



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 3 June 2010

Jeudi 3 juin 2010

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 3 June 2010

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 3 juin 2010

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Hindu prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

EXCELLENT CARE FOR ALL ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR L'EXCELLENCE
DES SOINS POUR TOUS

Ms. Matthews moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 46, An Act respecting the care provided by health care organizations / Projet de loi 46, Loi relative aux soins fournis par les organismes de soins de santé.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I will be sharing my time with the member from Scarborough–Rouge River, my parliamentary assistant, who has done an exceptionally fine job in taking this legislation through committee.

I rise once again in this chamber to urge all members in this House to pass the proposed Excellent Care for All legislation at this third reading of the bill. This legislation is vital if we are to have a modern, accessible and equitable health system in this province, a system that delivers the kind of quality care Ontarians deserve today and one that will be there for our children and for our grandchildren.

I'm very proud of this legislation because I know that it will result in positive changes for Ontario's patients. Universal, single-payer health care is a core value that all Ontarians share. It is a precious gift that was passed to us from earlier legislators and one that we have a responsibility to pass on to future ones.

In order to continue making essential health care services available to our population, critical changes will have to be made—changes to attitudes, to approaches, to processes; changes to our basic conceptions of what the health care system should look like in the future. The entire system must put the needs of the patients first and foremost, and that means looking for ways to add quality and value to a health care system that serves the people of this province and is paid for by the taxpayers of this province.

Speaking of taxpayers, each and every one of them expects us to manage their dollars wisely to get the very

best value out of every dollar we spend in health care. As you know, over the past several years, health care has been consuming an ever greater portion of the pot. That's why it's imperative that we place a greater emphasis on patients getting better quality care, which in turn will mean that we will all be getting better value for our money.

There are many examples of hospitals already implementing measures to improve quality. Let me share a couple of examples. The University Health Network: They have an interdisciplinary quality committee. Everyone from doctors to nurses to other health care workers all have a voice in improving quality. In Sault Ste. Marie, the Sault Ste. Marie Group Health Centre has reduced the number of patients rehospitalized for heart failure by 43%, and they've achieved a 25% to 33% reduction in diabetes-related complications. How have they done this? By putting a greater emphasis on quality. In Thunder Bay, they've reduced bed-empty time—that's the time between discharging a patient and admitting a patient—by 25% by implementing measures to make the process more efficient. And in Ottawa, they've developed the internationally renowned Ottawa ankle rules, simple guidelines developed to aid emergency physicians in deciding when to use X-rays for patients with ankle injuries. The application of the Ottawa ankle rules is something that has reduced the number of X-rays for patients who come in with an injury to their ankle.

This proposed legislation, along with complementary initiatives, will help develop a culture of quality, where everyone working in health care, from the CEO to the front lines, including the board of those health care organizations, is focused on quality improvement for patients. From now on, the focus will be on better care delivery, leading to better patient outcomes, and smarter use of resources thanks to a culture of quality and value within the health system.

I was very, very pleased to hear that the vast majority of our health system partners and stakeholders are supportive of our vision and our process for getting there. To quote from the submission from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, the RNAO, to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, "The RNAO welcomes" legislation that "seeks to promote evidence-based" best practices "and make health care organizations and executives accountable for providing the highest-quality patient-centred care."

The Ontario Hospital Association had this to say: "The OHA strongly supports Bill 46. Ontario is home to the most efficient, transparent and accountable hospitals in

Canada,” but “we all recognize ... that the public” we serve expects more.

There were a number of submissions received at the committee, and I was quite pleased with the enthusiasm stakeholders have shown for this legislation. In fact, many of the amendments were adopted, which I think speaks to the level of co-operation and support for this initiative. My colleague MPP Bas Balkissoon will speak in more detail about some of those amendments.

0910

Specific quality improvement initiatives will start in hospitals. As you know from the previous two readings, the bill is based on the following four principles. The first principle: Care must be organized around the patient to support his or her health. The second principle: Continuous quality improvement is a critical goal. The third principle: Payment, policy and planning must support both quality and efficient use of resources. The fourth principle: Quality care must be supported and, indeed, driven by the very best evidence and standards of care.

Hospitals would be required to have interdisciplinary, interprofessional quality committees that would report to the board on quality-related issues. These quality committees would develop improvement plans that support better patient care. Every organization would have quality improvement plans that are publicly posted. This would help hospitals work toward expressly stated goals that would ultimately make them better at what they do. It would also inform patients, families and the community about what hospitals are doing to improve the delivery of care.

Executive compensation would be linked to whether or not the organization achieved the results in those plans. I'm very pleased that hospital executives are embracing the proposed changes. In fact, Bob Bell, the CEO of the University Health Network, strongly supported the recommendations by speaking at the press conference to launch this proposed legislation. From the very top down, through every level of the organization, there would be a continuous focus on quality, a culture shift that would drive better patient care. The improvement plan would hold hospital leadership accountable for delivering on that plan.

To make the process more transparent, there would be a patients relations process in every hospital to address complaints and concerns, as well as regular patient, client, caregiver and staff surveys. The results of these surveys would be used to inform the annual quality improvement plans. This would give patients and their families as well as those who work in hospitals greater input into shaping quality improvements in hospitals. Patients would be very much a part of this quality improvement dialogue. Patients, the users of the system, would have a voice in how it is run. That is what this is all about: Greater empowerment for patients so that their system can serve them better.

There are many examples of individual efforts of quality improvement in the system, and there is no shortage of dedicated and committed health professionals

and organizations in Ontario. I won't list them all. I do want, however, to thank the health care leaders for embracing the challenges and working with us to improve quality care.

What I believe has been lacking is a standard where quality and value are an absolutely integral part of everyone's job. As a way to expand quality consistency throughout the system, the proposed bill would also expand the mandate of the Ontario Health Quality Council. I think this is a very important element of the bill. It would enable the council to provide recommendations on the evidence-based delivery of health care based on clinical practice guidelines. The council would also make recommendations on possible changes to the way health care is covered and paid for to ensure that what we pay for reflects the best available evidence.

For Ontarians, this legislation means that we want to keep paying for things that improve outcomes for patients. The reality is that poor-quality care, inefficient care, is expensive care. When someone is readmitted to the hospital because they did not receive the proper care upon their discharge, that is expensive care and it is poor-quality care for that patient.

So it all comes down to putting patients first. It comes down to delivering our best to them today in a way that will allow the health system to be there for future generations. Let's remember that waste and inefficiency are what is costly. Quality and value go hand in hand.

The proposed Excellent Care for All Act is a necessary first step in achieving these imperatives. I sincerely believe that the future of our health care system in Ontario depends on it. I urge my colleagues to join with me in passing this important piece of legislation.

I do want to conclude my remarks by thanking the extraordinary people in the Ministry of Health who have worked very, very hard to bring this idea, this aspiration, to reality today. A lot of people have worked very hard to develop this, and I give them my sincere thanks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate? It does go in rotation, so the honourable member for Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: I appreciate the opportunity here. I'm just using a few moments to put on the record the fact that I've met with our local hospitals with regard to not specifically this, but it was mentioned in the meetings that I had at Port Perry hospital as well as the Uxbridge hospital, and we want to put that on the record.

Our member from Kitchener–Waterloo will be speaking, and having been the Minister of Health, she has a pretty good insight into what's expected.

I would say from the beginning that everyone would agree with the premise or principle or objective of quality in our hospitals. We would expect that it exists already. The structure is the second part of it, the quality organization being set up. I would have expected, when I look at the sunshine list in hospitals, that most of those patient-based outcomes and CIHI—the Canadian Institute for Health Information—reporting would have presumed that some sort of outcome-based process exists

today. To find out now that the minister is just putting this in place would give one of the impression that maybe some of the outcomes aren't accountable. I don't know.

She said she has the support of the hospital association, which I think is very important.

I'm wondering: Does she have the support of the Ontario Medical Association, the doctors? I want to put on the record that a couple of the doctors I met with informed me that they had concerns about their role on the board and the fact that they may not be entitled to vote on some of the things. They can participate on the board. I recall talking to Dr. Steve Gray, who is a very well-respected practitioner in Port Perry. He also serves on the Lakeridge Health board, and as such, he knows of what he speaks.

I would expect that this would be reviewed. This is third reading, unfortunately, and time-allocated.

I want to put on the record the final thing. The measurement I have, in the practical sense of just a person representing constituents in the riding of Durham, is that almost all of the hospitals in my jurisdiction are in a state of trauma. All around me, the hospitals are in trauma. Almost all of them are suffering from a lack of human and physical resources.

I look at the member from Peterborough, Jeff Leal. It's tragic that we're having public meetings on the hospital. Yesterday, I heard from the coalition from Northumberland Hills Hospital—Lou Rinaldi. They should be up in arms about what is going on here. This is a distraction from the point of view—

Mr. Bob Delaney: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I respect the opinion of my colleague from Durham, who is a very well-spoken member, and I do remind him that it is not practice to refer to members in the assembly by name but by riding.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): He did both. He referred to the honourable member by riding and then his name.

The honourable member for Durham has the floor.

Mr. John O'Toole: I was looking at the Northumberland Hills Hospital and the Peterborough Regional Health Centre. I also want to mention that Uxbridge hospital is going through a similar challenge for human resources. Port Perry hospital this week, it's my understanding, because of the lack of resources, is also in a state of siege.

0920

Certainly, we agree entirely with the principal objective of quality, patient-centred care. What do I see? I see the LHINs increasing expenditures and yet reducing front-line services in the hospitals. That's what I see. That's the evidence.

Despite the rhetoric from the minister here this morning, health care is in paralysis, in cardiac arrest. That's the reality across this province. We've had reports from autopsies and other kinds of reports about the outcome-based situation in our hospitals. The young person who died in Niagara because they were diverted from a hospital where the emergency was closed and died on the

way to the other hospital—that's the reality, and I've heard it day after day after day.

I want the people of Ontario to know that they have increased funding to the bureaucracy in health care: LHINs. Now they're setting up this health quality council, which I presume already exists. Outcome-based in hospitals is what it's about. I think this is a disguise, personally. I support the objective but I'm suspicious.

Part of this section of Bill 46—I looked at it. It says right here: "Health care organizations are required to develop a quality improvement plan..." Of course they are. And this is the key part to it: Is it going to affect executive compensation? I hope the reporting is honest.

With that, I'll leave the rest of the comments to our critic and a person who is highly respected, Ms. Witmer from Kitchener-Waterloo.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I also will leave most of the time to our health critic, France Gélinas, who will be here shortly.

What I wanted to contribute to the debate, really, was about health care generally. As a party, of course, of medicare and of Tommy Douglas, this hits close to the hearts of New Democrats everywhere.

There are two ways of killing a health care system: One is slashing and burning, closing hospitals willy-nilly; the other is by nibbling at the edges, by delisting bit by bit, letting nurses go, letting the bureaucracy take over, not paying bills when bills are due. The classic case in my own riding is Four Villages health centre, which, completely under this ministry, was promised when opening a satellite—and, of course, I think we would all agree here that community health centres provide some of the best medical care. They're interdisciplinary teams, they're relatively inexpensive—certainly far less expensive than hospital care—and they have doctors on salaries. It's the kind of model that New Democrats love. This particular one opened a satellite because they're so busy. They already have a waiting list. They were promised money by this government. In fact, when checking with various folks in the Ministry of Health, they were told that the cheques had been processed. But have the cheques ever arrived? No. Numerous calls; my office has been calling. Meanwhile, the question is, how do they pay their staff? How do they pay their rent? How do they pay their utilities? That's the kind of ship that's being run across the aisle here.

Look at the delisting of services that has happened out of the McGuinty Liberals. No longer do we get eye exams covered by OHIP. Is that not an essential health service? No longer do we get physio paid for by OHIP. Is that not an essential health service? No longer do we have ambulances paid for. I ask you, is an ambulance ride to the hospital not an essential service? This is chipping away at the core of our health care, not to mention the closing of emergency wards, not to mention the letting go of nurses, and not to mention, which would horrify the average Ontarian, the huge salaries taken away from the taxpayer base by some of our CEOs.

Our leader, Andrea Horwath, brought in a bill to cap civil servant salaries at twice what Dalton McGuinty makes, twice what the Premier makes. And let's remember, these are not people who have to reapply for their job every four years; these are people who have contracts that make the average MPP drool. They have pension plans, they have built-in clauses that give them payouts when they leave, and they earn more than twice as much as our Premier. There's something wrong with that system. There's something very wrong with that. This is valuable health care money that's not spent on patients, not on putting patients first, but on putting bureaucrats first. So there's that.

I know that in my riding there are many, many people who do not have family doctors, who can't get access. This is true of hundreds of thousands of Ontarians who do not have access to a primary-care GP. Where do they go? Guess what? They tend to go to emergency wards to get primary care. This is the most inefficient, expensive way of delivering health care. Yet we have foreign-trained professionals—I have several in my riding; I'm sure we all do—who are working far beneath their potential because it takes them an average of 10 years to get accredited. I have one surgeon in my riding who goes back to Iran for six months every year because he can't get a job here. That's how he pays for staying here. He is in his 40s. He doesn't want to spend another 10 years in school going through the process. He doesn't have that kind of money and doesn't have that kind of time. Yet we desperately need him. We need doctors. Doctors aren't forthcoming.

And of course there's the much-ballyhooed dental plan. Remember, this is the McGuinty Liberal government that promised a dental program. We can't even get physio or eye exams, but they promised a dental program. Do we have a dental program? Absolutely.

Here is the situation: The problems are myriad. This bill is not going to address them. I'm going to leave the balance of the time for my colleague from Nickel Belt, who will be here shortly. But suffice it to say that what the McGuinty Liberals have done on their watch is to chip away at the foundation of medicare in this province. It's sad; it's not stopping, and we as New Democrats—remember, the party of medicare—are appalled by it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I rise in the House today to speak to Bill 46, our proposed Excellent Care for All Act, at this third reading. It was my privilege to attend the Standing Committee on Justice Policy hearings on this bill to hear the submissions by individuals and many of our partners, such as the Ontario Hospital Association, the Ontario Medical Association and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, to just name a few. We also received input from my colleagues across the way, the member from Nickel Belt and the member from Whitby-Oshawa.

I was heartened to hear that for the most part, the vast majority of partners were supportive of what we're

aiming to achieve with this landmark legislation to improve the quality and value of the province's health care system by putting patients first and enhancing accountability, thereby ensuring that the system will be there for future generations.

I'd like now to acknowledge and thank all the individuals and groups for making written submissions or coming forward with their thoughtful ideas. The commitment to improving the province's health care system is undeniable. Like all Ontarians, they want to ensure that quality patient care is job one for everyone who works in health care and that the system provides value for every dollar spent.

In response to some of the recommendations we heard both at the committee hearings and through written submissions, the committee passed motions to amend the proposed legislation. For example, in response to similar recommendations from the Ontario Hospital Association, the Ontario Medical Association, and the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences to not require health care organizations to survey employees every year to avoid survey fatigue, we put forward an amendment to require organizations to survey employees at least once every two fiscal years.

In response to a recommendation from Trillium health care, the committee amended the bill to acknowledge the work that some hospitals have already done to develop a patient declaration of values after consulting with the public.

The bill was also amended to require every health care organization to provide a copy of its annual quality improvement plan to the Ontario Health Quality Council in a format established by the council that permits reporting on a minimum set of quality indicators.

We wish to thank Cancer Care Ontario for appearing before the committee and for their suggested amendment, and our colleagues from the NDP for moving that amendment.

0930

Following the recommendation of the Ontario Nurses' Association, the committee amended the bill on our government's motion to ensure that in appointing members of the Ontario Health Quality Council, consideration would be given to selecting experts in the creation of safe, quality and healthy work environments. Similarly, based on advice from Cancer Care Ontario, the bill was amended to give consideration to selecting experts in clinical service evaluation and quality improvement. This change will strengthen the composition of the council at this very critical juncture.

The bill was also amended on the motion of our Progressive Conservative colleague to ensure that past board members and executives of health care organizations were not precluded from being considered to serve on the council—an important clarification to the bill. The committee also came together with unanimous consent to approve an important amendment suggested by the Ontario Hospital Association that was necessary to clarify a

potential conflict between a new provision in the bill and an existing investigation provision.

We've been very responsive to our partners and opposition colleagues, and I believe the amendments that were made by the committee make the legislation much stronger.

Let me now turn to why this legislation is so urgently needed. Recently, you may have heard about a population projection report by Statistics Canada. According to that report, the population of over-65s will more than double, from 4.7 million in 2009 to between 9.9 million and 10.9 million by 2036. Seniors will surpass children aged 14 and under between 2015 and 2021. If left unchecked, in 12 years, 70 cents of every dollar spent by the provincial government will be on health care. Governments must prepare to meet these pressures on the health care system.

The proposed Excellent Care for All Act would do just that. It would lay the groundwork for a significant culture shift in this province's health care system, a culture shift that must take place if the system on which we all rely is to be there in the future and to be sustainable. Not only can we not keep spending at the current rate, we must tie increases in spending to improvements in quality.

If this legislation passes, significant changes would begin to take effect in our health care system. Health care organizations, beginning with hospitals, would all have interprofessional quality committees that would report to the board of directors on quality-related issues. Every organization would have quality improvement plans publicly posted, and executive compensation would be linked to the achievement of outcomes identified in those plans. This is a very important component of this bill that would bring about a systemic focus on quality that would permeate the organization and would eventually drive better patient care.

We also moved forward in a staged approach with several additional policies that will shift the focus in health care in Ontario onto quality and value. We would gradually reform how hospitals are funded to better align funding with efficient delivery of high-quality patient care—to ensure, in other words, that the money follows the patient. This is an absolutely necessary step. At present, the global funding system does not support quality improvement and it does not reward the efficient provision of health care. We believe that the system needs to be improved.

Before I close, I want to thank some of the stakeholders who attended committee: Mr. Jeff MacDonald from LifeLabs Medical Laboratory Services; Dr. Bob Haig from the Ontario Chiropractic Association; Ms. Katrina Kilroy from the Association of Ontario Midwives; Mr. Terrence Sullivan from Cancer Care Ontario; Dr. Mark MacLeod, Ontario Medical Association; and Mr. Tom Closson from the Ontario Hospital Association.

This proposed Excellent Care for All Act is a reflection of this government's strong commitment to the future of health care in Ontario. I would urge all my colleagues in the Legislature to support this legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm pleased to join the debate, the final opportunity we have to speak to Bill 46, the Excellent Care for All Act. I don't know how anybody could not support this, but I think we also have to recognize that what is being suggested here is certainly not going to be the answer to all of the problems that are plaguing our health system today.

The reality is, the health system in the province of Ontario is not sustainable. It is growing at an average annual pace of 8%, and without changes to the system, the current 46% of funding that goes to the health system will be 80% of total program spending in 20 years. It will leave little money for other priorities such as education, social services, public safety, transportation, culture etc. Obviously, Ontario is not going to be able to bear that burden. We have a looming crisis in public health care costs, and we need to address that issue.

This bill, in part, addresses the issue, but anybody who thinks this is going to solve the issue would be badly mistaken. Part of the reason, of course, for the increased costs in our health care system is because of our growing population, our aging population, increasing costs of technology, and increasing drug costs. One other component that I think is really important is the increased incidence of overweight and obesity and the decreasing fitness levels that we're seeing in our province today.

If you take a look at the aging population, I think this is an area where we need to be concerned. The boomer tsunami is going to hit us, and we've already heard that the senior population is going to double by 2036. We're going to outnumber children for the first time, and we're obviously going to see an increase in medical spending. CIHI tells us that in 2009, when we spent an average of \$3,800 for those under the age of 64, those over 80 consumed \$17,500. So health costs are going to go only in one direction. They are not sustainable.

I'm going to come back to the aging population, because although the government has introduced Bill 46, which they say they want to do because they want to make sure that accessible care is going to be available for all patients throughout the province of Ontario, I just want to emphasize that this is not going to go anywhere in meeting the need for change that is so imperative. There is much more in the way of critical change that is going to be necessary.

I support the bill, as far as the bill goes. A lot of it is paperwork. A lot of it is going to involve health care stakeholders. The public really isn't aware of this bill, and probably, at the end of the day, they don't care that much about it other than to want to know that the health care that they need is going to be accessible to them and that the best quality of care is going to be provided. I think all people in the province today want to make sure that whatever services are provided, they're getting the best value for their taxes. Insofar as this bill moves in that direction, it's a bill that we certainly can support. At the end of the day, of course, we want to do everything

we can to make sure that patients in this province get the best outcomes possible. This bill is going to be really looking at evidence-based health care and the best clinical practices.

I'm glad that the RNAO was involved in making some changes to the bill. They have long been supporters of evidence-based practice. Of course, we're going to see an expansion of the Ontario Health Quality Council as well.

However, I think it's important to recognize that what this government has never done since 2003—and what was promised by the former Minister of Health, Mr. Smitherman—is a health plan, a 10-year plan for health. There was going to be a determination of where it was we needed to go, who the demographic was going to be that we were trying to serve and what the needs of that demographic were going to be. Hopefully, we would have then seen a strategy as to how we could achieve those goals and meet those needs, and then also measurements on a yearly basis to see that we were achieving those goals. That would have also gone a long way to achieving quality; to achieving cost-effectiveness, value for money; to improving access to care and making sure that the appropriate services are available to patients in the province of Ontario.

0940

That's where this bill falls short. That's where this government falls short, because you can introduce this Excellent Care for All Act which, as I said, really is based on a lot of paper reporting of different measurements and best practices, but we have a problem in our hospitals that we're not addressing, and that is the alternative-level-of-care patients. This government has never developed a plan to deal with the aging population who are languishing in our hospital beds, for whom we are paying the cost of an acute care bed when they should be more appropriately looked after either in a long-term-care bed, in the community elsewhere or getting home support. But we don't have those services available, and so they end up in our hospitals, sometimes for weeks, sometimes for six months, because there's no place for them to go. They're driving up the costs in our health care system.

Unfortunately, Ontario has amongst the largest percentage of alternative-level-of-care patients in all of Canada. There are alternative-level-of-care patients in somewhat less than 20% of our beds in our hospitals through this province. Some hospitals have fewer, some hospitals have more. But these beds are occupied by people, primarily seniors, who should be in other beds—and I can tell you that a hospital setting is not where you want to be, because we know that in hospitals there are infections. Unfortunately, some of these individuals do contract these infections. They actually become more sick than when they came into the hospital and, on occasion, when we've had some of the epidemics, some of the people have actually unfortunately not returned home or to any other setting.

In my own community, when I took a look at the number of alternative-level-of-care beds at Grand River

hospital in March, they had an average of 75 people in these beds on a daily basis. That is a lot of people. I know Cambridge hospital, which has had a lot of financial problems and challenges, suffers from the same problem. Think of the cost of keeping someone in a hospital bed versus the cost of keeping somebody in a long-term-care bed, in another community setting or in home care.

The other problem that you have in the hospitals is that if you have these people in the acute care hospital beds, it means that people who are looking to have surgery can't have surgery. So we see delays in surgeries; we see backlogs; we see doctors who have booked surgery and then can't move forward with the surgery, the reason being that there are no beds available for the people who have the surgery. The other problem you have, of course, is in your emergency rooms. You have people coming into the emergency rooms and, of course, there's no bed for them because you have the alternative-level-of-care patient occupying that bed.

In this province today, because of the fact that the government up until now has basically relied on the 20,000 beds that our government announced in 1998 to meet the needs of those who need a long-term-care bed—we just aren't seeing a plan for more beds. Yet, we have 25,000 people ostensibly waiting for a long-term-care bed. In my own community, I've been told there are somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1,500.

So this is great; this bill before us is great. But, believe me, it is a small step, and it is a lot of paperwork. It will certainly help in the development of ensuring that quality care is improved, and it will hopefully help to make sure that we're becoming more cost-efficient. Hopefully it will increase accessibility. But unless you address the other problems in the health care system and break the back of this alternative-level-of-care problem that we see everywhere to ensure that people get the most appropriate care in the most appropriate setting at the best cost, you're not going to solve the problems in the hospitals.

Hospitals are having challenges. They're doing everything they can. They even close emergency rooms at certain times of the year. We've seen that in the past seven years, when this government has been in place. They've eliminated a lot of outpatient services and a lot of other services, and people in the community have been left looking for the services that no longer are in the hospitals. But we have to develop a common approach to capacity planning throughout the hospitals and throughout the province, because hospitals simply can't meet the demands today. The community care system is stretched, the long-term-care system is stretched, and the demographic tsunami that we've talked about has not even hit.

The other part of the puzzle that we need to address if we're going to reduce health care costs is that we really do need to focus and address the issue of obesity. This is a very alarming problem. Take a look at 1981 to the present—there was a report done by Statistics Canada. It says that our fitness levels have declined and our waist sizes have increased. This is putting us at greater risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma,

cancer and arthritis. They tell us that 17% of the children are overweight and 9% are obese. That is alarming. They say that 38% of adults today are at a healthy weight while 62% are overweight or obese. Again, this puts all of us at risk of health problems that are very expensive for the health system. They're also telling us now that the children born today aren't going to live as long as we do. We have to tackle that problem if we're going to tackle the problem of making sure that our health system is there for us tomorrow.

We have the bill in front of us today, Bill 46, the Excellent Care for All Act. I support it, but it is only a small part of what needs to happen. I would strongly recommend that this government focus on the development of a long-term-care plan: Identify the long-term-care needs, identify your population, and identify the solutions to address the problems. Let's move forward, because this, today, is only a small, small part of what is necessary. In fact, it's maybe a little bit of window dressing, and we have not addressed the real problem. The fact is, health costs are unsustainable. We need to have a debate; we need to address them. That debate, that discussion, should start now, and I would encourage the government to do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to add a few words for this third reading of Bill 46, the Excellent Care for All Act.

First of all, I agree with the basic principle of the bill. If we focus on quality, if we put everything that is going on in the health care system through a quality lens, we have the possibility to effect immense changes for the better. The health quality council, as we are talking here in the Legislature, is presenting their report. Health quality council: Their name says it all. They look at the quality of the health care services that are delivered here in Ontario. They have great suggestions for change. They identified opportunities where if we change the way we do things, it would improve quality. It would improve outcomes. It would improve client satisfaction with our health care system.

0950

The bill basically tries to do this. The problem is that a lot of it is left to regulation. Believe it or not, there are groups of health care workers out there that really like the way they are doing things, really believe that what they are doing is helping their patients and are very reluctant to change. In order to facilitate change in an environment like this, you need strong levers, and to me, quality is something that resonates with every health care worker. Every health care worker wants to offer good-quality care to their patients. If you can give them those tools, you are in a position to effect change.

The NDP has brought forward dozens of changes to make this bill stronger, to make sure that all of the levers are there to really take advantage of the humongous possibility for improvement that quality can afford the people of Ontario. Unfortunately, all but one of our

amendments were turned down. What we have now is a bill that could do great things, that is a first step toward doing great things, or that could fizzle and do nothing, because a lot of what the bill will do will only be clear once the regulations are written up.

When the regulations are written up, members of the opposition have very little input into this. But I can tell you that some really well-organized lobby groups within the health care system will be able to influence those regulations. If they see this as infringing on their turf, they could be successful in making sure that what has the potential to help millions of Ontarians will fizzle out and basically do very little.

We had made recommendations such as that the quality plan that each and every one of the hospitals—and I hope soon every health care organization in Ontario—puts forward should be right next to the Ontario Health Quality Council assessment of how this hospital is doing. If you have an assessment of when they are following best practices and when they are meeting quality outcomes, and you have this assessment done by the health quality council—which, by the way, is very good at what they do. They are very good at assessing what is quality, how do you measure it, how do you seek it and how do you define it. They do a very good job. Let's put in a page that says, "Here's how the hospital fared," and they can compare themselves to their peers. Let's see how every health care organization fares and let them compare themselves to their peers. But let's also have the quality plan for that hospital or that health care organization right next to it so that you can see results. But when we brought forward amendments that would mandate public accountability, that would mandate that those public documents be made available and be tied together, those were turned down. There's hesitation on the part of the government to do both steps. So we have a bill that could turn out to be good or could turn out to do very little more than collect dust like a lot of other work that has been done and like a lot of other reports and bills end up doing.

There are things that we know need to happen. We talk about interdisciplinary care. The government, to their honour, have put forward 150 family health teams. Family health teams are described as interdisciplinary care, where physicians work together with nurse practitioners, nurses, dietitians and social workers. Every health care professional gets to work to their full scope of practice so that they can take on those 750,000 people in Ontario who do not have access to primary care and so that you can have access to the right provider at the right time and decrease wait times. All of the mandate is good.

But when you look into the implementation of it, you see some of the power struggles at play. You see that in a team, you should have a physician, a nurse, a nurse practitioner, a social worker, a dietitian—let's say, a four-, five-, six-person team. That makes sense. It's easy to work with; communication is easy. But that's not what we see in family health teams. In family health teams we see a dyad: For every physician, there is one other health professional.

You see how sometimes the intentions are good. They say the right thing. They say that they want interdisciplinary care, but the doing falls short. This bill follows this path of putting forward great ideas that have the potential to do great things but then leaving the implementation to a date to be determined, by people to be determined and by regulations that I'm hoping will come out really soon and will be very good, but we have no assurance of that. "Excellent care for all" could turn out to do just that: fizzle out.

This bill drastically changes and augments the mandate of the health quality council. This is something that New Democrats support. We really believe that putting in a quality lens has the possibility to move things. But when we look at their mandate—for reasons completely unknown to me, when the health quality council did its first report and asked the people of Ontario what they thought quality should be made out of, they had nine items, and I'll read them to you. It goes as such: "The nine attributes that Ontarians tell us reflect a high-performing health system include: accessible"—makes sense—"effective, safe, patient-centred, equitable, efficient, appropriately resourced"—that makes sense to me—"integrated, and focused on population health." All of this makes sense.

The health quality council is putting forward its fifth report. It's all good. But now, you see, there's a little wee change that has happened. Those nine principles are still there, but "appropriately resourced" has been taken out. It now says only "appropriate."

You've heard my colleague from Kitchener–Waterloo talk, saying that the hospitals in her area were strapped for cash; 50% of the community hospitals are strapped for cash. The government, by a change of a word in legislation, takes out "appropriately resourced," takes out "resourced" and only keeps "appropriate." That, to me, raises a red flag.

You have drastically improved and added to the mandate of the health quality council to bring this quality lens, but you have taken away their mandate to look at resources. To me, that makes no sense.

They have done their work. They've done a good job for the last five years, and they have looked at appropriately resourced health care. That means that if we're not achieving quality because of resources, they say so. It is part of their mandate and this is what they do. But now the government has taken one word out; they have taken "resourced" out. So if the health quality council finds that you cannot achieve quality because part of the system, such as the hospital system, is under-resourced, it's not part of their mandate anymore. They cannot report on that anymore. To me, this is a step backward, not forward.

1000

Another thing that we tried really hard to change is that the focus of the health quality council will be on publicly funded care. We all know that lots of publicly funded procedures have been delisted, whether we talk about optometry care, chiropractic care or community-based physiotherapy care. A lot of these have been de-

listed. Now we have a new mandate for the health quality council that says, "You shall only look at publicly funded services." So it doesn't matter if best practice—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I would just ask the honourable members to whisper. It's getting quite noisy and the speaker has indicated that she's been distracted by that, so please respect that the honourable member for Nickel Belt has the floor.

The honourable member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can talk very loud if I have to.

Another thing we wanted to change is that we wanted to make sure that the best practices that are developed do not only focus on medication, operations and surgery. We wanted to include all of the determinants of health. We wanted to include parts of health that are not funded by the public health care system, such as chiropractic care.

Let me give you an example. Lots of people, unfortunately, are involved in motor vehicle accidents. Whiplash, where you hurt your neck, happens frequently. The best practice will tell you that a chiropractor has a role to play for whiplash injury patients. But now, with Bill 46, the health quality council won't be looking at chiropractic care because they are not funded under the public health system.

For us, we wanted every health care practitioner who is under HPRAC, who is registered by the province of Ontario, who is recognized as a health care professional in Ontario, to be included in the mandate of the health quality council so that when they look at best practice, they don't only look at the part of the system that is funded, they look at all of the professionals who are regulated by professional colleges in Ontario and provide quality care to people. That won't happen. Their mandate has been narrowed. Like it has been narrowed to not look at resources, it has also been narrowed to not look at the practitioners who are not publicly funded. To me, again, this is a step in the wrong direction.

We've talked many times about the need to have interdisciplinary advisory committees in our hospital system. Right now, we have medical advisory committees that do as well as they can, but things have changed. Health care is now delivered by an interdisciplinary team, where more and more, the different professionals are allowed to work within their full scope of practice. But when we tried to bring those changes forward, they were not allowed.

I see that I only have a few seconds left on the clock. This bill, this focus on quality, has an opportunity to do great things. You put the focus on quality, you add a little bit of resources, you bring in transparency and accountability to the public, and I guarantee you that things will change for the better. This bill, unfortunately, is timid. We'll have to wait until the regulations are done to see if we will take the bold step that will mean drastic changes to the health care system in Ontario for the better, and the curbing of the ever-increasing expenses in health care

toward quality. But at least we will be supporting this bill because it does no harm.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2010, I am now required to put the question.

Ms. Matthews has moved third reading of Bill 46, An Act respecting the care provided by health care organizations. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1005 to 1010.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Ms. Matthews has moved third reading of Bill 46, An Act respecting the care provided by health care organizations. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Duguid, Brad	Meilleur, Madeleine
Albanese, Laura	Duncan, Dwight	Milloy, John
Arnott, Ted	Elliott, Christine	Mitchell, Carol
Arthurs, Wayne	Fonseca, Peter	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Gerretsen, John	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Gélinas, France	Naqvi, Yasir
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	O'Toole, John
Bentley, Christopher	Hoskins, Eric	Pendergast, Leeanna
Best, Margaret	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bisson, Gilles	Jeffrey, Linda	Prue, Michael
Bradley, James J.	Johnson, Rick	Pupatello, Sandra
Broten, Laurel C.	Klees, Frank	Ramal, Khalil
Brown, Michael A.	Kormos, Peter	Rinaldi, Lou
Brownell, Jim	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Cansfield, Donna H.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Tabuns, Peter
Chiarelli, Bob	Levac, Dave	Takhar, Harinder S.
Clark, Steve	Marchese, Rosario	Van Bommel, Maria
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Wilkinson, John
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dickson, Joe	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 66; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): It being just about 10:15 of the clock, this House stands in recess until 10:30, at which time we will have question period.

The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Bob Delaney: I draw members' attention to the Speaker's gallery. Visiting from Bangladesh for the Bangladesh Expo 2010 is Liton Dwan, a notable and renowned spiritualist, along with Georgina Bencsik, chair of the Canada Bangladesh Business Council, and Mohammed Hossain, vice-chair. Please welcome them.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'd like to again introduce guests of page Tristen Groves: his mother, Vicki Lavine-Groves, grandmother Lottie Lavine and friend Alan Blumberger.

Also joining us shortly is Dr. Karen Somerville, president of Canadians for Properly Built Homes, and 30 homeowners, members of that organization across the province.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I just want to remind all members that today is the cattlemen's barbecue from 12 to 2. Thank you to the cattlemen for another fantastic barbecue, and welcome to all the cattlemen who are able to attend today. I would ask for unanimous consent to wear our Canadian beef symbol.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I also want to introduce my intern from the University of Toronto and the lovely riding of Huron-Bruce: Catherine Simpson. Catherine, stand up.

We also have in attendance Bette Jean Crews, president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Welcome, everyone.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: On behalf of page Joshua Rossetti from the riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore, I want to introduce his father, Fabio Rossetti, his sister, Olivia Rossetti, and his grandmother, Tina Rossetti, who have joined us here in the galleries today to celebrate his last day as page here in the Ontario Legislature.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Among many other interns is Maggie Conway, who's here today. She's the daughter of one of my good friends, Kim Donaldson. We're delighted to have her here today.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I'd like to introduce two people who are working in my office as interns: Maria Naser, who comes from Markham, and Tim Crjlenica, who comes from Windsor. A special welcome today. They're doing a great job in the office of the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Michael Chan: I would like to introduce to the House our summer interns. They're all talented individuals with a keen interest in government business. Please welcome Christina Cedric, Eric Pegolo and Goind Grewal. Welcome.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm just looking to see if she's here yet. Rhett Figliuzzi is one of our pages from our riding who's having his last day here. His mom is here to witness the last day. Welcome, Cheryl, but I'm not sure where she is.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I don't believe they're here yet, but I want to introduce two wonderful community advocates for seniors from Don Valley West: Edna Beange, who's a former city councillor for East York—I know the member for Beaches-East York knows her very well—and Peg Holloway. Both are on my seniors' advisory council, and they help me stay informed of seniors' issues in the riding. I want to welcome them when they come in.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I hope the member for Thornhill will forgive me here. I'm going to introduce a class from

his riding. The teacher is a very good friend of mine, so that's why I'm doing it. Joe Bush is the teacher, and the class is from Our Lady of the Rosary in Thornhill. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to introduce—he's not here yet—the intern in my office: Gian Mele from the city of Sarnia and the riding of Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Frank Klees: I want to welcome to the House summer student Ashley Patton, who is working in my office for the summer.

I want to just express the appreciation also of my staff for the good work that they've done over the last session: Dr. Alex Roman, Suzanne Bolton and Neave Greig. We couldn't do our work in this place without the support of our staff, and I want to acknowledge them today.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I would like to welcome the grandmother and grandfather of page Sarah Klapman. In the members' gallery are Arlene Klapman and Sam Klapman. Welcome.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I would like to welcome to the Legislature today, from the great riding of Scarborough–Rouge River, the students from Albert Campbell Collegiate Institute and their teacher, Ms. Kim.

Hon. James J. Bradley: The interns, as you know, do a great job for us, as do staff. I'd like to introduce Leo Lehman, Nick Gallant and Mark Downard.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): From my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London, I'd like to welcome the group from St. Anthony Catholic French Immersion School, which is visiting Queen's Park today. They'll be joining us later this morning in the Speaker's gallery.

APPOINTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a copy of the order in council reappointing Gord Miller as the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario effective May 19, 2010.

APPOINTMENT OF OMBUDSMAN

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a copy of an order in council reappointing André Marin as Ombudsman of Ontario effective June 1, 2010.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Premier criticized the cost of Ontario hosting the G20, saying, "I have the same reaction as Canadians do—a billion dollars is a lot of money."

How soon the Premier forgets his summer of scandal. In eHealth alone, the McGuinty Liberals wasted a billion

dollars on his office staff, a Liberal campaign chair and a host of other Liberal-friendly consultants.

Was the Premier trying to be ironic or was his comment on the cost of hosting the G20 an attempt to draw attention away from the fact that in just 28 days, his greedy \$3-billion HST will grab more money from the pockets of seniors and families?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I always appreciate the positive, constructive suggestions coming from the other side. Perhaps that's no real surprise.

I wanted to take the opportunity today to talk a little bit about the things we've been doing for and on behalf of Ontario families. They've been concerned especially about the economy, jobs and their own household expenses. We started by cutting taxes; in fact, eliminating from the tax roll the 90,000 lowest-income families. We've created a new Ontario sales tax credit, \$260 each for adults and children, which will benefit 2.9 million Ontarians. We have a new Ontario property tax credit, \$250 for non-seniors, \$625 for seniors. That will benefit 2.9 million families and individuals in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Mr. Speaker, through you again to the Premier: It's obvious that the Premier chooses to forget the summer of scandal and the \$1-billion amount that was wasted on eHealth.

Earlier this week, the auditor told us how you had taken money out of the pockets again of seniors and families. OLG wasted millions on luxury suites, resorts, spas and even paintball, but OLG executives today still enjoy the same allowances and the same expense accounts. According to the auditor, the Premier could have taken action over two years ago. The OLG actually wrote him and asked to be exempted—if you can believe it—from the Management Board of Cabinet rules, but the Premier couldn't be bothered to reply.

So I say to you, do seniors and families have to pay the HST because there was no oversight of the agencies, or you just couldn't say no to—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I want to take the opportunity to thank the auditor for the work that he did for us at OLG. We asked them to come in, and he did come in. My honourable colleague knows that we have changed the rules. The auditor reported on events that occurred before the rule changes had been put in place, and again I thank him for his work.

Moving beyond that, I also want to take the opportunity to remind my honourable colleague about some of the things we've done, which they continue to stand against. We're reducing the price of generic drugs by 50%; they stand against that. We've signed an agreement with Samsung bringing 16,000 jobs and four manufacturing plants to Ontario; they stand against that. We're creating a new northern Ontario energy credit to benefit northern Ontario families, who have some extraordinarily higher costs when it comes to energy; they stand against

that. We also brought into place new pension reform that will be especially helpful to people who lose their jobs in the province of Ontario; again, that is something that they stand against.

1040

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Again to the Premier: We've had the billion-dollar eHealth scandal, we've had the scandal at OLG, and if that's not enough, we know of another scandal that continues to unfold. The Ombudsman investigated complaints about waste at the Hamilton Niagara Local Health Integration Network and the Liberals tried to dump him. The unprecedented smear campaign against André Marin has backfired, but we're still waiting for an apology, someone to be held accountable for defaming him and, most importantly, the Ombudsman's report on waste at the LHIN to be released.

Whatever is it that is in the report that motivated you to scrap a public review of the LHINs until after the next election? Are you making seniors and families pay the HST—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: This is an extraordinary, complicated stretch. The HST is all about ensuring that we build a stronger economy for us today and for our children tomorrow. It's about 600,000 more jobs. It's about doing what every parent has always done—whatever they need to do to secure a bright future for their kids. That's simply what it's all about.

I want to once again take the opportunity to thank Ontario Conservatives, who have been relentless and enthusiastic in terms of their support for this particular initiative. I want to thank them for their commitment not to undo it should they earn the privilege of serving Ontarians in government. Last, I want to thank them by name: Ministers Flaherty, Ecker, Baird and Clement; John Tory, Mike Harris, Senator Runciman and, of course, Prime Minister Harper. They have all been very kind, assiduous and enthusiastic in terms of their support for a very important initiative.

TAXATION

Mr. Peter Shurman: My question is also to the Premier. The truest scandal is that each and every hour of each and every day, Dalton McGuinty spends over \$2 million more than he collects in revenue. At the current pace of overspending, he's on track to double the debt in just two short years. Are you making Ontario seniors and families pay your record sales tax increase because you can't control your record spending, Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Like governments around the world, when Ontario went into the downturn that we went into last year, we chose to spend 3% of gross domestic product to invest \$32.7 billion in infrastructure and create and maintain some 300,000 jobs for Ontarians.

That was the appropriate choice to make. That's what the federal government did, that's what the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Germany did.

What have the credit rating agencies said about Ontario? That in spite of the challenges, this province is in good shape and poised to come out of this downturn bigger, better and stronger than before. We will continue to invest in our communities and our people and create jobs for those who have suffered setbacks.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: Why don't you just stand up and say, "My name is Dwight, and I have a spending problem"?

With Dalton McGuinty, scandal doesn't just happen. Wasteful overspending is all part of a master plan. Every other jurisdiction in Canada is pursuing aggressive deficit reduction plans that bring them back to balance within five years, but Dalton McGuinty ambles along planning eye-popping deficits for the next eight years. While he says the deficits and the HST are about schools, hospitals and jobs, he has not built any long-term-care beds, he is cutting nurses and independent pharmacies, and he has lost over 300,000 manufacturing sector jobs.

So why are Ontario seniors and families paying your greedy HST?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock, please.

Interjection: The Speaker's got a smile on his face.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I have a big smile on my face. I'd just ask the honourable members to come to order, please.

Minister of Finance?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Just over a year and a quarter ago, the government of Ontario stood and protected Chrysler and General Motors. General Motors announced just the other day another \$245-million investment in the city of St. Catharines, which is so ably represented by the member for St. Catharines. That was the right thing to do. That will create jobs. That will pay benefits.

The challenges that our economy went through—we're starting to see nine consecutive months of growth in jobs. We still are not back to pre-recession levels but we're moving in that direction. We're moving faster. What do the private sector economists say? The private sector economists say that Canada will lead the world and that Ontario will lead Canada.

Unlike the member opposite, we believe in a strong future for this province. We believe in jobs. We will work to create more jobs and help—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order. I would remind those who are offering interjections, it's much more helpful if they're in their seats.

Final supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: The real scandal is that the HST doesn't even begin to fill the hole Dalton McGuinty keeps digging and digging for our children with his runaway spending. And it cannot be forgotten that he did not tell Ontario seniors and families about his record income tax increase—the so-called health tax—before he did it. He didn't tell them about his record sales tax increase—the HST—before he did it.

How worried should seniors and families be about the fact that the McGuinty Liberals are signalling plans to bring in a carbon tax, a water tax, road tolls, a second health tax and, according to his strategic adviser, Andrew Steele, a rate hike to the HST?

Interjection: And we're getting rid of puppies.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: And we're getting rid of puppies, yes.

What a flight of fancy that was.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order. Members will please come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can arrange express flights for any member to get to Manitoba or Quebec, gladly.

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Let me remind the member opposite of what the Conference Board of Canada says. It says that Ontario's economic rebound is being supported by public fiscal spending by the government of Ontario.

Let me remind the member opposite about what one of his colleagues, Mike Wallace from Burlington, said. Here's what Mike Wallace said: "As Conservatives, we're supportive of a combined tax.... It's not a tax grab.... That is a misnomer to mislead"—divert—"the public to get them excited about something that's not accurate."

He's talking about you, sir. He's telling you that you're not being completely candid with the people of Ontario.

What does that member's former leader say? "Conservatives are mad at me because I have acknowledged the comments made by organizations like the TD Bank ... that there are ... economic benefits to this planned HST, which there are."

I do not—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

New question?

1050

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Since we're in the mood for quoting from our past records here, on November 6, 2001, the then Leader of the Opposition stood in this place and said, "This government blew \$1 billion on a publicity stunt and sent out \$200 cheques." He later added, "The people of Ontario ...

will not be fooled. They will see through this pretence. They'll see past the truckloads of their own money being thrown at them...."

Eight years ago, the Premier said people weren't fools. My question is this: After nearly seven years in office, are we to assume that he has now changed his mind?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm pleased to take the question. Again, I want to take the opportunity to thank the federal government. These are federal funds that are being distributed to Ontarians through the appropriate departments, and we think it's the responsible thing to do. The fact of the matter is that there will be a transition period until all the savings generated for businesses are passed on to consumers, and we think the fair thing to do is to pass these through to Ontario families.

They've taken a different approach in British Columbia. So be it. That's using their judgment. They thought that was the best thing to do. We bring a different perspective.

We could have kept the money, which I gather is what my honourable colleague is suggesting, that we keep the money as the government, but we felt the most appropriate thing and the fair thing to do was to pass this money on to consumers.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This government brags about the HST cheques being in the mail, but Ontario families are not being fooled, and they're telling me that every single day.

Deena Moggach says this: "The money he says we will get in the first year as a bribe will not help in the long run and again ... middle ... income people will suffer."

Jim McLeod calls the cheque a "bribe," and then asks, "What about next year and the year(s) after?"

Is the Premier's opinion of people really so low that he thinks that they're going to be impressed with a one-time bribe in return for a—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'll ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'd encourage my honourable colleague to speak with the chair of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, who said, "At the end of the day it's big-time savings for businesses and ultimately the consumer. We recognize this is a big challenge and a big step forward in how we do business, but it's an important step and probably one of the most important steps we've made over the last 10 to 15 years."

We've had a tremendous amount of support from others, not just the chair of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, but from Ken Lewenza. I know my honourable colleague will be familiar with Ken. Ken said, "I said to the Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath, 'Andrea, the harmonized sales tax ... cannot be an issue from the progressive side.'"

We have support from the CAW, from Ken Lewenza and organized labour across the province in favour of

this, because they know it creates jobs and it supports families.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier can try to skirt the issue as much as he wants, but it's real Ontarians who actually get it.

Wayne Ellis writes this: "The ... 'gift' is a sad joke and will only help for the first year."

Rick Snowdon adds: "The [money] we may get from the government will not even begin to cover the extra expense that we will incur."

Does the Premier agree with himself that these cheques are nothing more than an expensive publicity stunt, or, after almost seven years in office, has he decided that he can fool the people?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: More and more, my honourable colleague is standing apart from her traditional supporters.

Gail Nyberg of the Daily Bread Food Bank said the following: "If you're a low-income Ontarian this is a positive budget, and I congratulate the government on recognizing that you can fight poverty and stimulate the economic scene at the same time."

Pat Capponi of the 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction said, "This budget has moved the bar forward on housing, tax credits, and child benefits in ways that will make a tangible difference in the lives of many Ontarians."

People traditionally on the left are in support of our budget. They're in support of the package of tax reforms, and they're specifically in support of the HST because they know it's about building a stronger economy. They know it's about supporting our families both today and in the future.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. The Premier thinks people can be fooled with a cynical publicity stunt; New Democrats don't. The Premier thinks people should pay more while billions of dollars fly out the door on huge tax giveaways; New Democrats don't. The Premier thinks thousands of people who have spoken up against this unfair tax scheme should be completely ignored; New Democrats don't.

Why is this Premier refusing to listen to people across Ontario who are rejecting his cynical tax scheme and the cheques that come with it?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm a little bit surprised, because my honourable colleague has been saying for months now that she's concerned about the financial burden assumed by our families on a daily basis.

Here is an opportunity for us to work together, to pass along federal dollars through our treasury—it doesn't even come through our treasury; it comes directly from the federal government. They're going to send out cheques to go directly into the hands of our families, and my honourable colleague stands against that. I just don't

understand how she can have it both ways. She wants to stand up for families, stand up for helping them address their financial challenges. Here's an opportunity for the federal government, pursuant to our direction, to send those cheques directly to families, and she stands against that.

I think I know where families stand on this. I think they want the help when it comes to these transitional payments. I think they're entitled to look forward to these benefits. I think they're going to put it to good use, especially during the course of this summer.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier doesn't need to remind me who I stand with; I know that quite clearly.

Here are some of the voices that the Premier is ignoring. Alice Cupa says this: "I'm scared"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would love an explanation as to why, when I stand up, it becomes so quiet; the moment I sit down, things just change.

Please continue.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Here are some of the voices that the Premier continues to ignore. Alice Cupa says this: "I'm scared. Not only for myself, but my 87-year-old mother, who still lives alone in her own house.... She is just barely making ends meet. When gas [and] hydro ... taxes ... increase, she won't be able to stay at home."

Richard Halifax of Ottawa adds: "All I know is, it's going to cost me approximately \$104 per month. I am still working at the age of 75. I live on a very tight budget.... guess I'll have to limit my haircuts from one a month to one every two months."

Does the Premier not realize that his unfair tax is forcing people to cut even the most simple and basic things in life—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague expresses what I can only gather to be sincere empathy for this particular individual, but why would she deprive her of her transition payment then? This is the purpose of this: to help ease all Ontario families through. Why would she stand against our Ontario sales tax credit: \$260, which will benefit this individual every single year? What about our seniors' Ontario property tax credit: \$625 for this individual? But my colleague opposes it. Then there's the senior homeowners' property tax grant, going up to \$500 in 2010.

Why does my honourable colleague stand against these benefits that we're putting in place to help out Ontario seniors? I don't understand it, and I think, frankly, neither does the individual.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier is finally answering my first question; he obviously thinks he can still fool the people.

Wayne Moore says this: "I am a contractor, and on several occasions in the past four or five months I have

been asked to install HVAC equipment under the table. I won't do it, but others are installing equipment for cash. This is creating an underground market ... and is not helping business improve."

Keith Grant from London adds: "Our additional expenses will be about \$50 a month."

With people worried about job security, their small businesses and their pay, why is the Premier about to hit them with such an unfair tax scheme?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: As the Minister of Finance said a moment ago, Ontario will be a national champion in terms of our economic growth this year. The Conference Board of Canada specifically said that. They said, as one of the significant contributing factors, the following: "Households will benefit from income tax cuts and from temporary sales tax transition benefits as the province moves to harmonize the provincial sales tax system with the federal goods and services tax."

The Conference Board of Canada is specifically stating that one of the reasons we're going to experience such tremendous growth, one of the reasons we're going to be a national champion in terms of the rate of our economic growth this year, is because of the package of tax reforms that we have put in place.

My colleague says she's concerned about economic opportunities and jobs. That's exactly why we're moving ahead with this package.

1100

TAXATION

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Premier. For all of Dalton McGuinty's talk about the HST creating jobs, he has said nothing about when Ontario seniors and families, who pay the tax, will see jobs created.

Yesterday we asked the Minister of Revenue at budget estimates when the first 60,000 HST jobs will be created. Surprisingly, he said, "Most of them have already been created." The families in northern Ontario, who haven't seen any job growth, wonder how a harmonized tax that hasn't happened yet could do this. Is it magic? Is it sleight of hand? Or is this just another example—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Withdrawn.

Is this another example of how the McGuinty Liberals will say anything to get re-elected?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I'm very pleased to stand up and address this question. The truth is that our companies which are creating products to sell around the world will reap huge benefits from this harmonized sales tax. In fact, at every single step along the way in their input costs they will see their costs decrease. That means that they will be more competitive. They will sell more goods. They will need to hire more people.

We know that this is going to work because it's worked in 140 countries. Even the other day, being up in

the Ottawa area and speaking with the Tomlinson company—1,000 employees—these people can recognize the clear and present benefits of this initiative to people and jobs. That's what we need in this province as we come out of this recession. We—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Families in the north are interested in learning what kinds of jobs the HST will create in the years it will take to develop the Ring of Fire with your "oops" plan. According to Minister Wilkinson, they are "jobs of the future" and "the vast majority of jobs that our children are going to have today haven't ... been invented."

What does Dalton McGuinty's futuristic job invention machine look like? Are they sold here or just in Korea? Is it like a Samsung job invention machine, where you put in a billion dollars of subsidies and you get hot air out the other side?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Apparently, this particular member missed the terrific announcement this week in eastern Ontario, with—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Renfrew, member from Hamilton East, member from Durham.

Minister?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Let's be clear: Since last May, there have been 140,000 new jobs, this in an era when we have come out of the worst recession in 80 years.

But we're not stopping there. We are seeing companies investing today. Blast Freezers in eastern Ontario is creating jobs, recognizing that our tax policy makes Ontario the most competitive of any jurisdiction that we compete against in North America, and we're proud of that tax policy.

People need to work. People need jobs. You are prepared to sit there like a bunch of patsies while the world takes off around—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Members will come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please don't provoke them. Order.

The minister will withdraw the comment she made.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): New question.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Ontarians living in poverty are anxiously awaiting the release of this government's so-called social assistance review report. We know that the report was submitted 17 days ago, but this

government still has not seen fit to release it. On May 18, I asked when Ontarians would receive the report. The Minister of Children and Youth Services said it was being translated. Why is this government waiting until the summer recess? Does it have something to hide?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Thank you very much for the question. It's very appropriate to ask this question at this time.

The report will be released pretty soon. It's this group's report, so in order for us to release a report we have to make sure that it's translated and we have to make sure that it's accessible. I hope that the member is not suggesting here that we should issue reports that are not accessible to all Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Prue: Translation should not be an excuse. We agree that it needs to be translated, but we also think it should be put before this House when we're in session.

In March, the government terminated the special diet allowance, which helps low-income people with serious medical conditions buy nutritious food. This is of very serious concern to ISARC, which I met with yesterday, as did the Conservatives, but no Liberal came to talk about that.

The 25 in 5 network is demanding that no recipient of the allowance see an income reduction in the transition to the nutrition supplement program and that total funding available not be cut. Is one of the recommendations of the social assistance review council the reason that the government is burying this report until after the House recesses?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: My answer is absolutely not. We are very proud of what we have done, and we're working very closely with Gail Nyberg and this committee. I met with them a couple of times and I will be meeting with them again. I'm very pleased by the work that they have done so far and we will continue to work with them.

I'm very proud of what our government has done to help to reduce poverty. We will continue to work with the community and with my colleague responsible for poverty. We have invested money. We have raised social assistance by 12%. We have put forward the child benefit program—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

TAXATION

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the Minister of Revenue. Red tape is a huge burden to small businesses in Willowdale. I've met with a lot of small businesses in Willowdale and they asked me to ask the government to do two things. They say they face too much red tape in dealing with too many levels of government. They're dealing with red tape when they could be focusing on their businesses, growing their businesses, hiring new employees and building the economy.

The other thing they're looking for is a reduced tax burden so that they can reinvest in their businesses and grow the economy. They asked me to ask you, Minister, what are you doing to reduce red tape and taxes for small businesses?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I want to thank the member for the question. We're doing both. Right now in the province of Ontario we have two governments tripping over themselves, trying to tax every transaction twice, when only once will do. We only have one tax collector for personal income tax, one tax collector for corporate tax and now I say to the small business community, we are only going to have one tax collector, the federal government, when it comes to the sales tax. As a result, we'll be able to eliminate over 5,000 pages of regulations in regard to the retail sales tax that have built up since 1961. I know that the business community is particularly happy that we can do that.

As well, under our tax reform package for small businesses, we are lowering, on July 1, the small business rate from 5% to 4%. As the only province, we will be eliminating the small business deduction surtax, which has been a job killer. We're eliminating that so that small business—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Minister, job creation is one thing. It's obviously critical, but when I'm talking to people up in Willowdale, they're very worried because they've been hearing that all items in the province are going to increase in price by 13%.

1110

I think everyone wants to see a more competitive Ontario, but no one wants to see this on the backs of those least able to pay. The unemployed, those on modest incomes and seniors on fixed incomes don't have the flexibility in their budgets. Minister, how is the harmonized sales tax going to affect low-income Ontarians and others least able to afford it?

Hon. John Wilkinson: Because the HST is part of an overarching tax reform, what it means under tax reform is that for the people whom you have raised, from your constituents and so many others, people with a lack of disposable income—and I'm thinking of seniors on a fixed income, middle-income families with a lot of children and people on social assistance—will be better off after July 1 because they will benefit from our targeted tax cuts, our targeted tax eliminations and our increased targeted tax credits. Overall, it will put them in a better position.

But I would like to put to rest that rumour that's being perpetrated by others in this place that somehow, taxes on sales taxes are going up everywhere. There could be nothing farther from the truth. For 83% of the things that people buy each and every day, there is absolutely no change in sales tax. It will apply, because of a broader tax base, to energy and services, but that gives us—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mrs. Julia Munro: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. My constituents are furious that you are cutting off debate on the natural gas plant that is going into King township. This is a plant that you have ordered to be built in the middle of the greenbelt in the Holland Marsh, and now you want to use a loophole in the Planning Act to force it through. The mayor of King says that you “circumvent the very process set up to publicly adjudicate such proposals; a process that was established to protect the people and the environment of Ontario and to respect the voters’ wishes in the municipality.”

Are you using the Planning Act to kill the hearings at the OMB on this natural gas plant because you know you’ll lose?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I would never think that. I would never presume wins or losses in any of these situations.

I really respect the opinion of my friend Frank Klees very much, and the treasurer—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The riding, please.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Oh, sorry; riding names—and the riding he represents. I want to tell you that his strong support for this is something that I think everybody takes into consideration.

As you know, there has been a posting by the ministry that allows people 45 days to comment on this particular project. I know that everyone who has a comment, including my good friend Mr. Klees and others, will be able to comment favourably or unfavourably as a result of the opportunity of that 45-day ability to comment—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Julia Munro: All Ontario families must be concerned with a Premier who finds never-before-used loopholes in his Planning Act. He has ignored the calls of more than 50 municipalities that want a moratorium on wind farms. Now he is ignoring the people of King, who have already spent \$200,000 fighting this plant at the Ontario Municipal Board. The mayor said in a letter to the Premier, “We ... followed your legislative process to the letter of the law at considerable expense to our taxpayers; yet, you have moved to override us right in the middle of an” OMB “hearing.”

This is a question the member for Oak Ridges–Markham won’t ask, but I know that my constituents and many of hers want to know: Why would you use a loophole to destroy the integrity of the planning process?

Hon. James J. Bradley: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member brought up families in her question, and I want to say that that’s what this is all about. It’s about the families and businesses in King township and northern York region. They need power to lead their quality of life. The businesses in that community need stable sources of power to run their businesses. The clock is ticking. If we do not move, it’s very clear that this community could be subjected to brown-outs.

That was a policy that was acceptable to the Tories. In fact, they brought us very close to that. If we would have followed their direction, we would be browning out all over this province. But we are for reliable sources of power. We’ll make the tough decisions we need to make to protect those very residents, to ensure that they have access to energy supply. That’s our—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Howard Hampton: My question is for the Premier. What does the Premier think of a construction company that has received hundreds of millions of dollars in provincial government construction contracts but refuses to pay its subcontractors long after they have completed the construction work and, instead, forces them to file expensive lawsuits, which take two or three years, before they get paid? What does the Premier think of this kind of unethical business conduct?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I saw the Attorney General here a moment ago. I believe he’s here right now, and I refer the question to him, if I might.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Let’s just understand about the lien act. It was brought in decades ago as a result of some very difficult and protracted discussions between all of the parties involved in construction. Everybody—everybody—compromised to some extent.

It is a zero-sum game, meaning that if you change the rules to benefit one party to the construction equation, others are going to lose funds. What we’ve been doing is discussing with all of the different parties potential amendments that would strengthen our construction framework and benefit all parties. We’re still having those discussions now. In fact, we have started some consultations to make sure that any proposal we bring in works for the province of Ontario and the people of Ontario, including all those—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Howard Hampton: It is not a surprise to me that the Premier didn’t want to answer the question. The company is Carillion Canada, and it has received hundreds of millions of dollars from the McGuinty government and has habitually, over the last four or five years, refused to pay its subcontractors, leaving thousands of workers and dozens of subcontractors in the lurch. Meanwhile, Carillion Canada has given thousands of dollars to Liberal candidates and Liberal riding associations.

My question is this: Since Carillion Canada has received hundreds of millions of dollars of government money and has found that it can afford to give thousands of dollars to Liberal candidates and Liberal riding associations, when is the Liberal government going to demand that Carillion Canada pay the subcontractors—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: My friend knows that I wouldn’t comment on a specific case, but he chooses the

protection of the House, the protection of privileged comment to make comments that are really beneath a member, beneath a former Attorney General and beneath this House.

If the real issue is to strengthen the legal framework around construction, there's a way to do that. If the real issue is to score political points free of commentary or the recourse of those who are smeared, he did it exactly the right way.

IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Each year, thousands of newcomers make their home in Ontario because of its rich cultural diversity, high quality of life and boundless potential for economic opportunity. One high-demand sector that attracts many newcomers to Ontario is the information and communications technology industry, also known as ICT. According to an industry forecast, there's a high demand but short supply of ICT professionals who possess the total package of business and technical skills that employers require. The ICT industry also estimates that about 3,600 newcomers settle in Ontario each year to pursue a career in ICT. What is the government doing to help—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

1120

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm very happy to speak to the question from the member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

To help our newcomer professionals succeed, the McGuinty government has partnered with the Information and Communications Technology Council to create exciting new opportunities for newcomers in Ontario's growing technology sector. The McGuinty government is also pleased to be working with JVS Toronto as they continue to build on their tradition of excellence by delivering valuable services that help newcomers integrate into Ontario's workplace.

My ministry recently launched the integrated work experience strategy, a new skills training program that will provide internationally trained newcomer professionals with the skills they need to succeed. This program provides six weeks of intensive classroom training. It provides business networking, mentoring and other work experience, which are important for these individuals to succeed because—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm pleased to hear that the government is taking real action to help Ontario newcomers adapt their skills to Ontario's workplaces. JVS Toronto, which has offices throughout the city, has a proud tradition of helping newcomers in Toronto since the end of World War II.

We've all heard stories of highly skilled newcomers who uprooted their families to Ontario in the hope of a

better life and a brighter future. Some of these newcomers quickly adapt their talents to the Canadian workforce. Others, unfortunately, are working in jobs unrelated to their professions. This concerns me, as it should concern all Ontarians, because we depend on newcomers to ensure that Ontario remains strong and prosperous. Can the minister tell this House what the government is doing to help newcomers get good-quality jobs in their professions?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The McGuinty government understands that integrating newcomers into the workforce is the key to their success. That's why removing the barriers for newcomers so that they can work in their professions is a high priority for this government. We led the way in 2006 with the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, and we are leading the way with our highly successful bridge training programs.

Since 2003, the McGuinty government has invested more than \$145 million in 200 bridge training programs that have helped thousands of newcomers get the training they need. For example, 80% of the individuals who completed the construction management bridging project at George Brown College found jobs within one year of graduation.

There's still more work to do, but we are making important progress by giving newcomers the opportunities they need to obtain jobs in their field of expertise.

NORTHERN ECONOMY

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Today we're voting on Bill 191. When this bill came before committee last summer, it sparked a torrent of protests. This bill is a bill that got the Liberals labelled Canada's worst government. First Nations are against it, northerners are against it, foresters, prospectors and miners: Everyone agreed that you didn't consult with them. Despite the fact that everyone has told you that this bill will destroy the northern economy and subject our First Nations to generational poverty, you seem hell-bent on making northern Ontario a gigantic park, a park of poverty and destitution. Minister, why was the World Wildlife Fund the only group before committee that said they were consulted before you put forward this bill?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The comments aren't appreciated.

Minister?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I appreciate the question. I am very proud of our government and the work that we've done to make a commitment to the Far North. We've been very clear in our objectives; certainly, we announced it early in the throne speech and in our budget speech. We have a vision for the Far North that is far-reaching.

We recognize the social, environmental and economic interests of First Nations and people in the north. I have spent personal time going to the north, talking to First Nations, talking to mayors, because it's extraordinarily important to have their buy-in and their participation. We

have been very diligent in visiting the north, and I intend to visit again. There will be hearings in the north coming up shortly. I look forward to the input from our northern First Nations as well as our northern residents. It's important that we have their participation.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Minister, this isn't the first time you Liberals have been in bed with environmental special interests. The Timmins Daily Press said on May 25 that your government was played like a fiddle and that you were promised "good publicity" for giving environmental groups exclusive rights.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I know that many people would like to go home. I'm quite content to continue on. We'll just sit here and let the clock sit in "hold" mode.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I know how much everybody loves question period. It was certainly my favourite time of the day.

Please continue.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Minister, a report released by the Ivey Foundation smugly sets out how a group of Toronto special interests played your government for fools. You've lost control of your ministry, we've lost \$62 million since you took power, and now your Bill 191 will crush all development in the north. The Ivey Foundation report shows that your government has abandoned northerners and stakeholders for Toronto special interests.

Minister, you've failed in your duty to the people of Ontario. Will you drop Bill 191 and resign?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm really proud of the way we've conducted ourselves with Bill 191. In 2009, we heard from our First Nations, our stakeholders and the public and we responded by tabling amendments. We're going out again. That is unprecedented in legislation. In 2009, we conducted extensive northern consultations. Again, that's a unique way of consulting with communities.

We're committed to working with the Far North. In fact, in May we had 33 of 34 northern communities participate in the land use planning base. That is extraordinary participation. The response has been positive. I can tell you, I continue to appreciate the valuable contribution that our First Nations and northern communities provide. Their participation is overwhelming. They want to participate. They're enthusiastic. We're happy to work with them. This is important legislation.

PENSION REFORM

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. In just 10 days, Canada's finance ministers will gather in PEI to decide upon the future of retirement savings. In my own discussions with government representatives from across this country, people want to know if the McGuinty government will turn its back on public pensions just because the insurance industry wants the billions of

dollars in management fees that private retirement solutions would give them.

Are they right to be concerned? Will this government simply be a mouthpiece for the insurance industry at this historic pension meeting?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Later this afternoon I'll have the opportunity to meet with a number of Canada's leading labour leaders on pension issues. I'll be meeting with Brother Sid Ryan; I will be meeting with a range of others. This government takes an open and balanced approach to what I think is one of the most important issues confronting this country.

I had the opportunity to speak with Ken Lewenza at some length both on the HST and pensions. I've had the opportunity to meet with Ken Georgetti in my office. I have met and spoken with finance ministers and ministers responsible in Manitoba and Nova Scotia. All of us are looking forward to meeting in Prince Edward Island to advance the agenda of stronger and better pensions and—I would go beyond that—post-retirement incomes for all Canadians.

1130

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I didn't ask for a list of the meetings that this minister had. I want to know what his position is on public pensions versus putting money in the pockets of the private insurance industry. Other governments, not just me, are right to be concerned that the McGuinty government is in the pockets of the insurance industry. The McGuinty government voted—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need help from the government. I'd ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment, please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I withdraw it, Speaker.

The McGuinty government voted—

Mr. John Yakabuski: That's what the McGuinty government has been doing—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No. That's not helpful either, member from Renfrew. Please continue.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The McGuinty government voted unanimously against an NDP motion supporting public pensions and unanimously supported a Liberal bill that would mean billions of dollars more in fees collected by insurance companies.

So I'm asking again, will the McGuinty government simply be a puppet for the insurance companies in PEI or will it side with Ontarians and be a forceful advocate for public pensions?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The member displays—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. We have 10 minutes exactly. Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Only 30% of Ontarians even have a pension, and that member has not addressed that issue.

Finance ministers, at the behest of Premier McGuinty when we first called for a national summit, have pulled together. We've been working across the country to build a consensus on a range of options that are available, including all political parties.

I would suggest to the member that it's about more than people with pensions. It's about that 70% of us who don't have a pension. It's about post-retirement income. They are not addressing that question. They're trying to score cheap political points, mischaracterizing the position of the government. We're not going to fall into—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I recently read that Bluewater Health, which serves my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, was able to recruit the equivalent of 13 and a half full-time physicians within the past 18 months. That's very good news for a community that historically has been underserved.

Could the minister please inform this House of our government's action to improve the quality of health care for people who access the Bluewater Health care system?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex for her outstanding commitment to getting better health care for the people in her community. I'm very happy to talk about the successes that we're having in building a stronger, better health care system for all Ontarians.

Working with our LHINs, we've made significant progress in hospitals across the province, and Bluewater Health in Sarnia is just one example. Working with our partners, we've been able to bring down wait times for cataract surgery by 677 days. Hip replacements at Bluewater Health have come down by 255 days; and knee replacements, 198 days. These are significant reductions that have made a meaningful difference for people in the riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: This is again very good news, and I'm proud of the progress that our government has made for the people of Sarnia, Lambton county and across the province.

I also read that Bluewater Health previously had concerns about the number of alternate-level-of-care patients they had in their hospital. Could the minister please inform the House of the progress made at Bluewater Health to ensure that patients are receiving appropriate, high-quality and efficient care?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We have been working very closely with the LHINs across the province, the hospitals and the community care access centres to bring down the number of people who are in hospital who don't need to be in hospital, who would be better served outside the hospital.

Bluewater Health is a great success. They've gone from having one in three beds occupied by an ALC patient to just 6%. It's an extraordinary achievement. They have been able to do this thanks in part to our aging-at-home strategy, where we've invested \$5 million.

It wouldn't be possible without the hard work of people in the community. Betty Kuchta of the CCAC; Gary Switzer from the LHIN; Sue Denomy, the CEO of Bluewater Health; and all the people who work with them have really had a tremendous success, and I want to congratulate them.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. John O'Toole: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Minister, over the last few years and from the 1950s and 1960s, it's been well understood that there was a need for an east-west transportation corridor north of Toronto. That route is the 407, and it's the number one priority in Durham region.

The latest phase of the environmental assessment over the last decade concluded in January of this year. That environmental assessment report is on your desk, Minister. The estimated date for that report to be released for your comments on the 407 website was May or early June.

Minister, the question for you today, as you've missed the deadline of May: Can you release the report from the environmental assessment on the 407 east expansion? When are you going to start construction on the 407 east?

Hon. John Gerretsen: I'd like to thank the member for the question. The environmental assessment on that project has been approved by the ministry. It will now be turned back over to the Ministry of Transportation, and they will be dealing with the construction of at least the first phase of that. The environmental assessment of that has been approved just within the last week.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. John O'Toole: That's good news. I hope you get on with the job. You've been dithering and delaying.

You know that the congestion on our 400-series highways costs the economy of Ontario \$3.3 billion annually, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Your colleague the current Minister of Municipal Affairs and former Minister of Transportation estimates that the 407 east expansion is scheduled to be completed by 2013. Minister, can you advise if the 407 east expansion is still on track to be completed by 2013? Would I be safe in making that commitment, or is it another failed promise by the McGuinty government?

Hon. John Gerretsen: I know that the Minister of Transportation is looking forward to answering this part of the question.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm very happy to say that we are going to be able to deal with this issue publicly very soon. We are absolutely going to work on getting this road extended.

But I do have to say that I really don't think that we should be taking advice on the 407 from the party

opposite. I think that it would be a travesty for us to listen to the party opposite on any aspect of this project.

I absolutely understand that people in the eastern part of this province need this project to go ahead. The EA has been done. We are going to be announcing very shortly the staging of this project. We're committed to pushing that road out. We're committed to that extension. We're going to keep working on it. But we're not going to take advice from the party opposite on the 407.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Can't you just think about that wonderful corn-fed beef that is sitting out on the front lawn and how much I know all of you want to get out there?

New question.

HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. In April, our leader, Andrea Horwath, wrote to the minister on behalf of homeowners stuck with badly built new homes: homes with leaks, crumbling foundations, faulty heating and cooling systems, cracks in walls and cracks in floors.

1140

Our leader asked the minister to meet with the homeowners. Yesterday the minister wrote back, saying "Meeting with me would be ineffective." Some of the homeowners are here today. Why is the minister afraid to meet with people who simply want developers to be held accountable when they build shoddy homes?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: Thank you to the member for the question. I also would like to thank the Canadians for Properly Built Homes who are here on behalf of their advocacy. Thank you for coming.

Tarion's role is to ensure that new homeowners in Ontario receive the warranty protection that they are entitled to by law. In 2008 the Ombudsman of Ontario conducted a review and released a report about the public's understanding of the relationship between the ministry and Tarion. The ministry has implemented all of the recommendations.

Some of the things that were included in those recommendations are the hiring of an internal new-homebuyers ombudsperson in January 2009. That ombudsperson is to provide a review function for homeowner complaints with Tarion. In fact, they have—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: If the minister is so pleased to have this community here, I hope that means she's going to meet with them after question period. I take that as a yes.

This minister is also responsible for Tarion, Ontario's new home warranty program, yet she refuses to help homeowners who have been fleeced by crooked builders. The minister's silence on this issue about legitimate consumer complaints is absolutely unsettling.

Today I'm introducing a bill to give the provincial Ombudsman powers to review Tarion, which was one of his recommendations; since 1986 he has made that recommendation.

Will the minister support this bill? And if she won't, why not?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: It's a little rich, coming from that party, since they were the ones who voted against protecting homeowners from energy retailers.

I could answer the question. I don't need the member to say yes for me. I would be very happy to meet with you as soon as question period is over.

Let me just review one issue. The new-homebuyer ombudsperson, who has been in place since January 2009, received 271 complaints, which he did review. In fact, it's working. There is nothing more important to us, as a government, than protecting consumers, and that's exactly what we will do.

I look forward to our meeting after question period.

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I rise on a point of order regarding an order paper question that I had submitted.

According to standing order 99(d), "The minister shall answer such written questions within 24 sessional days, unless he or she indicates that more time is required because the answer will be costly or time consuming or that he or she declines to answer, in which case a notation shall be made in the Orders and Notices paper following the question indicating that the minister has made an interim answer, the approximate date that the information will be available, or that the minister has declined to answer, as the case may be."

The minister did not answer my question, nor did he indicate that more time was needed. I instead received a list of eligibility criteria and the number of families that have received funding for the program I was inquiring about, neither of which I asked for in my order paper question.

I have a copy of my order paper question with me. I would ask that you review the answer that I have been provided and offer your advice as to what steps can be taken to resolve what I feel is a violation of standing order 99(d).

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the honourable member for her point of order. I've made previous comments in this chamber that my role and what I can do is to enforce and to ensure that a question gets answered. Unfortunately, I can't interpret or persuade a ministry to provide an answer that is to your satisfaction.

Mr. Ted Arnott: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Yesterday at the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, the chief of staff to the Minister of Finance made statements that directly contradicted statements that were made twice in the House by the government House leader concerning what happened on budget day.

I would like to give the minister the opportunity, and seek the unanimous consent of the House to allow the

government House leader, to clarify this matter and perhaps apologize to the members of the opposition and to the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): As the honourable member knows, issues arising at committee need to be dealt with at the committee.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to take this opportunity, and would ask all members to join me, as we thank this great group of pages. We wish each and every one of them all the best in their future endeavours.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to remind members to make sure they have it in their schedule that the International Plowing Match is going to be held in Elgin county, just outside of St. Thomas, September 21 to 25. Members, staff and any viewers, make sure you come and visit the International Plowing Match.

DEFERRED VOTES

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2010
LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
L'ENSEIGNEMENT POSTSECONDAIRE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 43, An Act to amend the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000, the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005 and the Ontario College of Art & Design Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 43, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 favorisant le choix et l'excellence au niveau postsecondaire, la Loi de 2005 sur les collèges privés d'enseignement professionnel et la Loi de 2002 sur l'École d'art et de design de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 43, An Act to amend the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000, the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005 and the Ontario College of Art & Design Act, 2002.

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

The division bells rang from 1145 to 1150.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On June 2, Mr. Milloy moved third reading of Bill 43. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gerretsen, John	Miller, Paul
Albanese, Laura	Gélinas, France	Milloy, John
Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Mitchell, Carol
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Naqvi, Yasir
Bentley, Christopher	Jeffrey, Linda	Oraziotti, David
Best, Margaret	Johnson, Rick	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Phillips, Gerry

Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Prue, Michael
Brotten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Pupatello, Sandra
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Rinaldi, Lou
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Carroll, Aileen	Mangat, Amrit	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	Marchese, Rosario	Sousa, Charles
Chiarelli, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dickson, Joe	McGuinty, Dalton	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hillier, Randy	Savoline, Joyce
Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Shurman, Peter
Clark, Steve	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Elliott, Christine	O'Toole, John	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 63; the nays are 14.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

FAR NORTH ACT, 2010
LOI DE 2010 SUR LE GRAND NORD

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 191, An Act with respect to land use planning and protection in the Far North / Projet de loi 191, Loi relative à l'aménagement et à la protection du Grand Nord.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Hon. John Gerretsen: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? I heard a no.
The division bells rang from 1153 to 1158.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

On May 18, 2010, Mrs. Jeffrey moved second reading of Bill 191. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Milloy, John
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Mitchell, Carol
Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Oraziotti, David
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Pendergast, Leeanna
Best, Margaret	Jeffrey, Linda	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Johnson, Rick	Pupatello, Sandra
Brotten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldip	Ramal, Khalil
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Chan, Michael	Mangat, Amrit	Smith, Monique
Chiarelli, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dickson, Joe	McGuinty, Dalton	Van Bommel, Maria

Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine

Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Bisson, Gilles
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Elliott, Christine
Gélinas, France
Hardeman, Ernie

Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea
Jones, Sylvia
Kormos, Peter
Marchese, Rosario
Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
O'Toole, John

Ouellette, Jerry J.
Prue, Michael
Savoline, Joyce
Shurman, Peter
Tabuns, Peter
Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 60; the nays are 23.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2010, this bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO PROPICE AUX AFFAIRES

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 68, An Act to promote Ontario as open for business by amending or repealing certain Acts / Projet de loi 68, Loi favorisant un Ontario propice aux affaires en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 68, An Act to promote Ontario as open for business by amending or repealing certain Acts.

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

Interjections: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 60; the nays are 23.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2010, this bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

I take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and safe summer. I look forward to seeing all of you in the fall. I would welcome a motion to extend question period through the summer and gladly love to be here, but in all seriousness, have a safe summer. Make sure you get out and explore Ontario. And remember: Buy local, buy Ontario, buy Canadian. Have a great summer.

This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1200 to 1300.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I want to welcome the Ontario Cattlemen's Association to Queen's Park. I'll be speaking about them further in a few minutes, but I want to recognize a few representatives who are here in the members' gallery: Dan Ferguson, Bob Gordanier, Rick Hobbs, Bill Herron and Gerald Rollins. I want to thank them for lunch. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I want to welcome today the students from the Albert Campbell Collegiate Institute debating club. They are in the east gallery.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'd like to introduce a good friend of mine, Josh Terry. He's a constituent from the riding of Durham but, more importantly, he was the assistant to the Honourable Bev Oda, MP for the riding of Durham, and is currently on placement at the Royal Ontario Museum. Congratulations, Josh—and his friend Jessica McDonnell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

They're not here just yet, but I'd like to acknowledge two young constituents as well from my riding—I believe they're interns or some role—Caroline and Harriet Bynon-Murray, who are currently summer interns here at Queen's Park. I'm looking forward to meeting them this afternoon.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan and page Mary McPherson, to welcome her mother, Tracy Shields, to Queen's Park today.

LEGISLATIVE USHERS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would like to invite all members to join me in congratulating this year's group of student legislative ushers, who have performed their duties admirably and provided excellent service to this House all year long: Jordan Paolucci, the team leader; Shiva Logarajah, Claire Glossop, Duri Song, Natalie Orellana, Janette Piasecki, Jenna Smith, Maria Chung, Tamara Quashie, Tracy Chen, Tyrone Davis, Harlan Tufford, Michael O'Shaughnessy, Osman Akhtar, Bedour Alagraa, Shae Frosst, Nick Turner, Ryan Nutter, Darcy Glyn Williams and Yi Jian Chen.

Some of these ushers will be returning next year, while others are graduating and pursuing their careers. On behalf of the Ontario Legislature, I'd like to wish all of our ushers all the best in their future endeavours.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CATTLE FARMERS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise today to welcome the Ontario Cattlemen's Association to Queen's Park and thank them for providing members with a wonderful Ontario corn-fed beef barbecue lunch today.

The cattlemen make a significant contribution to our provincial and national economy. Beef production is worth over \$1.8 billion to the Canadian GDP and creates more than 26,000 direct and indirect jobs.

I want to thank the cattlemen's association for coming here to tell us about the difficulties they are facing. This morning, I had the opportunity to meet with elected representatives for the Ontario Cattlemen's Association, and I talked with some of our cattle farmers during the day about the challenges they are facing. They've made it clear that farmers need the government to immediately commit their 40% funding for new risk management programs. They expect the Ontario government to support Ontario farmers the same way the Quebec government supports Quebec farmers.

Losses in the beef sector were almost \$200 million last year. Producers are losing their ability to re-mortgage their farms. The situation is unsustainable.

The government cannot come out of this round of federal-provincial-territorial talks with the same empty rhetoric in the closing press release. It's time for positive action. The Ontario government must take the lead in supporting Ontario's farmers. Later this afternoon, we will be debating Jim Wilson's resolution on that issue.

I hope that after hearing from the cattlemen about what they need and enjoying the fine lunch they provided all the members, all the members in this House will support that resolution on behalf of Ontario's farmers.

ABORIGINAL LAND CLAIMS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Members of the assembly would know that there has been a controversy brewing for time in regard to lands that are owned by the Toronto District School Board and lands that are claimed by the Mohawk in regard to the Haldimand Proclamation.

This is an issue that the government can find a solution for fairly simply. The Toronto District School Board has told the Mohawk people that if they access that land, they will charge them with trespassing and use the full extent of the law to prevent them from using land that was given to them, the Mohawk people, through the Haldimand Proclamation. The government, to fix this, quite simply could do what the Toronto District School Board is asking, and that is to purchase the land so that the province gets title to the land. In exchange, the province would then transfer that land to the Mohawk people.

It seems to me that if a deal was made over 100 years ago with the Mohawk people in order to grant that land to them, certainly we can fix this problem by finding a peaceful solution to a situation that doesn't need to escalate. The key is that the provincial government would have to sit down with the Toronto District School Board. The Toronto District School Board, as I understand it, is prepared to sell the land for a sum of around \$750,000. I call on this government to do that, to enter into negotiations with the Toronto District School Board and, once the land title has reverted to the crown, enact what we had done in the Haldimand Proclamation many years ago

and transfer that land back to the Mohawk people so they can use it for their traditional use.

DEBATE TOURNAMENT

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Today, students and their teacher from Albert Campbell Collegiate Institute, a school located in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River, are visiting Queen's Park. These students are members of the school's debate club and are the champions of a debate tournament against teams from Dr. Norman Bethune and L'Amoreaux Collegiate Institutes in Scarborough.

I encouraged, supported and sponsored this tournament for two reasons. First, I wanted to raise awareness of the democratic process in Ontario and the importance of voting, especially amongst newcomers, and I wanted to stress the importance of community involvement. The winners are visiting Queen's Park to observe the legislative process in our province, which will enhance their learning. I must say that all the participants in the debate did a fantastic job. Although there is only one winner, they all gained valuable skills, such as public speaking, research, and defending their point of view.

The debates ranged from the right to prorogue the House to the education system, and I must say that they were very intense. I want to congratulate the champions and welcome them to Queen's Park. I hope they have a great day here today.

I also want to thank the principals and the teachers from all the schools for their active participation in making the debate such a success. All the students are here in the east gallery, so if we could give them a big round of applause.

LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Mr. Toby Barrett: This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Long Point Bird Observatory, the first research program in North America dedicated to migratory and breeding birds. It was in April 1960 that volunteers led by David Hussell and Erica Dunn began banding and monitoring on the tip of Long Point. My father and I took our 18-foot cedar-strip boat out from Port Dover to the tip of the Point back on that April day.

Over the 50 years, we now have a huge database of 750,000 birds banded, checked for disease and weighed. The weekend of May 14 saw birders across the country leave their nests to return and enjoy 50th-anniversary celebrations and reminisce of burying the Jeep and the Land Rover on the south beach at the Point.

My father, Harry, was joined by the who's who of the field: Fred Bosworth, Bob Stamp, Bruce Falls, Bob and Ross Bateman, and Jim and Pat Woodford, just to name a few of the originals. Pat is credited with banding the first bird, a song sparrow, 50 years ago at the tip of the Point.

The Long Point Bird Observatory is associated with Bird Studies Canada. I invite members present and people to check out the visitors' centre at Port Rowan

and help recognize and celebrate 50 years of valuable, neutral, objective research and a lot of hard work out on the end of Long Point.

BREAD AND HONEY FESTIVAL

Mr. Bob Delaney: Volunteers and residents in Streetsville are preparing for the annual event that marks the start of summer in Mississauga: Streetsville's Bread and Honey Festival.

The main stage will be home to dozens of performers throughout the weekend, from a Celtic rock band to a Paul McCartney tribute show. The Habitat for Humanity playhouse will hold a building competition on the island on both Saturday and Sunday.

1310

I will serve pancakes at the Rotary pancake breakfast on Sunday morning in the newly renovated Vic Johnston hall.

Residents and visitors can participate in the 32nd annual Bread and Honey Race, and can enjoy ward 11 Councillor George Carlson's fishing derby on the Credit River banks on Sunday at 9 a.m.

And be sure to visit my booth in the Rotary consumer market inside the Vic Johnston arena Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Local arts and crafts will be offered for sale by artisans and businesses, both local and from across Ontario.

During the three days of the Bread and Honey Festival, visitors can enjoy fresh slices of bread covered in sweet honey. Come and enjoy the legendary Streetsville hospitality, enjoy Mississauga and visit the 2010 Bread and Honey Festival.

BROCKVILLE AND AREA YMCA

Mr. Steve Clark: I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary that the Brockville and Area YMCA is celebrating this year. The Y has a long history, and it looks very different today than when it started 150 years ago. It has gone from delivering programs in rented spaces to having an incredible facility to call home; from Bible classes, camera clubs and canoe competitions to being a leading child care provider and teaching kids to swim in its very own pool; and from serving the needs of young Christian men to serving the needs of individuals of all ages, genders and backgrounds.

Over the years, this not-for-profit charity has faced both challenging and flourishing economic times. It has embarked upon campaigns called the "Save the Y" as well as "Build the Y Pool." The generosity and vision of community leaders have ensured its survival and success.

Today, the Y serves the kids and families in our region through leadership development, camp, child care, fitness and recreation, making a difference in the lives of thousands.

Congratulations to past and present staff, volunteers and also their membership for this milestone.

I also want to recognize the eight people recently named as Y champions: George Smith; Bruce Wylie; David Beatty; Jan Laidley; Paul Fournier; Don and Shirley Green; and the late Dr. Anthony Dunn.

The Y's mission to help individuals grow in spirit, mind and body in service to others and in an environment open to all is alive and well-positioned to positively impact the health and wellness of our families for years to come.

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: This past Saturday, May 29, I had the opportunity to participate in the second annual Road Today Truck Show in Brampton. It was great to support an event that highlighted the importance of road safety and the trucking industry here in Ontario.

The trucking industry helps to fuel our economy, and this industry has been the backbone of our manufacturing and trade sector in the province of Ontario. In Ontario alone, trucks transport over 90% of our food and consumer products. This industry employs more than 200,000 people, and out of that, 75,000 are truck drivers.

Our government is working to ensure that this industry remains prosperous, and we are committed to improving road safety.

I want to thank all the organizers and volunteers for hosting such a great event and helping all of us to understand the need to inform and educate our community about the trucking industry.

On behalf of the residents of Mississauga-Brampton South, I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work and dedication of truckers all across the province.

MINOR SOCCER

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: In the spirit of the World Cup, I would like to stand today to recognize all the parents and coaches across the province who make minor soccer in Ontario a success and thank them for their efforts.

Specifically, I'd like to recognize Kitchener minor soccer. Their motto is, "Building better people through soccer." I want to highlight, as a soccer mom—

Interjection.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Thank you—the Kitchener Spirit boys under 12; their coach, Mario Halapir; the manager, Sue Halapir; the assistant coach, Rick Regier; all of the parents who travel the province weekend after weekend to support our young players. I want to say thank you.

Mr. Joe Dickson: Great people.

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Wonderful.

Kitchener Spirit 98 Boys are very unique in this respect. They've had an unparalleled amount of success on the field while truly exemplifying the core value of sportsmanship—not seen regularly in this realm of competition.

This year, the team was promoted to the top league available for players in our district and has started the season by winning their league cup tournament. The Spirit Boys also won the West Niagara Invitational Soccer Tournament, and, at their age, they're allowed to compete in the prestigious Ontario Cup. They made their way through the first round.

I want to commend Coach Halapir for his commitment to our children, I want to thank the boys, and I want to recognize the keeper, Ben Upenieks, my 11-year-old son.

I want to leave you with a comment from the coach, who says, "Winning's not the measuring stick. The effort and commitment to get there is." Thank you, Coach Halapir.

PETRIE ISLAND

Mr. Phil McNeely: Today, I would like to recognize and acknowledge the work done by Sonshine Families and especially its director, Len Goddard, in promoting youth activity at Petrie Island in Ottawa–Orléans, one of the premier outdoor recreation sites in all of the national capital region.

Sonshine's Petrie Island Recreational Initiatives and Training, better known as SPIRIT, recently received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant in the amount of \$13,500 to purchase a shelter and equipment.

I'm very proud to say that I helped establish Petrie Island as a public beach and park during my tenure on Ottawa city council. As a matter of fact, I launched my campaign there in 1999. A lot of the work has been done by a great many people, including Al Tweddle and the Friends of Petrie Island, to promote this site since that time.

Still, we've only scratched the surface when it comes to helping the site reach its full potential for youth and seniors and all Orléans residents. Several groups are currently working on plans to introduce additional programs to the island, including canoeing, kayaking and small sailboats.

On Sunday, I will be a participant on a panel discussion about Petrie Island at the Queenswood United Church, led by Pastor Ed Gratton. I look forward to the ideas that will flow from this event.

On July 1, thousands of people from across the region will descend on Petrie Island to celebrate Canada Day as part of the Greater Orléans Canada Day Celebration. I know I will be there. I look forward to meeting my fellow Petrie Island enthusiasts on Canada Day.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Hon. Margaret R. Best: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: In my supplementary response to the question from the member for Ottawa–Orléans on June 1—I might add, congratulations on all the health promotion work you're doing, and also my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga.

On June 1, 2010, my statement, "We have put up tobacco power walls," should read, "We have banned tobacco power walls."

While I have the floor, I would like to take this opportunity, with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, to welcome Amy Wanounou, the coordinator of government relations and public policy of the Hospital for Sick Children's Safe Kids injury prevention program, who is here with us in the east members' gallery. Thank you for coming.

This week is Safe Kids Week in Ontario. During this time, we partner with our program and with community organizations throughout the province to raise awareness and promote injury prevention among our children and youth.

Thank you, and welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Half of that was a point of order.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And the other half was your generosity.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present the Report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions: the Royal Ontario Museum, from the Standing Committee on Government Agencies and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: As Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies, it is a privilege to table this report on our study of the operations of the Royal Ontario Museum. The report of the committee notes the recent transformation and innovations at this venerable institution and makes some recommendations for further improvements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chair, the CEO and staff of the Royal Ontario Museum for their assistance and to express our appreciation to those who made presentations to the committee, both in person and in writing.

I thank the committee members for their ongoing contribution to the agency review process. Thanks as well to our committee clerk, Douglas Arnott, and research officer Avrum Fenson.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate.

1320

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

RENTERS' RIGHT TO KNOW ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LE DROIT DE SAVOIR DES LOCATAIRES

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 94, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 with respect to reporting bed bug information / Projet de loi 94, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les rapports sur la présence de punaises des lits.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Mike Colle: A very short statement: The Renters Right to Know Act, 2010, amends the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, to require landlords, before a tenancy agreement is entered into, to disclose information that has come to the landlords' attention during the previous five-year period with respect to bedbugs in a rental unit or any other rental unit in a residential complex.

PRESERVING THE DIGNITY OF THE ONTARIO LEGISLATIVE BUILDING ACT, 2010

LOI DE 2010 SUR LA PRÉSERVATION DE LA DIGNITÉ DE L'ÉDIFICE DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 95, An Act to prohibit the construction of certain buildings north of the Legislative Building at Queen's Park / Projet de loi 95, Loi interdisant la construction de certains bâtiments au nord de l'Édifice de l'Assemblée législative à Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The bill prohibits the construction of a building or structure if any part of it is visible above the roof of the legislative building at Queen's Park when viewed by a person standing at the intersection of Queen Street West and University Avenue. The bill also renders any decision or order of the Ontario Municipal Board that would permit such construction void, including any decision or order made after January 1, 2010.

MICHELLE KROHN ACT (MODIFIED DRIVER'S LICENCE), 2010 LOI MICHELLE KROHN DE 2010 SUR LES PERMIS DE CONDUIRE MODIFIÉS

Mr. Ramal moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to create an optional modified driver's licence / Projet de loi 97, Loi modifiant le Code de la route afin de créer un permis de conduire modifié facultatif.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: The bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to add a new section, 38.1, which creates a modified driver's licence. The minister may issue a modified driver's licence to a person who elects to hold this licence and who meets the requirements set out in section 38.1. A modified driver's licence is subject to a condition that the holder is not permitted to drive a vehicle on specific highways. The bill also provides that any particular test necessary to obtain a modified driver's licence would not require driving on a specific highway.

ONTARIO NEW HOME WARRANTIES PLAN AMENDMENT ACT (OMBUDSMAN'S POWERS), 2010

LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LE RÉGIME DE GARANTIES DES LOGEMENTS NEUFS DE L'ONTARIO (POUVOIRS DE L'OMBUDSMAN)

Ms. DiNovo moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act to amend the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act to give the Ombudsman power in respect of the Corporation / Projet de loi 98, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Régime de garanties des logements neufs de l'Ontario afin de conférer des pouvoirs à l'ombudsman à l'égard de la Société.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: The bill amends the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act to provide that the Ombudsman's powers under the Ombudsman Act in respect of any governmental organization apply to the corporation established under the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act. The bill also provides for necessary modifications in the application of the Ombudsman Act.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to meet

during the summer adjournment for up to three days, at the call of the Chair, to consider the 2009 annual report of the Auditor General; and

That the committee be authorized to release any reports during the summer adjournment by depositing a copy of any report with the Clerk of the Assembly, and upon the resumption of the meetings of the House the Chair of the committee shall bring any such reports before the House in accordance with the standing orders.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. John O'Toole: It is a pleasure today to rise and present a petition from the riding of Northumberland. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the government-appointed local health integration network (LHIN) has approved a budget proposal by the Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) that includes plans to close 26 hospital beds, outpatient rehabilitation and the diabetes education clinic; and

"Whereas these cuts will leave no outpatient rehabilitation (including physio- and occupational therapy) available for patients in Northumberland county; and

"Whereas this cut leaves all patients with insulin-dependent diabetes without education and support that is vital to prevent serious health decline; and

"Whereas these cuts will result in for-profit privatization of hospital beds and services and new user fees for patients; and

"Whereas private, for-profit, unaccredited retirement homes are not safe or appropriate to house patients who need professional nursing and health care; and

"Whereas the NHH is considered a very efficient hospital in comparison with peer hospitals and the people of west Northumberland have already made a huge sacrifice regarding hospital services;

"Therefore be it resolved:

"That the McGuinty government act immediately to protect patients in Northumberland Hills, fund the hospital to maintain the current services, and stop the hospital bed and service cuts."

I'm pleased to sign and support this, and hopefully the member from Northumberland will speak up on behalf of this hospital.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas workplace injuries should not result in the poverty of an injured worker, and that it is the duty of a workers' compensation system to ensure the financial

security of those who can no longer engage in the labour market, and that financial burdens accumulated by the workers' compensation system should not be the burden of the injured worker;

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

"That all those who engage in work in Ontario shall be covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act; that the Legislature shall eliminate deeming permanently disabled workers to be earning income when they are not; that annual cost-of-living adjustments be made a permanent addition to the legislation; that claims-based experience rating be eliminated; and that the unfunded liability not be reduced at the expense of the injured worker."

I agree with this and will affix my name, and Yidu will bring it down.

1330

POWER PLANT

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I have a petition today signed by a number of family physicians in my community. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas, in view of the recent natural-gas-fired explosion in Connecticut and the placement in Ontario of such facilities in close proximity to homes and schools;

"Whereas, in view of the absence of enforceable standards for the level of fine particulate matter in ambient air since it was declared a toxic substance one decade ago under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act;

"Whereas, in view of the premature mortality and adverse health effects, largely attributable to fine particulate matter, which may arise from large natural-gas-fired generation facilities close to population centres;

"We, the undersigned physicians, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to institute the following:

"(1) A moratorium on the development of all natural-gas-fired power plants until appropriate safety setbacks are legislated.

"(2) The legislation of regulatory standards for fine particulate matter and the further regulation of precursor gaseous" pollutants "that contribute to its secondary formation.

"(3) A requirement that all natural-gas-fired power plants undergo an individual environmental assessment."

I agree with this and I will send it to the table with page Ana.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas multiple industrial wind farm projects are being considered by the government of Ontario in the absence of independent, scientific studies on the long-term effects on the health of residents living near industrial wind farms;

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the government of Ontario to put a moratorium on any renewable energy approvals for the construction of industrial wind farms in the province of Ontario until such time as it can be demonstrated that all reasonable concerns regarding the long-term effects on the health of residents living near industrial wind farms have been fully studied and addressed.”

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas violent crime and gangs have been a problem in our communities; children require safe schools and safe streets in order to thrive;

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

“To continue with their support of the guns and gangs program;

“To continue to recognize the importance of a strong and educated police force;

“To continue to support rehabilitation programs;

“To continue to keep education as a top priority; and

“To continue to make our streets and schools safe places to be.”

I agree with this petition, will sign it and send it to the table with page Mary.

ELMVALE DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Jim Wilson: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Elmvale District High School is an important part of the community of Elmvale and surrounding area; and

“Whereas the school is widely recognized as having high educational requirements and is well known for producing exceptional graduates who have gone on to work as professionals in health care, agriculture, community safety, the trades and many other fields that give back to the community; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised during the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that ‘Rural schools help keep communities strong, which is why we’re not only committed to keeping them open—but strengthening them’; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn’t found any money to keep an actual rural school open in Elmvale;

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

“That the Minister of Education support the citizens of Elmvale and flow funding to the local school board so that Elmvale District High School can remain open to serve the vibrant community of Elmvale and surrounding area.”

I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition from Community Living in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas almost 12,000 Ontario citizens who have an intellectual disability are on waiting lists for residential supports;

“Whereas another 7,000 individuals are waiting for other supports;

“Whereas 80% of the 1,500 parents providing primary care for their adult children waiting for residential services are over the age of 70;

“Whereas the government of Ontario made a commitment in 2007 to provide a 2% base funding increase to agencies providing developmental services every year up to 2010-11;

“Whereas the government has decided not to provide the 2% funding increase promised for the current year;

“Whereas the failure to honour this funding commitment will cause further deterioration of supports and services for people who have an intellectual disability;

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

“That the government of Ontario reinstate the 2% base funding increase promised four years ago to service providers in the developmental services sector.”

TAXATION

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from a great many people in my riding who signed this petition.

“Whereas residents of Oxford do not want Dalton McGuinty’s new sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$500,000; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families, farmers and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario families.”

I affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Phil McNeely: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from students at Cairine

Wilson high school: Stéphanie Boulerice, Alexandre De Courreur, Emily Cleroux and 35 others.

“Whereas the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in its 2007 report, concluded that without dramatic reductions in human-induced carbon dioxide emissions, climate change may bring ‘abrupt and irreversible effects on oceans, glaciers, land, coastlines and species;’ and

“Whereas no one group, country or continent is responsible for climate change, but where all human beings are collectively responsible for solving the problem; and

“Whereas the production of greenhouse gases in Canada has increased by 27% over 1990 levels; and

“Whereas our elected leaders have a responsibility to report to the public on their actions with respect to halting climate change for the sake of accountability; and

“Whereas youth in particular have a special interest in this issue, being those that will inherit this earth, our only home.

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario swiftly pass Bill 208, An Act to increase awareness of climate change.”

I will sign this petition and send it up with Dylan.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the cuts to health care, specifically the 15-bed closure and staffing changes at Brockville General Hospital. There were no cuts to management but many changes to the people who deliver hands-on care, adding immeasurably to their workload. We need to ensure quality care and available beds. Balancing the budgets on the backs of staff is not acceptable.

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

“The 15-bed closure and staffing changes at the Brockville General Hospital.”

I’m pleased to sign it and give it to my wonderful Leeds–Grenville page, Luke.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Mr. Joe Dickson: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians pay more for popular generic drugs for diabetes, high blood pressure and other common health issues than patients in other jurisdictions; and

“Whereas Ontarians deserve fair prescription drug prices so that families and seniors are not charged more than those in other countries; and

“Whereas some members of the opposition have sided with large corporations to preserve the status quo rather than make prescription medications more affordable for Ontario patients by supporting the proposed drug reforms;

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

“That all members of the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians by passing the government’s legislation to lower the cost of prescription medications.”

I shall attach my signature hereto and pass it to page Yidu.

TAXATION

Mrs. Julia Munro: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the illegal trade of cigarettes already accounts for almost 50% of all cigarettes purchased in the province and illegal products are available at a price that is already much lower than that for legal cigarettes (average \$70 for a carton of 200 legal cigarettes versus \$10 for 200 cigarettes in a plastic bag); and

“Whereas the HST, effective July 1, 2010, will raise legal tobacco prices by 8%, or another \$4 to \$7 per carton of 200 cigarettes, making illegal cigarettes even cheaper, and will likely only make the problem of illegal cigarettes worse in the province; and

“Whereas this situation will represent further losses to already suffering law-abiding retailers while only benefiting the organized crime groups behind the illegal trade;

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

“To prevent the growth of illicit trade by temporarily reducing the provincial tobacco tax to offset the impact of the HST and keep the price of legal tobacco products static until the contraband problem in Ontario is under control.”

I affix my signature to this, as I am in favour of it.

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus support public health care and protecting access to front-line care;

1340

“Ontario families have already given Dalton McGuinty \$15 billion in health taxes, which was wasted on the \$1-billion eHealth scandal. Now the McGuinty Liberals are cutting front-line public health care and putting independent pharmacies at risk;

“Dalton McGuinty’s cuts will:

“—reduce pharmacy hours during evenings and weekends;

“—increase wait times and lineups for patients;

“—increase the out-of-pocket fees people pay for their medication and its delivery; and

“—reduce critical patient health care services for seniors and people with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and breathing problems;

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

“That the McGuinty government stop its cuts to pharmacies.”

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

Ms. Helena Jaczek: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal caucus support public health care and protecting access to front-line care;

“Whereas Tim Hudak’s Conservatives’ policies would stop access to affordable prescription drugs being available to Ontario families and seniors;

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

“To continue to pursue legislation that will put an end to this flawed system of professional allowances for generic drugs in order to reinvest the savings, to the benefit of all Ontarians.”

I agree with this petition, will sign it and send it to the table with page Yidu.

TAXATION

Mr. John O’Toole: This is the last petition of this session, and it’s a very serious one. It reads as follows:

“Whereas residents of Durham do not want Dalton McGuinty’s new sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$500,000; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals’ new sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families, farmers and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario families” on Canada Day. Shame.

I’m pleased to sign and endorse this and present it to Mary, one of the pages, on their last day here.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT (ENABLING MUNICIPALITIES TO REQUIRE INCLUSIONARY HOUSING), 2010

LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L’AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE (INCLUSION DE LOGEMENTS ABORDABLES PAR LES MUNICIPALITÉS)

Ms. DiNovo moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 58, An Act to amend the Planning Act with respect to inclusionary housing / Projet de loi 58, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l’aménagement du territoire à l’égard de l’inclusion de logements abordables.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: This is a bill that has been before this House before. This is the second time I’ve brought it toward the members across the aisle and to those on this side of the aisle. With their indulgence, I hope that the result is the same: that they pass it again on second reading.

It’s a modest proposal, but let me set the stage for my modest proposal. We are in a province now with a housing crisis. In fact, some would say that it’s a disaster. It was named a national disaster at one point, and nothing very much has changed since then. We have 142,000 families waiting on affordable housing lists across the province of Ontario. We have 72,000 families just in the GTA area alone.

Anybody who is looking at the housing market now knows how difficult it is to afford a house, particularly in our major municipalities. I remember a time when, in my parents’ generation, on one salary, you could own a house, own a car, pay for it outright and, if you were very, very lucky, maybe a cottage as well, and in those days you had a pension too. Those days are gone.

Now, in downtown Toronto, even two young people with two incomes in the average range would find it extremely difficult to afford a house at Toronto prices, and most likely would only be able to afford a small condo to get into the market. That’s the big picture of Ontario and Ontario’s housing.

This is not a bill that demands of the government to build new housing, although I have a motion on the order paper to do just that. In fact, Dalton McGuinty, back in 2003, promised 20,000 new affordable housing units—new builds. We still don’t have those. This bill doesn’t ask for that.

This bill doesn’t ask that housing be made a human right in Ontario, even though there is a charter challenge before the courts and before this government to ask them to do just that. We keep in mind, of course, that the United Nations has called for housing as a human right. This bill doesn’t do that, either.

This bill doesn’t do what another one of my motions has asked, and that is to reform the Ontario Municipal Board so that cities with planning boards can take the bulk of that effort upon themselves and so that citizens’ groups that are fighting against a developer or for something don’t get stymied at the OMB level. We’ve had a classic case of that in my benchmate’s bill, just tabled this afternoon, to stop the condo development that would obscure the skyline and the view of the citizens’ Queen’s Park.

This bill doesn’t do any of that. It’s a modest bill.

What does this bill do? All this bill does is amend the Planning Act so that municipalities can, if they want, introduce inclusionary zoning rules. This is not pre-

scriptive in any way, sense or form. What would happen now if a municipality tried to introduce inclusionary zoning bills of their own is that developers would take them to the Ontario Municipal Board and win. That's why they don't do it. So this bill simply makes it possible for a municipality to introduce inclusionary zoning.

What is inclusionary zoning? Inclusionary zoning is simply an act that asks—and it could be mandatory; it could be voluntary—developers to set aside a certain number of units as affordable housing.

I was challenged by the then housing minister, Mr. Watson, to go to the municipalities and get motions passed to support my bill—the bill was lost due to prorogation; that's why I'm bringing it back again—so we took up that challenge. We wrote to councillors across Ontario. We wrote to municipalities across Ontario. The cities of Toronto, London, Thunder Bay, Milton, the town of the Blue Mountains—and councillors in countless other cities who supported this motion—those towns actually passed motions to support my inclusionary zoning bill. The support was unbelievable. It was over what we ever thought we would get. It was astounding, in fact. Even Hazel McCallion, who was sitting downstairs having lunch with Mr. Watson at the time—I remember asking her if she would support this bill, and she said, “Absolutely. We don't have that power now. We would like to have that power,” that power, again, being whatever they want to define it as. So this is really giving the municipalities in Ontario a chance to do something about the affordable housing crisis, which they don't have right now.

Where is this in place? Inclusionary zoning is in place in literally hundreds of jurisdictions across the United States—hundreds of jurisdictions in smaller municipalities in California alone. The Maryland experience is a particular case in point, where they've had it in place since 1976, and over 11,000 new units of affordable housing have been provided because of inclusionary zoning. Certainly in Great Britain and countries in Europe, inclusionary zoning is not a new thing. It is in place in a number of jurisdictions there. But the Americans really are leading us on this one. That's where it has really taken off.

Looking at the number of new builds that happened in the province of Ontario over the last while, we calculated that it could be responsible, even at a conservative 10% of all units, say, in developments over 50 units, for producing as many as 12,000 new units of affordable housing per year in Ontario. It wouldn't solve the crisis. It wouldn't house all those on the 142,000-family waiting list. But what it would do is provide housing without costing one tax dime. That's the strength and the power of inclusionary zoning.

What are the objections—because I have done the talk radio circuit on this bill, and I've had some, to be honest. There was a report done by the Canadian Home Builders' Association which, not surprisingly, took a contrary stand to this, because of course we are asking something of developers if municipalities decide to exercise their ability and this bill were to pass.

1350

Immediately, the Altus Clayton report was responded to by two experts, the foremost American expert on inclusionary housing, a man named David Rusk; and the foremost Canadian expert, an incredible man, Richard Drdla, whom we had here at Queen's Park speaking to this bill. They both immediately offered their critiques of that report and showed that, in practice, the concerns were really fallacious.

What were some of the concerns? One of the concerns I heard from a condo owner was that developers might pass on the cost, that if they're asked to set aside a certain number of units for affordable housing, the cost for those units would be borne by the other people who bought in that development. The answer to that is that it has never happened. In the hundreds of jurisdictions that have used inclusionary zoning bylaws to bring in affordable housing, it has never happened. It has never happened that housing has become more expensive. In fact—and this is due again to exigent historical circumstances, not necessarily to inclusionary zoning—the price of housing tends to come down, not go up. That doesn't happen. Really, history is the best answer to that.

The development needs to stay profitable. We are not arguing with the developers' need to stay profitable in this bill. In fact, we're saying that inclusionary zoning could help developers. In a down market, it could help developers because there are always those units that are difficult to sell. This way, the developer gets some money back. Also, as has been the practice in many municipalities, cost offsets are offered and zoning bylaws are changed to facilitate the development of affordable housing units. Municipalities have worked very well with developers on bringing these in. Hence, it has become the most popular way of providing affordable housing across the United States.

Again, this bill is not prescriptive. I want to emphasize that. All it does is get the OMB out of the equation. All it does is allow municipalities to bring in bills, if they so choose, that would make requirements of developers when it comes to affordable housing. They could be as conservative as 10%; they could be as generous as, say, in London, England—25%. It's completely up to the municipalities. That's why they love this bill, by and large. They would like to see this bill. Even if they don't act on it, they would like the opportunity to be able to. That's what this bill offers them.

It offers, actually, much, much more than that, I would hope. It also offers to those 142,000 families on the affordable housing waiting list hope. It offers some hope that, in the days when governments are running huge deficits, we can still move ahead, and dramatically so—conceivably—on the affordable housing file. We can move ahead without it costing taxpayers' dollars.

Developers already pay something, and I want to mention that as well, through section 37 in Toronto. They already pay, but that amount of money is negotiated between the councillor and the developer. It could go to beautifying a park or building a statue.

We don't need a statue; we need affordable housing units. We don't want to leave this up to the negotiation skills of individual councillors. We want to make this something that delivers on the promise that all municipalities have made about affordable housing and that this government has made about affordable housing.

Again, I'm bringing it back, I hope, for the same result. I emphasize that it's a modest bill. It simply gets the OMB out of the way of municipalities so that they can, if they so choose, move to enact inclusionary zoning laws. If they do, the result could be as powerful and dramatic as providing up to 12,000 new units of housing a year. These could be rent-to-own; they could be rental. It's not prescriptive. That's left up to the municipalities and possibly between them and their developers.

But what it would do is give us a ray of hope, a glimmer of hope in recessionary times, that we could answer the challenge that poverty has given us and that the need for housing, the national disaster of housing, has laid before us.

With the indulgence of the House, I hope you see fit to pass this yet again in second reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I'm pleased to have an opportunity to comment for a few minutes on this bill. I'll be sharing my time with the member from Toronto Centre.

I'm going to approach this from the perspective of being a city councillor for 15 years, first in the city of Scarborough and then for six years at the city of Toronto. I found that in my experience, representing a part of Scarborough or various parts of Scarborough, depending on which election it was, all the way back to 1988, the best projects and the best developments occurred with the Planning Act that allowed for the section 37 so-called bonusing, so that if a developer wanted to build something and it was to be larger than the zoning bylaw permitted, we would sometimes allow it, and in exchange, we would get services—for example, an upgrade to a subway station or the LRT line or a new park built.

I can think of many projects all around Scarborough. I could take anybody on a tour and show them all the different things that have been created. In fact, through section 37, a developer wanted to put two towers in an area that was at the corner of Lawrence Avenue and Midland Avenue in Scarborough; this is the north side. The developer was given the approval, and, in return, the developer had to give the city of Scarborough over \$1 million. That was banked for quite a while. During those days, interest rates were higher, and the money that we made from that was used to build a new community centre, retrofit an old library that desperately needed to be fixed up, and build a new swimming pool and an outdoor area for children in the community to use. Not only would the people who would eventually be living in this development have an option to use this new facility, but also residents who lived around the community.

I think the way it exists presently works well. I'm a little bit concerned when we start dangling in front of

municipalities the option to impose the 25% affordable housing part for the Planning Act. The reason I have concern about this is that in the rare instance that you may get a council that's perhaps left-leaning, more left-wing or more socialist-minded, they may want to impose this on a good development, and if a developer comes along—and developers are not always bad guys. They work with cities, they work with planners and they work with communities. I found that most of the time they will co-operate. They don't want to go to the OMB either. What I discovered in the past when I was a councillor was that when I worked with developers, especially with members around the community and the experts at the city, through going back and forth, almost like a collective bargaining situation, we would continue to work with the developer until we worked out a proper plan. Many times, the developer would come down in size if it was too large or the developer would provide extra amenities, perhaps even repaving a road, which happened in the case of Tridel at Ellesmere and Birchmount in my former riding—the whole repaving of a road, adding extra classrooms to a school across the street and doing many other things.

My concern with putting in this 25% point is that developers are going to say, "If you're going to impose a 25% requirement on me for this development, I'm not going to bother building this," and it may not get built at all. All the possible benefits that would flow, which I just mentioned, from swimming pools to repairs to subway stations to roads, would all be left aside.

I've seen developers who have been scared away when too many conditions have been imposed on them for their approvals. They just walk away—and not just in residential developments, but also in commercial developments. We had one at Kennedy and the 401, which is in my former riding. It was a huge 40-acre parcel of land. All that was there was one store way in the middle of this place; it had been there for years. There were three different owners. We were able to sit down with them, with the community and the business association, and we were able to rebuild that whole area and provide for a very, very nice new commercial development that included a brand new theatre and all sorts of other needed things—stores and other shops—that make it one of the nicer places to shop in all of Scarborough. So we worked with the developers.

1400

I am concerned, again, with too much over-regulating or imposing too many conditions, and that's what this does. The intentions of the member who brought this forward are commendable, but my experience is that when you give a council extra powers, or certain other powers, maybe 90% will not abuse them but 10% probably will, and that's where my concern lies.

The Acting (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm pleased to speak to Bill 58, the Planning Amendment Act, which would enable municipalities to require inclusionary housing.

This, of course, as has already been noted by the member from Parkdale–High Park, is a bill that she introduced last year, 2009. The bill, unfortunately for her, was lost as a result of the Legislature proroguing, so she didn't have an opportunity to see her bill go to the Standing Committee on General Government for further discussion and debate and also, given the opportunity, to allow for some public input.

I think, as I listened already to the discussion that has taken place, there are obviously many reasons why we would want to support this. The need for affordable housing is—well, it's badly needed. We know that affordable housing has a tremendous impact on the quality of life for those people in particular who live in poverty. We should be ensuring that all people in this province have adequate housing.

So it is an important initiative and it really is, again, an indication of the member from Parkdale–High Park, who I think has made a lifetime commitment to making sure that everybody enjoys a quality of life that any one of us would hope to have. This one, in this case, is one where people would be provided with appropriate affordable housing.

Our party has traditionally supported housing and affordable housing, but we've usually done it by supporting rent subsidies and programs that lead to permanent independence rather than bricks and mortar as a solution to address the affordable housing needs in the province of Ontario. That has been our traditional approach. However, if you take a look at what is being proposed here by the member, inclusionary housing, as she has described it—really, she's saying it would “allow”; it's not mandatory. It does have the potential of making more units available to people in the province of Ontario.

However, there are debates and there are arguments on both sides of the issue. That's why, if the Legislature today decides to support this initiative, obviously it's a result of all of us agreeing that affordable housing is important to people in this province. We need to take action in order that people can have access to affordable housing. But it's obvious that a lot of further debate is going to be required. We need to get some feedback from people who are going to be impacted.

The member mentioned that the Ontario Home Builders' Association had opposed granting municipalities the planning authority to require inclusionary zoning. I know that that particular association feels that there's a high potential to cause the average price of new homes across the market in certain jurisdictions to increase, therefore reducing housing affordability and reducing the overall supply of new housing. According to the home builders' association, inclusionary zoning causes developers to pass on the cost differences that are created as a result of the social subsidy to home buyers and renters or rental owners, thereby making it less affordable for them to own or rent a home.

The member says that she has talked to municipalities, and it appears that those that she's talked to have indicated their support for her bill. She also talked about

the fact that this does happen in the United States and that some of the concerns that have been expressed by those who have some opposition to this initiative, she doesn't feel would materialize.

At the end of the day, this House needs to make a decision about this particular piece of legislation. Do we want to pass it? Do we want to send it out for public debate and give those people who have concerns an opportunity to step forward and express them and also allow those people—and she indicated that she does have quite a bit of support from different municipalities—to appear before us? I guess what we need to do at the end of the day is, we need to use whatever means are available to us to ensure that all people in this province do have access to affordable housing.

I applaud the member from Parkdale–High Park for bringing forth this bill one more time.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I just want to take a few moments to support my colleague from Parkdale–High Park. I won't take my whole time because I know that she needs many more minutes to respond to some of the comments that have been made by others.

I am one of those who supports government involvement in terms of creating affordable housing because, based on my 20-year experience, if we don't do it, it doesn't get done. That's just the way it is, and that's an experience that I think is shared by many. But my suggestion of government doing it is not shared by all politicians, quite clearly, and different political parties will say, “We all have different approaches in terms of how we get there,” and I understand that. But my view is that we, as a government, have a responsibility and an obligation to provide housing for people who simply do not have the means to get housing.

There are 140,000 people waiting for subsidized housing, and that list doesn't seem to diminish. In fact, it increases over time, which speaks to the need for government involvement; otherwise, we're not going to solve the need for housing that is affordable by those who don't earn a great deal of money. That's one component of the problem that needs to be addressed.

Ms. Witmer speaks about their way of wanting to solve the issue of affordability through supplements, and that's another tool that all governments have used as well. But it's yet one more tool; it's not the only way to get to affordable housing. In fact, we know that it doesn't do it in and of itself and that you've got to think of different ways to be able to provide affordable housing.

God knows, for the people who live in my riding of Trinity–Spadina, housing is no longer affordable. The people who come into my riding have to spend anywhere from \$600,000 to \$1 million to get a home, and these are the homes that the old Italians used to call shacks. They used to refer to Marchese still living in downtown Toronto: “You still live in that shack?” Our shacks are worth close to one million bucks, and they're probably more valuable by way of pecunia, by way of the cost,

then some of the Woodbridge homes. These shacks cost a great deal of money, and ordinary folks who have a modest income of \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000 or \$60,000 can't live in downtown Toronto anymore. They can't. So there is nothing really affordable any longer unless we create affordable housing for those who earn \$40,000, \$50,000 or \$60,000. And the majority of income earners are in that middle range, where family income is about \$50,000 on average. That's the range.

1410

I know that families are making huge sacrifices to put every penny into that home, whatever home, whether it is a condominium or a house. Every penny goes into paying down that mortgage. The new immigrants are finding it more and more difficult to buy a home. Those that do, live together, both with their children or grandchildren or brothers and sisters, because that's the only way you can afford to buy a home; you can't do it on your own anymore.

Housing has become incredibly expensive, and with the loss of thousands and thousands of good-paying manufacturing jobs, people are working in places where the salaries are no longer that great. So now what we're building is a whole lot of condominiums, and that's okay. I've got 40% of people in my riding living in condominiums. In the riding next to me on my right, 60% of the people live in condominiums, and on and on. In Toronto, we have 40%—not in Toronto—we do have 40% of all condominiums in Ontario in Toronto; that was the point I wanted to make. We're building a whole lot of condominiums, and that has become the rental option for many, in fact. Half of the condominiums are rented. So it has become another opportunity for people to live: instead of in rental buildings, in condominiums.

The fact of the matter is that this bill presented by my colleague from Parkdale–High Park gives municipalities that want to do this another tool to get at affordability. The bill will have to leave 10% of the housing aside for affordable housing. Let the cities determine what that affordability level is.

Clearly, we're not breaking new ground. It's not as if the member is doing something that is so totally new that you've got to be afraid of it. She speaks to the fact that there are many municipalities doing it all over the world, and to the south our neighbours are doing it in many states. So we're not breaking a whole lot of new ground. This is a tool that I believe is something that cities want, and if cities want it, or municipalities want it, let's give them that power to be able to bring in inclusionary zoning that allows for more affordable housing to be had.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Toronto Centre.

Mr. Glen R. Murray: It's a great privilege to stand up and support this today. I want to commend the members for Parkdale–High Park and Kitchener–Waterloo because I think they presented two very logical arguments for this.

This is a very easy piece of legislation for me to support, for a couple of reasons. One, I ran on this. I

made this a commitment in my election literature in the by-election, and I know that it's one of the reasons that the folks in Toronto Centre sent me here.

Number 2, I actually had the pleasure of being a keynote speaker at the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario's annual conference. I was asked to speak to them about—this was last year—innovative new ways of doing city and town building. I talked extensively in my presentation about these market mechanisms.

The member for Kitchener–Waterloo very articulately put forward the need, which is interesting, because I, being a Liberal—although we've heard from a New Democrat and a Conservative—we all have recognized one fundamentally powerful tool, which is the market-place. This is actually a market mechanism for building housing that transcends any kind of ideology. It is quite rightly well used in the United States. We're a "big tent" party, which is one of the reasons I am a Liberal, and I find it very exciting because I always go to a caucus meeting where there's a great diversity of opinion, and it tests you and forces you to sharpen your arguments.

This mechanism is really critically important, too. I've also had experience. In the municipality I was mayor of, we tried twice to get from our provincial government a similar mechanism and were unable to. I say this in a completely non-partisan way. That happened to be an NDP government, and I think they have a new Premier now who's more predisposed to this. We did get tax-increment financing and a number of brownfield and tax incentives, which we basically used as a backdoor mechanism for inclusionary housing and inclusionary zoning.

Minneapolis has been extremely successful in this, both under Democratic and Republican mayors. So again, I think there's lots of wide ground to do this.

Why is this important? The member from Trinity–Spadina made a point, and I very much agree with him. He talked about the problem of affordability of housing. It's more than a housing crisis.

David Hulchanski's work at the University of Toronto has shown that we've lost half of our middle-income neighbourhoods in urban Toronto and we've seen a doubling of our low-income neighbourhoods. I would say to my colleagues—and I would ask for as many of my colleagues in my party to support this as possible.

One of the biggest determinants of people's net wealth when they retire is their ability to own a home. It is very hard—I would almost say that it's impossible—in Ontario today to retire with any kind of economic security, whether or not you have a pension, if you don't own your home. One of the biggest differences we have going forward in the next 10 years is the ability of people to own their home and new Canadians to own their home. We have to create market mechanisms for affordable rental and affordable housing.

I'm very proud of the record of the McGuinty government. We have 35,000 units under construction right now in Toronto. That's about half of what the need is. We have to double the pace. We need better solutions, and we should be listening to them, no matter where they

come from. When they come from thoughtful people in the opposition, we should bring those forward.

I know we have our housing consultation going on right now. I know there's a lot of enthusiasm amongst my colleagues in the Liberal Party for many of these new ideas. In Winnipeg, when I was mayor, we built about 4,500 affordable housing units—not one built by government—directly through these kinds of market mechanisms. They were run by community groups. Some of them were built by the private sector, but they simply mean that the bounty of condos that you see going on in most large urban centres in Ontario right now could be one of the engines producing affordable housing. They're simply not—beyond the growth in the tax base that they bring to local municipalities—doing that because we don't have a mechanism.

Some of my colleagues have argued that you can't trust city councils to do this. City councils aren't appointed boards. They're democratically elected. If the people in Scarborough, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Cornwall or Strathroy don't like this, they can vote out their city council.

The only criticism I would have—and it's not really criticism—is that this has to be part of a larger housing strategy. In some communities, for this to work there'll have to be tax incentives and tax write-offs for community non-profit groups and developers. There will have to be some greater powers for land assembly in communities to protect price. I think all of those things are possible, but they should not be things that hold up a sensible step forward in this process.

One of the things I learned very early on in politics is that if you don't worry about who gets credit for things, you can get a lot more done. I can't imagine a group of folks that isn't going to benefit from this. This is actually one of the ways out of the recession that I think is totally consistent with the principles of—

Interjection.

Mr. Glen R. Murray: This is one of the things that's most consistent with the principles of my party, which is that you can't get out of this recession in government by hacking and slashing services and diminishing the role of government. You can't get out of this by building the tax burden. So you have to build the tax base. These market mechanisms—and I cut taxes every year I was mayor and built more affordable housing than any other municipality at the time, and I'm very proud of that record. To do both of the things was through these tax-based building mechanisms that create wealth, add value and increase the property tax revenues in municipalities—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you very much. Further debate.

Mr. John O'Toole: It's a harmonious last day here. I think that's the tone I'm picking up here from pretty well all the speakers today.

I think the member from Trinity–Spadina has often and eloquently spoken of affordability of accommodation, and it's not new for him to speak that way. I can say that our member from Kitchener–Waterloo is also well-

known for being compassionate. The member from Toronto Centre has commented on that, and I think that's an appropriate acknowledgment.

All members I believe would recognize, as the member from Toronto Centre said, the importance of shelter. It's arguably almost a conundrum, really; it's a contradiction. I'll tell you why.

1420

I served on council. I served during the time of the NDP, actually, and they had a requirement for affordable housing and a percentage of housing of certain density—regulations. The issue then became the development charge portion of it. The development charge is what we used to call a lot levy in the old days.

The more people you cram into less space, there are other issues that become evident. Some of them are social, and they're real; they're not something imagined. In parts of Toronto, we see that the density equates to other social inequities, if you will. It also requires the community to provide a lot more common services.

I can recall, respectfully, the member from Toronto Centre, who was the mayor of Winnipeg at one time, and he was the lead person—CEO, I guess—of the Urban Development Institute. When I was the critic, I did meet with you, and I did appreciate the informed opinions that you gave me. I didn't agree with them all, obviously, but I did respect them. You are far more educated in that field than I am, except for the time I served on council.

No one disputes the need for affordable housing. The conundrum or contradiction is: If you build a single-family residence in Durham that's a semi or link home, the development charges themselves are about \$30,000 to \$40,000. That's when you get the building permit. You pay \$40,000. You put the \$40,000 on a 30-year mortgage; that's going to cost you almost a half a million dollars for the development charge over the 30-year life of the mortgage.

We talk about affordability in housing. Neither the landlord nor the tenant can actually afford the cost of inadequate infrastructure. What's the deficit in our infrastructure in Ontario? It's staggering. It's \$13 billion in Toronto. This is future debt, debt on the pages here, of decaying and decrepit infrastructure.

My concerns now are these: If you have a co-operative—and I'm more supportive of the co-operative solution, to be very honest with you. People have a vested interest in and concern for the care of the property. I'd be supportive of those solutions. I want that to be clear. But there again, even the maintenance—now they'll have to charge the HST. So everything government does costs more and affects the cost of operating even the most simple complexes. If there's a recreation component, there'll now be a charge on that as well.

You look in Toronto: The biggest problem in housing now—the condos were a good buy because the capital costs were low. They were also taxed differently. They weren't taxed as multi-residential; they were taxed as residential. Multi-residential taxes are five times more

expensive than residential tax, but the tenants don't know it because it's buried in their rent.

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: In Ottawa, it might be two, but there's a good number that are five. That rate is set by the municipal level of government.

Not only that; the issues are even more complicated. Now the biggest issue in condominiums is the condo charge. I know people personally—they're not wealthy people—who are paying over \$1,000 a month in condo fees in Toronto. The condo fees are the reserve funds and the built-in common service costs; it could be the pool, the tennis court, whatever it is they might have.

Affordable housing is almost, as I said, a contradiction. Even seniors in their homes today are euchred. If you're a senior in a home in Toronto, you aren't paying the—in my area, I just sold my home.

We have five kids; we are a modest, average family. My taxes—I live in the country and I have my own well and my own septic system—were \$7,000. That's affordable? In a few years, my taxes would have been \$1,000 a month. To pay \$12,000 in taxes I've got to make \$24,000 because half of your income is taxed, at certain levels.

Affordable housing: I agree. Find a solution. Housing isn't free. Somebody's paying for it somewhere. It could be done through tax measures. That would be my solution: Invest in co-ops, give them low-interest loans, and also allow seniors to have their taxes frozen. Our leader, Tim Hudak, has made that suggestion in the past.

There are solutions. They're not easy. I applaud the member for bringing them forward because shelter is a fundamental—some would argue it's a right to have safe, affordable shelter in your life; somewhere to call your home, your community or your sanctuary. So I commend you for bringing them forward, and I believe that we find it difficult to argue against those kinds of—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Parkdale-High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you to all of the members who spoke.

I'll start with Durham first. Certainly this bill isn't the entire solution, and I think I made that clear. This is simply, I would argue, a necessary part of the solution. The member from Durham talked about co-ops. Absolutely, I support co-ops. We should support co-ops. We should also support this. What this does is it allows municipalities—there is nothing prescriptive about it—if they so choose, to go this route.

The member from Scarborough Southwest was arguing that we don't want to impose something on developers. Well, quite frankly, right now the OMB, an unelected body, makes these decisions for us instead of allowing our elected bodies, our municipalities, to make these decisions for us. That's all I'm arguing.

Let's put it in the broader context. If you have a homeless person in your community, it costs you \$45,000 to \$55,000 a year to keep them homeless. Is that economically feasible? Does that make sense, either morally, ethic-

ally or economically? No, it doesn't. So, obviously we have to move on this, we have to do something.

Under-housing costs money. We know that it's one of those determinants of health. If you're under-housed, you get sick, you use the health care system more, you use the justice system more. It costs more. It costs us to have people improperly housed.

It could even save developers money. How do I say that? The member from Scarborough Southwest talked about \$1 million being negotiated from one developer. Well, think about a slight change in density zoning, for example. Say you have a condo developer who is going to be putting up a 100-unit infrastructure. If you allowed him to put up an extra floor, another 10 units, and demanded of him 10 units, 10% affordable housing, he's actually going to come out ahead of having to negotiate section 37 dollars. He'd actually come out ahead with that one zoning change, and he'd have 10 units of affordable housing—and you would never know which ones they are. That's the joy of mixed-use housing. Look at the St. Lawrence Market development. It's the model for the world. You don't know what's a co-op, you don't know what's affordable, you don't know what has market-driven rates. It's a wonderful place to live for everyone. That's what we're talking about. That's what inclusionary zoning provides.

I also wanted to say the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario—I forgot to mention them the first time around—all support this. They wrote a letter, and I'm just going to quote one line from it. They say, "It is our belief that conditional or inclusionary zoning powers for affordable housing purposes are a necessary tool to enable municipalities to effectively implement the provincial policy statement and growth plan objectives." That's their recommendation.

So it's not only municipalities across Ontario that would love to be able to look at this, even if they decide not to implement it—because, again, I suggest to all my colleagues that it's not prescriptive. This is simply a bill that gets the OMB out of the way so that if a municipality would like to do this, they can.

I want to particularly thank my friend from Toronto Centre because I think he has got it absolutely right: Without inclusionary zoning, we're never going to get there. The cost of housing, to go back to the member from Durham, is so outrageous these days, particularly—the member from Trinity-Spadina pointed this out eloquently, as always—in the centre of the city now that we need help wherever we can get it. The government alone stepping in and doing new builds cannot do it anymore with those kinds of land prices. We need to start looking at some solutions that don't require only taxes to pay for everything. This is a way of doing it. This is a way of asking of developers that they become productive members of the community, which, quite frankly, many of them want to be, and simply provide—instead of this negotiation, section 37—affordable housing.

1430

It could be rental; it could be rent-to-own. In fact, rent-to-own seems to be the most popular version of this,

when you look at the hundreds of jurisdictions in the States. Let's face it, it's what most people want. Most people want to own their own unit, own their own home. This allows them to do it. Again, you can imagine, it might cost developers less. It might even help them in a down market get rid of unsellable or what they see as unsellable units. Those units are needed; they're needed for affordable housing. This allows them to get into that business.

We know that you need an income of at least \$75,000 a year to buy a house now. How many people make that in anywhere like a large municipality? So we have to step in. This is for our children's sake; this is for our grandchildren's sake. This is for those who, even with two incomes, cannot afford to buy a home. This allows them to get into the market and, as my friend from Toronto Centre said, build up some equity to actually look after their families with. So ultimately, it's about our children.

Such a simple little bill, a simple little suggestion—not prescriptive. It's simply really asking of this government that they allow municipalities the option—an option that has been picked up, I mentioned, in over 100 jurisdictions in California alone, where they've produced more than 34,000 units of affordable housing by using this method alone.

We know it works in other jurisdictions. We know it works across the States. We know it works in Europe and in England. It could work here too. Thank you Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you very much. We will be voting on this in about 100 minutes.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Don't I get two minutes?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I thought we were going to do that automatically.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Yes, you have one minute and 40 seconds.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's all right.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Okay.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Jim Wilson: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario act to help farmers by supporting reforms to the national AgriStability program at this year's meeting of the federal and provincial Ministers of Agriculture, and by acting to create a comprehensive business risk management program, jointly funded by farmers and governments, as presented to the province of Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition, and that regardless of any other level of government, the provincial share of the business risk management program be in place for the 2009 production year, which is currently being marketed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. Wilson has moved private members' notice of motion number 33. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'm pleased to have the opportunity to present this resolution on behalf of not just the farm families in my riding of Simcoe–Grey, but farm families of some 57,000 farms across the province of Ontario. The fact of the matter is that Ontario farmers across many commodity groups are suffering during this economic downturn. Even before this downturn, we had problems in various sectors, but now they have become much more widespread.

There are, of course, many reasons for the current situation, including the rise of the value of the Canadian dollar, mandatory country-of-origin labelling in the US and the drop in consumer demand stemming from the economic downturn, to name just a few. But while governments have bailed out autos and banks, for Ontario farmers there has been no infrastructure program or any other form of additional relief. Most of the same farm programs that were in place before the downturn are there, but evidence shows they are only part of what is needed.

As the 2010 growing season gets underway in Ontario, the news for our farmers is not good. Just recently, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada released the department's farm income forecast for 2010, and that forecast underlines what I have been hearing from farmers in my riding. For 2009, agriculture in Ontario had a negative \$50-million net income. The forecast for 2010 predicts the loss of a further \$500 million. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is forecasting a decline of 15% in the net operating income for the average Canadian farm compared to the 2004-to-2008 average. Grains and oilseeds will be down 35% from 2009 levels, vegetable producers will see declines of 26% from the 2004-to-2008 average, and fruit producers will see declines of 15%. Already hard hit, cattle producers will see further declines of 5%. Hog producers' incomes will fall relative to both the 2004-to-2008 averages as well as the 1999-to-2003 averages. Even the relatively well-off supply-managed sectors will see expense growth outpacing income growth for poultry, egg and dairy farms.

The fact that so many sectors of the agriculture industry are hurting leads to a point that I want to emphasize to those members who may be from urban ridings, and to anyone who may be listening to this debate who may not be familiar with agriculture in Ontario: While we all know that Ontario is Canada's leading industrial and manufacturing sector, very few people from our cities know that Ontario is Canada's leading agricultural producer as well. Not only does Ontario have Canada's largest farm sector, we are Canada's most diverse agricultural producer. Those two facts mean that the Ontario government and we, as legislators, need to look at agriculture in a way that is different from most other provinces.

In provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan, agriculture is important because it makes up a larger share of the provincial economy. But because there is not as much agricultural diversity in those provinces, in terms of government policy they only need to focus on specific

parts of the industry, mainly the grains and oilseed sectors and cattle. Quebec and BC have fairly diverse sectors as well, but they're not as large as Ontario.

Ontario is also in a different position from the other provinces because most of Canada's food processors are located here. Ontario agriculture supports more than just the farm families on our 57,000 farms; it supports thousands of jobs in this province's urban centres. The agriculture ministry's web site will tell you that about 3,000 food and beverage processing companies, including international industry giants, employ approximately 114,000 people in Ontario. With further processing and associated activity, that number exceeds 600,000 jobs.

Moving from the corporate sector to the consumer, we need to recognize that one of the recent green consumer trends is to eat local. Eating local reduces the energy and pollution associated with getting food to the table. It also gives us fresher food as well. With our agricultural diversity, Ontario farmers can go a long way to providing our consumers with a huge range of local products. We just need to ensure that those farmers can stay in business.

I hope that this brief outline of Ontario agriculture serves to explain why we as legislators should take seriously the situation in which our agricultural sector finds itself. Because of both size and diversity here in Ontario, we can see whether or not farm support programs are working effectively to help farmers in all sectors or in just a few. If those programs are not working effectively, agriculture is an important enough sector here for us to take action—and to take action on our own, if necessary.

Today we know that those programs are not working effectively. Something is missing. We know because that is the word we're getting from our producers. Members of this House from rural areas know because they see it every time they go home to their ridings. The situation is so serious that our major farm organizations have united, not just to tell us that a problem exists but to work out a potential solution to the problem.

Ontario, because of its food diversity, has a great many farm commodity organizations as well as general farm organizations. In normal times, it's not unusual for some commodities to be experiencing some difficulty for a variety of reasons. In such normal times, the commodity organization voices its concerns to the government and to any affected elected representatives, and a process of seeking a resolution begins. Usually it works fairly well, and other than maybe a question or two in this House, government staff work with the affected parties to achieve some sort of solution to the problem of the day.

In this instance, however, something else has happened. The problem is severe enough that our two largest general farm organizations, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, have joined together with the major non-supply-managed commodity groups to form the Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition. This group includes the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association,

the Ontario Cattlemen's Association, Ontario Grains and Oilseeds, Ontario Pork, the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency and Ontario Veal. These are clearly not normal times.

These organizations that make up the Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition, as diverse as they are, have identified the gap that exists in existing farm programs and they have identified a way to deal with it. They have proposed a business risk management program that will provide a greater amount of predictability to farm incomes. The basic structure of the program is not new. Each party in this House has administered a similar program while in government. The basic structure: In essence, the business risk management program will cover the difference, if any, between the average market price and a floor price based on the cost of producing each commodity. The farmers will pay a premium covering 30% of the program costs in order to participate. Governments will pay the remaining 70% share. Farmers who do not sign up will not benefit.

The farm groups that worked on this proposal have even identified how it will link with existing national farm programs. For this, there is precedent in Quebec's ASRA program. The work done by the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition has also led to a proposal which is less susceptible to trade, countervail and anti-dumping actions.

1440

Currently, the national AgriStability program is intended to protect farmers from serious income loss. It kicks in when a farm's income falls more than 15% below that farm's reference margin. The program's major shortcoming is the fact that during periods of prolonged difficulty, the reference margin itself sinks, and it becomes more difficult to trigger assistance. Also, because of the calculations involved in determining these margins, there is no way of knowing in advance what sort of assistance a farmer will get, which in itself affects a farmer's ability to plan for the next year.

Because the business risk management program payments will contribute to farm income and would do so in a more timely manner, this will either reduce the amount of the later AgriStability payment or possibly eliminate it completely. AgriStability would remain a national program, but it would be more of a last resort program, to kick in for a really bad year which sees a serious drop in a farm's income.

I don't propose to get involved in a detailed discussion about national farm support programming policy or how that policy is made. It is, however, important to be aware of a few important points. In Canada, agriculture, constitutionally, is the responsibility of both the federal and provincial governments. Today, national farm programs are worked out by federal and provincial ministers, and funding is most often shared on a 60-40 basis between the federal government and the provinces. Policy and program development is usually led by the federal government and those provinces with a larger stake in their agricultural sectors.

But we need to realize that this is a consensus-driven process. Because of that, it's entirely possible for that process to be slow. The same consensus process also makes it possible for a province with a lesser stake or a different interest in its own agriculture to hold up progress at the national level. Ontario, however, has a large stake in agriculture—in fact, the largest. For us in this case, waiting is counterproductive.

Regardless of the reason for slow progress on the national front, it is not necessary for Ontario to wait for a national consensus agreement. Legally and constitutionally, we can quite easily proceed on our own, either with a stand-alone provincial program, such as Quebec's ASRA, or by announcing that we will fund our 40% share immediately of a future or potential national program.

In my opinion, the Agriculture Canada forecast shows there is justification for a national program and that Ontario should be at the forefront, fighting for that national program. But if that's not going to be the case, if some provinces feel it's not right for them or if the federal government has other priorities, then we should be making plans to proceed on our own. That is also the opinion of the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition. The OASC has asked the province to fund its share of the business risk management program before there is any commitment from the federal government.

Farmers would also pay their premium to match the provincial share. And of course, the payment farmers receive will only be 40% of the total provided for by the program model. It's important to recognize that our farmers strongly believe that this 40% will be an improvement over what is actually currently in place. It can provide some of the relief and some of the confidence that is needed.

What we need right now is word from the minister and this government about the steps that the province will take to help farmers and to help implement this proposal. I would hope that the government will support both my resolution and the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition proposal. This resolution is neither hostile nor contentious.

Since the OASC presented these reforms to our farm programs, the government has not responded with any different reform proposals, so I would hope that OASC's reforms are being looked at favourably. However, the time for review is rapidly passing, and the time for action has arrived, if this program will apply to the 2009 crop, which is currently being marketed. Our farmers need to know soon, if not today. After the hard work they have devoted to developing the business risk management program, they deserve a clear answer.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Howard Hampton: First of all, let me thank my Conservative colleague for bringing forward this motion today.

Unfortunately, in this Legislature, agricultural issues, food issues and farm issues are not debated as often as

they should be and do not receive the attention that they should receive, so I think this discussion is very timely.

It is also timely because the reality is that the farm sector in Ontario is facing a very difficult time. More and more farmers are leaving the farm. Young people who have thought about taking up farming in too many cases turn down the opportunity. More and more families, in order to sustain their farms, have to work off the farm; in some cases, both husband and wife are working off-farm to try to support the ongoing activities on the farm. Talking to almost every farm organization, whether it be the OFA, the cattlemen, Ontario Pork Producers or fruit and vegetable producers—the reality is, we're facing a very serious problem in the province.

The idea of a risk management strategy is not new. This has been something that has been talked about—even promised—over the last five years. In the run-up to the last provincial election, there was much discussion about a risk management strategy. I think farmers truly believed that we were going to see a risk management strategy.

I'm cognizant of the fact that everyone who may be listening or watching may not know what we mean by a risk management strategy, so let me try to describe it this way. Any time you produce anything, there are always risks. There is risk, for example, that if you're producing cars, suddenly the bottom will fall out of the car market, and we've had a recent history of that. If you're in the production of natural resources, there are always risks in terms of finding the natural resource or being able to process the natural resource. An oil company called British Petroleum is dealing with one of those risks as we speak. They found the oil but they were not exactly capable in terms of getting the oil to processing in a way that was safe.

We expect farmers in the modern world to carry all kinds of risk. Because many farm products are sold internationally, we expect farmers to deal with things like currency risk—the fact that the currency in the market you sell in may suddenly devalue as compared to the Canadian dollar, in which case you are not going to get as much for your product.

We expect farmers to carry energy risk. The fact of the matter is, farming in most areas or aspects is a very energy-intensive business. As we all know, when the price of gas goes from, say, \$1 a litre to \$1.20 a litre—and there are other associated costs with fertilizers and other inputs—that can have a very big impact on farmers.

We also expect farmers to deal with things like climate or weather risk. I would argue that it's becoming less and less weather risk and more and more climate risk in the current state of things.

Many major corporations simply would not carry that kind of risk. They have the economic power and clout to pass that risk on to somebody else. One could argue that British Petroleum was in effect saying, "Oh, let the fishermen and the tourist resorts in the Gulf of Mexico worry about the risk of an oil spill." But farmers, because they tend to be small, individual producers, can't pass

this risk on to anyone else. They don't have the economic power or clout to do it.

If we want to have good food, secure food and food that we can have some confidence that it is what it says it is—by the way, we've seen some situations lately where people could not be assured of the quality of food, especially when it was produced somewhere else and produced under conditions that were not that healthy. But if we want to have good, healthy food and food that we can count on, it seems to me that as a society we cannot expect farmers to carry all this risk. We've got to share some of it.

1450

One of the other things that has happened over the last couple of years is that, sad to say, I think there's been a game of Ping-Pong between this provincial government and the federal government. Both say, in one way or another, that there needs to be a better strategy or a strategy for risk management. But then they say, "You first." "No, no, I insist. You first." "No, no. You first, and we'll follow." And this is a game that's going back and forth. Meanwhile, farmers across the province face a more difficult situation, growing worse almost every day.

To get back to this motion: I think that everyone in this House should support the strategy that "the government of Ontario act to help farmers by supporting reforms to the national AgriStability program at this year's meeting of the federal and provincial Ministers of Agriculture"—that meeting is going to happen, I believe, on July 7 or 8—"and by acting to create a comprehensive business risk management program, jointly funded by farmers and governments, as presented to the province of Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition...." I think everyone could support that.

The next part, I think, is controversial: "and that regardless of any other level of government"—in other words, regardless of the federal government—"the provincial share of the business risk management program be in place for the 2009 production year, which is currently being marketed." That may cause some of my Liberal colleagues a problem. I understand that. But it seems to me that if it causes you a problem, then we're back into this game of, "Oh, I insist. You first." "No, no, I insist. You first." Meanwhile, farmers are not being served.

Let me try to be helpful here. Any risk management strategy is going to take a couple of years to get off the ground. That's the reality. You do not create these programs overnight and have them up and running a week later—not even a month later; not even six months later. It will probably take a couple of years to make this happen. So what's to be done? I agree; the federal government should be a partner in this, but I think Ontario has to do something to indicate its willingness to act. Given that it's going to take about two years to get this up and running—a year at the minimum—I think what Ontario should say, going to the table in July, is that Ontario is prepared to provide some interim money as a good-faith gesture that this is going to happen.

How much money would that entail? I'm not exactly sure. I've heard figures of \$100 million. When I think about this place recently, I could think of a number of ways where \$100 million was put down the drain. I can think of a number of ways, just in the last six months, where that has happened, so I don't think this is some gargantuan undertaking. If the result of the federal-provincial conference is that the federal government walks away and says, "We're not going to do anything," that will be laid bare for everyone to see what's going on. But as it stands now, to continue to have a game where everyone agrees there's a problem but everyone says, "Oh, I insist you go first," "No, no, no, you go first," "No, no, no, you go first," is just not sincere, and it's doing absolutely nothing to help farmers deal with an economic crisis that is growing serious week by week.

So I think all members should support this government in going to the table on July 7 and 8 and saying to the federal government, "We need your participation. We need a 60% participation from you in this strategy." But I also think, because there's this issue of the 2009 production year, that this government should say, "Between now and July 7, this government is prepared to put \$100 million on the table as interim coverage for the help that farmers need now," and to say to the federal government, "We're serious."

If the government did this, if the government was prepared to step up like that, I think we would get somewhere. But my fear is that this continuing game of "You first," "No, no, I insist; you first," "No, no, we insist; you first," is going to continue in a very unproductive game of Ping-Pong.

In the interests of seeing people's economic livelihoods have some stability and some semblance of a future, in the interests of sustaining literally tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of good jobs in this province, something has to happen in the near future. If this government doesn't feel that \$100 million is within its capacity, then do something which is within your capacity. If you think \$40 million is a good-faith gesture, then do that kind of good-faith gesture. But I have to say to you, to continue this game of Ping-Pong back and forth between federal and provincial governments while the real issues are getting lost is not helpful to any of us.

I note that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is here today. He would recognize this, because we've been playing Ping-Pong between the federal and provincial governments with First Nation issues for years and years—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to rise to speak on this important issue for our farming community, because we know that business risk management programs are important to the agri-food sector. We know that when they work, they help farmers address situations that are outside their control, and we know that the agri-food sector is a sector that's very important to Ontario's economy. That's why our government has provided over

\$1.8 billion since 2003 in farm income support and stabilization programming. That included \$55 million announced in June 2007, \$110 million announced at the 2006 plowing match and another \$125 million, which was announced in the spring of 2006—substantial investment in farm stabilization.

I think one of the first crises that we faced here was the BSE crisis, an international crisis where the bottom fell out of the beef market. When that happened, our government provided \$95.95 million plus an additional \$35.88 million in CAIS program advances to help the agri-food industry deal with the BSE crisis. Combined with the federal funding, Ontario's livestock industry has actually received over \$398 million for BSE programs and CAIS program advances.

We've introduced the buy-Ontario strategy to try and make sure that Ontario consumers know about the wonderful quality of Ontario food. In fact, we've invested \$65 million in promoting Ontario foods and committed to investing an additional \$40 million over the next two years.

We've invested significantly in rural economic development—a program that's called RED—over \$97 million since 2003. That has generated \$759 million in new economic activity in rural Ontario. I was happy to host Minister Mitchell in Guelph just a few weeks ago, where we announced \$1 million to get the initial design work up and running on a partnership between Guelph Hydro and Cargill, the meat producers, taking the waste products that are left over from meat processing and using those waste products as part of a digestion process that will in turn drive localized hydro generating—a really exciting program.

We've also worked with the Ontario cattle, hog and horticultural industries. In December 2007, we announced \$150 million in assistance to those sectors; of this, \$130 million going directly to Ontario cattle, hog and hort producers, with the remaining \$20 million going to various future sustainability issues. As of April 15, just a month or so ago, approximately 97% of those cheques had been cashed, for a total of \$127 million.

1500

So I just want to make it clear that this government has been very proactive in supporting the farm sector in the province of Ontario.

In fact, referring back to the comments by the member from Kenora–Rainy River, this government did go first in the back-and-forth between Ontario and the federal government over the whole business of business risk management. In 2007, we made the financial commitment to pilot a business risk management program on the model that we're now talking about with the grain and oilseed sector. That was a very successful program. It was so successful that many of the other sectors came together and said, "We want to see if we can extend that." The problem is that the federal government has been nowhere to be seen in all of this. In fact the traditional cost-sharing on this is 60% federal government and 40% provincial government, and that 60% has been spectacularly missing.

If you look at the farm sector, the farm sector has understood this. In the *Barrie Examiner*—not too far from your riding, Madam Speaker—Bette Jean Crews, president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, wrote just a week ago:

"Farm organizations have presented calculations showing a need for improved risk management programs, but our federal government has shown strong resistance to the implementation of such programs. They don't seem to acknowledge the need for changes to existing risk management programs—changes that should have been in place in 2008...."

"This is why the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the group of non-supply-managed commodity organizations have joined forces into the Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition (OASC) to try to impress upon the federal government the need for specific changes to existing risk management programs."

This motion that is before us today, as the member from Kenora–Rainy River noted, lets the federal government off the hook. It explicitly says that Ontario should pay up even if the federal government is missing in action. I don't know about you, but if I'm negotiating, I don't say to the person I'm negotiating with, "I think I'll give you 2%. That's what's on the table. But if you don't like that, I'll give you 5%." If I'm trying to buy a piece of property, I don't say, "You want to charge me \$1 million. I'm offering you \$800,000, but if you don't want that, I'll give you the \$1 million anyway." That's what this motion says: "We'd like to negotiate with you, but go ahead; do it your way. We'll put the whole bill on Ontario." I am not willing to support putting the whole bill on Ontario again, because we already went that way first.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise today to support the resolution brought forward by my colleague from Simcoe–Grey. I want to commend him for standing up for farmers, not just in his riding but across Ontario, who desperately need this program. I hope that all members of this Legislature will support the resolution and, by doing so, support Ontario's farmers.

Earlier today, I had the pleasure of meeting with representatives from the Ontario Cattlemen's Association. I want to recognize some of them who are here in the gallery to support this resolution: Dan Darling; Matt Bowman; John Gillespie; Gerald Rollins; John Lunn; and Curtis Royal, president of the cattlemen's association. Also, we have Brian Gilroy, president of the fruit and vegetable growers in the province of Ontario. They're all here supporting this resolution because at the 40% they are prepared—they think that's a good start, and then the federal government can come in at that.

They told us about the desperate situation that cattle farmers across Ontario are facing in a meeting I had with them this morning. Last year alone, Ontario cattle farmers lost \$200 million.

We know that the current programs aren't working for farmers. One of the challenges with ag stability is that if

you have a number of bad years in a row, your reference margin gradually declines such that you can't trigger the program. I remember one hog farmer who lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in one year and didn't qualify for support because he had a number of bad years prior to that. Three times he's lost money; the fourth time, he goes bankrupt.

That's why farmers are asking for a cost-of-production program. Under the present system, you can see that the programs are not working just by looking at the amount of money the government budgets for direct support to our farmers. Last year, we discovered that this government had quietly reallocated \$82 million away from that direct support. When I asked the Minister of Agriculture in this House about it, she said it was because the programs were demand-driven and farmers weren't qualifying for the support. Anyone who has spoken to Ontario's farmers knows that many of our agriculture industries are in crisis: our hog farmers. The cattle farmers are losing money on every animal they raise, and our fruit and vegetable growers are struggling with high input costs. The need for support is urgent, so if farmers aren't qualifying for the support program, there is clearly a problem with the support program.

However, instead of fixing the program to get the money out to the farmers in need, the McGuinty government just cut the amount of money they were budgeting for supporting farmers. Last year they budgeted \$325 million; this year it's \$180 million, a cut of \$144 million.

The minister claims that she will support a business risk management program when the federal government does. The reality is that she's using that as an excuse. If you look at the estimates, it's clear: She hasn't allocated any money for that this year. She's going to ask for the federal government's 60%, but she hasn't allocated a nickel in the provincial budget to deal with this if they were to agree with it. Farmers don't need a Minister of Agriculture to be a lobbyist; they need her to take action. They need a champion at the cabinet table.

The Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition has done everything the government has asked them to do. They came together to speak with one voice. They put forward one proposal. In response, this government has done absolutely nothing but make excuses.

On March 5 the coalition wrote to Premier McGuinty. They said, "Ontario farmers need an immediate commitment from your government to provide the provincial investment needed to stabilize and sustain our businesses. This commitment cannot hinge on federal support being given first." But the McGuinty government continues to make excuses.

In a few weeks, there will be another federal-provincial-territorial agriculture meeting. Ontario can lead by example by going to that meeting and by making a commitment now to create a business risk management program and give Ontario farmers what they need to survive. Or this government can continue to make excuses while our farmers sink further into debt and our agriculture industry declines.

I encourage all members of this House to support this resolution and send a clear signal that they understand the dire situation on Ontario farms and the urgent need to help our farmers. I ask all people to forget about what others are not doing but to do what other provinces are doing. The province of Alberta and the province of Quebec are individually, without extra help from the federal government, supporting their farmers. I think the Ontario government should do that for our farmers.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It's a pleasure to rise to speak to this motion from the member from Simcoe-Gray.

First of all, I'd like to thank the beef farmers for being here today. Along with the minister, a number of us met them this morning in the caucus room, room 247, to share some breakfast and go over their needs. Coming from a rural community, although I'm not a farmer, I do understand the needs and how important this industry is to our province. We talked this morning about how with the shrinking of the auto sector, this industry is probably now one of the biggest industries we have in the province of Ontario. I want to thank them for that and once again for their barbecue outside today.

I have the opportunity on a regular basis to meet with my local farming organization, along with the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture, my local folks, to talk about these things. Of course, it's not new that we're talking about it here in the House today. We've been talking for a long time. I appreciate them for supplying that type of fresh meat.

1510

But let me talk about the motion. I'm going to stand here today and say that I'd be prepared to support this motion if a few words were deleted. I'll just quote those words: "regardless of any other level of government" support. I'm prepared to support this if the member is brave enough not to protect his federal cousins and get them off the hook.

I stand here to be counted today. I will support it if—

Interjection: Walk the walk.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: To walk the walk when it needs to be walked.

I'm just going to make a couple of comments because I don't have a lot of time. I really wish I had more time.

To my good friend from Rainy River, I'm not sure what bubble he's been in when he says, "We're playing first and second and first and second." I think if he paid a little bit more attention to this industry, he'd know that this government came forward. I happened to be parliamentary assistant to then-Minister Dombrowsky when we listened and also came forward with a plan which we believe works. We still believe it's going to work, and we were first.

"Don't worry. The feds are going to come on board." I haven't seen them, frankly. Do they need help? Yes, they need help.

I hear my good friend from Oxford talking about cuts. Well, some additional \$1.8 billion that wasn't budgeted

for, but we put out the programs to help these folks—\$1.8 billion more. You know what? It's not enough.

I remember when my good friend from Oxford was the minister and an agricultural office was closed in my hometown, but I will give him credit. I pleaded with him to keep some of those sectors while I was reeve of Brighton township, and I give the member credit for supporting me and helping me achieve that. We got that, but they closed the rest of the building. So I get somewhat frustrated.

He talks about the allocation of budgets. Well, any crisis funding—and I'm going to call this crisis funding—that comes forward under any other ministry is never budgeted. So \$1.8 billion of extra funding that was never budgeted—you know, we helped out the sector.

I repeat: Yes, it's not enough. We need to do more. We're prepared. This morning the minister, as we met with the cattlemen sector, committed that when she goes to the fed meeting in a week's time or within a few days, she's going to bring that message. She is going to go even a step further. She mentioned this morning that she was going to scan among her other ministers, her colleagues across Canada, to see if they can really turn the pressure on the federal government.

My good friend here from Guelph read some of the comments of the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Bette Jean Crews, who happens to be a constituent of mine and has had my ear more than once, which is good because she keeps me in tune.

We're here. We want to help. But for them to take this initiative to take their federal cousins off the hook—I cannot go for that.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Wellington—Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: It's a privilege to speak today about Ontario agriculture and our farm families, to whom we owe so much, for they labour to feed us. We thank them for that, but we also appreciate their presence in so many of our communities, and the presence of the OCA here today.

So it follows that this government owes it to them to pay attention to the challenges they face so as to ensure the viability of agriculture for generations to come. Unfortunately, under this government their challenges have for many families become nothing short of a crisis, and this government is paying far, far too little attention.

I want to quote from a June 1 letter which all members of this House should have received:

"The economic situation facing Ontario farmers is dire, but numbers released by Statistics Canada this past week show a continuing decline and a situation that is even more serious than we had anticipated.

"The future of food and farming in Ontario, without risk management programming, is clearly very bleak."

Those are very strong words coming from our farm leaders, who have come together to form the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition, including the OFA and the Christian Farmers.

Of course, the McGuinty government should have known the magnitude of the crisis facing farmers in Ontario. Last December, I wrote to the Premier to call his attention to insufficient safety net programs, a risk management program that must be fixed and extended, poor weather and growing conditions, escalating input costs and excessive government regulation. In that letter I asked the Premier if he would follow the advice of the OFA and the OASC to make new strategic investments in this vital industry and engage in developing a national food strategy.

More than five months later, the McGuinty government had failed to take such meaningful action, and so on May 17 I wrote to the Premier again. In that letter, I pointed out that this year, the McGuinty government will receive almost \$1 billion in equalization payments from the federal government—for we are now a have-not province under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty—yet the McGuinty government continues to insist that it can't do anything about the consensus proposal on risk management because the federal government won't help. It's a pathetic excuse, especially in light of the Liberals' massive day care expenditures, which they went out of their way to hype in their budget speech as their initiative, taken without federal help.

Not acting on the crisis in agriculture is, in fact, the McGuinty government's deliberate choice. It was the former Chancellor of the Exchequer in Britain, Nigel Lawson, who coined the phrase, "to govern is to choose." Farm families, it would seem, are not this government's choice here in Ontario.

I want to offer this government another constructive suggestion that would help farm families. Many agribusinesses have fixed cooling requirements mandated by regulation or legislation. Milk, for example, must be kept cool. This requires electricity. But this makes adapting to peak energy prices difficult, if not impossible, for agribusinesses to simply absorb. Exempting peak energy expenses for agribusiness would go a long way to solving some of their cost pressures. Fruit and vegetable growers also need a break on hydro costs because their produce must be promptly refrigerated to ensure freshness and to conform to food safety guidelines. The Minister of Agriculture should consult and examine the options to help; perhaps a rebate program would be the answer.

My friend Jeff Wilson, who with his wife, Sharon, owns Birkbank Farms near Orton in the town of Erin, always offers me good advice. He tells me that fruit and vegetable growers need support from the province. The cost of this government's minimum wage increases comes right off the farmer's bottom line, and the farmer, in many cases, has little choice but to hire fewer workers and give them fewer hours.

To conclude, I want to thank my colleague Jim Wilson for this resolution, which I obviously wholeheartedly support. But the people who deserve our support most of all are the farm families of Ontario, and I call on all members not to let them down this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Leeds—Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: I too want to join with my colleagues on this side of the House to call for support of the member for Simcoe-Grey's private member's resolution. I think it's very important. I know that the member for Wellington-Halton Hills just quoted from a letter where the eight groups, as part of the coalition, have supported it. I want to also read into the record one of the last lines in the letter: "We need to act now so that all Ontarians can enjoy the benefits of a healthy and vital agri-food industry today and for future generations."

I'm a new member in this Legislature. Less than a week into my by-election, we had an all-candidates meeting that the federation of agriculture sponsored. I talked to farmers about this item that evening. I can't, as a new member, understand why the minister and the parliamentary assistant aren't here today, because this is such an important aspect for us to discuss.

I think, as well, that the member for Wellington-Halton Hills brought up a wonderful point about this government going forward with their day care legislation in the absence of federal funding. They could very easily do this today.

The other thing I want to do, just to close: Again, I support this resolution 100%. These members across the way just stood out in line for some cattlemen's beef, and it was wonderful cattlemen's beef. I think they need to also stand up this afternoon. They need to stand in line, just like we're going to, and support the member for Simcoe-Grey.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm here also to support the member from Simcoe-Grey and in a broader sense, support agriculture, Ontario's second-largest industry, with respect to the cattlemen here today, who have literally fed almost all the members here, and the farmers who feed Ontario every day. That's what this is really about. It's about making sure that a viable industry in Ontario is not at risk.

In my riding of Durham, agriculture is the second-largest industry—some would say, the first industry now that the auto industry has moved backward a bit.

1520

I want to thank the cattlemen, who have an annual meeting each year that is well attended and well respected. Dave Davidson is always a spokesman; Stan Found, Lawrence McLaughlin, Scott Nesbitt and Scott Swain, a couple of the young agricultural leaders who are always available to help me understand the complex issues in support of this whole risk management strategy. The leadership in agriculture in Durham is renowned: Don Rickard, past chair of the Royal Winter Fair; and Kurt Kemp has just opened Algoma Orchards, along with Mike Gibson. I look at the Frew family and I look at the DeJong family, Mountjoy, Hubert Schillings, Charles Stevens. All of them and all the commodities in the diversity of agriculture in Ontario are right in our ridings, right in the GTA.

This bill needs to be supported.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Simcoe-Grey has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to thank my colleague from Kenora-Rainy River and colleagues on this side of the House: the members for Oxford, Wellington-Halton Hills, Leeds-Grenville and Durham.

To the member for Guelph and the Liberal member from Northumberland-Quinte West, Mrs. Sandals and Mr. Rinaldi: I'm really disappointed. No matter how you word a resolution, I suppose you can always find some weasel words to figure out how not to support it, but the fact of the matter is, there are 57,000 farm families. It's not Jim Wilson you're hurting today—I don't live on a farm, although I come from a farm background; it's 57,000 farm families and they are really hurting. You have to know that, Lou, when you go home and you see these people.

The reason I brought this forward—this is the worst it has been in terms of a farm crisis, across the board, across all agriculture, and we see that in the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition. For the first time that I've ever heard of, all of the major groups are coming together, and they're trying as best they can to be polite to you, to be nice to you. They fed us all again today; they took lovely pictures of the Premier—the cattlemen's association, who are here today—and lovely pictures of the minister. They're trying to be as nice as possible, but they're starting to be on the verge of starving, and many have already gone bankrupt.

I drive through my riding, and where there were famous pork producers and beef producers, there's land for rent and houses for rent. That's how bad it is. And it's across the board this time. It is not just one commodity or another, as I mentioned in my remarks. From time to time we've had problems over the years with commodities.

You did a good job with the grain and oilseeds pilot project. Why did you take the \$144 million out?

At the same time, you go out to these people, the farmers, every day, and you're not telling them the whole story. You keep saying, "If tomorrow the feds came in, we've got the money." You don't have the money, and we're doing the best we can today to prod you along to at least do something for the farmers and stop using the federal government as an excuse.

TAXATION

Ms. M. Aileen Carroll: It is my pleasure to speak to the Legislature today and to begin by reading the motion that I am bringing forward for the consideration of the Legislature: That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario, working with the political confederacy of the Chiefs of Ontario, should press the government of Canada to acknowledge and implement in the HST, the same First Nations point-of-sale tax exemption currently provided under the RST.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Ms. Carroll has moved private member's notice of motion

number 32. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. M. Aileen Carroll: Our government strongly supports the First Nations in their call to maintain the point-of-sale exemption. But, as the motion reads, we need the government of Canada, the federal government, to come to the table.

Just to give the background of this motion and some context, let me just review that to remind the parties and all of us here that under the GST rules, no tax is payable if goods are acquired by a status First Nations member, band or council:

- on a reserve;
- off a reserve, delivered by a business or its agent to a reserve;
- off a reserve at a qualifying remote store by a reserve agent.

Since 1980, the province of Ontario has provided a point-of-sale exemption for Ontario retail sales tax to status First Nations members, bands or councils who acquire and self-deliver to a reserve for consumption on the reserve. This administrative practice has been supported by all three parties while in government. Minister Wilkinson, as Minister of Revenue, and Minister Bentley, as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, are in strong support of this action and have been working diligently in their discussions with the federal government to bring about the required outcome.

Since the HST will operate following those GST rules, there will no longer be a point-of-sale exemption for self-delivered goods unless the federal government agrees to administer this exemption. First Nations in Ontario would like this exemption to remain. The government of Ontario agrees very much that it remain.

To continue, may I just say that I am bringing forward this motion today because we strongly support the continuation of the current point-of-sale rebate, and we will continue to press the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Flaherty, to sit down and have a meaningful conversation with the First Nations and the government of Ontario.

As we are all aware, the federal government has final authority on the administration of the HST. They are currently indicating that they are not agreeable to continuing Ontario's point-of-sale exemption under the HST.

First Nations and the government of Ontario are working together in our joint efforts to bring the federal government to the table. This motion today calls on the Ontario Legislative Assembly to support that call to bring the federal government to the table. Together we can find opportunities—all parties, all members in this House—to communicate with the federal government, and together we will be in a stronger position to influence them.

As is known, a memorandum of agreement was signed between the political confederacy, represented by Ontario Regional Chief Toulouse, and the government of Ontario, as represented by Minister Wilkinson, on May 3 of this year. The MOA is a very positive step toward ensuring the continuation of the current administration of the

point-of-sale exemption. The memorandum of agreement also shows that Ontario is standing shoulder to shoulder with the First Nations to press the federal government to accept this point-of-sale exemption. On May 27, the Chiefs of Ontario ratified this memorandum of agreement with the government of Ontario.

Recent media reports have indicated that Minister Flaherty has made contact with First Nations and has indicated that he will meet with First Nations and Ontario. This is indeed encouraging.

First Nations and the Ontario government need to continue to work together to address the concerns that have been raised by the federal government relating to data and accounting requirements necessary for the administration of the HST.

In the very recent past, just to recount, Ontario entered into discussions with the First Nations leadership. Just to take us back, we did this immediately after passing the budget in March 2009, and we did so to bring the matter forward, to be very clear in our intentions to continue this relationship, this agreement, this administrative procedure, with First Nations in Ontario. We did so to make sure that people understood the impact of moving forward with this or not.

1530

The Premier wrote to the Prime Minister in support of the exemption, asking that federal ministers sit down and have meaningful discussions with First Nations and Ontario. In addition to pressing the federal government to continue our current point-of-sale exemption through the memorandum of agreement, the Ministry of Revenue and aboriginal affairs, and Ministers Wilkinson and Bentley and their teams and departments will continue to work together with the First Nations leadership to develop proposals to help address the concerns of First Nations.

I'm comforted, indeed, by the fact that all members of the Legislature are in agreement with the course of action, as they also support the principle of First Nations' point-of-sale tax exemption. All parties that have formed government in this province, in this Legislature, have had this as part of their policy, have implemented and carried on this tradition with the aboriginal people, with the First Nations of Ontario, during their term of office.

Although I listened carefully to the member from the third party who was addressing another matter and using the expression, "They say, 'They'll do it,'" meaning the federal government, and then the Ontario government says, "You go first, then we'll go," I don't think one can at all draw an analogy even in his mind of what we're bringing forward and asking for today.

We have absolutely put our cards on the table. We have made very clear in our discussions with the First Nations, in the memorandum of agreement, and in all that has been done in the past and since the 2009 budget, and we couldn't be clearer in our discussions with Minister Flaherty and the federal government of what exactly the outcome of these negotiations must be.

Exemptions have been made; that's well known. This is an exemption that must also be made. There can be no

exception here. We are very firm in our commitment, and we continue to act in the best of faith with the aboriginal peoples with whom we have been in constant communication and constant discussion.

We have many ways, as politicians and elected representatives, to convey what we believe to be good policy. We do this in this Legislature. We do it when we meet with the federal government. But we also meet in a number of quiet venues, and I would ask that all members of the House who have those opportunities convey in those quiet places what a very, very high priority it is that we accomplish this exemption and that we are able to move forward on all aspects of the point-of-sale exemption.

I know there are other members of the House who wish to address this matter. I realize I am going a little bit short of my time, but I understand here that that is often appreciated by other colleagues. So rather than be redundant, let me just close by saying that I am very honoured to bring forward this motion today. I see it as a very vital one, and I think we need to all work together, as we have been doing to date, and stay very strong vis-à-vis the federal government in demanding that this exemption be made.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm certainly pleased to speak to ballot item number 27 put forward by the member from Barrie, "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario, working with the political confederacy of the Chiefs of Ontario, should press the government of Canada to acknowledge and implement in the HST, the same First Nations point-of-sale tax exemption currently provided under the RST."

But I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it has to be quite embarrassing for the government to have not taken this issue into consideration. There was absolutely no reason whatsoever that Premier Dalton McGuinty could not have made this First Nations point-of-sale tax exemption a requirement in the MOA and the CITCA with the federal government.

It's another example of them hastily putting forward this new taxation of the HST, which will add 8% cost on every day households for all families throughout the province of Ontario and have a dire impact on seniors, yet on this particular issue they were negligent. I think it's also an admission on the part of the Liberal McGuinty government that the HST will negatively impact a major demographic in the province of Ontario. We've been telling them this now for months and months. It's going to hurt a lot of people.

The other thing the government should have done is negotiated with the First Nations at the time when they were negotiating the MOA and the CITCA, but they neglected to do so. Because of their own omission, their own neglect, their own lack of thorough consideration of the impact of the new tax, which will be with us now on July 1, they're trying to shift the blame in this private member's bill to the federal government when it has

itself a responsibility to the First Nations people of Ontario.

In fact, I have a quote here from Chief Angus Toulouse to the committee on finance December 3, 2009, where he says, "Ontario blames the federal government for the failure to address our rights and interests, but the chiefs do not accept that Ontario can simply shift the blame to the federal government. Ontario has its own relationship and its own responsibilities with First Nations in Ontario, and can and must do more. The duty owed by Ontario to First Nations is specific in this case, and the federal government has no authority to force Ontario to ignore and set aside the exemption."

I think the private member's bill before us today is a glaring indication of the fact that this government, when it came to the introduction and the implementation of the HST, has again not done due diligence. They did not consider all of the stakeholders in the province of Ontario and as a result, it has to be embarrassing that we now have today this discussion on this private member's bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important motion. I want to commend the member from Barrie for bringing this motion forward.

I support this motion and I support the fact that we have to extend point-of-sale exemption to our First Nations in the province of Ontario, a tradition we've had for some time. The government of Ontario, under the RST, the retail sales tax, which we now refer to as the provincial sales tax, had that type of point-of-sale exemption for our First Nations. We need to work with the federal government and we have to insist that the federal government create that point-of-sale exemption from the HST in their federal rules and regulations where the HST will lie.

I think we know why the government has introduced the notion of harmonizing GST and PST: 2009 was a devastating year. When we look at it globally in terms of the recession we lived through, it was a year where we saw economies contracting across the world, and of course Canada and Ontario were not immune to that decline in growth. It was imperative that the government ensure that we bring forward economic policies that will help grow the province of Ontario, that will help grow this economy. After all, as the largest province in the country, we are the engine of the economy for Canada.

We've already started to see the impact of the changes we have brought. Ontario is leading Canada in terms of economic growth and Canada is leading the world in terms of economic growth, and that correlation is very clear.

1540

Harmonizing the GST and the PST is not the only thing the government has brought as part of its tax reform package. Cutting income tax rates for 93% of Ontarians is another very significant piece of the policy that the government has put forward. That tax cut actually came

into effect on January 1, 2010, a good five or so months ago. It will impact most of our Ontario population, including members of First Nations who live in Ontario—not to mention the third aspect of the tax reform package, which is to cut corporate tax rates, especially for small businesses, which are the engine of our economy both in large cities and in small towns, villages and hamlets across the province.

What we need to, of course, now work towards—which is the focus of this particular motion brought by my friend from Barrie—is ensuring that the point-of-sale exemption exists on the HST for our First Nations. The way the GST rules are—and the member from Barrie talked about it a little bit—is that under the GST rules, members of First Nations who live on-reserve do not pay any sales tax. If they purchase something off-reserve and if that particular product is being delivered on-reserve, they do not pay any GST. They are GST-exempt. If they purchase something off-reserve and they are taking the delivery themselves, then they pay GST, but once that product is brought on-reserve they apply for a rebate and they get that GST back.

For PST, or RST, right now there is a blanket point-of-sale exemption, so it doesn't matter where the product is being used; on-reserve or off-reserve, members of First Nations do not pay the 8% PST.

Once the HST comes into effect on July 1, essentially what will happen is that the GST rules will become HST rules, which means that once again, if a member of a First Nation who lives on-reserve buys a product off-reserve and that product is being delivered directly on-reserve, they do not pay the 13% HST. However, if they take the delivery off-reserve by themselves and bring it on-reserve to use that particular good on-reserve, then they can apply for that HST rebate.

We are saying that that rule is fine for the GST if that's how the federal government has chosen to apply that particular rule, but the exemption from the 8% of the HST portion at the point of sale, just like how it operated under the RST, should stay in place. That is why the memorandum of agreement was reached with the political confederacy and signed by Regional Chief Toulouse, the Minister of Revenue, John Wilkinson, and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Chris Bentley, to ensure that we work together to insist that the federal government extend the HST point-of-sale exemptions for our First Nations, just the way it exists as it relates to the retail sales tax or the PST.

We're confident that by working together, we can extend that point-of-sale exemption. I think there is some willingness on the part of the federal government to consider that, to look at that. It is extremely important that we work along with members of our First Nations and, I think, extremely important that we, as the members of this Legislature, speak united and express our resolve to work together to ensure that this very important exemption exists for our First Nations, as they are an extremely vibrant part of our economy. It's extremely important that we have that point-of-sale exemption put in place.

I will stop at this moment because I know that my friend from Toronto Centre would also like to speak on this particular issue. Thank you very much for your indulgence.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate.

Mr. John O'Toole: I also want to thank the member from Barrie, a former federal minister, I believe, in the Chrétien government. She replaced Joe Tascona, who was a good friend—he used to sit beside me—and is running for mayor, I understand, in the city of Barrie.

That being said, our member from Kitchener-Waterloo, Ms. Witmer, mentioned in her remarks the oversight, deliberate or otherwise, by the negotiators of the original agreement with the federal government. The problem I have with this is, it's almost like the previous discussion with Mr. Wilson about who goes first, the "gotcha." You know what I mean?

Quite honestly, they're making a concerted effort here. Obviously, when you had Chief Toulouse sign the May agreement with Wilkinson and Bentley, the two ministers from the provincial government, they had already realized it was a problem—this point-of-sale exemption that's required for First Nations.

You recounted the history here from 1980. It was not always the case in Ontario, but it was in 1980 until the present time.

Did they just notice it? Not to be cynical, but was it an oversight, deliberate or otherwise, in these rushed negotiations on the HST?

The HST is a very unpleasant new tax, a 13% combined tax, and it's very controversial. The business community probably likes it for good reasons, but there are other communities that are disadvantaged, one of them being the First Nations, who are losing the point-of-sale exemption which is a privilege they had. It should have been respected.

Am I to assume the agreement that was signed earlier on in 2009 by Minister Flaherty and Minister Duncan—I have a copy of that agreement. There's no mention of the point-of-sale exemption. However, after that, they did provide a point-of-sale exemption for the \$4 cup of coffee for Tim Hortons. They did go back and say that anything under \$4—the sandwich, the doughnut and the coffee—was going to be exempt.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: The double-double.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, for the double-double. So why did they not force—and the question has been raised.

We, in substance, agree that privileges should not be taken away without serious negotiations—and they were taken away. With a stroke of the pen by the government, Mr. McGuinty's government eliminated a privilege that was in place and did not regard it. It's not the first time.

The evidence, to me—if I look at the changes to the Mining Act that were passed in October 2009, Bill 173, there were other oversights in those negotiations on the Mining Act. These mineral rights with First Nations are the very top issue. If you dig deep enough, these disputes

on land claims are all about the royalties. It's about current payment for all of the resources. Whether it's wood, gold or diamonds, it's about the royalties. They own the land anyway. We own it in common. We share the world.

More recently, Bill 191, which passed earlier today, is another example. It's the northern planning act, another case where they have exempted First Nations' autonomy in planning in the north, which primarily is inhabited by people of First Nations.

It troubles me that when it's convenient, Ms. Carroll brings a resolution forward, notice of motion 32, which we're debating—and it's a worthy, worthy issue—taking someone's rights away and then trying to replace them surreptitiously and blaming the federal government for not doing it.

The federal government gave you \$4.5 billion to raise taxes, and now you can blame the federal government in the future for all tax increases—because the tax collector, constitutionally, was the province. In the Constitution, the province gets taxing authority for certain types of things and municipalities don't have—other than property tax—the authority, but that's granted under the Municipal Act.

Getting on track here, I'm finding out that there's a whole series of disadvantaged people in this HST. They've acknowledged, with the transfer of \$4.5 billion from the federal government, that there is a bump in the road coming to people on July 1. It's going to cost you more on July 2 to go to Canada's Wonderland, more for gas for the car and tickets for the entry and the food you consume. Everything you have there for entertainment is going to cost more, or if you're going to Stratford or Niagara-on-the-Lake this summer. I would say everything is going to cost more. Registering my children in camps, soccer, basketball, football or whatever is going to cost more. Seniors on fixed incomes are going to be disadvantaged. The First Nations are disadvantaged. They've admitted that. They signed it. They are culpable and responsible, period, end of debate.

1550

Let's admit there's an error. If you stand and tell me in your summation that you apologize and have made an error—not you personally, Ms. Carroll, but your government made an error. I can tell you now that I believe—I know Minister Flaherty, a kind person and a person of principle and substance. I would say, if there are negotiations, he will do the fair thing.

As part of the bigger picture of untangling all these land disputes and unsettled resolves, the First Nations issues aren't simple issues. These are rights, rights of land ownership, land title, who can hold title. These are complex issues. Let's not trivialize them with this oversight and error by the McGuinty government in the signing of the HST agreement with the federal government.

The point-of-sale exemption is removing a privilege that was once enjoyed by agreement of this House in a vote in 1980. That was removed by a stroke of a pen by Dwight Duncan and Premier McGuinty. You can't hold

Minister Flaherty or Steven Harper responsible for it. Yet the tone of the debate today is to flip it over the fence and blame the federal government.

It's like everything they do, even earlier in Mr. Wilson's debate: Blame the federal government, the 60-40 split in agricultural support programs: "Where's the federal money?" Show some leadership. Show some courage. You will find us, when it comes down to ethical principles, to be supportive of doing the right thing.

This is a clear example of an error, an oversight—innocently; I don't blame malicious intent. But there is always the argument that should be made: The duty to consult is a legal term. Mr. Bentley, who signed that, knows the importance of that term. The duty to consult implies that the laws we change—you said it in the 173 act, you said it in Bill 191 and you said it in Bill 16 when you implemented the duty to consult. You will not always get agreement, but when you operate on first principles of respect, respect for the law, you can always come to consensus that the right thing was done.

I want to hear the summations, and I look—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Glen R. Murray: I had the pleasure to speak in support of a number of opposition bills today. I did that because I think they were the right thing to do, and I am very pleased to do that. I guess we urban white folks have the ability to have very academic conversations about that. I spoke earlier to the northern act.

The thing that's troubling to me is the conditions for First Nations and for First Nations children; that's one of the reasons I ran to be in this House. It was one of the reasons that brought me here. As I've said, there were four things that I wanted to do in my tenure in this House, and this is one of them. I arguably represent more First Nations and aboriginal folks than most others. Most people who are First Nations who have a health crisis end up in my constituency.

I take some issue with my friend from Durham. No one is blaming anyone here. I didn't hear Madam Carroll blame the federal government. I didn't hear the member from Ottawa Centre blame the federal government. You won't hear me blame the federal government.

Mr. Michael Prue: That's because you're like this.

Mr. Glen R. Murray: I don't think this is a joking matter.

If I leave here in 10 years, and we still have the kind of child poverty rates, the suicide and death rates amongst First Nations children in this province, we should all be ashamed. This isn't going to solve it, and I don't have time for blame games.

I worked as an adviser when I chaired the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy to both the present Conservative government and the last Liberal government. I have an eagle feather, and I am ashamed as a Canadian about the conditions of First Nations. I don't have the luxury of blame games.

I have also heard from my federal cousins, Minister Baird and others, Minister Prentice, that we were going

to put aside these silly discussions, and we were not going to diminish the rights of First Nations. Our party is simply saying it would be very, very helpful if we didn't get into blame games because, my God, you can look at any party in this House that has been in power anywhere in this country and none has met the full measure of the needs of First Nations people. None of us, who all live in glass houses, should be throwing stones.

The least we could do is have the humility to get out of this. I don't expect Conservatives, New Democrats or Liberals to apologize for their record on First Nations. What I would like to see is some maturity and all of us rise in this House and get the point-of-sale back. My understanding is that Minister Flaherty is a very honourable gentleman and a very good finance minister and someone who is committed to this. We know that our Premier and our Minister of Finance are committed to this. Ms. Carroll, who brings the unique experience of having a stellar career in both provincial and federal politics—we're very blessed to have her in our caucus—understands this and has seen this from both sides, and probably better than most of us understands the frustration of trying to get provinces, First Nations and the federal government aligned.

It takes a bit of humility here. I don't understand how you can't stand and vote for this today. It would be much more powerful if this wasn't a partisan issue, if all of us as Ontarians simply stood in our place, stood with our federal cousins and said we all believe this should happen. We're not trying to put Mr. Flaherty or Prime Minister Harper's back against the wall. My understanding is this is more of an invitation, quite frankly, because Chief Toulouse has signed this MOA to try to get them and us together.

We have been generously endowed by the federal government with transitional funding to buffer the losses that we will take on the HST, and there has been some goodwill there that I think has been expressed by the federal government. We are not administering our sales tax in this province. We have given up that right and responsibility. It is now going to be administered by Revenue Canada. The point-of-sale, the distribution and the administration of this may have complexities that we are not entirely aware of in this Legislature, and the discussion is important. My sense is that the goodwill is there. I think if this is perceived not to be a partisan issue, then we can all stand in our place and say that this resolution, which has no provocative language that I can see in it at all, is simply saying, "Let's get to the table," and is there a willingness beyond this? I think this will happen.

The notes I've got in front of me say that our government is trying to find a way to do this even if the federal government doesn't come to the table, but it is darn hard because we're not administering the HST. It would be much easier, much more efficient if we could do this.

The only people I'm going to apologize to today are the First Nations of this country because I never think that we've done them the kinds of service that we should

and this could be a small beginning in the right direction. I don't think anyone can take any greater credit or deserves any greater blame than the others. Let's just get on with it and deal with this administrative matter. Get the point-of-sales tax exemption back, meet the needs of First Nations people, show them some respect and move forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'm glad to get an opportunity to get a few minutes on this particular motion. I just want the people who are tuning in to understand what it is that we're debating, along with our guests who are here in the gallery, because they're wondering, "What is this all about?" It's real simple: The government of Ontario has decided that they want to blend the two sales taxes together. There is a federal GST that is administered by the federal government, and the province of Ontario has what we call the PST, the provincial sales tax.

The McGuinty government has decided they want to blend those two taxes together so that the federal government collects one tax rather than two, but the net effect is that you'll be paying more tax because many services and goods that were not covered under the PST—that were exempt—are now going to be taxed because we're going to follow the GST rules. So that's what this debate is about, but the ancillary part of the debate is, how does it affect our First Nations?

In Ontario, when Ontario ran its own PST system, as we do now, if you're a First Nations member and you show up in a store somewhere in Ontario and you have a status card, you get what's called a point-of-sale exemption. You walk into the store and you buy a pen, you buy a car, you buy whatever it might be, and if you have a status card you get a point-of-sale exemption. Then it's up to the Ministry of Finance and the vendor to ensure that in fact that particular good that is being bought is actually going on-reserve.

That's what this is all about. This is about the point-of-sale exemption. The problem is, the McGuinty government, in its haste to make a deal to blend the HST with the PST, to bring it all together, forgot to make sure that we protected the interests of First Nations. I take offence at somebody who stands in this House and says, "Let's not play the blame game on this particular issue," because that's what this debate is all about. This is about a provincial government that says, "It's not my fault. It's the federal government rules that govern this issue. There's nothing I could have done when I negotiated with the federal government; I'm absolved of any responsibility. It's Flaherty's fault." That's effectively what this debate is all about.

1600

So it's pretty rich when we have members of this House stand up and say, "I stand for First Nations and I think this is all about the blame game." This whole debate is about the blame game. This whole mess is about the blame game. If this provincial government under Dalton McGuinty believes that there should be a

new relationship with First Nations, as I do, as Andrea Horwath does, as Michael Prue and my colleagues do, then it was up to this provincial government to say at the beginning of the negotiations, “By the way, there is a point-of-sale exemption in the province of Ontario and we want to ensure that that point-of-sale exemption is maintained once we blend the two taxes together into the HST.”

I know that Madame Elliott knows what Mr. Flaherty would have done. She knows him well and I know him well, because I served in this House with Mr. Flaherty for years. If he wanted to have the blended HST badly enough, he would have said, “Okay Ontario, let’s sit down and talk about this and let’s come to some kind of an agreement.” I know Mr. Flaherty not to be an unreasonable person, but the provincial government didn’t put this on the table; that’s the problem. They found out that they had a problem when First Nations finally clued in to, “Hold it a second. HST? Does that mean to say that we’ve got a deal like with the GST? Does that mean to say that we lose our point-of-sale exemption?” They started raising questions with the government and raising questions with me, as the critic, and other members of the opposition. We confirmed, in fact, that what it meant was that the failure of the McGuinty government to negotiate the exemption in the first place put us in this situation.

So once the negotiations were over, the provincial government said, “Well, the easy way to do this is the blame game.” “Let’s play the blame game,” says Mr. McGuinty. “Let’s point our finger to the federal government and say it’s all their fault. Let’s work with you, First Nations, we love you,” says the McGuinty government. “Come close so I can hug you and love you and tell you the things that I want to tell you, whisper in your ear how much I love you and I want a new relationship, but it’s all the federal government’s fault.” That’s effectively what this is all about.

Are we going to vote for this motion? Absolutely. Why wouldn’t we? I would imagine that the Conservatives are going to vote for it. Because we believe there should be a point-of-sale exemption, and if this is a mechanism by which you get a point-of-sale exemption, so be it. But the point is, this is all about the blame game. This is about the McGuinty government that did not do its job at the beginning.

Listen, my friends, if you’re out negotiating the sale of your house and you want to have a condition in the offer of purchase—either in the sale or the purchase—do you not put it in at the beginning? Do you not instruct your real estate agent and say, “By the way, I’m buying my neighbour’s house,” or “I’m buying this house that I want to buy and my condition of purchase is that I want the water softener to come with it,” or “I want the curtains left on the wall,” or whatever it might be? You don’t go out and buy a house, not put conditions on the offer of purchase, and then once the deal is over say, “Oh, by the way, I forgot to say that I wanted the curtains, so I want them for free,” because I can tell you what I would do as the person selling. I’d say, “Well, it was up to you to put

it in the offer of purchase.” It’s the same thing when it comes to this particular issue. Where was the McGuinty government at the very beginning when they negotiated the HST merger with the PST?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: They forgot.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: They forgot, that’s exactly what happened. Which brings me to the point: What about this new relationship we’re going to have with First Nations? Does anybody in this House—I want to first of all start with my caucus—does anybody in my caucus not believe there should be a new relationship? Absolutely not. We think there needs to be a new relationship. I think that the Conservatives would want a new relationship. I certainly know that First Nations want a new relationship. But you put yourself in the shoes of First Nations and tell me how this relationship feels any newer than any other colonial attitude that we’ve had in the past, because this is what this is: colonialism at its best.

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Absolutely, my friend. Colonialism at its best. We’re going to fix this by going to the federal government. If we really believe as a Legislature that First Nations should have been exempted, and if the government believes that’s the case, it should have been done at the beginning. That’s the point that I want to make here.

So the government better not come in here and continue this, “Oh, it’s all Mr. Flaherty’s fault. Oh my Lord, it’s bad old Stephen Harper. It’s all those ghosts in Ottawa. You’ve got to work with the federal government.” My God. Aren’t you the government of Ontario? Isn’t the Premier the Premier of this province? Don’t we have a cabinet? Don’t you have a majority in this House? Aren’t you the ones negotiating the deal in the first place? What kind of negotiators are you if you can’t put in a point-of-sale exemption in an HST agreement with the federal government? It begs the question: Why, then, are you the government? It’s a really simple premise.

So I say to my friends across the way, don’t try to pretend this is anything other than what you’ve been doing on this particular issue right from the start.

I do want to commend the member for putting this forward. Is it a bad thing? Absolutely not. Is it a step forward? Absolutely. But I don’t want anybody to think, in any way, shape or form, that somehow because we, as New Democrats—and I can’t speak for the Conservatives, but I imagine they feel as I do—that by voting for this, we think that somehow or other it’s the federal government’s fault.

Mr. Glen R. Murray: Who said it was the federal government’s fault?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, I’m glad to give you another five minutes on the clock and we’ll redebate this issue. But the point is, you’re the ones who negotiated it. As I said, when you’re going out to do an offer of purchase, it’s up to you to put that information in in the first place.

I also want to say, in regards to the new relationship, that there’s an increasing frustration within the First Nations community of this province, and it’s not just

around the HST. We know, and we're going to see, come July 1, all kinds of blockades around this province as a result of First Nations' protests towards the HST.

Mr. Michael Prue: They are going to.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: They are going to. I don't condone it.

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No, no. Understand what I'm saying, Minister of Revenue. I'm not condoning it. That's not my point. My point is, we are seeing an increased amount of frustration on the part of First Nations with this issue, and what I think has been really a bit of a travesty is the government's attempt to try to push this off as the federal government's fault. The provincial government should be straight with First Nations and say, "We made a mistake. We either did not negotiate strong enough or we completely forgot to put this exemption in. We accept our responsibility as a province and we will work with you to get the exemption." You could make it a condition of the HST being implemented in this province.

From the perspective of the First Nations, they are hopeful. We are so fortunate in this province that the First Nations people are infinitely more wise and infinitely more patient than we are, because if you look at what's been happening in those communities for many years, there's always somebody who comes along and says, "You know, there's going to be a new relationship and we'll do things better." But as we continue to look at the conditions in our First Nations, they are no better today than they were many years ago.

I've been a member of this assembly for 20 years, and I've got to tell you, it's been pretty slow progress in First Nations. We're still living in houses with 20 and 25 people. We're still living in houses that have mould in them. We still have schools that we're sending our kids to that have mould in them and that are inadequate and unfit for children to learn in. We have hardly any kind of infrastructure to communities when it comes to roads and pavement. We have boil-water advisories in the majority of the communities across Ontario in First Nations. And what do we do in this province? Bad old Jim Flaherty, it's all his fault; bad old Mr. Harper, it's all his fault. Well, you know, the last—

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I hear the government say, "Now you're learning." See, they're confirming my point. Are they not residents of the province of Ontario? Do they not have the ability to benefit from what this province has to offer?

I say to my friends across the way, if you're serious about having a new relationship, you've sure got a funny way of showing it. We should start where we can in order to try to do what is necessary to advance the situation in First Nations communities and for First Nations generally so that they can have a better life into the future.

I end on this note: Today, the subcommittee met on Bill 191. The government wants to apparently have some

hearings up in the Far North in regards to this particular bill and the Far North planning act. So what do they say? "We're going to be up there in two weeks. We're coming. We're going to be there for a week, and everybody get ready. We're coming."

NAN is meeting next week. They're all out of the communities, along with the elders, along with the land use planning people. The following week, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council is at their tribal council annual meeting. There are graduations going on in those communities, where there's hardly a place to have a graduation because the only place the committee can do a hearing is a school, where there happens to be a graduation ceremony taking place. The government was not even willing to amend the time allocation motion to give the committee the ability to say to First Nations, "Tell us when you want us to come and we will be there."

All we asked for: Let's give the First Nations the credit they deserve and the respect that they should get from this assembly, to allow the First Nations to say to us, "Come on this particular week, sometime between now and September, and we'll tell you which communities we want you to come to in that week and, in partnership with you, we will tell you what we think about the Far North Planning Act." Instead, what do we get? Not a new relationship; it's a continuation of the same colonialism at its worst.

1610

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member has two minutes to respond.

Ms. M. Aileen Carroll: I think we need to recall that what we in this House hold in common is our commitment to ensure that the First Nations in Ontario maintain the same point-of-sale exemption in the HST that is currently provided within the PST. We share that commitment. We're also all joined in our desire to achieve the same outcome: the preservation of this exemption.

As my colleague from Toronto Centre emphasized, this motion is not about promoting an abrasive, partisan launch against the federal government. It is instead asking this Legislature to pass this motion, thereby sending the message to the federal government that their action is imperative, that we need them to do the right thing and ensure that the same exemption within our PST is contained within the HST. Yes, federal-provincial relations can be of interesting occupation, and certainly we see a variety of dynamics. But in this case, we don't have a situation where the federal government is trying to work with all provinces and territories. Instead, we have a federal government who pushed Ontario to go in this direction and we see a government that had the wisdom to recognize that this is exactly what we need. Therefore, we're just asking those two governments to finish the task and to accomplish exactly what should be done for First Nations in Ontario.

It isn't in any way an attempt to poke anybody with a stick. We are merely asking all of us to say in this motion and vote in this motion for exactly what all of us are agreed upon.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT
(ENABLING MUNICIPALITIES
TO REQUIRE INCLUSIONARY
HOUSING), 2010

LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE
(INCLUSION DE LOGEMENTS
ABORDABLES PAR LES MUNICIPALITÉS)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): We will deal first with ballot item number 25, standing in name of Ms. DiNovo.

Ms. DiNovo has moved second reading of Bill 58, An Act to amend the Planning Act with respect to inclusionary housing. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

I will call in the members after the other two resolutions.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): We will now deal with the second ballot item, number 26, standing in the name of Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson has moved private members' notice of motion number 33. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll deal with that after the next motion.

TAXATION

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): We will now deal with ballot item 27, standing in the same of Ms. Carroll.

Ms. Carroll has moved private members' notice of motion number 32. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1615 to 1620.

PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT
(ENABLING MUNICIPALITIES
TO REQUIRE INCLUSIONARY
HOUSING), 2010

LOI DE 2010 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE
(INCLUSION DE LOGEMENTS
ABORDABLES PAR LES MUNICIPALITÉS)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Ms. DiNovo has moved second reading of Bill 58. All those in favour will please rise.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Pendergast, Leeanna
Arnott, Ted	Jaczek, Helena	Prue, Michael
Balkisson, Bas	Kormos, Peter	Qaadri, Shafiq
Best, Margaret	Kular, Kuldip	Ramal, Khalil
Bisson, Gilles	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Cansfield, Donna H.	Mangat, Amrit	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Marchese, Rosario	Sergio, Mario
Clark, Steve	McMeekin, Ted	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Miller, Paul	Wilkinson, John
Dhillon, Vic	Moridi, Reza	Wilson, Jim
DiNovo, Cheri	Murray, Glen R.	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Elliott, Christine	Naqvi, Yasir	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	O'Toole, John	

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All those opposed?

Nays

Arthurs, Wayne	Dickson, Joe	Phillips, Gerry
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	McNeely, Phil	Smith, Monique

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 38; the nays are 6.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I'd like the bill referred to the regulations and private bills committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Shall this bill be referred to the standing committee on private bills? Agreed? Agreed.

We'll open the door now for 30 seconds.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. Wilson has moved private members' notice of motion number 33.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Clark, Steve	Marchese, Rosario	Sergio, Mario
DiNovo, Cheri	McMeekin, Ted	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Paul	
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All those opposed will please rise.

Nays

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pendergast, Leeanna
Arthurs, Wayne	Jaczek, Helena	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Qaadri, Shafiq
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Mangat, Amrit	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	McNeely, Phil	Smith, Monique
Delaney, Bob	Moridi, Reza	Wilkinson, John
Dhillon, Vic	Murray, Glen R.	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dickson, Joe	Naqvi, Yasir	Zimmer, David

Balkissoon, Bas	Kular, Kuldip
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Best, Margaret	Mangat, Amrit
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario
Cansfield, Donna H.	McMeekin, Ted
Carroll, Aileen	McNeely, Phil
Delaney, Bob	Miller, Paul
Dhillon, Vic	Moridi, Reza
Dickson, Joe	Murray, Glen R.
DiNovo, Cheri	Naqvi, Yasir
Elliott, Christine	O'Toole, John

Qaadri, Shafiq
Ramal, Khalil
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Wilkinson, John
Wilson, Jim
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 16; the nays are 24.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Open the doors.

TAXATION

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Ms. Carroll has moved notice of motion number 32.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pendergast, Leeanna
Arnott, Ted	Jaczek, Helena	Phillips, Gerry
Arthurs, Wayne	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 41; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, I do now call orders of the day.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. Phillips has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until September 13.

The House adjourned at 1628.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, M. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Glen R (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop
Amrit Mangat, Phil McNeely
John O'Toole
Clerks / Greffiers: William Short (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs
Toby Barrett, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Pat Hoy, Norm Miller
Glen R Murray, Charles Sousa
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: David Oraziotti
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Helena Jaczek
Bob Chiarelli, Steve Clark
Helena Jaczek, Kuldip Kular
Dave Levac, Rosario Marchese
Bill Mauro, David Oraziotti
Joyce Savoline
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown
Donna H. Cansfield, M. Aileen Carroll
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast
Jim Wilson
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Leeanna Pendergast
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Ted Chudleigh
Mike Colle, Christine Elliott
Peter Kormos, Reza Moridi
Leeanna Pendergast, Lou Rinaldi
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi
Bas Balkissoon, Bob Delaney
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones
Amrit Mangat, Norm Miller
Yasir Naqvi, Michael Prue
Mario Sergio
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman
M. Aileen Carroll, France Gélinas
Jerry J. Ouellette, David Ramsay
Liz Sandals, Peter Shurman
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller
David Caplan, Kim Craiton
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi
Tony Ruprecht
Clerks / Greffiers: Trevor Day (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
Shafiq Qadri, Khalil Ramal
Elizabeth Witmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions / Comité
spécial de la santé mentale et des dépendances**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott
Bas Balkissoon, Christine Elliott
Kevin Daniel Flynn, France Gélinas
Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Continued from back cover

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Post-secondary Education Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, Bill 43, Mr. Milloy / Loi de 2010 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne l'enseignement postsecondaire, projet de loi 43, M. Milloy	
Third reading agreed to	1949
Far North Act, 2010, Bill 191, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2010 sur le Grand Nord, projet de loi 191, Mme Jeffrey	
Second reading agreed to	1950
Open for Business Act, 2010, Bill 68, Ms. Papatello / Loi de 2010 favorisant un Ontario propice aux affaires, projet de loi 68, Mme Papatello	
Second reading agreed to	1950

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1950
Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	1950
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1950
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1950
Legislative ushers	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1950

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Cattle farmers	
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1950
Aboriginal land claims	
Mr. Gilles Bisson	1951
Debate tournament	
Mr. Bas Balkissoon	1951
Long Point Bird Observatory	
Mr. Toby Barrett	1951
Bread and Honey Festival	
Mr. Bob Delaney	1952
Brockville and Area YMCA	
Mr. Steve Clark	1952
Trucking industry	
Mrs. Amrit Mangat	1952
Minor soccer	
Ms. Leeanna Pendergast.....	1952
Petrie Island	
Mr. Phil McNeely	1953

Correction of record

Hon. Margaret R. Best	1953
-----------------------------	------

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

Standing Committee on Government Agencies

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1953
Debate adjourned	1953

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Renters' Right to Know Act, 2010, Bill 94, Mr. Colle / Loi de 2010 sur le droit de savoir des locataires, projet de loi 94, M. Colle

First reading agreed to.....	1954
Mr. Mike Colle.....	1954

Preserving the Dignity of the Ontario Legislative Building Act, 2010, Bill 95, Mr. Marchese / Loi de 2010 sur la préservation de la dignité de l'Édifice de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario, projet de loi 95, M. Marchese

First reading agreed to.....	1954
Mr. Rosario Marchese	1954

Michelle Krohn Act (Modified Driver's Licence), 2010, Bill 97, Mr. Ramal / Loi Michelle Krohn de 2010 sur les permis de conduire modifiés, projet de loi 97, M. Ramal

First reading agreed to.....	1954
Mr. Khalil Ramal	1954

Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Amendment Act (Ombudsman's Powers), 2010, Bill 98, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur le Régime de garanties des logements neufs de l'Ontario (pouvoirs de l'ombudsman), projet de loi 98, Mme DiNovo

First reading agreed to.....	1954
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1954

MOTIONS

Committee sittings

Hon. Monique M. Smith	1954
Motion agreed to	1955

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Hospital funding

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1955
-----------------------	------

Injured workers	
Mr. Paul Miller.....	1955
Power plant	
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	1955
Wind turbines	
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1955
Community safety	
Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1956
Elmvale District High School	
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1956
Services for the developmentally disabled	
Mr. Jim Brownell.....	1956
Taxation	
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1956
Climate change	
Mr. Mr. Phil McNeely.....	1956
Hospital funding	
Mr. Steve Clark.....	1957
Ontario pharmacists	
Mr. Joe Dickson.....	1957
Taxation	
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	1957
Ontario pharmacists	
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1957
Ontario pharmacists	
Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1958
Taxation	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1958

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS /
AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC
ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

Planning Amendment Act (Enabling Municipalities to Require Inclusionary Housing), 2010, Bill 58, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (inclusion de logements abordables par les municipalités), projet de loi 58, Mme DiNovo	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1958
Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti.....	1960
Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	1960
Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	1961
Mr. Glen R. Murray.....	1962
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1963
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1964

Assistance to farmers	
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1965
Mr. Howard Hampton.....	1967
Mrs. Liz Sandals.....	1968
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1969
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	1970
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1971
Mr. Steve Clark.....	1972
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1972
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1972

Taxation	
Ms. M. Aileen Carroll.....	1972
Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	1974
Mr. Yasir Naqvi.....	1974
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1975
Mr. Glen R. Murray.....	1976
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	1977
Ms. M. Aileen Carroll.....	1979

Planning Amendment Act (Enabling Municipalities to Require Inclusionary Housing), 2010, Bill 58, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (inclusion de logements abordables par les municipalités), projet de loi 58, Mme DiNovo	
The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro).....	1980

Assistance to farmers	
The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro).....	1980

Taxation	
The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro).....	1980

Planning Amendment Act (Enabling Municipalities to Require Inclusionary Housing), 2010, Bill 58, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2010 modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (inclusion de logements abordables par les municipalités), projet de loi 58, Mme DiNovo	
Second reading agreed to.....	1980

Assistance to farmers	
Motion negatived.....	1981

Taxation	
Motion agreed to.....	1981

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 3 June 2010 / Jeudi 3 juin 2010

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Excellent Care for All Act, 2010, Bill 46, Ms. Matthews / Loi de 2010 sur l'excellence des soins pour tous, projet de loi 46, Mme Matthews	
Hon. Deborah Matthews	1929
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1930
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1931
Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	1932
Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	1933
Mme France Gélinas	1935
Third reading agreed to	1937

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Bob Delaney.....	1937
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1937
Hon. Carol Mitchell	1937
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	1937
Hon. Monique M. Smith	1937
Hon. Sandra Pupatello.....	1937
Hon. Michael Chan	1937
Mrs. Liz Sandals	1937
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1937
Hon. Gerry Phillips	1937
Mr. Robert Bailey	1938
Mr. Frank Klees	1938
Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	1938
Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	1938
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1938
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1938
Appointment of Environmental Commissioner	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1938
Appointment of Ombudsman	
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1938

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Taxation

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	1938
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	1938

Taxation

Mr. Peter Shurman	1939
Hon. Dwight Duncan	1939

Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1940
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	1940

Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1941
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	1941

Taxation

Mr. Randy Hillier	1942
Hon. Sandra Pupatello.....	1942

Social assistance

Mr. Michael Prue	1942
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	1943

Taxation

Mr. David Zimmer	1943
Hon. John Wilkinson.....	1943

Municipal planning

Mrs. Julia Munro	1944
Hon. James J. Bradley	1944
Hon. Brad Duguid	1944

Government contracts

Mr. Howard Hampton	1944
Hon. Christopher Bentley.....	1944

Immigrants' skills

Mr. Bas Balkissoon	1945
Hon. Eric Hoskins	1945

Northern economy

Mr. Randy Hillier	1945
Hon. Linda Jeffrey	1945

Pension reform

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1946
Hon. Dwight Duncan.....	1946

Health care

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel	1947
Hon. Deborah Matthews	1947

Highway construction

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1947
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1947
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	1947

Home warranty program

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1948
Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis	1948

Answers to written questions

Mrs. Joyce Savoline	1948
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1948

Legislative pages

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	1949
--------------------------------------	------

Continued on inside back cover