructure deficit. We had three more great announcements in the budget this time for my riding of Atikokan, including the smaller townships and including the small community of Atikokan, as well as the city of Thunder Bay, building on previous infrastructure announcements that were made in the 2006 budget. We'll all remember that Move Ontario was a large part of that budget. Significant infrastructure dollars were brought forward at that time for the city of Thunder Bay: \$6.9 million. In this last budget, for me, is about \$2.5 million more, as well as the COMRIF money. So I think it's clear that we've been going a long way to addressing the infrastructure deficit we inherited when we came to government.

I spoke in my opening remarks about how this has been well received through a broad base of different sectors in the province, not just individual groups. In Thunder Bay alone, our action on the business education tax over the course of the next seven years is going to leave \$14 million more in the hands of individual businesses. I have had multiple calls from business owners in the city thanking me for that little component that's in the budget. It's significant. We all know that those tax rates have been high for quite some time. This is a big move, and they're thrilled with it. Of course,

we've still enhanced and continue to make our commitments to Thunder Bay Transit—\$4.5 million in gas tax revenue has flowed to the city of Thunder Bay.

## 2000

Also mentioned in there was another great project that hopefully people are going to see announced in the not-too-distant future. As we in our government continue to move forward with diversification of the economy in northern and northwestern Ontario, we have continued to invest significantly in knowledge-based products. Some will know, if they read the budget, that there is mention in there of a particular project called the Molecular Medicine Research Centre. We, with our government and through the help of Minister Bartolucci and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., have already contributed significantly to this project, to the tune of \$2.2 million, and we are hopeful that in the not-too-distant future we are going to see an additional amount of money, to the tune of about \$12 million or \$14 million, committed to this project. It's in the review stage; we feel like we're getting there. We've been working with the proponents of this project for, I would say, well over two years—I think we've exceeded two years now; there's been lots of to and fro. But that is an example of the work we've been doing, I would say, that has not been occurring in this province for a long, long time. We are working very hard to diversify the economy up there.

Other projects that fall into that same category that we have funded, many through NOHFC and others through different ministries: Molecular World, Genesis Genomics, a lot of research money for Lakehead University, more graduate students and on and on. So significant moves, significant dollars to try to help diversify the economy of northern Ontario and, in my case, northwestern Ontario. I'm very proud of those moves, and I think they're going to begin to bear fruit in the very near future.

I can remember very clearly, before I arrived at this place, the six years that I served as a municipal councillor in the city of Thunder Bay, the years 1997 to 2003. During that time, of course, the provincial government was the Conservative government under the leadership of Mike Harris and Ernie Eves. I think that my particular experience was not unlike the experience of many others who are here now. In the election of 2003, I think there were 36 or 38 first-time MPPs elected to this Legislature. Many of those 36 or 38 first-timers came from a municipal background, and I was one of them.

When I was asked to run in Thunder Bay–Atikokan, one of the particular reasons that I seriously considered it was my experience as a municipal councillor. During the term of that Harris-Eves government, I can tell you that every time you as a municipal councillor looked up, you were afraid that something else was going to be coming down the pike to hit you right between the eyes. That was the experience we had in Thunder Bay, and that was the experience that I know a lot of other municipal councillors had. I think that's what prompted a lot of people who were municipal councillors during that period to

decide that they felt they needed to run for provincial office.

During that time, if we remember what went on in the context of the budget and what was going on from 1995 to 2003, we had a provincial economy that was doing pretty well. It was riding on the back of a red-hot American economy and was doing very well. The provincial treasury was flush. At the same time, we were selling assets. The provincial government sold the 407—everybody remembers that one—for about \$3 billion, I think the number was. Apparently, it's something that's valued as high as \$8 billion.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** It's \$14 billion.

**Mr. Mauro:** It's \$14 billion.

We all know a little bit about the lease agreement that's in place, which we tried to get changed but unfortunately were unable to, so we're stuck with that for about 100 years, I believe. So an asset worth \$8 billion goes for \$3 billion, we're selling assets, the provincial treasury is doing very well, we're downloading billions of dollars in costs on to the backs of municipal residential property taxpayers, and what do we still find when we come to government in October 2003? A fiscal deficit of \$5.6 billion—almost impossible to fathom under those circumstances. The two pieces don't reconcile, they don't seem to fit, and yet that's what we found, a \$5.6-billion deficit. And during the same period of time, that government was able to add \$22 billion or \$26 billion to the total debt of the province.

The myth of good fiscal management by the Conservatives was shattered during that period of time. Why were they doing all this? Well, they were doing it because it was necessary to fund their tax cuts. They were doing it by slashing ODSP and OW rates, they were doing it by cutting the public service, they were doing it by firing nurses, and all sorts of other things that went on like that.

This is not in any way an overstatement in terms of what was going on in municipalities during that time. I can tell you that shortly after the election I had an opportunity to visit several communities in northern Ontario on behalf of the minister as we revamped the programming under the northern Ontario heritage fund, and I had the opportunity to visit Timmins. The mayor of the day there, Mayor Vic Power, asked me how my drive in from the airport was. I made the comment that it was very bumpy, and he said, "Well, Bill, do you know why that is? That section of road has just been handed to us by the Progressive Conservative government." As I recall, I looked at him with some disbelief. I said, "Vic, I think that's a 30-kilometre ride." He said, "Yes, you're in the neighbourhood." That's an example of what they were doing during that term and still leaving budget deficits on the order of \$5.6 billion. So it's a little bit rich and difficult for me to sit on this side of the House and listen to them try to lecture anybody in this province, let alone members on this side of the House, on how we should best bring in a budget. There's much more that I could

say, but I'll yield the floor to others so they have an opportunity.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: Sad news that we've lost two more members of our armed services and three others injured. Perhaps we could have a moment's silence out of respect.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration would like a moment's silence. Agreed? All stand, please.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I just want to offer a message of condolence, having just stood for a moment to recognize the loss, and also recognize the fact that democracy comes at a very high price.

I want to take the next few minutes to speak about the motion we are debating here this evening, which is a time allocation motion. I found it sort of interesting that the government House leader would file this motion, because this is the centrepiece of any government's legislative framework. It is passing strange that you are asking for time allocation to, in fact, limit debate on what is the most important piece of legislation that any government has.

I also thought it was really interesting that the decision of the House leader would be based on the wishes of the Premier. Last week in debate, the Premier made a comment about how he felt that members of the opposition weren't really appreciative of the importance of the budget. He said here that he thought we were missing this opportunity to debate the budget—I refer, of course, to the scandal we have unearthed. So I find it really interesting to juxtapose, on one hand, the Premier's interest in further debate on the budget, I would argue, by his comments in question period, and at the same time, this evening he has made sure that debate on the budget comes to a quick end. I just thought it was important to demonstrate this fundamental contradiction in the position taken as recently as last week by the Premier.

I think the opportunity, in terms of the motion we are debating here, is to just highlight a couple of the most important parts of this budget. One of the things that I think the general public has yet to appreciate the full implication of is the question of the changes in assessment. The government, after having frozen this process, which you just have to see as a way of having a time out without actually having any kind of solution or practical suggestions—so after having the time out in the budget, they have identified it as a four-year assessment period instead of a three-year assessment period. People need to understand that this actually does absolutely nothing in terms of what the assessed value is. It rolls it over a four-year period instead of three.

**2010**

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins—James Bay):** Speaker, I can't hear her.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Just one moment. Is there something wrong with the audio? Apparently there's—

**Mr. Bisson:** No, too many voices.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Oh, well, now that you've mentioned it, perhaps we could keep the chatter down to a lower level. Sorry, the member for York North.

**Mrs. Munro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to draw the public's attention to the fact that having an assessment period of time roll from three to four years is not something that is going to make a significant difference to one's assessed value. Instead, we as a party, as the opposition, have suggested and recommended that people should have a 5% cap, which would then allow those kinds of changes to float back and forth but within a manageable range.

The comment by the Premier when he thought we should be debating the budget—that was last week, not this week—made reference to the fact that it was over \$90 billion in expenditures. While obviously he considers that to be very much a plus, I think many taxpayers would look at that as over a \$20-billion increase in spending since the government came to power. When you consider that this is in fact our money that is being spent, one has to step back and say, "Well, are we getting our money's worth?" It works out to about \$4,500 per household.

Part of that \$90 billion, of course, dealt with many different programs, but one of the things I think one has to be aware of is that some of that spending is spread out over not just months, not just this fiscal budget year, but several years; in fact, not only the next election, but the one after that as well. So it certainly puts in context the hurrah that the government might express over the budget, recognizing that in fact it actually spreads over a period of time.

I want to talk for a moment about the importance of the budget as a method of leveraging the prosperity of the province because, really, government should be in the business of providing a regulatory framework and some guidance but not be in business. So when we look at the fact that the province of Ontario is dead last in the area of economic development in this country, it looks to me as if this budget in fact doesn't provide the kind of economic leverage that we need. We need a budget that speaks in a better fashion to ensuring ongoing prosperity.

One of the limitations that I think this government has created, quite frankly, in that regard is its energy policy. Voters will remember that the government promised that it would close the coal-fired furnaces in the province by 2007. This was despite the fact that common expert wisdom was that it would take several years to do that. Obviously, you need to do it in such a way that there's a transition that doesn't disrupt the power flow for the province, that allows for the development of expertise and allows for the reconstruction of generating plants and so on and so forth.

That was all ignored. This was all going to be accomplished by 2007. It wasn't until late last year that the energy minister indicated, of course, that 2007 was now a goal that had slipped away, without any kind of indication as to when, in fact, that would take place.

I think two items are really important. One item, of course, is that as the previous government, we had made a commitment that the Lakeview station would be closed, and that, of course, is the only one that has been done.

So, despite the expertise, there is no date that this government is prepared to give—but I think it's an extremely vital one, because, historically, having a competitive source of power in this province has provided many, many jobs and has provided opportunities for investment to come to this province and provide those jobs.

This is just one element where this government has failed to provide those kinds of carrots, those kinds of things that give security and stability to the economy.

If you consider that the budget is the most important indicator that any government can give in terms of direction and goals, then I'm afraid we have to say that this has been very disappointing for the community at large and for the economy specifically.

**Mr. Bisson:** I could say that I'm looking forward to this opportunity to speak on this time allocation motion, but, quite frankly, I'm in a bit of a quandary when it comes to this debate for a couple of reasons.

One, I'm going to have an opportunity to talk about the new diamond tax that's being introduced by way of this budget and what it means to the mining industry in general in Ontario.

Also, I've been listening attentively to question period for the last couple of weeks and listening to the Premier condemning members of the opposition for not wanting to talk about the budget and instead wanting to talk about the lottery scandal. Here we've got a chance to debate the budget, and what does the government do? They time-allocate the budget debate. I just think it's kind of ironic that we're in a situation where the Premier says he wants us to talk about the good measures in the budget—and I agree, there are some measures in this budget that I can support. There are some things in it that I think were positive. There are other things in it that I think were not so positive, and I'll get a bit of a chance to speak to that. But it's a time-allocated debate, so I won't get a chance, as any other member in this House will not get the chance, to really talk in detail about the budget and to talk about how we can make it better. That's really what behooves us all here, as members. The whole point of this Legislature is that when a government proposes a budget, we have a debate, and in the debate we put forward ideas about what the government has done well and what they've not done as well and how we can make it better for the citizens we represent. Unfortunately, in this debate, that's not going to mean a heck of a lot, because it's a time-allocated debate and the government has decided to truncate our discussion.

Let me talk about a couple of things.

First of all, I want to say something positive, because I think it's the responsible thing to do. You shouldn't come into this House, as a government member, and only applaud the agenda of the government like a trained seal;



neither should an opposition member come in here and just criticize.

There are some things in this budget that I think were okay; for example, the minimum wage move. I think the government heeded well the advice that they got from New Democrats and from the voting public, the Toronto Star and others who were involved, and moved on the minimum wage. Did they do it as fast as I would have liked? No. Nonetheless, they're moving. So I think the general principle, as far as the increase of the minimum wage, is—excuse me. I've got a cold. When I talk about Liberals, I don't normally get choked up like this. My God, it's a cold I just can't get rid of.

I want to say that as a general principle we support a \$10 minimum wage. That's what New Democrats have been pushing for. Did we get it in this budget? Quite frankly, not as fast as we want, but it's headed in the right direction. I would have much preferred to see it happen a lot more quickly.

The problem we're going to have, as you well know, is that by the time the minimum wage is actually increased to \$10 an hour, we'll be three years behind, and then we'll have to have it at \$11 to stay at the rate that we have to be at. So I think, generally, that was not a bad one.

#### 2020

There are a few other initiatives in the budget that I think, again, on their own, are not bad ones.

But here is the point: In a budget—here is part of the problem with the rules of this House—there are things that some of the members of the government sure would like to not support and would like to see hived off so they can have a separate vote, as the members of the opposition would like to be able to vote for some things and hive them off. Unfortunately, it's a one-size-fits-all kind of vote. The government members, obviously, have to vote with their government, so they're going to vote in favour. We, in the opposition, will vote opposed because there are some legitimate beefs in regard to this budget.

I want to get into the most serious one, in my view, that affects my constituency. I, like you, Mr. Speaker, am elected from a constituency. We're here to represent our constituents. I have, in my constituency, the first diamond mine to go into operation in the province of Ontario. De Beers Canada has spent a tremendous amount of money over the last number of years—25 years—along with other junior mining companies, doing exploration on the James Bay, looking for diamonds, because there was an indication some 20 years ago that there were diamonds in the sediment found in the Attawapiskat River. As a result of that sediment study of some 20 years ago, a number of mining companies, including De Beers in the end, did a lot of work to try to quantify if there are enough diamonds in that area to actually bring a mine into production. De Beers went through a very painstaking process of doing the economics on this project after they had decided there was probably enough there to make something happen. They spent literally tens of millions of dollars to quantify this

particular ore body. They did a really aggressive diamond drill program. They dug boreholes. More sediment work was done. Based on what they found, they determined there was X amount of diamonds. Now, here's the trick in mining—and this is what most people don't understand—you've got to spend truckloads of money to find a mine and bring it into operation. A diamond mine, a gold mine or a copper mine doesn't just happen and fall out of the sky, out of nowhere. Those kinds of investments that bring those projects into production are as a result of spending literally tens and hundreds of millions of dollars on the exploration stage of the project. De Beers ended at a point, not that long ago, about three years ago, where they had decided that the ore body was big enough. They did the economics on the project, and based on the economics of that day, they recommended to the international board of De Beers that they invest the money to go ahead and put this project into production.

That one project cost over a billion dollars to develop and put online. That's just what they're spending to build this mine. You've got to keep in mind where this project is. The De Beers Victor Project is in northern Ontario on the Attawapiskat River, 80 miles west of Attawapiskat. For those people who have not travelled that part of the province, there are no roads. The closest road to the De Beers project is about 400 kilometres south on Highway 11. We're talking about what the Crees called mushkegowuk, which is swamp. That entire area is basically one big swamp that is really expensive to try to build roads to.

De Beers, as a result of putting this mine into production, has to put in an entire infrastructure to make that mine operate: winter roads, hydroelectric, telecommunications, bringing materials up etc.—over a billion dollars. Before they spent that billion dollars, they had a discussion with the province of Ontario. They said, "What is your tax regime? What are we going to have to expect to pay in taxes when it comes to royalties on this project?"

Ontario, I might say, had the most attractive taxes when it came to royalties for investments here in Ontario. Ontario was leading the pack. We were on the cutting edge. Ontario was one of the best jurisdictions in Canada in which to invest in mining. Let me tell you, investment in mining is not just happening in Ontario. We're competing internationally for money to bring a project like that online. In Ontario, our mining regime says that if you're operating a mine south of Highway 11, south of 50, as we say, you will pay 10% of the value of whatever you take out of the ground to the crown based on an evaluation of what you have there. So if I start a gold mine, a diamond mine, a copper mine and it's south of 50, I pay to the province of Ontario 10% of the value of what I've taken out of the ground, based on a formula. The same way the oil industry pays royalties to the province of Alberta, Ontario collects royalties on the minerals in the ground. If you're doing a project north of 50, where there are no roads, Ontario, to its benefit—and it might have been done under the Liberals, it might have been under the Conservatives—reduced the royalty from

10% to 5%. We moved the royalty from 10% to 5% in order to say that if you're trying to start a mine in an area where there are no roads, no hydro, no infrastructure, we will recognize that you're going to have to build the infrastructure, not have the state, the province, build it for you. If I start a mine in Timmins, there's hydro there, there's natural gas there, there are roads, there are airports—everything to make my mine operate, as far as infrastructure, is there. But if I do it in Fort Albany or in Big Trout Lake or in Attawapiskat or Peawanuck or Martin Falls, that infrastructure doesn't exist, and the company itself will have to pay to put it in.

So the government of Ontario said—rightfully so—“We will charge a 5% royalty on what comes out of the ground north of 50 for all mining.” That created a boom of activity. It was that 5% royalty and a number of other things that we did as far as incentives in Ontario that got companies like De Beers to do the exploration that led to the finding of this mine and eventually to the decision to open that mine.

Well, imagine the surprise when I sat in the Legislature the day that the budget was presented and executives and workers who are involved with De Beers—Chief Mike Carpenter, the chief of Attawapiskat; Chief Stan Louttit, the grand chief of Mushkegowuk council—find out that we've now changed the game: We've gone from a 5% royalty north of 50 on diamonds to 13%, more than doubling the rate of taxes paid on royalty.

Now, the government, I have to believe, did this for a couple of reasons. One, well, do you know what? The Northwest Territories are doing it. That's what the Minister of Finance said: “We're just doing what NWT does.” They've got the worst tax regime in the country, Minister of Finance. Don't you get it? Nobody wants to invest there because the tax regime is too expensive for them to do it. They were investing in Ontario because our tax regime was favourable to mining. I say that as a New Democrat; I believe everybody should pay their fair share of taxes. But I understand, coming from northern Ontario, that if you don't have a tax regime that's competitive with other jurisdictions when it comes to exploration, you will never attract the kind of investment you need to get a project going.

Imagine the surprise of many people—Mayor Tom Laughren, the chamber of commerce, the labour councils, the First Nations and others—who saw this and all of a sudden said, “The whole economics on this thing has been thrown out the door.” So we've gone from being the most attractive tax regime in Canada to the worst, overnight, by way of this budget. For that reason alone, I cannot support this budget.

Now, I'm hoping that there's going to be some movement on the part of the government. De Beers was here last week. You might have been at the reception of Meet the Miners. For the first time since I've been here in 17 years, there were some pretty stern words from the leaders at De Beers telling the government, in the words of one of the executives the other day, “Look in the back of the room. There's the display for the first diamond

mine in Ontario, and probably the last one, because nobody is going to make the kinds of investments that are necessary, at 13%, that have been made to make this mine go.”

What makes this really unfair is this: If you were in the gold mining business and you started a gold mine right next door to the De Beers operation, the Victor project in Attawapiskat, you would pay 5% royalty. But because you're operating a diamond mine, you're going to pay 13%. People are going to say, “Oh, diamonds are more valuable.” That's what the argument is going to be. The reality is that the costs are the same: The same cost for electricity, the same cost to haul stuff up, the same cost for transportation, for telecommunication, for all of the infrastructure to run that mine. Why shouldn't you treat gold mining the same as diamond mining? That has always been the basic way we've operated mining in Canada: We've said, “We'll have a tax regime, we'll have environmental laws and we'll have various regulations that apply to the sector of the industry.” Imagine if you had a tax that said that GM in Oshawa is taxed at one rate and Ford in Oakville is treated differently, and one pays more than the other. We would never stand for a tax that basically said, “If you're Ford, you pay one rate; if you're GM, you pay the other; and if it's Chrysler or Honda, it's different.” We understand that you have to have sectoral approaches to taxation. What we've done in this tax bill, in the budget, is to basically say that we have one system for one type of mining and we have another system of taxation for another.

Now, I'm hoping that things will turn around. I know that the De Beers people have met, I think it was yesterday, with the Minister of Finance. I talked to the Minister of Finance last week and pointed out the error of his ways, why I thought it was wrong. He told me that he would meet with them; the meeting was set up. I do know that they met. I'm hoping that the minister has finally realized what this all means and things will turn around. I'm hoping that the committee hearings we're going to get—which won't be many; a day or a day and a half at the most, which I think is a travesty. I think a budget should have a little bit more time than that in committee. At the very least, we should have the committee travel to where communities are affected by this budget. Nonetheless, I'm hoping De Beers and others will present before the committee and explain why this was wrong. I'm hoping the government can do what is sometimes necessary, and that is to say, “I was wrong,” and to change. That is one of the reasons people become disconnected from politics, politicians and political parties. Even when sometimes we know we were wrong, we're not prepared to admit so.

#### 2030

I say it would be nice to see that. I've done it in my own time in politics. I can tell you stories where I've gone to people and said, “Listen, on that one, I was wrong. Maybe I should have done things differently.” That's how you learn and you grow, and I hope the government does the same.

I also want to talk a little bit, just finishing up, with regard to the De Beers issue, the diamond tax. What I hope and what I think everybody else hopes is that we have a regime that in the end will treat everyone the same.

The other thing I want to talk about in this budget debate is something that has really driven me—that I really don't like—and that is the way we approach infrastructure spending in the province. We have a system program called COMRIF. It's a municipal infrastructure program that's partly funded by the province and sometimes by the federal government, and we have this huge bureaucratic process which communities have to go through to apply for this money.

If you're the community of Kapuskasing, Hearst, Val Rita, Timmins or wherever you might be and you want to approach the province to get funding for infrastructure to do a project, the province says in COMRIF, "Municipal council, make up your mind—what one project do you want to have funded? Make up your priority, tell us what it is and it's in the mix with everybody else."

The town of Kapuskasing or whichever may have more than one project that needs to be done. They may need to fix the street at the same time they need to fix a water tower in another part of the community. There may be an arena that needs some repairs—there are all kinds of infrastructure issues that have to be dealt with, or there needs to be some expansion if that is the case. What this program has always done, in my view, is very much limit the ability of municipalities to plan properly for the reinvestment and building up of their municipal infrastructure.

I would propose that we have a different program. We should have a different approach. We should do what we have done from time to time, and that is to say, "Let's figure out how much the province can afford to give in municipal infrastructure, and then let's have a formula that apportions money to each municipality based on the number of people who live in the community, the size of their assessment base—some sort of a formula that gives each community a fair shot at X amount of dollars per year, so that if you're the town of Sudbury and you say your formula will give you \$15 million a year, the municipal council in Sudbury for the next number of years knows they'll get X amount of dollars every year for infrastructure, and they're able to do some planning.

For example, in the case of Kapuskasing, they got \$5 million just recently for a water project that was given by the province—I think it was a good thing—but if the town of Kapuskasing knew that every year it gets \$3.5 million on a formula and that would be guaranteed for four or five years, at least for the term of a council, I would argue, they then can sit back and say, "Okay, we've got some choices to make. We've got to partially fund it ourselves, we've got to make sure we can raise the money either by debenture or by the tax base to be able to pay for it," and then say, "What are our priorities for the next four years? We've got to fix Ontario Street. We've got to fix the water line in this part of the com-

munity. The arena needs a new roof, new chillers," or whatever it might be, the municipal complex—you know, whatever the decisions are. But then you leave the municipality to make up the decisions as to what project is going to get funded over a four-year period.

The reason we don't do that, in my view—I'm quite cynical—is that it takes away the ability of the province to do a whole bunch of press conferences. There's nothing more that ministers love to do. I look at my good friends across the way, because I've been there as well, and you want to keep control on when those goodies are going to come down and when you can make the announcement. I just think, "Yeah, I got some." I well know. I understand how that works. But I'm saying we can still do that, because you could put a requirement to the municipalities that whenever you're announcing your decisions on infrastructure spending, you have to do a joint announcement with the province, either with the local member or the cabinet minister—whatever way. The government can decide that. And then basically you can still get the best bang for your buck.

The other thing is that we have to insist—I would say insist and demand—that the federal government be part of this as well. They're the biggest culprits on this. They're the welfare bums of Canada, as far as I'm concerned. The federal government has downloaded—you know, they've got huge surpluses, right? And what's the surplus this year? Your husband, the Minister of Finance—it was huge.

It started with Paul Martin. Paul Martin said, "I want to balance the books of Canada," and said, "Stick it to the provinces." The provinces said, "We want to balance our books, so we stuck it to the municipalities." As a result, the federal government has these big surpluses, and the province and municipalities are strapped for cash. I think the federal government has to come in on it.

I would say a good way to do that would be on a one-third basis each. The municipalities, along with the province and the federal government, each put up a third, build up the fund based on the formula that I talked about, and then municipalities can go out and make some decisions.

You could, if you wanted to, as federal and provincial governments, establish some priorities to say, "You can't use all of your money just to buy buses. You've got to also use your money to do water, to do arenas." You can have a different kind of mix on it. But the point is, at least municipalities would be able to plan. I have never liked this form of municipal infrastructure spending.

We've been fortunate in my riding, I've got to say. Hearst just got close to \$1 million about two weeks ago; Kapuskasing got \$5 million; Smooth Rock Falls got \$800,000; the town of Fauquier got a fair chunk; the city of Timmins and others. We've been fairly fortunate, and I think that's a result of good municipal councils. I'll say it in this House. It's not the provincial member or the cabinet minister who made those applications happen on their own. We've got good municipal councils that put together some very strong proposals, brought them

before the provincial government and lobbied hard to get their money. I tip my hat to the municipal aldermen and the mayors who were involved. I know Mayor Spacek and Mayor Sigouin and others worked really hard to make sure that they identified some good priorities for their communities that eventually got funded.

But I'll tell you, it's one heck of a process that people have to go through, and I would say that the very least we should do is have an infrastructure program that is a little bit more predictable when it comes to the communities.

The last thing I want to end on is the whole issue of the provincial clawback. One of the things in this budget and one of the other reasons I'm not going to vote for this budget is that we have been calling on the government for years now—first the Conservatives, then with the Liberal Party—to end the clawback. Every time a parent receives the family child tax credit on behalf of a child, that should not be deducted from their provincial sources of income. The Liberals in opposition were apoplectic against the Mike Harris-Eves government, demanding that be undone. They've been in office for three and a half years now. Nothing has been done in order to resolve this problem.

In this budget, we finally got a positive announcement, right? We're going to end the clawback. But it won't be done in time for the end of this Parliament and it won't be done in time for the next Parliament; it will be done for the Parliament after that. So the decision that Mr. McGuinty and Mr. Sorbara have made in their budget is to off the issue not to this Parliament, not to the next Parliament but the Parliament after that. So we would all have to be re-elected twice, in this provincial election and then the one following four years later, if there's a majority government, to see the clawback end. I think that's cynical politics. I don't believe governments should be making those kinds of moves, making announcements that are basically going to affect somebody in the very far future. I think if the government's plan is to end the clawback, you should say you're ending 20% or 25% or 50% this year, you're ending the rest of it next year, and that you have some concrete steps to do that. That's not what this government is doing. The government is offing the clawback deduction away two Parliaments from now, and I think that's wrong.

With that, I want to thank members for taking the time to listen to my contribution. I know the Minister of Finance will be running back to the Ministry of Finance tonight to amend his budget according to what I had to say tonight. For that, Mr. Sorbara, I want to thank you.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to speak this evening in support of a very good budget. I'm very proud of the budget that we've had. Just because of the way that the member for Timmins-James Bay ended up talking about infrastructure programs, perhaps I will start where he left off because we too have had some frustration with the COMRIF program, which is three-way sharing. For precisely that reason, we introduced the rural infrastructure program, which was \$70 million initially, but in this

budget was doubled to \$140 million. That is provincial money. It's simpler to apply for than the process that my colleague across the floor just described with the COMRIF program. I'm delighted that my rural municipalities were able to benefit from that. The Elora area of Centre Wellington, which I actually share with the member for Waterloo-Wellington, received \$900,000 for a biosolids waste management facility, and one of my other rural municipalities, Puslinch, received over a quarter of a million dollars for help in rebuilding one of its roads that needs some attention. So I did just want to point out that because of the concerns that were outlined by the member, which we share, we did introduce our own rural infrastructure program here in Ontario, and this budget is making even more money available to that.

#### 2040

But the centrepiece of our budget, I'm very proud to say, has been in the area of child poverty. As a member of the Liberal women's caucus, I was absolutely thrilled to see this initiative, because the women's caucus had identified child poverty as an area that we wanted to work on. Certainly it's very gratifying to see the reception that the work, led by my colleague Deb Matthews, and by Kathleen Wynne before she became a minister, and which we took to caucus, to the Premier and to the Minister of Finance, had, and that it has materialized in what is the beginning of a really dramatic overhaul of the way we look at child poverty in this province.

One of the observations the women's caucus made was that for a child living in poverty, it really doesn't matter whether the parents are on social assistance or whether they're members of the working poor. From the child's point of view, they are living in poverty, and we need to look at the problem from that point of view. That's exactly what we are doing in this budget. We are saying that where there is a child living in a poor family, we will support that poor child regardless of the economic circumstances of the family, or at least the circumstances that lead that family to be living in poverty. We're going to look at the child and not at the income source of the parents.

For every child living in poverty, we have introduced the Ontario child benefit. Starting this year, that will be \$250 per child. When is it fully rolled in in 2011, it will be \$2.1 billion that the child benefit will send to poor children in this province. That is why it's taking a number of years to roll in. It's such a dramatic change in the way Ontario supports poor children. One of the things we also know about the way current programs work is that very often if you're on social assistance, if you're a family with kids, living in poverty, there are programs which support children where, if their parent goes out to work, the support ends. What that really does is say to that family, "You know, your children really would be better off if you stayed on welfare." We said, "You know, that's wrong. If a child is living in poverty, the benefit should continue, and as the parent moves from social assistance back into the workforce, that shouldn't mean their children lose the support of the province." So

we are dramatically restructuring our support and making sure that every child who is living in poverty receives the benefit based on the fact that they are in poverty, not based on the fact that their family is on social assistance. The working poor will be treated equally, and that is brand new in the province of Ontario and something of which I am very proud.

There are a number of other things which affect children, and as somebody who has spent a lifetime involved in education, I think we need to look at programs in terms of the whole child, not just the education system.

Excuse me; I think Mr. Bisson and I are sharing the same MPP cough and cold here.

One of the things we did was to extend funding for daycare. What we have wanted to do and have begun to do is to extend the provision of daycare in the province of Ontario. I'm very pleased to say that this year we are increasing the annual funding by \$25 million. Next year that will go up to \$50 million, which will again allow us to expand daycare services for children all over the province.

Another issue is children who are at risk. We know that a number of children in this province have mental health challenges, and one of the things that needs some attention in this province is our children's mental health system. It has been frozen, through the inaction of previous governments, for a number of years. So I was absolutely delighted to see that we have added \$8 million to the annual funding of children's mental health services in the province. That will have a significant impact on the number of children we can help.

We're also adding money to children's treatment services for children who have some sort of disability. We're adding an extra \$4 million to support them.

So there's quite a package here when you look at all the different services that we are beefing up.

I'd also like to talk a bit about some of the other things. I started with the rural section of my riding, but I'd also like to talk about some things that will be of particular benefit to Guelph. Guelph business people will qualify for a reduction in business education taxes. That will result in a savings of \$8.5 million to the Guelph business community. That's equivalent to a 39% cut in the business education tax rate as it's rolled in for industrial corporations and a 17% cut in the commercial tax rate.

There's \$2.7 million for transit in Guelph, and over \$700,000 for affordable housing in Guelph.

Indeed, there's a lot of good news in this budget for the citizens of Ontario and I'm very proud to support it.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I want to start by saying that I'm appalled by the fact that this government, this House leader specifically and this Premier, after all of their presentations, pre-election and during the election, about transparency and accountability and the aversion to a government's mandate and its use of its executive powers, we have before us what I would call an omnibus time allocation motion. This is on a budget that,

quite honestly, is staggering in its spending and completely neglectful in its priorities.

This is the budget that we're actually being forced to debate. It's just incredible. It's close to 300 pages, and for those viewing, the secret is in the detail.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Have you read it?

**Mr. O'Toole:** In fact, it's a promissory note.

The minister in charge of lotteries is here tonight. He, above all, should be silenced. He is a know-nothing, say-nothing and do-nothing minister. There have been no answers to the questions raised to him—120 questions, zero answers—and to the Premier as well.

Quite frankly, if you look at this time allocation motion—I'm speaking directly to my constituents in the riding of Durham and, more importantly, to the people of Ontario—don't be fooled. Why are they time-allocating a budget bill? They are limiting the opposition's opportunity to point out to you and to my constituents and to all the people of Ontario what's not being done.

If you looked at just the one issue of children who are being treated in the community, vulnerable children in the care of the province of Ontario directly through partner funding, they've committed \$200 million to that program. We met with those providers in our community and they have told us that unless the \$200 million flows this year—it's a four-year commitment—there will be work disruptions and vulnerable children will be exposed. That's just one area.

But the general theme that I hear in Durham region, which myself and Christine Elliott and Jerry Ouellette try to represent respectfully and responsibly, is that it's time for Durham's fair share.

**2050**

What's in this budget? Let's look just at that for a moment. First of all, in all of our minds and all of our hearts and those of our families, there's Bill 140, which is the long-term-care bill, where they're eliminating some 23,000 beds in this province. So for your parents, and the bed blockers, as they call them, chronic patients in hospitals who should be transferred to long-term care, there's going to be no place, no room in the inn. The commitment by this government in Bill 140 eliminates—B and C homes are now exposed to having less security in offering these services in the community.

But even continuing on the health debate, discussion, we had a bill before this House which is now starting to be phased in. It's Bill 102, which is trying to regulate the pharmaceutical act and the Ontario Drug Benefit Act. In fact, we're seeing now that there's going to be some excruciating pressure on your local pharmacy and on the pharmacists themselves. They're going to be surprised, because they're reducing the funding and reducing the number of prescription medications that you're going to be entitled to.

I can boil it down specifically to my riding of Durham. There are two hospitals that are now hanging by their thumbs: The hospital in Port Perry, the hospital in Bowmanville, and I should say, on behalf of Christine Elliott, the hospital in Whitby, are all being threatened with an

imminent reduction of services, directed by the minister. We know that they had an operating problem. I think the operating budget was around \$14 million. These are services. They were directed by the Minister of Health, George Smitherman, the Premier and the members around the cabinet table. They gave them \$7 million, which is half of it, they gave them \$1 million in one-time funding and told them, directed them, to cut \$7 million. Let's look down deeper into this issue, just this one issue, in the limited time, because of time allocation, that I've been allowed to speak, not just on behalf of my constituents; more importantly, beware of false promises. As the member from the NDP said, the emperor has no clothes.

The most important program: The member from Guelph-Wellington spoke about children's mental health services. The Minister of Health, George Smitherman, has said—I'm putting it on the record here today; it's in the budget; it's in communications that I've had in public meetings—to cut \$3 million from children's mental health issues. Your family—children suffering various issues in their life are being told, "The service is not going to be there for you." Thank Dalton. At the same time, recognize that they have increased the health tax. Each family that is working and commuting on the GO train with me is paying about \$1,600 for the health tax. You're paying more and you're getting less. The member from Guelph-Wellington spoke. I listened specifically to her comments. Why? Because, on the very next day after they had cut \$3 million from Durham, they announced in a Liberal riding, Guelph—and this is tokenistic partisanship—an addition of \$3 million. Perhaps it's because her riding is vulnerable. She could lose the next election.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** The minister announced it; not me. I'm revealing it to the people of Ontario from the maroon book. Be aware of the maroon book. Be aware of anything in one of the books. In fact, the regional chair said in the last budget and in this budget—not just for the 407 and Durham region transit; they gave hundreds of millions of dollars to Peel, York and the city of Toronto. What did we get? We got \$55 million, compared to the hundreds of millions. In fact, we have the highest growth and potentially the highest risk.

The viewers should be aware that the job losses in Ontario, and more specifically in the auto sector—they were addressed earlier today on the budget—more importantly there in this province, by this government's tax policy, are devastating to the economy and to the lives of the constituents I represent. I challenge this government on a time allocation motion to let us have our voice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The chair recognizes the member for York-South.

**Mr. Mario Sergio (York West):** It is York West, but that's okay, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The chair recognizes the member for York West.

**Mr. Sergio:** It's 9 o'clock, so I can understand. I only have a couple—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Sergio:** Yes, indeed, I want to get to the York subway as well.

I thank you for the few minutes that I have. I want to make a couple of points, because I think it is impossible to do justice to one of the best budgets I've ever seen since I've been in this House. I think we should really consider passing this budget as soon as possible and bring all the good, positive aspects to the people of Ontario.

Some things never change between opposition and government. I look—three and a half years—and what a change, what a difference. Thank goodness that every three or four years the people of Ontario have an opportunity. And you know what? Politicians are like babies; they need to be changed sometimes. Thank goodness. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here today, bringing this particular good news.

Let me address perhaps the most important aspect of the budget with respect to Toronto, if you will, the people of York West and York North, and the people of Ontario as a whole, because the impact of \$670 million allocated for the extension of the subway will not only help Toronto, York region, Durham and Peel, but all the people of Ontario.

Today, I was completely shocked by the shocking admission of the leader of the third party here, saying that if he had a chance, he would do away with the extension of the Spadina subway to York. It is quite—

**Mr. Dunlop:** He didn't say that.

**Mr. Sergio:** I'll read exactly what he said, if you would be willing to listen and be quiet, because when you spoke I did not speak.

What the other side fails to understand is that York University is a city in itself. There are some 51,000 students on a daily basis, plus another 5,000 or 6,000 staff. We've got 1,663 buses going in and out of the university daily, and I wonder what the effect is.

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** And these guys want to kill it.

**Mr. Sergio:** And they want to kill it. On top of that, the most shameful thing is—this would create some 35,000 or 40,000 jobs for the construction of this subway extension.

What is even more unfortunate—I'm glad to see that my NDP friends are here—is that it comes from the NDP leader, who usually speaks for the environment and jobs. Here we are, and he's speaking against the people, not only of Toronto—and he has shown such a wickedness, speaking against Toronto—but also against the people of Thunder Bay and the people in northwestern Ontario. My friendly companion here, Gilles Bisson, comes from up north, and Bombardier is up north, isn't it? That employs a lot of people and ultimately would be working for the extension of the subway to York University. Isn't that amazing, that instead of bringing forth the best, positive side of the budget, we tend to tear it down?

**Mr. Bisson:** Mario, this is hogwash. Nobody said anything about cancelling subways.

**Mr. Sergio:** Well, let me read; let me take a couple of minutes. Mr. Hampton said, "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." Can you believe that coming from Mr. Hampton?

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the member from Timmins—James Bay bothering you, there?

**Mr. Bisson:** No. I was just helping him out.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, he's not in his seat. Member for York West.

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**Mr. Sergio:** I want to wrap it up. We have seen over the years that when they cut, we build. They closed hospitals; we built hospitals. They closed schools; we built new schools. They cut doctors and nurses; we provided more help. This is what we are doing, and this is what the budget does—especially when it comes to seniors, particularly in my area, children and working-class families.

I'm going to give the floor to my colleague. I thank the House for listening.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** It's a real pleasure to be able to speak about our budget tonight. I know that my colleagues talked about some of the specifics. I'm going to talk about some of the broader things and how it has been received in my riding.

Before I go there, I heard from my friends across the aisle, the Tories and the NDP, about our credibility. Well, I'm not going to make up things. I'm going to quote some of the things that the local newspaper, the Cobourg Star, printed while Mr. Tory was in the riding, so bear with me.

This quote is from March 4: "During a stop in Cobourg on Tuesday, opposition leader John Tory reported cataract surgery wait times at the local hospital were up. He reiterated it at a health care round table discussion in Brighton yesterday and issued a media release that stated 'the wait for cataract surgeries at Northumberland Hills Hospital is up by 15%'."

I'm not going to read what I said, because it's probably unparliamentary, but let me tell you what CEO Joan Ross from Northumberland Hills Hospital said.

"Last month the average wait to have cataract surgery in Northumberland Hills Hospital was 21 days, hospital president Joan Ross said in an interview yesterday. In January it was 23 and in December it was 16.

"I think we have the lowest, or one of the lowest, wait times (in Ontario)."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rinaldi:** But I'm not finished.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I want you to pay attention.

This is the editorial from March 8: "Of course, Tory's main objective was to discredit the current Liberal government and that's what opposition parties do."

I agree with that. But in this case, there was more at stake than just the Liberal Party's record of management on the health care unit; there was the reputation of the Northumberland Hills Hospital and its management.

From the same editorial:

"Apparently, this is not the first time Mr. Tory and his staff have lashed out using incorrect figures."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rinaldi:** But I'm not finished with what the editorial says.

"And, of course, we all remember the \$5.5-billion deficit the PC government of Mike Harris, Ernie Eves and Doug Galt left behind."

And they called—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hold it, member for Northumberland. We're supposed to just have a pleasant time here at night sittings. I can't hear the member for Northumberland because of the cross-talk here, so shall we listen to the member for Northumberland?

**Mr. Rinaldi:** I'm going to finish with one last line from the editorial: "That deficit, fudged"—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** What does the member for Simcoe North not understand about "Order"? Member for Northumberland.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** "That deficit, fudged by the PCs during the election campaign"—that's what they know. So that was the credibility of those folks who are criticizing us.

Now, I'm going to talk about what people said about the budget—not what I said, but what the people in the riding and some of the newspapers said. Let me quote:

"Cobourg mayor Peter Delanty said the really good news in the Ontario budget was twofold: direct funding for children in low-income families and a monthly increase in housing assistance....

"And from the county level," because we do have a county level of government, "uplifting"—

**Mr. O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member of Durham on a point of order. What section of the standing orders?

**Mr. O'Toole:** With respect, I would ask the Speaker to rule on whether or not the member for Northumberland is speaking to the motion before us, which is a time allocation motion on this budget.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That's not a point of order. It's a very broad motion that we're discussing tonight. Member for Northumberland.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anyway, he went on to say, "from the county government level, 'uplifting' these social costs will help with the bottom line ... just as the province has by paying more for ambulance services and health unit costs."

This is a classic. This is a quote about the Conservative candidate in my riding, Mrs. Galt. Listen to this.

**Interjection:** The Conservative candidate.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** On the Conservative candidate: "Local riding Conservative candidate Cathy Galt supported the Liberals' Ontario child benefit and lauded" the Liberal

government. So I wonder why Mr. Tory and the rest of the party voted against our budget the other day.

I've got a couple of minutes and I've got a couple of other quotes from people in my riding.

"Port Hope Mayor Linda Thompson"—who was just elected for the first time—"was not only excited about increased infrastructure funding to address the \$130-million deficit in her municipality ... but says the \$10 million announced to extend high-speed Internet"—that's broadband—"service into rural areas like Northumberland is very 'beneficial.'

"For economic development, there must be this level of communication, she said."

Let me tell you what the Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce said: "Port Hope and District Chamber of Commerce vice-chair Lynda Kay agreed that both small business and home-based businesses benefit from the installation of broadband services.

"Ms. Kay endorsed the phasing out of the business education tax over the next seven years, investment in roads, plus the phasing in of the increase in the minimum wage from \$8 hourly to \$10.25 over three years, because in this way the impact won't be as severe as a sudden change would be."

I could go on and on here. Let me tell you what was in the Trentonian. It's also an Osprey paper, not very friendly to us, but there, you understand—and I'll end there.

"Northumberland-Quinte West"—which is a new riding—"should be pleased with the amount of good news contained in Thursday's ... provincial budget." That was an editorial. So they can talk all they want, but this is reality. That's what the people are saying in my riding.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Davenport.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** This is a classic first. To get applause from the opposition is really something that I appreciate very deeply.

I was at a meeting tonight at 6 o'clock in my riding. The people there told me that members of Parliament are speaking much too fast and are not speaking clearly enough, and they were begging me to speak distinctly, and I will try to do that. I would hope that members will take this into account.

The budget was crafted with a vision in mind, a good Liberal vision, and that vision is to create opportunity for all Ontarians. We are finding ourselves in a global world, in a global economy, and consequently we are competing not just locally but globally. That means that if Ontarians want to maintain the kind of standard of life that we're used to, we necessarily have to be more competitive. While we're speaking tonight, we also know that there is a shift of wealth taking place away from North America and away from Europe. Just think about this: The United States of America is this year borrowing from China—that is, the People's Republic of China—more than \$500 billion. We're talking about a shift of wealth.

**2110**

Let's say, for instance, that an Ontario worker gets \$10 an hour. Of course, most workers—let's take the median—get a lot more. But for the \$10 an hour a factory worker gets, he competes with a person in the Third World for less than \$1 an hour. It's obvious what takes place here. The only way we can possibly compete, the only way we can possibly maintain our wealth and maybe begin to shift back this transfer of wealth, is to ensure that Ontarians have the competitive edge. What does that mean? That means, obviously, that we have to look at this specific budget, because in the budget, we're trying to create the opportunity.

First, for the first time we have a new ministry, the Ministry of Research and Innovation. It's the Premier.

Second, we have to be competitive in education, because it is only through innovation and research, it is only through maintaining and ensuring that people stay in school and get as much education as possible—only in that way can we possibly ensure that we are competitive.

It's important to understand and look at the figures. We're spending, in education, over \$800 million. It means more teachers. What about post-secondary education? Did you look at the figures? Did you look at the figures here? Post-secondary education is delivering 75,000 new spaces. This budget is doubling student aid. That should be applauded. Now nobody applauds—but I don't want to get into that, because I don't want to be partisan about this. This budget should be supported by every member of the Legislature, including the opposition. If you weren't partisan, you'd applaud that as well.

Apprenticeship programs in the riding of Davenport alone—I had the minister come in and talk about apprenticeship and providing apprenticeship training, carpentry, for women in need. Imagine that. That was never the case before. Providing a carpentry apprenticeship program—what a wonderful idea. Let's face it: This may not necessarily be a Liberal idea, but isn't it a good idea?

**Interjection:** It's a great idea.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** It's a great idea.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Let me give you an example: between Diamond Aircraft and Fanshawe College, \$1 million for apprenticeship programs, and it goes right across Ontario—it isn't just London, it isn't just Toronto, but right from Windsor over to Sudbury, over to Wawa, over to Thunder Bay, right across Ontario. That's the apprenticeship program the Liberals are trying to institute. Do you know what? We're being told that to be competitive we need to have better roads and we need to have a better transportation system. I don't want to talk about the subway, and I don't want to talk about the NDP and how they went back on the subway going to North York; I don't want to talk about that. What I'm simply saying is: Infrastructure services are an important item in becoming competitive. We can't have a truck driver sitting in gridlock and wasting gas and wasting time.



Finally, health care: It's competitive. Publicly funded health care brings investment to Ontario.

Let's tie competitiveness and the economy to our working poor. The working poor need to be supported. We're all in this together. We're in the same boat, but we've got a captain. His name is McGuinty. This captain knows that on this ship we're all together. We need one another. We need to work in harmony. We need to have the opposition onside, whether that's the NDP, which sometimes brings up good and positive proposals, or the Progressive Conservative Party, which brings up good and positive proposals—they should be listened to. It's part of our budget—we're all-encompassing. Our intent is big, our intent is large; it includes you as well, and that's why we don't want to be partisan tonight. That is not part of this budget. That's why I appreciate the member from the NDP saying he's got some good—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Listen, I listened to you tonight carefully and you said there were some positive ideas in this budget. Why don't you agree when I say that? You said that tonight. Stand up and be counted and say, "Yes, this is a good budget," because that's what you said earlier. Don't change your mind now. I have you on record, an NDP member saying there are good, positive suggestions and good, positive policies in this budget. You said it and now—just a minute—we've got it on record.

Since we're all in this boat together, what we need is to work together in harmony. What we need is to help each other. How does this Liberal budget help each other? How does this Liberal budget help the working poor? Look, the minimum wage—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** I don't want to be partisan, as I said. Don't look at me and don't tell me—what did I hear about the minimum wage from the NDP? The member from Sudbury is telling me 15 cents for five years, and there's criticism against us for raising the minimum wage 75 cents per year. That means it's over \$10 in a very short time. What about the shelter allowance to help the working poor? If you're making less than \$20,000, you're getting \$100 for a shelter allowance. What about

child care and child care spaces? What about the \$250 in this budget that will be given to every child in Ontario this year? Not only that, but we're increasing it to \$600; injured workers, 2.5% per year; ODSP payments; social assistance.

My time is up. Let me simply say this—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your time is up.

Mr. Caplan has moved government notice of motion number 323. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 2117 to 2127.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Parsons, Ernie
Balkissoon, Bas	Leal, Jeff	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bartolucci, Rick	Levac, Dave	Ramal, Khalil
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Marsales, Judy	Ramsay, David
Brownell, Jim	Matthews, Deborah	Rinaldi, Lou
Caplan, David	Mauro, Bill	Ruprecht, Tony
Chan, Michael	McNeely, Phil	Sandals, Liz
Colle, Mike	Meilleur, Madeleine	Sergio, Mario
Craitor, Kim	Milloy, John	Smith, Monique
Fonseca, Peter	Mitchell, Carol	Smitherman, George
Gerretsen, John	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Van Bommel, Maria
Kular, Kuldeep	Oraziotti, David	Watson, Jim

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please stand one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Dunlop, Garfield	Munro, Julia
Barrett, Toby	Elliott, Christine	O'Toole, John
Bisson, Gilles	Martiniuk, Gerry	Savoline, Joyce

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 36; the nays are 9.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

It being 9:30 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 10 of the clock on Thursday, April 12.

*The House adjourned at 2130.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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