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# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 24 March 2011

Jeudi 24 mars 2011

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 24 March 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 24 mars 2011

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY  
STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS  
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA SANTÉ  
ET LA SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 23, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 160, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to occupational health and safety and other matters / Projet de loi 160, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail et la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne la santé et la sécurité au travail et d'autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Just by way of getting into this debate, a couple of things I'd like to say are, first, I came out of the United Steelworkers organization. One of the things that I did when I was with the Steelworkers, along with Moe Sheppard and Omer Séguin, was a lot of work to deal with trying to find out why miners who worked underground had lung cancer and cancer of the trachea. We suspected, at the time, and we ended up proving, that in fact it was because of the environment underground.

You might wonder: What does that have to do with the relevance of this debate? I think it will illustrate the point of why I think what the government is trying to do here might be headed in the right direction but could end up taking one heck of a wrong turn, depending on what a minister would do with the powers that they have under the act.

Let me just tell you this story. Way back in the day, miners who went underground were constantly exposed to various types of carcinogens. We found, over the years, that many of the miners in, as we called it then, the

Timmins gold camp, the Kirkland Lake gold camp and Red Lake and others, were getting what was called silicosis, which is a disease where the dust from underground accumulated in the lung. People contracted what was called silicosis and eventually died of not being able to breathe.

In a lot of cases, it also became a question of lung cancer. The lung cancer was not just because of the dust, but more because of the fumes underground, the introduction of diesel and various blasting agents that were used underground that were carcinogenic. Depending on the person's tolerance, because we know that no two people are affected by what's in the environment the same way, people contracted cancer and died.

That's how I got involved with this. Quite frankly, I got into politics as a result of the study that we did under the Steelworkers, headed then by Omer Séguin, who was our regional rep down in Sudbury, and Moses Sheppard, probably one of the most dogged people when it came to health and safety in this province and when it came to the issue of industrial disease. I became involved with those two characters, as I like to call them, and we started a study to take a look at what had happened to those workers who worked underground.

The reason the Steelworkers and my local, Local 4440 in Timmins—at the time, Noranda mine locals—did this was, we were quite convinced that there were a lot of people who had been diseased and had died as a result of exposure. But here was the nub: The medical community, the Ministry of Labour, the Workers' Compensation Board and others all said no it had nothing to do with the work underground; it had everything to do with their own lifestyles. They smoked too much or they were pre-disposed to cancer because of family genes, etc., etc. It had nothing to do with the work underground.

The problem we had was that there was really no mechanism within either the Workers' Compensation Board or the Ministry of Labour to deal with having somebody take a look at this from an independent perspective—who didn't have a vested interest, either as a worker or as a mine owner—and say, "All right, let's take a look at what's going on underground. Are people dying basically as a result of exposure to the dust and fumes underground, or are they dying because of other reasons?" We had asked at the time that some sort of independent review be done, and of course no such thing existed.

So we decided that the best thing to do was for us to start poking around ourselves. Moe Sheppard and I in Timmins and Omer in Sudbury started going through all

the old mine records we had—seniority lists from the various mines in the Timmins and Kirkland Lake area. We took that, and it took me probably the better part of two years on a Tandy 1000, one of the first computers to come out—at that time it was dBASE III—to input all the information we had for miners who had worked in the various gold mines in Timmins, because we had the seniority lists as a union. So we knew, dating back to about the 1920s, who had worked at what mines, because we had all the seniority lists for all the mines in the Timmins area and pretty much all the mines in the Kirkland Lake area, except one. We had those seniority lists, so we were able to track miners from one mine to the other. If they worked someplace for five years and popped up somewhere else three years later, we would know that.

We then said, “Well, that only gives us sort of a database of who was there.” So we started deciding we should go through our compensation records at the union hall. Moe Sheppard would bring records home every day, and Omer Séguin did the same. They would read through the workers’ compensation files on which we had represented workers on various things, from a broken ankle to an industrial disease. Everything that had anything to do with a pulmonary issue was circled and given to me to input into the computer.

So I would get the files from Moe the next day—I would pick up my 5, 10, 15 files that he had gone through—and I would have to go through, page by page, where he had circled things and try to organize it in the database so we knew, “Okay, this guy complained of a lung issue or this person had a problem with his throat,” or whatever it was. We’d put that all into the computer.

The problem we now had was that we had enough information to tell us that we had miners who were sick. So we went to the Ministry of Labour and to the Workers’ Compensation Board and we said to both, “We need you to do an independent study.” Eventually they heeded. They didn’t give us an independent study. They hired—I believe it was a Dr. Muller they hired to go out and do some work as an epidemiologist, to take a look at what had happened to these miners.

Dr. Muller, a learned guy—just like Mr. Ritter, who was appointed by the Minister of Natural Resources for the Agent Orange issue—basically went out and did his study. Of course, he came back and said, “It’s all lifestyle. There was nothing underground that could ever cause these men to be sick.” The expert Dr. Muller came back and said there was no causal relationship between the person’s lung cancer, stomach cancer or trachea cancer and the work.

Well, we knew that was hogwash, because we knew anecdotally, if we talked to the families of dead and diseased miners, that the brothers who didn’t work in the gold mines didn’t have the same diseases. We just knew that if the guy who worked underground had lung cancer and had three brothers on the surface and they were all smokers as well and didn’t have lung cancer, it couldn’t just be a coincidence that lung cancer only happened to

workers in the mining industry for no reason. It had to be because of exposure.

We went back and started making the point, and we then pushed, through Elie Martel, who was our health and safety person here in the Legislature—and we should thank Elie Martel and Bob Mackenzie, who came before us. They were in the forefront of creating what eventually became the Workers Health and Safety Centre and the Industrial Disease Standards Panel and other agencies that, quite frankly, led to some very, very big innovative changes when it comes to health and safety in this province. I’m proud to be a member of the party that had these gentlemen doing this work before, and I stand on their shoulders, along with everybody else in this Legislature, when it comes to those issues.

The point was, there was no independent person we could go to who would be able to do the study. They said, “Not a problem. We’ll do a commission,” I think it was the Ham commission, if I remember correctly, that was appointed then by the Minister of Labour—I think Mr. Sorbara was Minister of Labour at the time. The Ham commission went out and did its work. They did the study, and they did interviews and looked at our data and came back and said, “No, there’s no casual relationship between the workers underground and their cancers.” Well, we knew that was hogwash.

#### 0910

My point is, we didn’t have anywhere to go where we had somebody with true independence, who was not having their strings pulled by the minister, the government, the Workers’ Compensation Board, the companies—or the unions, for that fact. We really had nobody independent to look at any of this.

So Moe Sheppard—and I give him great credit for this—says, “You know what we have to do? We have to go to the graveyards.” We went to every graveyard in Timmins and Kirkland Lake and we pulled the names off the tombstones. We did that for a reason: Because we now had in the database all of the men who had worked underground because of the seniority lists; all of the information because of workers’ compensation files; and now we had a date of birth and a date of death, so we were able to figure out, with a lot of the records, who was still alive and who was not. It allowed us then to go and start talking to those people who were still living, or survivors of those who had died.

The Steelworkers created a fund, for which I was hired to go on staff—that’s how I ended up on staff with the Steelworkers—to go and interview all of these survivors, either the widows or the survivors of cancer themselves. What we found was quite fascinating. We did our own crude little epidemiology study. We had a questionnaire we did. We’d go in and say, “Hi, Mrs. Aavasalmi”—I always remember the name, because it was the first name on the list of the database. We would go and see Mrs. Aavasalmi, and she said, “Yes, my husband died; he’s deceased. This is what happened.” And we’d say, “Okay, did he have any brothers and sisters?” “Yes.” And we did a whole history on the brothers and the sisters. We did

that with every survivor that we could find: either the widow, the children of the deceased miner, or the miner, if they were still alive.

When we finished that—it took about a year—we pulled it all together on the database—dBase III; man, that was fun back then, trying to work with that brute. Anyway, we got that information and, lo and behold, what did it say? It said that workers who worked underground died—what was it? Miners died 14.1 years faster than their non-mining brothers. So we looked at all the non-miners and said, “What happened to them, with their work histories? When did they live? When were they born? When did they die?” and the story was, on average, the miner died 14.1 years quicker than their non-mining brother. So we knew then we had something.

We then helped organize what was called the Victims of Mining Environment. These were the widows. Mrs. Ouimette, I always remember, and Mrs. Larcher, who were the big kingpins of this organization, organized like you would never believe before. Women in their 60s and 70s and 80s were getting organized and trying to find some way to basically bring light to this issue, to force the government of the day to do something, which at the time was the Peterson government. They came down here to Queen’s Park, I’ll always remember, on the bus.

They had made up mock tombstones, and put the mock tombstones in front of the Legislature: date of birth, date of death and what Charlie’s name was, the miner who had died. The media would go out there and say, “What’s this all about?” Then they started telling their stories.

Eventually, the media started saying, “There’s something wrong here.” They kept on calling—“There needs to be an independent review of this whole thing. We can’t have the mining companies on the one hand, and the unions on the other hand, butting heads and a government in between that doesn’t want to do anything.”

What came out of that was quite interesting. We ended up creating the Industrial Disease Standards Panel, which was a truly independent agency that was able to look at issues such as cancer among gold miners. They were appointed, yes, by the government. A selection was made based on consultation with labour and the employers, and the person, once appointed, was independent. That independent body went out and did a whole bunch of work, when it came to what we eventually called the lung cancer gold miners’ policy, that basically allowed compensation to be paid to those workers who were diseased as a result of their time underground. We paid out—I can’t remember what the numbers were, but it was in the hundreds of millions of dollars of compensation that was paid to the families of those people who had died as a result of working underground—all of that because we questioned the authority and we questioned the government of the day. All of the experts were saying we didn’t know what the heck we were talking about, and it took three dumb Steelworkers, as I always say, the three wise men—Omer, myself and Moe—to put the picture together so that eventually they could not refute the evidence.

I say that in this debate because I look at what we’re about to do here, and it seems to me that we’re taking some steps back in what the government is trying to create. They’re saying they want to have a—what do they call it again? The person that they want to create—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Chief prevention officer.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Chief prevention officer—thank you very much. I don’t have my glasses on, so I never read notes or anything—which, in itself, is not a bad idea. The idea of having a chief prevention officer to look at these issues of industrial disease and how to make the workplace safer makes some sense. But the kicker is, this person was going to be responding to the Minister of Labour.

All I know is that I went through the process and it took us four or five years of work to try to convince the government to do something, and the problem that we had was, there was nobody out there who was able to say, “We’re doing this, not as a vested interest from the workers’ point of view or from the employers’ point of view; we’re doing this from a scientific point of view and what’s right and wrong.”

Eventually, we created, as I said, the Industrial Disease Standards Panel, the occupational health and safety centres and others, which are truly independent and are able to do the work they do and, as a result, we’ve cleaned up the underground. Working underground today has far less risk when it comes to industrial diseases, let alone accidents, because of the work that was done through these independent organizations, the occupational health and safety centres and, also, the Industrial Disease Standards Panel, which was eventually cancelled and shut down by the Conservatives when they came to power.

Here we are. The government is saying, now that we have these agencies, such as the occupational health and safety centres, “Well, that’s not a bad thing, but we’re going to make it all answer to the Minister of Labour.” I’m saying that then there’s no independence. Health and safety in this province are going to be driven by the minister. We all know that ministers of different types and different parties are going to have different focuses when it comes to health and safety. I would argue that the Conservatives would be on one side of the extreme and the New Democrats would be on the other side of the extreme. We believe that workers need to have the right to refuse, workers need to have the ability to know there will be no reprisals if they refuse work, and that health and safety inspectors need to have the powers to do the things they need to do to make the workplace safe.

What you could end up with in this legislation is a person who’s appointed by the Minister of Labour who is not progressive, who doesn’t want to see health and safety as a serious issue in the workplace, and we may end up very well taking some huge steps backwards when it comes to health and safety in this province. I, quite frankly, am quite disturbed by that.

As I started to read this legislation and looked at what it is and the way that it’s structured, I said, “Yes, I’m

prepared to give the government some credit. They're trying to do something that, generally, is a good idea, as far as having"—what do they call them again, Rosie?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Chief prevention officer.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:**—"chief prevention officers and the panel." I think that makes some sense. But that person is not going to be a person who's independent.

I would say that we can't allow the bill, in its present form, to go forward. I'm going to vote against it. My colleagues, I imagine, will do the same, but I'll let them pronounce themselves on that. I believe that if we do this, we need to find some way to make that officer independent.

Here are a couple of ideas. We could make it an appointment of this House, just as we do with the Environmental Commissioner or the privacy commissioner, where the person is appointed by the three parties and we need to agree among the three of us. Three representatives of each party get together, as we do to choose our officers of the House, and then that person is given a mandate of five or 10 years, whatever we decide, to do the job as required. That's one model.

The other model is to give this chief prevention officer the same powers under the act that, let's say, the chief medical officer of health would have. The difference is, the chief medical officer of health, yes, is appointed by the government but has powers that he or she must follow in the legislation, and the minister can't do anything about it unless he comes and changes the bill in the House. In other words, the chief medical officer of health has a certain amount of independence to do what's right and is not necessarily as influenceable when it comes to powers from the minister—the Minister of Health, in that case—to influence what his or her decisions would be about issues of public concern when it comes to health.

It seems to me that there are two models that the government can draw on. We can go the way of the chief-medical-officer-of-health example or we can go the way of the appointment through the House, such as an Ombudsman or one of those particular officers. I think that way, both the employer community and the worker community will know that there's some independence to this. At the end of the day, I don't think everybody's going to be happy, but that isn't the point. The point is, you need to have somebody come in who's independent and looks at all of this stuff and has some credibility and is able to do the kinds of things that they have to do.

**0920**

I just want to finish on this point. I give the government some credit for trying to do something that could be positive. I very much fear, however, that what they have done by setting it up the way they have—that the chief prevention officer and the panel are going to report directly to the minister and take their marching orders from the minister—is a step in the wrong direction. It's actually a weakening of what we do now. For example, the Workers Health and Safety Centre at least is hired by the Workers' Compensation Board. There's a buffer between the minister's office and the Workers Health and Safety Centre and other such agencies.

I just say again to the government: I will be voting against this on the basis that I truly believe that this is a step backwards, not a step forward. If we're serious about having a chief prevention officer, which I think is a good idea, we then need to make sure that that person is truly independent and has powers that are clear through the act, so that the minister, the cabinet or the Premier can't interfere with the important work that this person would have to do when it comes to making sure that our workplaces are safe and the workers are protected.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I really enjoyed the presentation from the member from Timmins–James Bay. I agree with him. We do have problems. We see many of them in the workplace. I have my own personal experiences with my father. He didn't even have a union to go to when he worked in the lumberyard, and he had problems there.

The key to the bill is that it's based on the Tony Dean report. It was actually an expert panel that reviewed and decided how to make workplaces safer. They came up with the idea. People in the ministry came forward, and this bill was drafted. It's founded upon the Tony Dean report. None of us would question Tony Dean's credentials.

In the Dean report, there is a recommendation for a chief prevention officer and a prevention panel. The panel will recommend to the officer every year what should be done regarding occupational health and safety. I think it's different than just having a bureaucrat write a report and give it to the minister every year, because the prevention officer has to take advice from the panel. On that panel are three employer representatives, three labour representatives, and other representatives who provide advice to the chief prevention officer.

So there are some viewpoints from different parts within the labour structure that will provide advice to the chief prevention officer, and that officer will provide annual reports. The minister will be accountable for anything that the panel or the officer recommends, because there has to be an annual report. I think that's very key. We've also integrated the system with this new thing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to commend my colleague from Timmins–James Bay for the personal comments he has made and his concerns around this particular bill.

What we worry about is: To what extent do the health and safety associations, the Workers Health and Safety Centre and the occupational health centres for Ontario workers retain the independence that they have at the moment? It's not quite clear to me. They are independent at the moment. Will they retain their independence as they go forward, or will the minister override much of the opinions and the work that these people do? That remains a doubt in my mind.

The other question that is very clear and irrefutable—and that is that the chief prevention officer writes up his

or her report, but that report must be approved by the minister before it's released to the public. We worry about that, parliamentary assistant. We worry about that, because if the minister has the power to change that report, we think that could put undue influence on the kind of measures that the chief prevention officer would be bringing forth. So if that independence of the chief prevention officer is undermined, or potentially is undermined, or could be undermined, by your government or another government in the future, that puts into question much of the work that you're trying to do and much of the work that everybody has tried to bring forth in the report presented by Mr. Dean.

So we have serious concerns, I agree with the member from Timmins–James Bay. That's why we want debate; that's why we want hearings. We want to be able to hear from different people about these particular aspects of the bill before we pronounce ourselves.

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

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I listened carefully to the member from Timmins–James Bay about his experience and his job on the mining front, where he described eloquently how people suffered in the mines, and the comparisons he made very, very well to compare people in the same family who work outside and inside, how people contract disease and people don't, as a result of working underground. It's important for all of us, to create some kind of safety mechanism.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Labour for bringing in some changes to the act and to the way we deal with labour and employees across the province of Ontario.

The creation of a prevention officer I think is very important, and also taking the responsibility from WSIB to labour, which means the government wants to take the full responsibility to protect our workers who work on a daily basis to provide for our economy and support our economy. I think all these mechanisms were put in place in order to create training and also create awareness among the workers to make sure that when they work in a bad environment, they have the right to report their employers, and also to create protection for them.

We believe strongly that our workers in the province of Ontario work very hard to build this province and also to continue to maintain our stability and our ability to continue to build a prosperous province. That's why I think we owe them great respect and we should create laws and regulations in order to protect them and make all the workplaces safe.

The member mentioned from his own experience how he worked hard with the steel union and the miners in the north in order to create those mechanisms to educate the government back then on how important it is to create a safe environment for the workers, especially the people who work 600 or 700 feet underground. I had that experience when I went to the salt mine—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Thank you. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I too spent over 30 years in heavy industry and am well aware of the things that are missing in health and safety.

Some of the things that are important to the NDP that are not being addressed sufficiently by this bill are—external enforcement is one. Enforcement must be based on the principle that the cost of non-compliance is greater than the cost of compliance. The internal enforcement provides certified members with the unilateral power to issue stop-work directions.

I could go on. There are several other items under each title, but I've only got two minutes here.

Enforce and strengthen the reprisal provisions on the OHS. Give ministry inspectors the power to investigate alleged reprisals and to reinstate workers and order back pay and other damages to employees. Improve and expand health and safety training throughout Ontario. There are many workplaces in Ontario where they don't even have regular safety inspections; they don't have monthly tours. They don't follow up even after they've been ordered to do things, and five months later you find that at the same plant where a person was given an order, someone is either killed or injured seriously because they haven't followed up. That's another serious thing.

Increase health and safety support and resources to workers so they don't have to be worried about reprisals from their employer. A regular review of health and safety systems legislation and regulations is also important. These are just some of the things that we see are lacking in the bill.

In my humble opinion, I think they've given far too much power to the minister. He can override his commissioner and he can override independent health and safety organizations in this province. I think they've done a wonderful job in the last few years and they're an independent body that has no bias and no influence outside their own workplace. They can follow their directives and initiatives in the way they feel is correct for the people of Ontario. Certainly we have to look at all these things before we pass a bill like this.

**0930**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The honourable member from Timmins–James Bay has two minutes for his response.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I want to thank members for responding.

The point I'm trying to make is that the idea that the government has brought forward in this legislation is not a bad idea. I don't think the whole idea should be shot down. However, I know from experience that I've gone through that if you don't have an independent person who is responsible for the investigation into issues around health and safety and recommendations as to what to do to make the workplace safer when it comes to freedom from accident or disease—if that person is not independent, we are in a heap of trouble.

I've worked in that type of environment. I worked in the gold mines up in Timmins in the 1970s and 1980s in that particular environment, and I can tell you that work-

ers struggled hard and long in order to get the minimal amount of independence that organizations such as the occupational health and safety centre and the clinics have now. They do immeasurable work when it comes to making sure that we try to prevent accidents.

I very much fear that the way this legislation is written now will turn the clock back to pre-1980s, to a time where workers, quite frankly, didn't have somebody they could go to that was truly independent in order to do the types of investigations that have to happen to make a workplace safe.

The bottom line here is, we need to ensure that workplaces in this province are as safe as possible. We need to make sure that people, when they go to work in the morning, are going to come back at the end of the day free from accident or disease. There are ways of being able to prevent the vast majority of accidents and disease if we're able to do the type of work that we've been doing up to now, but the key is, it must be an independent system that doesn't have a vested interest of the employer community, the worker community or the government. They have to go and do the job that needs to be done in order to make sure that workers are safe and workers are not put at risk of having diseases as a result of their exposure to the underground or any other workplace.

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

Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I'm now required to interrupt the proceedings to announce that there's been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. The debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government indicates otherwise.

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** We would like the debate to continue.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The minister without portfolio has indicated that we'll continue the debate.

Further debate? The honourable member for Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much. I wasn't sure what was happening there. I don't think I've ever seen that happen in this place before.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** He was so kind.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** You're such a great guy, Gerry Phillips.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Because you wanted to hear me speak, right, Gerry? That's what it's all about.

**Hon. Carol Mitchell:** We live to hear you, Garfield.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you so much. I'm honoured that this is what happened. So you can hang in for the other folks here as well.

Anyhow, it's a pleasure to rise to second reading debate on Bill 160, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to occupational health and safety and other matters. I asked this morning to speak to this bill, and I wanted to put a few things on the record.

The explanatory note is something I always like to start with, at least. The bill amends the Occupational Health and Safety Act. That's the key reason we're here, because of some accidents two years ago.

"Section 4.1, which specifies the minister's responsibility for the administration of the act and sets out some of the minister's powers and duties in administering the act, is added to part II of the act.

"The act is amended to allow the minister to establish standards for training programs and to approve programs that meet the standards. The minister may also establish standards that a person must meet in order to become an approved training provider and may approve a person who meets the standards as a training provider with respect to one or more approved training programs and may collect information about workers' successful completion of approved training programs for the purpose of maintaining a record.

"Section 6 of the act is amended to authorize a director to establish policies respecting the interpretation, administration and enforcement of the act and to require an inspector to follow any such policy.

"Section 7.6, which allows the minister to establish training and other requirements that a member of a joint health and safety committee must fulfill in order to become a certified member, is added to the act. The minister may certify a committee member who meets the requirements.

"Section 8 of the act is amended to require a constructor or employer to ensure that health and safety representatives receive training to enable them to effectively exercise the powers and perform the duties of a representative.

"Section 9 of the act is amended to allow either co-chair of a joint health and safety committee to make written recommendations to a constructor or employer if the committee fails to reach consensus.

"The bill adds part II.1 (Prevention Council, Chief Prevention Officer and Designated Entities) to the act. Section 22.2 of the act requires the minister to establish a prevention council responsible for providing advice to the minister on the appointment of a chief prevention officer and providing advice to the chief prevention officer on occupational health and safety matters. Section 22.3 requires the minister to appoint a chief prevention officer responsible for developing a provincial occupational health and safety strategy, preparing an annual report on occupational health and safety and advising the minister on occupational health and safety matters. Sections 22.4 to 22.7 allow the minister to designate an entity as a safe workplace association or as a medical clinic or training centre specializing in occupational health and safety matters if the entity meets the standards established by the minister. A designated entity must operate in accordance with the standards and with any other requirements imposed on it, and is eligible for a grant from the ministry.

"Part III.1 of the act is amended to allow the minister to approve codes of practice with respect to both statutory and regulatory requirements and specify that compliance



with the code is deemed to be compliance with the requirement, subject to any terms or conditions set out by the minister in the approval.

“Section 50 of the act is amended to allow an inspector to refer a matter to the board where a worker alleges that his or her employer has violated the prohibition against reprisals and where circumstances warrant. The matter cannot have been dealt with by final and binding settlement by arbitration under a collective agreement or by the worker filing a complaint with the board, the worker must consent to the referral and a policy respecting referrals must have been established by a director before the inspector may refer the matter to the board.

“Section 50.1, which gives the Office of the Worker Adviser and the Office of the Employer Adviser prescribed functions for the purposes of part VI of the act, is added to the act.

“Section 63 of the act is amended so that persons employed in the Office of the Worker Adviser or the Office of the Employer Adviser are not compellable witnesses in a civil suit or any proceeding respecting any information or material furnished to or obtained, made or received by them under the act which acting within the scope of their employment.

“Subsection 70(2) of the act is amended to add complementary regulation-making authority.

“Provisions relating to the load-bearing capacity of structures are updated to remove references to an engineering design method that is no longer current.

“Other complementary and transitional amendments are made to the act.”

There are small amendments to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997:

“Part II (Injury and Disease Prevention) of the act is repealed. The substance of subsection 4(2) and section 10 of that part (dealing with payments to construction workers and first aid requirements that may be set by the board) is re-enacted elsewhere in the act.”

“Section 159 is amended to exempt information-sharing agreements between the board and the Ministry of Labour from the requirement that the agreement be approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.”

I understand that the whole reason this legislation was brought forward was as a result of the fact that on Christmas Day 2009, four workers were killed and others grievously injured when the scaffolding supporting them collapsed. The workers were illegal immigrants, and the scaffolding had been improperly maintained. As a result, the government launched a panel, chaired by Tony Dean, the former secretary of cabinet, for whom, by the way, we all have a lot of respect. The blue ribbon panel consisted of academics, labour representatives and members of industry. After almost a year, the panel came back with a series of recommendations in December 2010, and this legislation, of course, enacts the panel's recommendations.

I guess the concern I had was—and I know there has been lots of debate, and to be perfectly honest, I haven't had a chance to look at all the other folks who have

debated this. But when I first heard of this accident in 2009, on Christmas Day, I had a real problem with how it happened in the beginning. What I'm hearing—I've had a number of complaints from industry, the manufacturing industry in particular, who tell me that, over and over again, they're inundated with inspections from the Ministry of Labour and workers' compensation people. I'm curious how a factory in Simcoe county or Grey county can have monthly inspections—sometimes five and six reports coming to them from the Ministry of Labour—and they continually update these factories.

#### 0940

If you've been in the factories—one company manufactures aerosol cans; another, plastic products; there's a cement block manufacturing company. These are people I've heard a number of concerns from, and one of the concerns they're always saying to me is, “We continually keep our products and our assembly lines up to code and these inspectors come in and make these minor changes on a regular basis,” and it gets very expensive for them.

I'm wondering how somebody who can be dangling in the air on scaffolding on Christmas Day—maybe none of the inspectors are out and looking at job sites on Christmas Day or on holidays, and maybe they only work from 9 to 4 or something like that. I'm not sure of the exact details of that.

On one hand, we've got an over-inspection, and on the other hand, no one seems to be inspecting equipment that's outdated and has been improperly maintained. When was the last time an inspector looked at that scaffolding that was dangling in the air from the high-rise? It would be interesting to see some of the comments coming back. I'd like to sit in on the committee. I'd like to ask those questions at committee to the minister and to some of the people who will make deputations to the committee. How, on one hand, do we have so much time for inspections on some job sites and at other times, apparently, no one looks at them?

I keep a close eye. I'm from a construction background. I love to watch the construction sites here in the city where they build these huge high-rises. I can tell you that what I see on those sites is complete health and safety worked on to the best of their ability. You see everyone wearing hard hats; they've all got the colour-coded jackets they wear for identification. You see the guardrails put up everywhere around the cranes, around the edge of the construction site. I would say, overall, on those high-rises etc. that we see being constructed in the city, that they're doing an extremely good job of health and safety. The folks who are the contractors obviously are taking a great deal of pride in that. I think that by far the vast majority of the people working on those construction sites are doing a great job and are well protected.

However, when you hear of someone else in another part of the city dangling with a couple of ropes on unsafe scaffolding, you wonder why no one in the Ministry of Labour is going out and just keeping an eye on all of the high-rises that you see, especially when it comes to

window cleaning or any of the construction improvements that they have to make to the buildings. Who is keeping an eye on those? Obviously, no one was, and, as a result of that, four people lost their lives on Christmas Day 2009.

So these are the kinds of questions I'd like to raise on this. I understand there are also questions around the prevention officer. But we pay a lot of money, as taxpayers, into the Ministry of Labour and the WSIB, and as far as I'm concerned, there's enough money there now that these kinds of accidents should not be happening. To try to come up with another bureaucratic level or a whole new series of jobs and programs that are made to improve worker safety shouldn't require any more money. I think the money is in the system and they should be able to easily make the work system safer for the employees with the money that's already funded by the Ontario taxpayers into this ministry.

That's all I'll have to say today. I look forward to the remaining debate on this bill and also to the opportunity to debate it and to listen to the deputations in committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I appreciate the comments made by the member for Simcoe North. I think he's outlined in his presentation the complexity of the act in front of us today. What Bill 160 really does is amend two key acts. It amends the Occupational Health and Safety Act and it amends the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

The amendments are not that easy to understand, but these amendments came as a result of Tony Dean's report, which is actually called the Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health and Safety. It was struck shortly after that accident. I'm not sure, but I think it was on December 24 that that unfortunate scaffolding accident took place. Shortly after that, the Minister of Labour requested Tony Dean to chair, or be in charge of this panel that would study workplaces and try to make them safer.

It came forward with a number of recommendations, I think 46 in all. Again, they did extensive consultations on their own and they came forward with a report. The Ministry of Labour was then able to bring forward a bill, and that bill is in front of us today with changes, as I mentioned, to the two bills so that workplaces will be safer.

What we want to do, and I think everyone in this House agrees, is to make workplaces safer. The bill in front of us attempts to do that and is based almost exclusively on the expert advisory panel's recommendations—at least some of them, if not all of them. The idea is to make workplaces safer and to prevent accidents like the scaffolding one from ever happening again in the future. It's the biggest overhaul of the act in 30 years. I think we're going in the right direction.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm not quite sure I agree with the parliamentary assistant that the Dean report is mostly

being followed. I think there are a lot of things that have been left out. One of the major concerns is section 50. The way it's currently administered discourages many workers from exercising their rights under the OHS Act and does not adequately protect from reprisals those who do exercise their rights. The panel heard some key criticisms:

—MOL inspectors have no role in investigating reprisal allegations.

—The OLRB procedures are complex and take too long, and travelling to Toronto for a hearing is expensive and time-consuming.

—The MOL rarely prosecutes—I repeat: rarely prosecutes—employers for violating section 50.

The Dean report concluded this section with this recommendation: "The Ministry of Labour should enhance the current legislative provisions for penalties by adding administrative monetary penalties as an enforcement tool, and should develop policies and procedures that govern their use." That lacks in this bill, big time.

The NDP supports the use of administrative penalties which would allow an inspector to impose an immediate financial penalty on an employer. Ideally, we would have liked to have seen this in the following:

—Certain violations must result in mandatory penalties relying on a schedule of violations and penalties.

—Repeat violations resulting in higher penalties.

—Penalties must reflect the seriousness of the violation, how long the violation has been occurring, the number of workers affected and the impact on workers—injuries and illnesses.

Such a system would be speedy and not easily circumvented. Employers and other workplace parties would be aware of the cost of non-compliance with certain sections of this act. This is a very important part that is lacking.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Johnson:** As we all know, we're moving forward with the changes to our health and safety system that makes workplaces safer for all Ontarian workers. I spoke previously about my son having a summer job working on road repairs. I was very pleased that they were giving him the training as a youngster. I think it was very important. But every day that he went to work we would always say to him, "Make sure that you come home, and be safe and don't do anything that you don't know how, that you haven't been trained on."

I think it's very important. I'm pleased that, as we're making these changes, the education and training of workers and employers—of course, we all know it's crucial, in order to ensure that all our workers are safe, that employees have enhanced safety training and a more effective reprisal complaint process. If a worker sees that something is not right, it is their duty to stand up and say something without fear of reprisal.

I know that the member from Simcoe North spoke about the inspectors. I'm pleased that our government has put inspectors back into the system in all areas across a number of ministries that were cut previously. I think that

has helped to improve safety across the board in so many areas of this province.

**0950**

The fact that we're going to have a new chief prevention officer will be of benefit to all the workers in this province. I agree that we have to make sure that those inspections are done across the board and that the proper regulations are in place so that people will be able to know that when their loved ones go in to work in the morning or in the evening, they're going to come home again. It's crucial to the safety of our workers in this province. I know that, personally, I want to see all those people come home.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to speak on behalf of Bill 160. I had the opportunity a couple of days ago to speak at greater length, but I'd like to commend the member from Simcoe North for some of the points that he covered.

Just to go over some of the points that I raised a couple of days ago: On this side of the House, we, the official opposition, strongly support the Dean report but we're not in favour of this bill as written. We think that it needs a lot of amendments and it needs a lot of work done at committee to improve it.

We think there are lots of improvements to make. It drastically deviates from the original Dean report, which we commended, as I say, because the Dean report did take a lot of time to look at the issues. I feel, and I think a number of other people have said this, that this bill, at the end of the day, will do nothing to prevent bad employers from entering the underground black market, where they would still be able to operate because it will probably drive more people underground with more of these regulations.

This is just another bureaucratic committee that would, I'm sure, lead to a number of patronage appointments that would do nothing to add to the safety of workers in this province.

This chief prevention officer would take over control of all occupational health and safety activities within the government and within the province. It would remove prevention activities from the former WSIB mandate, where they are now, and would upload them to the Ministry of Labour. It also authorizes the minister to license and set standards for training programs recommended by this chief prevention officer—another onerous load on small business and legitimate businesses that are trying to do business in this province. It will do nothing for the ones that are underground and the ones that will further go underground.

The Dean report had a lot of recommendations to the bill. Like I say, we strongly support the Dean report, but we feel that this bill needs a lot of improvement. The devil's in the details, as the old saying goes. It needs to get to committee as soon as possible. I'd recommend that that committee travel. Come to Sarnia-Lambton, where we have a great safety and prevention record.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The honourable member for Simcoe North has two minutes for his response.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you to the members from Scarborough Southwest, Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock and Sarnia-Lambton for their comments this morning.

No one wants to see anybody injured in the workplace in Ontario: That's a given. I think that's what everybody in this House would agree to. What I want to know and what I would like to ask at the committee is—because I don't think I've heard it here today, and I don't think the parliamentary assistant has answered or that I've heard it from any of the government members—how you're going to stop something like this from happening again.

This was created because someone went out in a holiday season. They had illegal immigrant workers. They had a scaffolding system that was set up that was unsafe and had not been properly maintained. I want to know how next Christmas, the same thing couldn't happen to somebody else. How is this bill going to stop something like that from happening? Because you can't legislate against someone who, I feel, could be doing something illegal; they probably set the timing up for that particular job so that they would not have to abide by workplace safety inspectors, because they knew they were probably off on the holiday season. I think that's probably what happened here.

I'd like someone to tell me how this legislation will actually stop that from occurring another time. We don't want to lose four more people in a tragic accident like that—just looking at it as not only a legislator, but as a common person looking at it from the outside, wanting to know what this legislation will do to stop it from happening again in a year or two, or whenever. The way I see it right now, there's nothing that will stop that from occurring again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** We've had over seven hours of debate. We'll now go into 10-minute debate rotations.

Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to speak to Bill 160, and I want to talk about some personal experiences. Everybody has a personal experience, which I think is useful to share with everyone.

My father was a construction worker, and two of my brothers were carpenters—two of us became teachers—and like most immigrants, my father and my two brothers worked very hard in carpentry and in the construction area. Part of that experience reveals many problems, because I recall my brothers and my father talking about how difficult it was in the workplace and how frightened they were to admit that they might have been injured or that they might have a physical problem that could prevent them from working. They were afraid that if they weren't able to work, to whatever degree, they would be let go, and/or if they got injured, there was no recourse to them.

That story is very typical of a lot of immigrant groups. It wasn't considered manly to report an injury. They were

afraid, as I said, that if they reported the injury, they would be fired. Many who reported an injury would be paid by the employer and were told they shouldn't report it to the then Workers' Compensation Board, because, of course, if they did, that would hike up their costs, because the more injuries you have, the more you had to pay.

Imagine a worker not reporting a potentially long-lasting problem that they might continue to have for a lifetime. Not reporting it means that it's not on the record. Not reporting it means that if there were no witnesses, you would never be able to prove that you ever had the injury. These were the stories of the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s, and it still goes on, I suspect. There's nothing new under the sun, as it relates to injuries.

We sometimes don't respect workers. We oftentimes don't respect injuries. I think about how we, as a society, respect firefighters when they die in the workplace—as we should, correctly. I often think of the tremendous societal grief that there is when a policeman or police-woman dies on the job or gets killed. The whole of society rallies to the families in grief. For some bizarre reason, we don't do the same when an injured worker dies. We feel bad. We feel sorry. A day or two later, the injury and the death is gone, and the families suffer it on their own. Why is it that that happens? Why is it that there is no public collective grief for the injured workers? I find that a bit of a problem, and I wanted to share that with the members of this Legislature and whoever might be watching this bright, early morning.

I want to say that I support many aspects of Bill 160, and I have some criticism, which I'll share with you straightaway.

One of the things this bill does is to eliminate some of the fragmentation that exists in health and safety. You've got a Workplace Safety Insurance Board that deals with some aspects and you've got the Ministry of Labour dealing with others, so the argument for many years has been that the system with health and safety is fragmented. This finally brings the two together. It's a good thing. Prevention and enforcement are finally brought under one roof, and we think that, too, is a very useful thing to do. The Ministry of Labour sets the standards to protect worker health and safety, and we believe that is correct and that's a healthy thing to be doing. But there are some concerns, and my colleague from Timmins—James Bay spoke to this earlier. Some of this concern relates to the independence of many of the groups that dealt with health and safety, the independence they used to have and which could be under threat under the new bill.

**1000**

Health and safety associations had independence to present their work. The Workers Health and Safety Centre had their independence to do the work around health and safety, and we felt that that was the right thing to have. The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers did very much the same. We worry that their

independence is questioned, is potentially undermined under the new system, and we want to make sure and we want to have assurances from the parliamentary assistant, the minister and this government that that indeed will not be the case.

But assurances in and of themselves may not be enough; we need to see them in law. Because when we look to the chief prevention officer, we note that his or her report must be approved by the minister before it's released to the public. That is a fact. That fact undermines the individual's independence to present a report on health and safety in whatever way he or she believes it ought to be presented. But having to have the minister look at the report, have his or her oversight, have his or her override over that report, questions the independence of the chief prevention officer.

The parliamentary assistant doesn't speak to that. He keeps on saying how Mr. Dean has presented this report, and it's a presentation that he, Mr. Dean, makes on behalf of all of the consultations he has made, but he never speaks to the issue that I have just raised. He avoids it, and the parliamentary assistant avoids it because he knows that the independence of the chief prevention officer is under threat; it's questioned. That's why he doesn't want to speak to it. That's why his minister will avoid speaking to that issue and the government will avoid talking to that particular issue.

The Conservative Party, as presented by the member from Lanark, Frontenac and others, says that they oppose the way the prevention council is structured because it is the minister who decides who he or she will have on that prevention council. According to the member from Lanark, Frontenac and others, the problem with that is that what will happen is you will have a whole lot of Liberal appointees to that board. As a result, he argued, this puts into question the entire work of the prevention council.

I argue, in a contrary position, that if you have the Conservative Party in government and they are hostile to this prevention council or to prevention in general, that presents a similar problemo, in my humble estimation of things. It could be that you could have a Conservative minister who might be friendly toward injured workers. God bless. It could very well be.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Exactly. And it could very well be that you might have a friendly Conservative government vis-à-vis injured workers; it could very well be. But if they happen to be hostile, they would present the same problem that the Liberals are presenting by way of how they are structuring this particular council.

So we worry about the independence of the prevention council, and we worry about the lack of independence of the chief prevention officer. We have profound questions that we need to address in committee hearings, and we hope to be able to hear them before we declare ourselves on this particular bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** During my early days and my first jobs as a graduate engineer, I was involved in the con-

struction industry in Ottawa. There were two construction failures there that caused death, and I remember them to this day. They both involved, in the shoring, falsework failures during concrete-placing operations. One was the Heron Road Bridge—I think it was seven or nine people who were killed in that accident—and a building on Elgin Street. They came within one or two years of each other.

I attended the coroner's inquest on the building failure and it was quite traumatic for me, as a young engineer, to hear the evidence come out on how the failure occurred, and knowing, from the coroner's recommendations, that it would have been preventable if certain things had been done.

I think it's important that we've moved ahead as a government. One of the first things we did was hire more inspectors. The present Attorney General said, when he was the Minister of Labour, that there were a billion reasons to have better safety on our construction projects.

I think that's the direction we've been going in, and this, the Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, Bill 160, takes us again in that direction of more safety in the workplace, trying to make sure that there are fewer areas that are not going to be looked at. Where accidents have, in the past, been occurring, we can block those.

I'm very much in favour of what we're doing with the chief prevention officer. We'll be able to coordinate the prevention system. That's going to bring it all together under one person, and we'll have a say for Ontario's construction workers.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member for Trinity–Spadina is always passionate and often informative. This bill, as he has said, and anything that we do to improve workers' safety, for them and their families, is very important. Our leader, Tim Hudak, has made it very clear to us that that is why this bill is a worthy discussion.

Here's the real issue: Those Ministry of Labour investigators that were just mentioned by the previous speaker already had the authority and, indeed, the responsibility, to inspect that site. I think this bill is more or less a broader response to workplace safety, and more importantly, it's looking at the WSIB.

One of the features of this bill is that it uploads the responsibilities for prevention to this new office, the chief prevention officer. It takes it out of the responsibility of the WSIB, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. The WSIB is off the rails; we know that now. Their operating deficit is around \$11 billion. It is a mess, and the Auditor General said that as well. That money is actually paid by employers, not the government; they haven't got one nickel in this.

On the enforcement side, they do. What is so shameful is that this accident could have been prevented by the existing structure. This bill will not change that. In fact, there's no argument here that it may not improve the underground economy, which some could argue was the

case of these four workers in 2009, being new to Canada and maybe being taken advantage of.

We want to protect safety in the workplace. It is the right thing to do. This bill is probably a bit overboard and excusing the government for not doing the job they were supposed to do back in 2009.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I would argue with the last part. I don't think this bill is a little bit too much overboard. I think, quite frankly, what you're going to end up with is all of those independent agencies that currently exist put in a position where the minister is going to have a whole bunch of ability to direct what happens with those agencies. I don't think that's a good thing. I don't think that you, as a legislator, or I, as a legislator, or they, whoever the government is, should have the right to muck around with what is supposed to be truly an independent agency. That, to me, is the crux of the issue.

The idea of having a—what do they call it, Rosario?

1010

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** A chief prevention officer.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Chief prevention officer; jeez, I keep on forgetting it in the debate.

Anyway, the idea is not a bad one, but you really have to have that person be independent. I suggest that there are a couple of ways to come at it. We could do similar to what we have with the chief medical officer of health, where there's legislation that sets out the powers of the chief medical officer of health and there is a form of independence. Yes, that person is appointed by cabinet, but there's a form of independence through the law. So it's not as if that person answers directly to the minister. They do, but there are some safeguards within the law.

I think the best thing to do is a similar type of thing to what we do with the Ombudsman or with the privacy commissioner, whoever: The three parties get together, they put a person each on the committee, we agree who that person is for a five- or 10-year term, and that person reports to the House. In that way, you can truly have an independent system. I think that's where we need to be going, because I know from my experiences, and I think you know, as a worker—and I know Mr. O'Toole worked a long time in the automotive industry—that health and safety is something that is truly important to the bottom line, because the fewer accidents we have, the better it is for the companies and certainly the better it is for the workers. To do that, I think we need to have a system that's truly independent from government and can't be influenced by the minister of the day.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to stand up and speak and listen to the member from Trinity–Spadina speaking about this bill.

This is all about the democratic process. That's why we introduced the bill and the opposition voiced their concern and added to the debate and advised us about different issues. We sent the bill to committee, and the

committee enhanced the bill and gave it more ability. That's what democracy is all about.

I listened to the member speaking, and while he's criticizing some, in the end the chief prevention officer is not going to work alone. He's going to have a council built from workers and also owners and experts in safety, in order to advise the chief. Those mechanisms are in place to protect the workers and create a safety mechanism for all of us in the province of Ontario.

In the end, the suggestion here is to enhance safe working conditions and make sure that all the workers in Ontario, all the employees in Ontario, work in a safe environment, and whoever violates those safe environments is going to be punished. That's why the chief prevention officer is going to work hand in hand with the employers, with the workers, with the experts, to create those conditions.

Also, moving the responsibility from the WSIB to the minister shows our commitment to protecting workers in the province of Ontario. I think it's a great step forward in order to create safety for the people in the province of Ontario.

I listened carefully to many people speaking in this House. Of course, the Conservatives didn't want anything to do with this issue. I know they'll abolish the WSIB. They have different issues about unions and labour; they don't care about those areas. But in the end, we on this side care about the unions; we care about labour; we care about the people in the province of Ontario. We want to create safe conditions for all of them to work in—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Thank you. The honourable member for Trinity–Spadina has two minutes for his response.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to commend the member for London–Fanshawe for being the chief booster of the Liberal Party; you can tell by his remarks, and the remarks from my friend from Ottawa–Orléans as well.

We are questioning the independence of the chief prevention officer, and we question the problems around the prevention council and whether or not they're going to be independent. We are worried that they're not going to be independent. And they should be.

Neither of the two Liberal members who spoke addressed the concerns we raised. They just keep saying how this is a good bill and this is good for injured workers; we're getting everything together so that we can do the best for injured workers. They just ramble around the issue and never once do they address the questions that we have raised: that the independence of the chief prevention officer is under question. Merely by reporting to the minister and having his report looked at and approved by the minister in advance of the release of the report questions his or her independence. None of you ever speak to that. It's a serious worry we've got, and you've got to address that.

You also have to address other areas. We should be investigating alleged reprisals against workers. We're not

doing that, and we're not likely to do that. We should be enforcing swiftly, with onerous penalties as well on those who violate health and safety concerns. I don't believe we're going to do that. We're not doing that as well as we should be doing it. We should simplify the prosecution process so that inspectors can prosecute straight-forward cases more speedily.

These are some of the areas we need to address. Yes, that is why we, too, are looking forward to the hearings to get opinions from everyone around these issues.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** It being 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 1016 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to welcome the family of page Ciaran Thomas to Queen's Park today. Ciaran and his family are from my community of St. Paul's. Joining us today in the members' gallery are Ciaran's mother, Alison; grandmother, Emily; and his sisters Bronwen, Charlotte and Hannah. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis:** Today at Queen's Park is Greek flag-raising day, and I invite all members to come outside for the Greek flag-raising.

I also would like to recognize some of our guests today: the Honourable Mr. Dimitris Azempoulos, the consul general of Greece, will be here; the consul general of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Stavros Augoustidis; Fotini Houlios; and Mr. Panos Androthis.

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would like to welcome one of my constituents from York–South Weston, Barb McLeod, who is here to watch the proceedings today, and we'll have lunch together. Welcome.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Yesterday, the Ontario PC caucus introduced a motion to give Ontario families relief. The motion calls for the expensive new hydro agency that Premier McGuinty created and called the Ontario Power Authority to be dismantled and the cost of that bureaucracy to be removed from Ontario families' hydro bills.

On Monday afternoon, Ontario families and seniors will see which members of this assembly respect them when they say they can't afford this bloated bureaucracy any longer. Will you join us in offering relief to Ontario families or will your members vote to offer relief to the bureaucrats at your bloated, overpriced agency?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** We've taken several steps to keep the costs of electricity down, and those actions are

saving energy consumers about \$1 billion a year. We froze the compensation structures of all non-bargaining public sector employees. We've limited travel costs and other expenses. We've requested Hydro One and OPG to revise down their 2010 rate applications to find savings, and they did that. All of our energy agencies are significantly reducing their operating costs. For 2011, the OPA has reduced its overall operating budget by 4.1%.

His trash-talking of the public service today is a reminder of the days when they sat in cabinet and they took pleasure in insulting the good work being done by our public servants—our teachers, our nurses and our power workers. Those were dark days in energy, they were dark days for this province—

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Premier McGuinty used to say that the Ontario Power Authority was a transitional agency, so you can't be opposed to dismantling the OPA for a principled reason. The Premier's so-called transitional agency keeps on growing more and more bloated. It's gone from \$14 million to \$80 million in just five years. It may seem small to you, but that \$80 million works out to \$20 a year for seniors who are struggling to keep the lights on at home.

Every day members of the Ontario PC caucus hear from seniors and families who say they're unable to pay their hydro bills any longer. Don't you and the McGuinty Liberals sitting around hear the same thing?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** On Tuesday, after a line of questioning similar to that, where I think the Leader of the Opposition received a fair amount of push-back, he said this to the media, "Listen, in the past we've seemed to function without the Ontario Power Authority."

I'd like to ask the member opposite what their definition of "functional" is, because when his leader was in cabinet, their system wasn't functional at all. In fact, it was completely dysfunctional. Does he think it was functional to put up the use of coal by 127%? Does he think it was functional, when his government was in power, that their failure to invest in power nearly crippled our power system? Did he think it was functional to pay \$1 billion in import costs to US coal plants just to keep the lights on? Their memory may be fading but families are going to remember the dysfunctional energy system—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** This, coming from a minister who raised the use of coal in Ontario by 29% last year alone.

Yesterday, Premier McGuinty boasted about recovering \$5 million a year from a sham of an agency review. The Ontario PCs have found a lot more in savings that can be taken off the hydro bills: \$80 million a year more, and more than that, if the OPA keeps bloating at its current pace.

If the McGuinty Liberals voted for the Ontario PC motion to dismantle the OPA and take that cost off hydro

bills, it would give Ontario seniors and families real relief, the relief they need. Why do you constantly vote to raise hydro bills, but will not support an Ontario PC motion that will actually reduce Ontario families' hydro bills?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'll tell you why we won't support their motion: They have absolutely no credibility when it comes to accountability and transparency in government—none whatsoever. Their leader sat in cabinet and actually allowed Hydro One to buy a yacht. Their leader sat in cabinet and allowed Hydro One CEO Eleanor Clitheroe to earn \$2.2 million a year. The CEO today earns half that amount, and that doesn't include inflation. Our energy agencies are no longer in the yachting business. The salaries of the top 20 executives at OPG are now on average 35% lower than they were when your leader sat in cabinet.

And let's not forget, the PCs removed Hydro One and OPG from being subject to freedom of information. Why did they do that? Because they wanted to make sure that they could keep those the energy agencies for their own personal—

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

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** He just doesn't get it. Families are crying for relief and he wants to rattle on about some irrelevant stuff.

Two weeks ago, the Minister of Finance held a press conference—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** To the Minister of Energy, again. He almost dislocated his shoulder from patting himself on the back for finding 0.0002% savings from a sham of an agency review.

On the same day, McGuinty Liberals hinted that the Premier is thinking about using the budget to streamline the alphabet soup of his expensive and bloated hydro agencies. You've made it clear you'll fight tooth and nail to keep Ontario families paying for an overgrown OPA bureaucracy they don't need, that you created. What sort of tinkering with hydro agencies will you do and how much more will that cost Ontario families?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** That party wants to continue to attack the Ontario Power Authority. That's fine; we understand where they're coming from, because they don't support any of the work that is being done by that agency. They do not support the efforts the Ontario Power Authority is making to help us get out of dirty coal, something that you put up 127% during your time in office, something we brought down by 70%, and that will be gone altogether by 2014, cleaning our air and building a healthier future for our kids.

Who would be putting out those feed-in tariff contracts that are creating thousands of jobs across this province, benefiting farmers—the microFIT projects that are benefiting farmers—to the tune of \$10,000? Under

them, they wouldn't need those contracts going out because they don't support those jobs; they don't support the farmers when it comes to the microFIT program. They don't support cleaning up—

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the minister: If the Premier's sham of an agency review is anything to go by, then Ontario families should brace themselves to keep paying for an Ontario Power Authority they don't need and can't afford. The crowning achievement of the Premier's agency review was to take two bloated agencies, Infrastructure Ontario and the Ontario Realty Corp., and turn them into one uber-bloated agency.

Premier McGuinty's expensive hydro mess includes more bureaucracies than you can shake a stick at: Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, the Independent Electricity System Operator, the Ontario Energy Board, the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp., not to mention the Ministry of Energy itself. How much more will it cost Ontario families when you merge the OPA with one of these bloated agencies?

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**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I say again, that party has absolutely no credibility when it comes to accountability and transparency in our government agencies and government altogether—no credibility whatsoever.

Your leader sat in cabinet, as I said before, while Hydro One purchased a yacht. I think Defiant was the name they called it.

At the same time, your CEO, Eleanor Clitheroe, was making \$2.2 million a year. The CEO of Hydro One now makes half that amount. As I said before, the top 20 executives at OPG are now, on average, earning 35% lower than when you were in cabinet. Who are you to lecture us when it comes to accountability in those agencies?

When they were in power, those agencies were absolutely out of control. Their operating costs are going down. We're working hard with those agencies—

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Member from Sarnia-Lambton.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It appears the minister's on a ship, but I think it's the Titanic.

Premier McGuinty does not show respect for Ontario families with half measures and tinkering that do nothing to lower Ontario's hydro bills.

Eleven thousand bureaucrats at the alphabet soup of hydro bureaucracies earn over \$100,000 a year. That list includes a security guard at OPG, a landscape architect at Hydro One, a Web and Internet adviser at the OEB, and something called an "executive adviser" at the OPA. The McGuinty Liberals won't agree to shine light on these agencies and how they've bloated or to dismantle the expensive OPA bureaucracies that Ontario families do not need and cannot afford.

Will you finally put Ontario families first and support our motion? Will you, Minister?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The member opposite talks about respecting Ontario families, but their actions do nothing but disrespect Ontario families. Why would you vote against a 10% reduction in their energy bills? Our clean energy benefit is bringing down energy rates by 10% for Ontario families, farmers and small businesses. Show some respect for Ontario families and support our efforts to lower their energy bills.

How can you claim to respect Ontario families when you voted against and opposed the creation of thousands of jobs that Ontario families in this province need, especially at this time in our history? We need those clean energy jobs, jobs that you don't support, jobs that you're going to kill. That's totally disrespectful for Ontario families. If they respected Ontario families, they'd be supporting our efforts to clean our air and get out of coal and build a healthier future—

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

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Acting Premier. The Acting Premier told the press that he'd be campaigning with his federal Liberal counterparts if a federal election is called later this week. If a voter asks him whether he supports the Liberal Party of Canada's plan to roll back corporate tax cuts, what exactly is he going to say?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** As I've indicated publicly, Ontario's corporate tax rates are still far above our sister provinces. So it's important to understand, as many Ontarians do, and apparently the leader of the third party doesn't want to do, that we have to be competitive with Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. That is just the reality.

We also have to continue to be competitive with OECD countries. Canada's at the mid-level right now. Frankly, by doing what we've been able to do, that helps all of Canada be competitive but, most importantly, makes sure that we won't lose jobs—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** After taking \$4 billion from the federal government to implement a new sales tax on everything from home heating to gasoline and heeding Mr. Flaherty's call to offer a multi-billion-dollar handout to some of Canada's richest corporations, how can the McGuinty Liberals now claim that they're the only ones who can take on Harper's Conservatives when they've been in lockstep with them all along? Seriously, who is this minister trying to kid?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I'll remind the member opposite that it was \$4.3 billion that the Conservative government gave us because they wanted us to harmonize the sales tax. Every nickel of that went to small businesses and to Ontario families—every nickel of that. In fact, the last payment will be in June, which is important. By the way, in British Columbia, they didn't forward that on to the people.



I would remind the member opposite that the pulp and paper industry in northern Ontario said they needed these tax changes not only to help with the competitiveness of taxes but to help deal with the rising value of the dollar. The member may not have noticed this: The Canadian dollar is above par right now.

This is the right thing for jobs in Ontario. It's the right thing for a better future. It's the right thing for a—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People realize that this is a desperate move from a desperate government. The McGuinty Liberals have no credibility criticizing the Harper Conservatives. This government brought in Harper's HST and copied his corporate tax cuts.

Will the Acting Premier be giving every Ontarian a little grain of salt to go with the budget next week?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Today is Harry Houdini's birthday, and that member wants to get herself out of all kinds of untenable tie-ups. She doesn't want to create jobs in Thunder Bay or in Timmins; she wants to create them in Red Deer and Edmonton. She doesn't want to create jobs in Windsor; she wants to create them in Detroit. She doesn't want to create them in Hamilton; she wants to create them in Pittsburgh.

We've laid out a clear plan that will create jobs and enhance investment. That is why even Ken Lewenza and Sid Ryan advised her to go easy on her criticisms of our tax policy, because they know it's important to a new and revitalized auto sector and more jobs across the province. It's the right plan for a better future for all of our children.

#### SCHOOL FEES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is to the Acting Premier. Our public schools were founded over a century ago on the idea that no one should be denied an education because of how much money their parents had.

Why are already-stretched families being asked to pay more and more to put their children through high school?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I think that it's important to remind the honourable member that education has been a priority for this government and, as such, we have increased our investment in education by some 40% since coming to office. We also have worked very closely with teachers and with parents to understand where we need to be streaming those dollars.

I'm happy to say that as a result of our investments, because our focus has been on enabling students to be successful, we now have results that demonstrate our students are more successful. In fact, our students are among the top 10 best in the world as a result of the investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It may be a surprise to the minister, but a new report was released by People for Education. It shows that high school course and activity fees are on the rise. Families are now paying almost 20%

more in course fees this year, on average \$25 per course, to give their sons and daughters the education they need.

Why are families being asked to pay more for public education?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I'm happy to be able to correct the honourable member when I say that fees are not allowable for anything that is a curriculum requirement in our schools. Students are not required to pay fees for those things.

As a result of concerns that have come to us from parents, we have put guidelines around fees in place. We have done so with the co-operation of our parents. In fact, we will also be presenting guidelines this week around fundraising activities as well.

We are very conscious about the importance of ensuring that access to a quality education in the province of Ontario is equitable for all students. That is why we have acted as we have to put guidelines in place for fees. We will be coming out with guidelines for fundraising and also for corporate participation in our schools.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In a September 2010 letter, the Minister of Education stated that mandatory flat fees for courses leading to graduation are ineligible for fee charges, just as she said just now. Yet nearly 70% of high schools are charging course fees. That is the point.

Families are feeling the squeeze, and paying the bills at the end of a month is already a struggle for thousands of Ontarians. Why are the McGuinty Liberals refusing to enforce their own policy, and once again making family essentials more expensive when they need to be more affordable?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I'm very happy to have the opportunity to inform the honourable member that, as part of our fee guideline structure, we are now requiring boards to report what fees are collected, how they are collected and why they are collected to ensure that boards are, in fact, complying with the fee guidelines. Up until now, no government has undertaken this kind of reporting.

We are very serious about ensuring that students and their families are not required to pay fees for what is required of students to gain their secondary school diploma or their elementary education. We are very serious about this. That is why we have put the reporting requirements in place. We want to know where boards are charging fees and what they're charged for, because no student should be required to pay a fee in order to graduate from secondary school.

#### COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is to the Attorney General. This morning I moved a motion in the legislative committee on justice policy which called for an investigation into the victims' justice fund. This was an

opportunity for parliamentarians to undertake their role as representatives of Ontario families and empower them to support victims of crime, such as Liz Hoage.

Liberal committee members voted against my motion, claiming that it was partisan. But my motion was taken directly from the 2008 recommendations of former Chief Justice Roy McMurtry in a report you commissioned.

Why did you direct your parliamentary assistant and other Liberal committee members to vote against my motion that would have supported victims of crime?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** In fact, no government has been more complete in its support for victims of crime. The very report he references, the former Chief Justice's report, says that Ontario has the best approach to victims' issues in Canada.

The problem with his motion, quite simply, is he sought to start at 2003, but we have a very good record of making sure that there's not unallocated money in the victims' justice fund.

He really should have looked at his own record for eight years, when they built money up in the victims' justice fund, did not disburse it to victims, did not disburse it to agencies, and had a \$77-million surplus at the end. We now have, apart from the contingency, \$3 million in unallocated funds.

Our record is clear. He needs to investigate his own.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I notice the Attorney General doesn't speak to the victims.

Today's motion would have led to an investigation of the flawed victims' justice fund and produced recommendations to ensure that the needs of victims are addressed—victims, Attorney General. Yet your parliamentary assistant voted against my motion because he said it was partisan.

My motion was taken directly from the 2008 recommendations of former Chief Justice Roy McMurtry—a direct quote from him. Clearly, it was your parliamentary assistant and Liberal committee members who were playing politics on this issue.

But if you agree with your parliamentary assistant that Chief Justice Roy McMurtry is, in fact, partisan, will you still have him conduct the inquiry on the G20?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** The member, with respect, is not being accurate in our approach. Our approach has been all about supporting victims. In fact, one of former Chief Justice McMurtry's suggestions was that we make the victim quick response program permanent, which we're doing, to make sure that we were as generous as people would expect us to be with victims.

Under both the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, where we put an extra \$100 million in to clear up the backlog, and under the victims' justice fund, where all of those funds are allocated to victims' issues or to agencies that serve victims directly—that's exactly what we're doing: spending public funds for the assistance of victims. What the member wishes to do is to go back to his own record, which did not support victims as they should, built up an unallocated surplus, and he wants to ignore that—

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

#### DISCLOSURE OF TOXINS

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, you will know that Mayor Diodati and his council in Niagara Falls are concerned about the possible use of Agent Orange in their community. They want something done about it. They want an investigation. They call over and they're told, "No problem. We've got this guy, Len Ritter, who's supposedly the guy who's going to be the independent fellow doing the review."

How can the mayor of Niagara Falls—and, more importantly, the citizens of Niagara Falls—feel confident that there will be an independent review when we know that Len Ritter was the very guy who approved the use of Agent Orange when he was the head of that department back in the 1980s?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I'm very pleased to stand and speak about this issue again. It's obviously very important to us, and we're committed to finding all the facts and sharing the information in a transparent fashion.

In fact, our 1-800 number is operating and continues to receive inquiries and questions from people across Ontario. Since March 23 we've received 466 calls. The WSIB line continues to receive calls from former workers who were possibly exposed to the herbicide, and as of March 22, WSIB has received 534 calls and 171 claims that have been initiated.

We've fulfilled our commitment to establish an independent panel looking at 2,4,5-T, and certainly Dr. Ritter will be supported by panel members who will be serving him on a part-time basis to get to the bottom of this issue. There are far more questions and answers, and we're committed to getting all those answers, and I'm committed to making sure those are—

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** The answer that Mayor Diodati and his council want to know is, how is there going to truly be an independent investigation when the person you appointed to head the investigation—and he in turn appoints those people to help him—was the guy who approved the use of Agent Orange? How can that be independent? The mayor of Niagara Falls and the citizens of Niagara Falls and citizens across this province need to know there will be an independent review. How could you have appointed somebody to head this up who was working for the very department that allowed the use of Agent Orange and eventually became the head of it at that time?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** It's pretty clear to me what this honourable member is trying to do. He's trying his hardest to discredit a world-renowned toxicologist. In fact, the honourable member has been trying to discredit the panel Chair even before the panel Chair was chosen.

As we all know, 2,4,5-T was removed from the list of approved herbicides nearly 30 years ago. Ontario is the first Canadian jurisdiction to launch a government-wide

review of the use of this herbicide. Dr. Ritter would have been fresh out of university 30 years ago, working as a junior toxicologist for Health Canada. I'm sure that the honourable member knows that science has evolved significantly since the 1980s. Dr. Ritter is an award-winning toxicologist and a world-leading expert in the use of herbicides and pesticides. I have great confidence in Dr. Ritter. I'm sure that the rest of this Legislature will—

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

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Earlier this week, the member for Nepean–Carleton visited Pickering to stand in front of a transformer station and talk about the debt retirement charge that her party slapped on my constituents' hydro bills, as well as her party's opposition to clean energy and the modernization of our electrical system. I know that the few people who showed up to hear about her party's plan for energy left disappointed when she refused to share even one thoughtful idea her party has.

With so much at stake in our electrical system, would the minister get to the real facts out there in Pickering for their families and tell them what you're doing to build the modern electricity system that they need today and will definitely need in the future?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to thank the member for Ajax–Pickering for that question. I want to remind them that this is the government that refurbished the switchyard at that very Pickering transformer station. This is the government that upgraded the Whitby transformer station. This is the government that refurbished the Cherrywood transformer station in northwest Pickering. This is the government that brought energy reliability back to the families of Pickering and broader Durham region.

1100

When PC caucus members go out and hold these photo ops, I think it's just a tad embarrassing for them to note that they're standing in front of power infrastructure that they neglected and that we've upgraded. Our government has invested more than double what they used to invest in transmission upgrades. These are investments that that PC Party has opposed every step of the way.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Minister, also last week, the Leader of the Opposition went to London, stood in front of a transformer station and talked about the debt retirement that his party placed on our constituents in London. Also, he—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member will come to order.

There have been a number of comments that I'm hearing from the opposition benches about whether a member will be here or not. I don't want to hear about this. I know I'm not going to be here, but I don't need the comments being thrown across the floor at other mem-

bers on the other side. The electorate will decide on October 6. I do not need to hear from you in that regard. Thank you.

Please continue.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** Also, they showed their opposition to our clean energy strategy, that will make sure we have clean energy in the province of Ontario. I know the two people who showed up wanted to hear about their plan for energy, which the Leader of the Opposition is proposing for Ontario, but you know what? They left frustrated because they didn't hear anything, because they refused to share it.

Minister, can you tell us and tell my constituents in London about your plan for energy in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Duguid:** Absolutely. I want to thank the member for London–Fanshawe for that question. I welcome the opportunity to share with him and this Legislature the fact that this government indeed has a long-term energy plan that invests in building a clean, reliable and modern energy system.

It may, however, be just a little bit embarrassing for the Leader of the Opposition to know that the particular transfer station that he was standing in front of in London had just undergone a \$6-million upgrade to install a new capacitor bank that will help facilitate the phase-out of coal. That's the kind of investment and upgrade that's going to help the reliability of our energy system and help build a clean and healthy future for our kids. That's the kind of investment, however, the PC Party failed to make when they were in office and have consistently opposed every step of the way.

I think it's just a little bit embarrassing for the Leader of the Opposition—

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

### ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** To the Minister of Energy: Over the past two months, I and my colleagues have been travelling the province, talking to and hearing from Ontario families and seniors who say that they're looking for relief on their skyrocketing hydro bills. I don't think it's too much of a stretch to say that we've visited almost every transformer station in the province, some of them twice. Minister, will you do the right thing and give Ontario families relief on their hydro bills by voting in favour of our opposition day motion to scrap the Ontario Power Authority? Or should we go back out, start our cars, get out to those communities and tell them you don't care or give a damn about their hydro bills?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I just remind members on both sides of the House that temperate language is very useful in helping to maintain order and decorum.

Minister?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** If that member cared about energy costs for Ontario families, he and his party would be supporting our clean energy benefit. It's taking 10%

off the bills of every family in this province and every small business. Families are saving about \$150 a year from this, small businesses about \$1,700, farmers about \$2,000 on average a year. That party isn't supporting the assistance that we're providing for Ontario families.

Our clean energy benefit is helping Ontario families cope with the costs of rising energy. Investments have to be made in our energy system. We need to build a clean, reliable, modern system, something they did not believe in when they were in power, something they don't believe in now. We're helping Ontario families; they're opposing the help that we're providing to those families.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I guess it leaves us no choice but to start our cars and go out and tell them that you don't care about their skyrocketing hydro bills.

In each town that we visited, families and seniors say they simply can't afford it. In fact, if they knew we were in town, they would come out in front, join us at the transformer stations and tell us that they could not afford their hydro bills, and they would bring their bills with them. They told us that they cannot afford your billion-dollar smart meter tax machines, your billion-dollar energy exports to Quebec and New York and your billion dollars a year that you're making of the debt retirement charge by turning it into a permanent tax grab.

It would be nice, for a change, if we could tell our old friends in Cobourg and Wallaceburg and Goderich and Mississauga, or any of the other 35 stops, that the McGuinty Liberals actually took something off their hydro bills to give them relief. Unfortunately, we can't do that, but you have a chance to abolish the OPA by voting for our motion on Monday. Will you do that?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** You know something that would be really nice for Ontario families? It would be really nice of the party opposite and their leader to tell Ontario families why they're afraid to share with Ontario families what their plan is for energy. I can think of a lot of reasons why you'd be hesitant to do that—maybe because you don't support that clean energy benefit taking 10% off their bills. That will be hard to explain to Ontario families. Maybe it's because you don't support the thousands of clean energy jobs that we're creating in communities right across Ontario. Maybe you don't want Ontario families to know that you're going to kill thousands of jobs in their communities. Maybe it's because you don't support our efforts to get out of dirty coal by 2014, cleaning our air and providing a healthier future for Ontario families.

I can understand why you don't want to share your plan, but Ontario families deserve to know. What is your plan? When are you going to bring it out? When—

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

#### NUCLEAR WASTE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Minister of Health. Dr. Hazel Lynn, the medical officer of health for Grey-Bruce, has testified before various gov-

ernment bodies, stating that her health unit has conducted a formal risk assessment of Bruce Power's plan to transport 16 massive radioactive steam generators across the Great Lakes to Sweden. She claims this assessment shows that this plan is risk-free. Does the Minister of Health support Dr. Lynn's conclusion that there is no health risk to this widely opposed plan?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Energy, Speaker.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's interesting that the NDP continues to dwell on this particular issue, because it has been raised in the past, and I think we've been very straightforward in our response to this in the past. But it is interesting that this week, in the wake of what's going on in Japan, that the issue would quietly emerge here again.

I don't want to question their motives on this, and I never would, but let me just repeat: The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission has studied this matter in absolute detail. They've held public hearings. This is a federal agency that is fully responsible for making decisions on this particular matter. I wrote to my federal colleague on this, and I wrote to Bruce Power as well, making sure that they're taking every measure to protect the safety of Ontarians. But I asked the leader opposite whether she wrote to anybody on this at all when the hearings were going on, and she—

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is actually back to the Minister of Health. Dr. Lynn is using her formal risk assessment to persuade Ontarians that the transport of radioactive steam generators is safe, but there's a little bit of a problem. When Dr. Lynn refused to provide us with a copy of the actual risk assessment, we submitted a freedom-of-information request, and what did we get back? A speech, a series of emails and a template for what a health risk assessment might look like.

Is the Minister of Health concerned that a local medical officer of health is testifying before government bodies and speaking about this plan when a formal health risk assessment she cites doesn't even seem to exist?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission held public hearings on this, and as I said, I, as Minister of Energy for this province, wrote to Bruce Power and my federal colleagues, impressing on them the importance to ensure that all measures were taken to protect public safety. The leader of the NDP had an opportunity to appear before those hearings. She could have—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** If she was really concerned about this when those hearings were going on—it wasn't that long ago—she could have let her voice be known. Why is it that today, in the wake of what is going on in Japan, the leader of the opposition decides that now she wants to make sure that her voice is heard? I can't help but think that some of the media were right last week when they suggested that the NDP fascination with nuclear—all of a sudden, again this week—is nothing less than distasteful.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Again, I want to remind all members that the use of temperate language in this place is very important. It helps to maintain order and decorum. And any time that we start to bring it below a level that starts to deliver an attack at another member, it is not helpful for the dignity of this House as a whole. I would just ask all members to be conscious of that.

New question.

1110

## AIR-RAIL LINK

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. The Georgetown South project to expand GO Transit service and to build an air-rail link to connect Union Station to Pearson airport has seen a number of significant improvements in my community since its original proposal. These include making Weston an air-rail link stop and tunnelling GO trains and the air-rail link through parts of the Weston rail corridor to reduce noise and vibration and improving safety and the look of the corridor. It also includes expanded GO service for local residents to downtown Toronto and a commitment for a new GO station at Weston.

It has come to my attention, however, that word is spreading in the community questioning GO's commitment to this station. Can the minister please assure my constituents that the planned new Weston GO station will go ahead?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to thank the member for the question about the Weston GO station, for which she advocated, and I want to assure her and her constituents that we are proceeding with the construction of the new Weston GO station. That is on track. It's because, as I say, of her advocacy that the consultation took place in the community.

Now, most riders will take the service from the airport to Union Station, but we recognized, as a result of conversation in the community, that there was also an opportunity to give residents in that community new service as well.

That construction of the GO station is going to be phased. The first phase will be to shift the existing station platform from the north of Lawrence Avenue to just south of Lawrence Avenue. Then, as we proceed with the station building and additional parking, Metrolinx will be speaking with local stakeholders and updating them regularly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** As the minister knows, it is very important for the residents of York South–Weston to have the opportunity to provide input as this important work moves forward. The new GO station will be a welcome addition to the community, especially as services increase. It is very important that the community continues to be consulted and informed about the next stages in the process. Metrolinx has stated that the new station

will be a temporary modular structure and that a master station plan will be carried out in 2011 to determine future transportation centre requirements.

Can the minister please tell this House more about this future GO station, as well as the next step for community input and involvement?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Metrolinx is working with the city of Toronto and the Urban Land Institute to develop the station master plan for the future Weston station, and there's also going to be a public meeting in May 2011, a bit more than a month from now, to generate ideas and further development options for the Weston community.

Metrolinx will also be adopting the mobility hub guidelines to inform the station development. That process will involve the city and it will also involve the local community.

Because of the advocacy, again, of the members from York South–Weston and Davenport, we've acted on community concerns regarding the construction of the whole Georgetown South corridor. GO has a dedicated community relations team and community offices in the Weston and Strachan neighbourhoods to make sure that there's ongoing communication with the community.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My question is to the Acting Premier. In recent media, you've been telling anyone who would listen that you are campaigning for Michael Ignatieff. This is the same Michael Ignatieff who said that Premier McGuinty's imposition of industrial wind turbines raises a threat to democracy. Will you backtrack on your support for Michael Ignatieff or for Premier McGuinty?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I just ask the member—and I say this to all members in the House. It appears that there is going to be a federal election campaign. I don't want to see this election campaign fought out in this chamber. I want to see—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** No, on both sides.

I'd like to ensure that there are questions that are asked—I'm going to give the member an opportunity, as he still had some time on the clock—to ensure that it's a question that is asked that pertains to policy of the provincial government.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'll simply rephrase it, Speaker.

There was a comment made pertaining to industrial wind turbines and a threat which is seen by your federal counterparts to those. Are you going to backtrack on your support for your federal counterparts or your Premier?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** What Ontario would like to see is our clean energy industry get the same support—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Lanark will withdraw the comment he just made.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Withdrawn.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** What we would like to see is a national government that will give the same support to

Ontario's clean energy business as it does to the fossil fuel business in western Canada. What we would like to see is a federal government that will treat Ontario the same under labour force market adjustment programs as it does the other provinces. What I also said is, we want a federal government that will give Ontario an immigration settlement agreement that is as generous as it is to the other provinces. Finally, what we want to see is a federal government that acknowledges the work of the Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Again, I remind the honourable member on this side of the House to talk about provincial issues.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** There's a quote out there from the Liberal candidate for Haldimand-Norfolk that says, "I have to take what you say to" the Ontario energy—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I am being equal, and that's what I'm trying to do. Don't challenge the Chair, please, Minister.

I just remind the member to be talking about provincial issues and not a candidate for federal office.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** In fairness, I am talking about provincial issues. I'm quoting a candidate who says, "I have to take what you say to" the Ontario energy minister "and tell him there are problems with wind turbines. I will tell him that you are not being heard."

The Acting Premier may want to turn around and pass the message along to the energy minister sitting behind him.

The question for the Acting Premier is, how do you keep a straight face saying that you support Premier McGuinty's expensive wind turbine experiments when you don't?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I am proud of the fact that we have the largest, most expanding clean energy program in the world—without question. I am proud of the fact that this government has invested unprecedented resources in closing coal and in opening up not only windmills but also solar farms. And what about biogas for our farming communities?

Most of all, I'm proud of the important incentives we've given to the creation of jobs throughout southern Ontario and eastern Ontario. That is the kind of support that is necessary to build a new industry, to build better schools, to build better health care and, most importantly, to build a better and cleaner energy future for all of our children.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Young adults with developmental disabilities are languishing on waiting lists for both Passport funding and special services at home. A recent ARCH alert says that 2,492 young adults are receiving Passport funding but nearly 4,000 people are on the waiting list. The same ARCH alert says that

special services at home is frozen: No new applications have been approved since 2008—three long years.

Will the minister assure this House and the thousands of families—some of whom are here today—who languish on waiting lists that they will receive top priority in her ministry and in the budget next Thursday?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, I would like to welcome the families and their children in the gallery today. I want to thank them for their advocacy roles on behalf of their children. I always say that parents are the best advocates for their children. I talk to a lot of them, and I'm so impressed.

What I want to say to the member on the opposite side is that the Passport program was created by this government. When you were in power, you just did nothing. When we came into power we initiated that wonderful program, and it's a very, very successful program.

Yes, we have a waiting list, and yes, I would like to eliminate this waiting list. So we'll have to wait for the budget. But this government is determined to do more for—

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

1120

**Mr. Michael Prue:** The minister doesn't understand that the program is frozen. This minister knows full well that thousands of desperate families have begged for adequate support for years. Special services at home cannot be offered if no applications are being approved.

In the last fiscal year, the program provided an average of only \$4,200 per family for respite care. Even worse, last March, there were 7,160 families on the wait-list. We know that a small amount of money has been allocated for Passport funding for this year, but that will only reduce the wait-list by 3%.

Will this minister tell families that every young adult in Ontario who qualifies for Passport funding and special services at home will get the services they need, or does she prefer to dither while they languish on wait—

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

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I appreciate the question and I appreciate the concern from the member of the opposition.

I want to remind him that this government created the Passport program, helping more than 2,500 people with funding in their communities. Since 2003, we have increased annual base funding for special services at home. We have increased the budget by 50%. We have invested in developmental services 500 million new dollars and increased funding by 50%.

This government has done a lot. Do we have more to do? Yes, we have more to do, and we will be working with the parents and with our partners to make sure that we continue to invest in that program.

#### EDUCATION

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** This morning my question is to the Minister of Education. Parents in my riding of Peter-

borough have been contacting me with their concerns. They're concerned about the situation that is unfolding in Wisconsin. Teachers there are losing their collective bargaining rights and teachers are being portrayed as overpaid and underworked. Parents in my riding are very concerned that a similar sentiment could be making its way north of the border.

What can I tell my constituents to address their concerns? Do they need to be worried about the future of their child's education?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** That's a very important question, and I can say that it's a question that I've heard from some of my constituents as well.

What I can say to the honourable member is that our government, our party, is absolutely committed to the collective bargaining process for teachers, ECEs and all support workers in our schools. We are absolutely committed to labour peace. We are absolutely committed to peace in our schools. We value peace in our schools because labour peace supports student achievement. That is why test scores are up in the province of Ontario.

We have also been able to increase graduation rates. It's because our committed staff in all of our schools have been able to focus on doing what they do best, and that is educating all of our students.

*Interjections.*

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

Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** Parents in my riding will be reassured to hear that we are committed to public education and value teachers in this province.

Minister, we all know that the economy is starting to recover from the recession in Ontario and the rest of the world. Some jurisdictions have cut taxes and services to alleviate pressures on their budgets. How could I assure my constituents that we remain committed to student achievement right here in Ontario?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Our commitment has been very clear since we've come to government. I would say that even in the face of the most significant economic event—the recession—our commitment to education is manifest in our commitment to full-day kindergarten. We know that the opposition call it a frill; they say that this is not the time to do it. They will cancel full-day kindergarten.

We are committed to supporting student achievement in the province of Ontario—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The honourable member will withdraw the comment she just made, please.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I will withdraw.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We are, on this side of the House—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Order, on both sides.

Please continue.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Methinks they doth protest too much.

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Just open your eyes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** That, from the honourable ministers, is not helpful either.

New question.

#### LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, you say your unaccountable LHIN bureaucracies are helping people, but the facts on the ground speak otherwise. Your South East LHIN is supposed to be helping people with acquired brain injuries, people like Scott Finlay, who was injured in the 1978 Canadian downhill championships. The Finlay family wants to ensure that Scott is going to be cared for, but your LHIN can't figure out where or how they spend money for people with acquired brain injuries. Minister, why are your LHINs not meeting the needs of Ontario's people?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Quite the contrary: The LHINs are delivering exceptional results for the people in those LHINs. Before the creation of the LHINs, there was no one responsible for tying together, for streamlining the health care system for people who needed access to health care. There was no one who was actually looking at the system from the patient's perspective to make sure the right supports were in the right place for the people.

We have significantly improved care for people, thanks to the LHINs. Our aging-at-home strategy has provided supports for people in the community so they can stay at home, where they want to be, for as long as possible, without having to go into long-term care.

Our plan is to continue improving care for people. The opposition has an altogether different plan when it comes to health care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Minister, you do have room for improvement. Your LHINs just keep piling up more and more expenses.

I spoke to your LHIN chairman Georgina Thompson about funding for ABI patients. Two months later, she told me she had some good news and some bad news. The bad news was that the LHIN doesn't know how or where they're spending money for acquired brain injury patients. The good news, though, was that the South East LHIN had hired a consultant for \$357,000 to track down where the LHIN spends their money for people like Scott Finlay.

Minister, you allow these unaccountable bureaucrats to keep soaking up money that should go to front-line care for people like Scott Finlay. What use is a bureaucracy that needs to hire a consultant to track their chequebook?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm afraid the party opposite and the party on this side of the House have a completely different vision of the future of health care in this province.

The first fact the people opposite need to understand is that LHINs actually cost no more money than what existed under their governance. They had two layers of bureaucracy, which we replaced with the LHINs to give people in the community a local voice.

The member from Kingston and the Islands tells me that he has been working very hard to find a resolution in this particular case but, I tell you, cutting \$3 billion out of health care is going to do nothing to help people who are seeking help in this province.

We have a demonstrated improvement in health care in this province. When they had the chance before, they cut health care. If they have a chance, they'll do it again.

### REPLACEMENT WORKERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. For two and a half long years, workers at Brantford walked the picket line, while their employers, Engineered Coated Products, brought in busloads of replacement workers under heavy security.

ECP has a sister plant in British Columbia. In British Columbia, they negotiated a settlement. Do you know why? Because British Columbia has banned the use of temporary replacement workers. The ECP Ontario plant has become the poster child for anti-scab legislation, yet for two and a half years, the McGuinty government did nothing.

ECP is now shutting its doors. Why has the minister failed these workers, failed this community and failed our economy?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It is always very difficult when closures occur, and we do sympathize and feel badly for those families who have, for a long period of time, been without a job.

1130

I would also like to commend the member for Brant, who has been tirelessly advocating and working to try to come to mediation, and trying to support those in need in those communities.

These have been pretty tough economic times. As Minister of Labour, it is always our intent to try to bring both sides to the table and negotiate a settlement. That's always the best way to achieve and arrive at a negotiation that all parties agree to. We will continue, as we always have, to make our mediators available to support the negotiations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would say this: Everything that has to do with this lengthy labour dispute points to the need for a ban on temporary replacement workers. The situation has been a lose-lose for absolutely everyone involved. It has hurt and divided the community for two and a half long years. It has left workers and their families struggling. It has now led to a company that is

shutting its doors in Ontario and wiping out any economic benefits we could have. It has led to 100 jobs being lost in our economy. It could all have been prevented had the minister done like BC and Quebec and enacted legislation that would ban the use of temporary replacement workers.

My question is to the minister is simple: Will the minister do the right thing and enact legislation that bans the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Back to the families who are affected: We will make our ministry, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and others available to facilitate the transition.

In regard to the other jurisdictions that have instituted certain forums, they in fact have higher instances of strikes. In this province, we've had 99% of all issues resolved prior to stoppages and strikes. We have a great record. We have the longest and the best record of labour peace in 35 years.

We will always work closely with all stakeholders involved to try to achieve and mediate. We will always do what's best for our workers while maintaining a competitive environment, so that companies succeed and survive, we achieve those jobs and so those workers are supported.

### MINISTER'S COMMENTS

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm making specific reference to standing order 23 and, in particular, paragraphs (h) and (i). It's with respect to the response by the Minister of Energy to question number 4 put by the leader for the New Democratic Party.

The Speaker rose to address at least the tone of the response, but the Speaker will recall that the response of the minister was to the effect that this question was only being put to exploit the tragedy that's taking place in Japan when, in fact, of course this question has been put by the NDP for well over four weeks, possibly even months now.

For the minister to respond in that way is, in my submission, (1) making an allegation against the leader of the New Democratic Party; and (2) pursuant to paragraph (i), it's imputing "false or unavowed motives" to the leader of the New Democratic Party.

I appreciate this is difficult stuff because, at some point, as more and more things become out of order, there are less and less things that can actually be said or done, as you've put it so many times, in the cut and thrust of debate here in the chamber.

I think it's important that if there's going to be an application of the standing orders, it be consistent; if the application of the standing orders is going to be firmer than it was in the past, it be clear; and if the application of the standing orders is going to have validity and legitimacy in the chamber, it has to be applied to all members, regardless of which side of the Parliament they sit on.

I leave that with you. I know there's another matter being raised that I will address as well, but I suggest to



you that the minister's response in that instance violated standing order 23(i) and 23(h).

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I want to thank the honourable member from Welland on the point that he's raised regarding standing order 23 and the use of making allegations against another member.

This is an issue that I have talked about in the past. I did, as the honourable member said, make reference to and reminded the honourable minister of the importance of the use of temperate language in assisting and maintaining order and decorum within this place.

I will not get into the practice of reviewing Hansard to try to determine whether an allegation was made. I will leave it in the hands of the minister, because I heard comments that were made, and there was some difficulty because of the tone within the chamber, but I will leave it to the minister. If, in the minister's mind, he chooses to withdraw that comment, I will leave that to him to deal with.

#### USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** On a separate point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to preface this by making it very clear that members of the PC caucus respect entirely any of your decisions and rulings, but I am, on behalf of our caucus, asking for a reconsideration of your caution to the House today with respect to the bringing in of the federal Parliament into the provincial Legislature.

I want to remind you, Speaker, and the members here, that we've been living in a federal minority Parliament since 2006. Certainly since the election of 2008, when the potential of a possible coalition was discussed, the current government has been on the thin edge of a knife that could fall on any given day based on the posturing on all sides of that Parliament.

We're not in a new situation where, as you said today, we could be in the throes of a federal election. We've been in that situation since 2008, quite frankly. As most people in this country know, it's been a debate going on in the media ad infinitum.

I want to ask you to consider the validity of that point, and then I want to point out to you, Speaker, that, since 2006, in this House, if I had a dollar for every time I heard the members on the government side tell us, "Pick up the phone and call your federal counterparts," and then have an ad hominem attack on the federal government, but by extension trying to include us in that equation, I wouldn't have to worry about my retirement fund, I can assure you of that, because it would be well funded.

Then, post your caution today, Mr. Speaker, the member for Peterborough, in what we all know are staged government questions—nobody is silly enough or naive enough to believe that the member for Peterborough wrote that question; we know they're staged government questions—handed off to the Minister of Education, to what? Talk about a situation in a state of the union of the United States of America and to try to draw a parallel to the opposition party in Ontario.

I'm asking you, Speaker, to reconsider your caution to us particularly today, because the point being raised by the member for Thornhill, with respect to the federal Liberal leader indicating that he questioned an act of this provincial Parliament and this provincial government and whether or not it was indeed democratic, is, in fact, I think a valid point, when the Minister of Finance has indicated that he thinks it's more important to be out campaigning for that Liberal federal leader than doing his job as the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you for reasonable reconsideration on that matter.

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** I join with the opposition House leader in his submissions to you on this broader area of the Speaker's comments earlier today about the inappropriateness of the politicization of question period.

**1140**

With respect, Speaker, question period is rife, it's rich with politicization, and there isn't a single election year that I can recall here—and some who have been here longer than I might refute that, but I doubt if they can—when, during the course of a federal election, or even after one, for that matter, or other provincial elections, that provincial members, provincial leaders, haven't been taken to task during the course of exchanges for what their federal counterpart may or may not have done or be doing.

When a member of the chamber or when a minister very publicly indicates that the minister will be campaigning for federal counterparts, then one questions why it is inappropriate to question that minister as to whether or not that minister adheres to or accepts the political position of that federal counterpart in contrast to the political position that minister's Premier might express.

So I suppose the problem is that we need some clear guidelines here. Once again, what's sauce for the goose has got to be sauce for the gander. The reference by the opposition House leader I listened to—and how many times have I heard Jack invoked during the course of question period, both in actual responses to questions and in exchanges across the chamber? Quite frankly, I want to tell you that New Democrats don't mind. We consider that type of questioning, the answers put and the content of those answers, to be fair in the context.

However, if the Speaker, if the Chair is going to find—and, again, the Speaker has that jurisdiction—that that is not an appropriate exchange, then, one, we have to know what the guidelines are. Does it only take place during the election period? Because we haven't had an election called yet, although everybody and their uncle is predicting one. Is it only during the election period, or is it acceptable throughout the rest of the year during a pre-election period?

These are the sorts of questions we have of you in terms of trying to be careful, as members, to not violate the Speaker's ruling.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Government House leader.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I don't often agree with the other House leaders, but I do agree that we don't live in a

vacuum. In fact, we have experienced three federal elections in our tenure here as government and you in this chair have experienced at least one, and we've survived, and so we leave it to your discretion and your judgment as to how you want to govern the House during this election period.

I would only note that, as the member for Welland noted, if one side is to do it, then all sides should be allowed to do it and that we should be looking at fairness more than at specific allegations from one side or the other.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I want to thank the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the member for Welland and the government House leader, as well as the member for Thornhill for the note that I received from him during question period on this issue. I can understand the need for clarity for all members within the House, and I will do that. I do want to do that, though, and I will do that on Monday, when we have a full House here—I didn't make reference to any specific member not being here—but to do that.

I will make the comment, and I will reiterate this clearer on Monday: Yes, we have been through federal elections, but within this chamber, let's deal with provincial policy.

I have to admit, and will comment further, that I too get troubled at government questions that get asked, particularly those government questions that start to question a position of one of the two opposition parties as well. I don't think that that is helpful. I would rather see a question asked specifically on government policy.

That question on the standing order—I hear the honourable members, two House leaders, regularly talking about standing order 38—is a challenge for the Speaker to deal with, and that is a challenge that every Speaker prior to me has dealt with.

I do also get the point being made about inferences being made to other jurisdictions as well, outside of Ontario. I will endeavour on Monday to provide some clarity for all members.

I thank the honourable members. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1146 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** In the gallery with us today are two amazing people in my life, constituency assistants Suzanne Bolton and Alyssa Meyer, who are visiting with us here today. I would ask members who know how important the roles of constituency assistants are to give them a very warm welcome.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'd like to welcome Georgina Bencsik, who is a constituent of mine and the vice-president of the Central Waterfront Neighbourhood Association. She's here to celebrate Ukrainian Heritage Day.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** I have the pleasure of introducing my brother and sister-in-law Robert and Linda

Martiniuk, my sister Rosemary Martiniuk, my nephew Timothy Martiniuk of Vancouver, and my nephew Patrick Martiniuk.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome a former member from the 32nd and 33rd Parliaments, representing the riding of High Park-Swansea, Yuri Shymko. Welcome back to the Legislature, Yuri.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CAMPING

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Every summer, many Ontario families go camping. Year after year, they find it an enjoyable activity synonymous with summer, sun and relaxation. At a time of increasing strain on household budgets, camping remains, for most families, a relatively affordable way to spend their vacation. But for how long?

Campgrounds are struggling to cope with the current regulatory burden. Consequently, they face mounting costs to implement the changes needed to comply with Liberal red tape. From septic systems required to be twice the size that's necessary, to lack of consultation from the Ministry of the Environment, to inconsistent policy from Hydro One, to the onerous propane regulation 440/08, to lack of access to financing, many campgrounds are struggling, and they wonder if this government is listening.

As critic to the Minister of Tourism and Culture, I was pleased to meet with representatives from Camping in Ontario, who were here yesterday at Queen's Park. They do an outstanding job speaking up for their membership. In September, I wrote on behalf of Camping in Ontario to the Minister of Consumer Services. I said I was concerned by the potentially harmful effect that propane regulation 440/08 would have on campgrounds and the Ontario tourism industry.

I sincerely hope the ministers of consumer services and tourism will start listening. As we approach the camping season, we will need this government to start paying attention and help keep camping affordable for Ontario families.

### CANADA WINTER GAMES

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I want to stand up and recognize two young athletes from my riding of London–Fanshawe for their outstanding performance at this year's Canada Winter Games: Samantha McIntosh and Kaylee Whitcroft, who, together with 14 other members of Ontario's ringette team, won gold at this year's games in Halifax. This is a wonderful achievement for these young women. I want to congratulate all the members of Ontario's ringette team for their success.

The Canada Winter Games are the highest level of national competition for young Canadian athletes. Held

once every two years, alternating between winter and summer, the games are crucial for the development of the next generation of Canada's athletes. At this year's games, more than 2,700 athletes competed in over 20 sports.

Ringette has been a part of the Canada Winter Games program since 1991. It's a fast-paced game that emphasizes skill and teamwork. Created in 1963 by a man from North Bay, Ontario, ringette is a truly Canadian sport.

Again, congratulations to the Ontario gold-medal-winning ringette team. Your performance at this year's games sets an example for the next generation of Ontario athletes. I wish you every success in your athletic careers.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Long-term care is on the brink of a crisis in this province, and although the McGuinty government claims all is well, the residents who live in the long-term-care homes, their families and the staff who care for them know better. They're making their concerns known through thousands of postcards that are being delivered to MPPs.

For the benefit of the Premier and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, here is what those postcards say:

"Dear MPP:

"I've sent you this card to let you know I support the teams that care for the 100,000 residents served each year in Ontario's long-term-care homes. From nurses and personal support workers to housekeeping and laundry staff, to food service workers and maintenance people, each member of those teams ensures a caring and safe home. They deserve our support.

"These teams play an important role in the quality of life and well-being of some of Ontario's frailest elderly. They are the dedicated people who provide care and service to residents all day, every day, yet these teams are threatened because government funding is not keeping pace with increasing resident care needs and regulatory demands.

"Please work to ensure there is appropriate funding to support these teams so they can continue to support Ontario's long-term-care residents. Thank you."

I'm calling on the government to listen to this appeal and make long-term care in this province a priority.

#### JOHN CARTER

**Mr. Michael Prue:** March 24 each and every year is Agnes Macphail Day in East York. We celebrate her birthday on that day, and we celebrate it by recognizing members of the community who have distinguished themselves in a way that would have done Agnes proud.

Every year, we have a guest speaker who talks to us about a number of things. This year, we are particularly proud that the guest speaker is our very own Clerk of the Legislature, Deborah Deller, who will be speaking tonight.

This year's winner is Dr. John Carter. He is a person employed by the government of Ontario. He is an expert in museums. He travels around the province looking at museums and telling the government what needs to be done in order to make them better, so that we can all appreciate them more.

He is a proud member of the East York Foundation and was on the East York local architectural advisory committee. He has been active in his union, OPSEU, here at Queen's Park. He was president of the federation of cottagers. He's on the local ratepayers' association. And if all that wasn't enough, he was one of the people instrumental in the founding of the Agnes Macphail Day committee in the first place. He has established some very good things in our neighbourhood: a park in her name and a street as well. He is a very formidable presence.

Everybody and everyone is welcome to come tonight to honour Dr. John Carter and hear Deborah Deller in her great speech that she's going to give.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I need to interject on this, and that is just to remind the members who Agnes Macphail was. She was the first woman elected to this Legislature. She was elected to this Legislature in 1943, and we need to be extremely proud of that.

Also, John Carter is the province's expert when it comes to barns in rural Ontario. John is a great expert when it comes to barns.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Do I detect a bias?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Speaker is not allowed to be biased.

#### YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAM

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I am pleased to speak today about a group of exceptionally talented young people in York South-Weston. Very recently, the Learning Enrichment Foundation hosted a great panel presentation competition for youth, boys between 15 and 18 years of age, who have been participating in their Biz Camp and young entrepreneur program. This program is sponsored by Alterna credit union and supported by local small business owners in the Mount Dennis neighbourhood. The young entrepreneurs program encourages youth to develop innovative entrepreneurial ideas.

This year, 12 participants pitched their new small business ideas to a panel of judges. They will have completed a business plan and be ready to start their own entrepreneurial project for the summer. The top three presentations were selected, receiving financial support to get their ideas up and running. I must say that being on the judging panel proved to be a difficult task, given the high calibre of the ideas that were presented.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the first-place winner this year, Rahul, for his scholars learning centre project; the second-place winner, Shlok; the third-place winner, Dhesaka; and Keary for an honourable mention.

I would also like to thank Jean-Marie Boutot of the Learning Enrichment Foundation youth host program for her wonderful work in engaging youth in our community.

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## STEVE AND LISA COOPER

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's certainly springtime and a time to celebrate agriculture as it will soon be planting season, although you wouldn't know it from yesterday.

Canada's farming community is blessed with an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. I'm pleased to congratulate a couple from my riding of Durham who exemplify these very qualities. Steve and Lisa Cooper are the winners of the 2010 Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers Award.

This award program, which began in 1980, recognizes young farmers under the age of 40 who exemplify excellence in their profession. They must demonstrate their production history, environmental stewardship, a contribution to the community and a keen financial acumen.

Steve and Lisa grow more than 30 different crops on their 250-acre farm near Zephyr. They raise goats and chickens and market directly to the public through a community shared agriculture program. In 2009, they had 460 families sign up for their community shared agricultural program, where families paid to receive a weekly basket of fresh goods from their farm.

Steve and Lisa are a wonderful example of innovation in agribusiness today in Ontario. Congratulations to both of them. They are helping to bridge the gap between field and plate, and also celebrate excellence and innovation in agriculture. I'm sure all of us will congratulate Steve and Lisa for their achievements in agriculture in Ontario today.

## DONWAY FORD

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I rise today to recognize and congratulate a local business in my riding of Scarborough Southwest, Donway Ford. On March 10 of this year, I had the opportunity to take part in the celebration of the reopening of the newly refurbished Donway Ford, which is located at 1975 Eglinton Ave. E. in Scarborough.

Donway Ford is owned and operated by Paul Lenneard and two other business partners and is an automobile dealership that sells many types of Ford vehicles. It also provides an array of services, from auto detailing to body shop work.

The company has a long and storied history in Scarborough. Donway Ford first opened its doors on April 23, 1958. After more than 50 years of serving our community, Donway Ford has grown to over 75 employees, and is still owned and operated by the second generation of families who started the company.

As the member of provincial Parliament for Scarborough Southwest, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the grand reopening of Donway Ford's newest facilities and wish the owners and the employees of the company continued success in the years to come. I know

that they will continue to flourish in Scarborough and represent Ford here in Canada.

## EDUCATION

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** Today I rise out of concern for public education in the province of Ontario. Many Ontarians have been following the situation in Wisconsin very closely, where teachers are losing their collective bargaining rights and are being portrayed in a negative light by the government. The opposition, when they were last in office, copied many policies from the then-Wisconsin government, and the results were devastating for Ontario: cuts to public service, closed hospitals, and labour strife with our teachers, resulting in the loss of 26 million school days.

We cannot allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated again, and I am afraid the current Leader of the Opposition, who has yet to reveal his plan for education in the province, will see what's happening—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member currently making a statement is using this time, which is usually shared in a non-partisan atmosphere, to actually provoke a discussion that you ruled on earlier today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. It's not a point of order, but I do remind all members that this is a time—and I don't necessarily agree with the member from Durham that statements have not been of a political nature on all sides in here, so I will not grant him that. But I do caution all members on drawing analogies between what is happening in other jurisdictions and comparing that to previous things that have happened in this province or might happen in this province. I don't think it's helpful to all of us, and I just remind members to be cognizant of that.

Please continue.

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** Thank you, Speaker.

We cannot allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated in this province, and I'm afraid the current Leader of the Opposition, who has yet to reveal his plan for education in the province, will—

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

## JOHN BOICH

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** It's with great sadness that I rise today to honour the life of the late John Boich, who tragically passed away last week.

John was a good friend of mine, and a good friend to anyone who believed in democracy and the importance of political engagement. He was a former educator, professional football player and co-chair of the Shape Burlington committee.

On March 2, Arlene and John were informed that he had been voted Burlington's 2011 Citizen of the Year for his hard work in civic engagement, a fitting and long-overdue tribute to this amazing man. John loved his community and had a real heart of gold.

Over the years, I came to see John as a gentle, giant man. A great storyteller, John could keep you spellbound as he spun a tale or two or three at a moment's notice. He always lit up a room with his warmth and humour.

The other side of John was equally appealing. He had the uncanny knack of always finding a way to shear through all the rhetoric and nonsense, while being genuinely helpful in the process. John tended toward seeing the best in people and, once spotted, encouraging everyone to lend expression to their unique giftedness. He mentored many of us.

May we all learn from the wonderful example that John set, and may he rest in peace.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Kuldip Kular:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on General Government and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 150, An Act to provide for the resolution of labour disputes involving the Toronto Transit Commission / Projet de loi 150, Loi prévoyant le règlement des conflits de travail à la Commission de transport de Toronto.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed?

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated March 3, 2011, the bill is ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2011

#### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION À L'OBÉSITÉ JUVÉNILE

Mr. Fonseca moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 170, An Act to proclaim Childhood Obesity Awareness Month / Projet de loi 170, Loi proclamant le Mois de la sensibilisation à l'obésité juvénile.

**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. Peter Fonseca:** Obesity continues to be one of the biggest threats to our economy. Childhood obesity is a serious social and economic condition that affects the health of millions of children. It plays a defining role in our children's health.

Proclaiming April as Childhood Obesity Awareness Month supports the work of a group called Transformation Inc. This group has a vision of conquering childhood obesity and related illnesses within this generation. It's a lofty goal, and I commend them for it. Heightening awareness about childhood obesity will have a significant impact on changing the future by creating a healthier and happier generation of kids. Therefore, this group—and I am very much in support—is pushing to make the month of April Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. This will deliver a message that we want for all our kids: to eat healthier and to participate in exercise.

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## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the House schedule.

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

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 58(b), when the House recesses at the end of the morning sitting on Tuesday, March 29, 2011, it shall stand recessed until 4 p.m., at which time government notice of motion number 55 shall be called.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that, during consideration of private members' public business this afternoon, in the event that Bill 155, An Act to proclaim Ukrainian Heritage Day, receives second reading, the order for third reading shall immediately be called and the question put immediately, without debate or amendment; and that, in the event that Bill 166, An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month, receives second reading, the order for third reading shall immediately be called and the question put immediately, without debate or amendment.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES**

NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE  
EDUCATION WEEK

SEMAINE NATIONALE  
DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT COOPÉRATIF

**Hon. John Milloy:** Today I invite all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me as we celebrate National Co-operative Education Week, March 21 to 25. This is a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge that co-op programs are an integral part of university and college education across the province.

Co-op education provides in-school theoretical learning with practical on-the-job learning and experience. It benefits employers, students, communities, the province and educational institutions alike.

Co-op placements help forge strong working relationships with employers and provide students with a source of income to help support their post-secondary education. They offer the opportunity to find inspiration and help young people make that important connection between their passion and a future career.

Co-op placements also give students a competitive edge in securing jobs in today's challenging marketplace. Our Open Ontario plan is helping to build the most highly skilled and educated workforce in the world, securing a strong economy for the future.

In Ontario, we have more than 45,000 co-op students, in partnership with 39 colleges and universities across the province. Students are learning key skills and earning great experience in a variety of industries, including finance, electronics, resource and manufacturing.

Ontario has thousands of employers involved in hiring co-op students across the province, companies such as Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd., Canadian Tire, CIBC Corporate, Cobalt Pharmaceuticals, Dell Computers, Google, Hillebrand Estates, Hydro One, IBM Canada, Niagara Tourism, Sick Kids hospital, TD Canada Trust, Research in Motion, and the list goes on.

Grâce à ces partenaires importants et à tous les autres, nos étudiantes et étudiants terminent leurs études avec des compétences utiles, prêts à contribuer à la croissance et à la prospérité de notre province.

The government of Ontario strongly supports post-secondary co-operative education. It provides operating grants to institutions that run co-op programs. The Ontario co-operative education tax credit, which we recently expanded, helps employers that hire students enrolled in a co-op education program at an Ontario university or college. The Ontario student assistance program provides support to students, including those in co-op programs. More than \$13 million is being invested for 32 co-op diploma apprenticeship projects across the province. This is an increase from just six projects when the program started in 2004-05. The government of Ontario also hires more than 250 co-op students every year.

So, in partnership with the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education and Education at Work Ontario, together with colleges and universities across Canada, we celebrate the success of our co-op students and graduates. I encourage employers and local communities across Ontario to invest in co-op education and consider hiring a student. They can go to the website ewo.ca to find out what post-secondary institutions offer co-op programs in their local area.

Once again, I encourage all members to support National Co-operative Education Week, March 21 to 25.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Responses?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** In response to the minister, the PC Party is very supportive of co-operative education here in the province of Ontario. We recognize that our college and university students are the future of our great province, and the PC Party has always sought to enhance employment opportunities that allow young people to lead productive and independent lives.

By combining academic studies and work experience, we know that Ontario's co-operative education programs benefit both students and employers. It gives students real-world experience and market-relevant skills. It makes it easier for students to make the transition from school to the workplace and it helps students earn money to pay for their own education. It also provides real economic benefits to employers and improved partnerships between businesses and educational institutions.

That's why, in 1996, we passed the Tax Credits and Economic Stimulation Act, which brought in the co-operative education tax credit. We did this to restore confidence in Ontario, create jobs and spur economic growth.

This initiative that we created, and that the minister is applauding today, encourages employers to provide more co-op opportunities to meet the demand while also ensuring that students can benefit from more placement opportunities.

But we could be doing even more for co-op students if this government wasn't redirecting hard-earned Ontario tax dollars towards foreign scholarships that are only open to foreign students. Ontario students need not apply.

The McGuinty government's foreign scholarship plan will award lucrative \$40,000-per-year scholarships to 300 foreign students while Ontario students get left behind. This is just more evidence of how out of touch Premier McGuinty's government is with the people it serves. This \$30-million foreign scholarship giveaway is an affront to Ontario families who are struggling to afford to put their children through college or university.

Just look at what our post-secondary students are faced with. Ontario not only has the highest tuition of any province in Canada; we also have the largest class sizes and the highest student unemployment rate in Canada. Instead of addressing those alarming numbers, Mr. McGuinty finds it easier to ignore the basics and create programs that no Ontario family asked for.

It's also clear that this government has an easier time making new promises rather than delivering on old ones. In 2007, Premier McGuinty promised in the throne

speech to deliver a \$300 textbook and technology grant to every full-time college and university student. When I asked the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities last year why the government is only offering half that amount to only a fraction of qualified students, the minister said that because of financial circumstances, the government had to break its promise.

Fast-forward eight months and the minister miraculously found \$30 million to give \$40,000-per-year foreign scholarships out, yet he can't find the money to pay for his promise to deliver \$300 to every Ontario college and university student for their textbook and technology needs.

It's obvious that Premier McGuinty is out of touch with the priorities of Ontario families. By introducing this foreign scholarship program, the government is turning its attention away from tremendous domestic challenges faced by post-secondary institutions.

In 2010-11, Ontario graduate students saw a 10.6% increase in tuition fees and undergrads saw a 5.4% increase. The \$6,307 average amount undergraduate students now pay is more than that of any other province. Class sizes in Ontario universities are also the largest in the country, with one professor for every 27 students—15% higher than the rest of Canada. Then there's the average debt of a university graduate last year, totalling \$26,680.

It seems that Premier McGuinty has lost all concept of how his grand experiments are affecting Ontario families who are saddled with extraordinary numbers. A woman from Guelph wrote this to me: "My daughter is in third-year university and it has been a financial struggle. She holds two jobs and is a full-time student, and as pensioners we can only help so much. The economy has impacted all of our lives, but we just get slapped with more taxes, such as the HST, so we can all struggle some more."

Mr. McGuinty doesn't seem to realize that families are worried about putting food on the table, paying the hydro bill, paying their rising auto insurance premiums and putting money towards tuition for their children at college or university. All of this has become a real struggle, as the lady from Guelph said.

In closing, I just want to reiterate what the leader of the official opposition, Tim Hudak, has said: that we will take all of that \$30 million that the government is giving away to foreign students only—again, no Ontario student need apply for those scholarships—and we will reinvest that money into programs like co-operative education, which is a success and which is something that we began with our tax credit to encourage, in a big way, employers in 1996.

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**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I have to admit that usually the announcements that are made by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities are an opportunity for me to attack his government—usually, but not today. I think today's announcement is a good announcement, something that New Democrats want to share with all the

people who work in the co-operative education sector, and the minister, in this regard.

The minister says it quite correctly:

"This is a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge that co-op programs are an integral part of university and college education across the province.

"Co-op education provides in-school theoretical learning with practical, on-the-job learning and experience."

This is something that is valuable to students and it doesn't matter where they are. The more of these opportunities we offer students, the better.

I often believe that there is too much theory in what students who have gone to university study and very little practical experience in the field, whatever field that is. I think if people had an opportunity to be in the field, they would know or discover whether or not they would actually like to be in the very field they're studying. The co-op experience gives them that opportunity to understand whether they like something or not, or to be able to move on into a different field. It's a good experience.

At the high school level, I often think that students are the ones who have to find the co-op experience, and in that regard it's a serious weakness, I have to say. We should be doing more at the school level and as a government, where we actually create an employment office so that we seek employers out, rather than forcing students to find employment opportunities. At that level, it's a weakness that I think should be remedied.

There have been concerns at the university level that have been raised by some, which I want to raise with the minister and something that he might want to consider. One of the questions that someone has raised is the following: Trying to get co-op students covered by the Employment Standards Act is something that some are seeking, but so far there has been very little movement on it. At some point, maybe the minister might want to comment on that.

And what does the Employment Standards Act deal with? It deals with a whole lot of issues connected to holiday pay, vacation, severance, exploitation of workers, wages, and if they're free of potential reprisals if they have a concern with an employer. That's something to look at and I think it's worthy of some study.

The other point that some have made is that they would like to try to get incentives for not-for-profit organizations to hire co-op students. I think it's a valid point. It would be good to get co-op students to have an opportunity to be in the not-for-profit sector and to understand what value some of those organizations have. I think we have 4,000 organizations in the not-for-profit sector. That would be something worthwhile by way of enhancements to that sector so the students can get there.

The other point that has been raised that I think has value is trying to get funding support for hiring of co-op students with disabilities. That too is something we should be looking at as a government. It has merit. I support that.

I wanted to raise those issues for the minister and his government to review in the future.

As it relates to this announcement, it's a good announcement today, and New Democrats want to support National Co-operative Education Week.

## PETITIONS

### PARKINSON'S DISEASE

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to present petitions from my riding of Durham, which read as follows:

"Whereas there are up to 40,000 Ontarians living with Parkinson's disease, many of whom require speech-language therapy to retain essential verbal communications skills and life-saving swallowing skills; and

"Whereas speech-language therapy can make the difference between someone with Parkinson's retaining their ability to speak or not, and their ability to swallow or not, yet most Ontarians with Parkinson's are unable to access these services in a timely fashion, many remaining on waiting lists for years while their speaking and swallowing capacity diminishes; and

"Whereas Ontarians with Parkinson's who lose their ability to communicate experience unnecessary social isolation and economic loss due to their inability to participate as full members of their communities; and

"Whereas it is the responsibility of the community care access centres to assign speech-language pathologists to provide therapy to people on the wait-lists, yet people are regularly advised to pay for private therapy if they want timely treatment, but many people living with Parkinson's are already experiencing economic hardship and cannot afford the cost of private therapy;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to call on Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to intervene immediately to ensure that CCACs across Ontario develop a plan to ensure that all Ontarians living with Parkinson's who need speech-language therapy and swallowing therapy receive" these treatments when necessary and where necessary as soon as possible.

I'm pleased to sign and support it and present it to Cherechi, one of the pages.

### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I keep receiving petitions about judges in Ontario.

"To the Parliament of Ontario and the Attorney General:

"Whereas the Canadian Judicial Council has been asked by Ontario's Attorney General to probe the judicial behaviour of judges; and

"Whereas judges are human beings and have been known to make serious mistakes in the judicial system, leading to devastating consequences and unfair justice for Canadian citizens; and

"Whereas some judges are known to have fallen asleep in the midst of a trial"—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It happens in this Legislature from time to time.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** If I can just get your undivided attention, please, that would be great.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Please read the petition.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** —"in the midst of a trial, have been observed making biased, disrespectful comments, and abused their judicial powers; and

"Whereas Canadian families need to be protected from these judges who are unable to change their habits, unable to follow the rule of proper conduct and unable to exercise recommendations set by the Court of Appeal, and consequently commit grave injustices;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens, are strongly requesting the following changes in our judicial system:

"(1) That a 'judicial demerit point system' be applied to ensure that judges are accountable for their judgments rendered;

"(2) That a yearly review of their performance be established by the Canadian Judicial Council."

I am giving my assent to this petition.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I have a petition from numerous people on the west side of my riding, in Concord West, Brownridge, Glen Shields and surrounding communities.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario and GO/Metrolinx are currently proposing the construction of a GO/Metrolinx intermodal station hub and parking lot on crown land (land registry PIN number 032320650) owned by the Ontario Realty Corp., land which adjoins to the east of the Concord West community in the city of Vaughan and has been in the community's traditional green space; and

"Whereas the land in question is ecologically sensitive and demonstrably part of the Bartley Smith Greenway; and

"Whereas safe access to this land and the said greenway by the Concord West community residents and seniors is needed from Rockview Gardens;

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

"That the McGuinty government transfer the subject land from the Ontario Realty Corp. to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority."

I agree with this petition, and I will sign it and give it to my friend Fatemah, a page from Thornhill.

### REPLACEMENT WORKERS

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



“Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: 97% of collective agreements are settled without a strike or lockout; and

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed those laws; and

“Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

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“Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout.”

I send that down with Emma to the clerks' table.

#### RAIL LINE EXPANSION

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Metrolinx, an agency of the government of Ontario, is planning an eightfold expansion in diesel rail traffic ... in the Georgetown corridor, which cuts through west-end neighbourhoods including Liberty Village, Parkdale, Roncesvalles, the Junction and Weston; and

“Whereas this expansion will make this” a very busy diesel rail corridor; and

“Whereas exhaust from diesel locomotives is a known danger to public health ...; and

“Whereas diesel exhaust poses an especially potent danger to children and the elderly; and

“Whereas diesel trains are harmful to the environment and contribute to climate change and are also heavy, loud and disruptive to neighbourhoods and local quality of life; and

“Whereas over 250,000 people live within one kilometre of this line and 30,000 children attend one of more than 200 schools within one kilometre of the tracks;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge the Legislature of Ontario to take action with respect to the immediate electrification of the Georgetown South rail corridor, including the air-rail link....”

Since I agree, I'm delighted to sign this petition as well.

#### OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to present another petition from my riding of Durham, which reads as follows:

“Whereas citizens are concerned that contaminants in materials used as fill for pits and quarries may endanger

water quality and the natural environment of the Oak Ridges moraine; and

“Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and” indeed “a duty to protect the Oak Ridges moraine; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario has the lead responsibility to provide the tools to lower-tier government to plan, protect and enforce clear, effective policies governing the application and permit process for the placement of fill in abandoned pits and quarries; and

“Whereas this process requires clarification regarding rules respecting what materials may be used to rehabilitate or fill abandoned pits and quarries;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that the Minister of the Environment initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the Oak Ridges moraine until there are” established, “clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to prevent” further “contamination of the Oak Ridges moraine.”

I'm pleased to sign and support this, and present it to Daniel, one of the new pages here.

#### HOME CARE

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I do have one more petition to the Parliament of Ontario and the minister responsible for senior citizens. It reads as follows:

“Whereas seniors who are disabled and/or ill are presently suffering at home; and

“Whereas the cost of a caregiver on a monthly basis who looks after a senior in their own home is around \$1,200, including room and board; and

“Whereas the cost of taking care of someone at home is at least 10 times less than the cost of a hospital bed; and

“Whereas most seniors with disabilities and/or illness are crowding an already overburdened health care system;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, strongly request that a basic government subsidy be established (based on a doctor's evaluation) which will pay at least a minimum allowance for a caregiver.

“Seniors deserve to live at home as long and as independently as possible.”

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, I'm enthusiastic about this petition. I'm signing it right now and giving it to Riley.

#### RURAL SCHOOLS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** “Petition to Save Duntroon Central Public School and All Other Rural Schools in Clearview Township:

“Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is an important part of Clearview township and the surrounding area; and

“Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is widely recognized for its high educational standards and intimate learning experience; and

“Whereas the frameworks of rural schools are different from urban schools and therefore deserve to be governed by a separate rural school policy; 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 rural schools open in Simcoe–Grey;

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

“That Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Education support the citizens of Clearview township and suspend the Simcoe County District School Board ARC 2010:01 until the province develops a rural school policy that recognizes the value of schools in the rural communities of Ontario.”

I agree with this petition and will sign it.

#### ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal government have continued to ignore farmers and have slashed support to farmers by over \$145 million in 2010 alone; and

“Whereas agriculture plays an important role in Ontario’s economy and deserves investment; and

“Whereas PC MPP Bob Bailey has introduced a significant tax credit for farmers” who donate surplus food to food banks “to help provide tax relief to farmers and assist local food banks; and

“Whereas over 25 million pounds of fresh produce is disposed of or plowed back into Ontario’s fields each year while food banks across Ontario continue to struggle to feed those in need; and

“Whereas, if the McGuinty Liberals truly support farm families and wish to fight poverty, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should immediately” call and “pass MPP Bob Bailey’s Bill 78;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call ... Bill 78, the Taxation Amendment Act (Food Bank Donation Tax Credit for Farmers), 2010, to committee immediately for consideration and then on to third reading and implementation without delay.”

I agree with this petition and will affix my signature to it and send it down with Emma.

#### ONTARIO PHARMACISTS

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Another petition from my riding of Durham, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government is cutting front-line health care at pharmacies, which could mean higher prices, less service and even store closures for us;

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

“Stop the cuts to front-line health care at our pharmacy now.”

I’m pleased to sign this in support and send it with Madelaine, one of the pages.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### UKRAINIAN HERITAGE DAY ACT, 2011

#### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DU PATRIMOINE UKRAINIEN

Mr. Martiniuk moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 155, An Act to proclaim Ukrainian Heritage Day /  
Projet de loi 155, Loi proclamant le Jour du patrimoine ukrainien.

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

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** I dedicate this bill to my parents, Timko and Helen Martiniuk, maiden name Kalapaca. As all their children are present in this chamber today, I can say how proud we are of our parents and their Ukrainian heritage.

I’m honoured to introduce this bill with the support of my colleague and friend from Oshawa, Jerry Ouellette, and my co-sponsors, my friend of many years, Donna Cansfield, member for Etobicoke Centre and a Canadian of Ukrainian descent, and Cheri DiNovo, member for the riding of Parkdale–High Park, a riding in which my family resided and lived for decades. This bill would see September 7 in each year proclaimed as Ukrainian Heritage Day.

The first official Ukrainian heritage immigrants, Vasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, arrived in Canada on September 7, 1891. Soon afterwards, Ukrainian immigrants began arriving in Ontario in large numbers. Today, Ontario is home to more than 336,000 Ukrainian Canadians. There are more than 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent across the country.

I have the honour of introducing a number of people who are present with us today who I feel should be recognized, because each of those persons, whether I name them specifically or not—the organizations and those persons have made this bill possible. Hopefully, it will pass later today second and third readings and become law.

Firstly, I neglected to introduce my friends from Oakville, Robert and Sandy Zacharczuk, who are here as my guests.

**1350**

Secondly, I'm honoured to greet the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Ontario Provincial Council, and its president, Yvan Baker. That council and Yvan helped considerably with the drafting of this bill, and I thank them for that.

Present is the United Nations Association in Canada, Toronto branch representative Georgina Bencsik; also, the Canadian Lemko Association representative, Andrzej Rotko; the Ukrainian National Federation of Canada director, Yuriy Serhijczuk; the League of Ukrainian Canadians president, Oleh Romanyshyn; the Canadian Friends of Ukraine, including the former MP and MPP Yuri Shymko, and the president, Margareta Shpir; Ukrainian Youth Association of Canada members Andrea Kardasz, John Koshyk and Harry Nezmasznyj; the Yavir School of Ukrainian Dance, including school administrator Marusia Perun; the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Toronto branch, including the president, Oksana Rewa; the Canada-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce, including the president, Zenon Potichny; Desna Ukrainian Dance Company representative Alexander Czoli; the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, St. Catharines branch, including members Maryann Kobzan and Alexandra Sawchuk; St. Vladimir Institute, including the president, Paul Strathdee; the Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society, including the president, Eugene Duvalko; the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Resource Centre chair, Lisa Shymko; the League of Ukrainian Canadian Women, including the president, Chrystyna Bidiak; and the Rt. Rev. Bohdan Bilinsky, chancellor of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Toronto.

Canada is a nation that has rightly been characterized as the pre-eminent multicultural country of the world, beginning from the very foundation of our great country.

On September 7, 1891, immigrants from the Ukraine began to arrive in Canada to write their own unique chapter in our nation's history. At the end of the 19th century, few in Canada had ever heard of Ukraine, for at that time an independent Ukraine statehood, free from ravaging colonial domination that was Ukraine's historic national tragedy, was still an elusive and future ideal. But the people of Ukraine have always known who they were.

The name Ukraine comes from the Slavic word meaning "to cut or slice." Living on the rich, fertile black soil of the steppes north of the Black Sea, the people native to the land were in constant conflict with invaders who were forever trying to take it from them. Since their land was constantly cut out and won back from the territories controlled by dominating nations, the name Ukraine became popular by the people of the chernozem or black earth.

This relationship to the land is also reflected today in the colours of the flag of national liberation: red over black, where black represents the black soil, and the red the blood of the people spilled on it for the sake of freedom and self-determination.

The tremendous importance of this relationship to the land in Ukrainian history is what gave shape to the

Ukrainian immigration to Canada. It was the promise of more agricultural land that led Ukrainians like Vasyly Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw to come to Canada on September 7, 1891. So began the first and most populous wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, which ended with the First World War and the arrival of 170,000 Ukrainians. Some 68,000 arrived during the second wave, from 1922-39, and about 40,000 for the third wave, from 1946-61. A fourth wave of Ukrainian immigration is currently under way, beginning in the early 1990s.

Since the Second World War, Ukrainians have tended to move to southern Ontario and Quebec. There are today more Ukrainians in Ontario than any other individual province in Canada; that is, 400,000.

Although separated physically from their ancestral homeland, Ukrainian Canadians maintained strong spiritual ties with it in their ongoing maintenance and development of their culture. Ukrainian Canadians have created institutions that showcase their culture, such as the Shumka troop, the world's elite Ukrainian dancers, and the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, which highlights the pioneer era of their forefathers. The world's largest Ukrainian egg was erected in Vegreville, Alberta, in 1974, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Ukrainian Canadians have also contributed to the culture as a whole. We all know and love actress and comedienne Luba Goy of the Royal Canadian Air Farce, singer Chantal Kreviazuk and painter William Kurelek.

In 1944, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress came into being, and that united the various social, cultural and political organizations of the Ukrainian community and spoke on their behalf with a single voice. The congress continues to serve the Ukrainian Canadian community with distinction, and I again welcome congress representatives to the House today.

Ukrainian Canadian scholars such as Dr. Lubomyr Luciuk have dedicated their lives to civil liberties and have paid particular attention to the study of the Holodomor, the man-made famine and genocide of Joseph Stalin that killed up to 10 million Ukrainians at the height of its terror in 1933. I am proud to say that both Ontario and Canada have officially recognized the Holodomor genocide and have formally established Holodomor Memorial Day, the fourth Saturday of November in each year, as a Canada-wide observance.

The Ukrainians have had more influence in Canadian society and politics than any other eastern European group. The late Ray Hnatyshyn was the first Governor General of Ukrainian descent. His personal coat of arms, which is on the certificate that created the arms for the Ontario Legislature building, which hangs before the grand staircase, bears the Canadian heraldic lion rendered in Ukrainian blue and yellow colours.

Other Ukrainian Canadian political figures include Gary Filmon, Premier of Manitoba; Roy Romanow, Premier of Saskatchewan; and Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta. Here in Ontario—unfortunately Steve had a prior commitment, but our Speaker, the Honourable Steve

Peters, is the first Ukrainian Canadian Speaker of our province. Our Speaker's family ties have a rich and long history that are woven into the very fabric of the Canadian mosaic, and I think I speak on behalf of all members when I say how proud we are of him.

My time is up and I have not completed, so I will continue speaking in a few minutes, once we do the rotation. Thank you very much.

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

1400

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** A couple of things before I make some remarks: First, the member from Parkdale–High Park, who co-sponsored this bill, regrets not being able to be here to speak to it; she's out of the country, and I did want to say that for the record. But she would have been, I suspect, a better speaker than Marchese on this particular subject.

Secondly, I wanted to say to Georgina Bencsik that I did introduce you earlier on, for the record. She's here today. And I want to welcome so many other Ukrainian-Canadians who are here to witness this debate and to witness our support for the bill.

The member from Cambridge gave a very good historical view of the Ukrainian community, in terms of where they came from and where they've gone, and commented on many of the successes of many Ukrainian-Canadians. I thought I would just touch on some of my personal history to Ukrainian Canadians.

Most of my life has been south of Bloor Street. I have mentioned this from time to time, and I say this with pride. I know that people kid me about not going too far beyond Bloor Street, but I have also stated that I moved to Lawrence and Bathurst, and I have done that successfully. I was a bit worried about my ability to be able to do that, but I've done it.

But having lived south of Bloor, I want to tell you where I went by way of high school, and that was Harbord Collegiate. At Harbord Collegiate, just west of Bathurst, we had a variety of different immigrant groups, and I think one of the largest groups at that time, in 1966, 1967, 1968, was the Ukrainian community, because they were one of the larger groups in my riding, including Polish Canadians, including Jewish folks who were in my riding—predominant before the Italians got there in 1956. We had many Greek Canadians, many Portuguese Canadians and now, predominantly, Chinese Canadians. It's an incredible mix of people, and this is where I met many of my Ukrainian friends at the time. One of my closer friends that I later met as a teacher was Ray Zarembo. It was fascinating to have met him as a teacher, because I never thought that was the profession he wanted. But he became a physical education teacher and is quite happy to have done that.

My other connection to the Ukrainian community was as a soccer player. I played soccer in high school, and many of the players were Ukrainian. One of my closest friends there was Stephan, and it was through him that I ended up joining the Ukrainian soccer team, if you can

believe that. I was the only Italian-Canadian on the team. I dare say I was the shortest member of the team, but clearly, they must have liked my ability. I was a defence-man. I wish that I could be as tall as some of the Ukrainian Canadians, because I would have been a great defenceman. But as it was, I did well and met many of the Ukrainian community and remember memorably one of the games we had in Rochester. I've never forgotten that game. We won it. I was happy; they were happy. It was a great day, and it was at that game—I believe it was at that game—that I learned the expression “jty dodomu.” I'm not sure it's pronounced correctly, but it means “go home.” That's the only expression I learned.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** Is that what they told you?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And it leads one to conclude that that's what they might have told me. That's not the case. But that's my experience with the Ukrainian community.

I want to tell you that the political representative in my riding during my high school years was John Yaremko, from the riding of Bellwoods. I was a high school student while he was still a provincial member. He retired in 1975. I was still not politically active yet. Little did I know that one day I might represent the same riding as John Yaremko. The boundaries have changed, of course, but—

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** You learned how to run playing soccer.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Right, right. But it's true. Running is part of the fun that I like to do. That's why I hate golf. Just standing in one little spot playing golf: That's not my game—I've said this before—but that's a different matter.

The point about Harbord Collegiate is that it was a school full of different communities. This country, like Harbord Collegiate, is a country of immigrants, and I am profoundly proud of the fact that we have many different communities—something that distinguishes us from many other countries in the world. I'm happy to say that most of us mix with other people and end up marrying individuals from different communities, which creates an incredible country that I speak of quite frequently as something one should be proud of. Mixing with other communities is a beautiful thing, and it does create one better race overall.

So to the Ukrainian community that's here, congratulations on your past, on the present successes many of you have achieved, and on your contributions to this great society. We welcome you here, and we, as New Democrats that are here, will be supporting this bill with great enthusiasm. Congratulations to the individuals who introduced this bill.

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

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** I'm pleased to be able to share my time with my colleague from Davenport. Also, before I speak, I want to let you know that the Honourable Jim Bradley, who is unable to be with us today, wants to identify his full support for Bill 155. Unfortunately, he's at a funeral, and I know that all our hearts and

our prayers are with the families of the firefighters this afternoon.

I am absolutely thrilled to be able to stand for a multitude of reasons, obviously as a Canadian Ukrainian, but also because—I didn't realize the member was going to have the bill in honour of his parents, but I have to admit that they were like my second parents. So this is, in particular, very special for me, and I thank you for the opportunity to share this, also with Cheri DiNovo.

As I hear about the history of Canadian Ukrainians and think about how difficult it must have been for someone to leave their country, their traditions, their food, their family, and travel across the ocean, land in Pier 21 or whatever it was called at the time and then travel to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario—wherever it might be—to me it is almost unfathomable. How do you do that? And yet they did, and aren't we grateful that they did.

You heard about one of the first: Vasyl. What we also know is that he was one of the first Ukrainians to receive an honorary Canadian citizenship in 1947 by the Supreme Court of Canada. The first member, of course, was William Lyon Mackenzie King, our Prime Minister of the day. But it spoke to his hard work, his tenacity and the fact that he had become an extraordinarily successful person by emigrating to Canada.

What's important as well is that we recognize the footprint left behind by these individuals and the influence and impact they have had on our lives for so many years. I would like to share a few of those with you. Ever been to an IMAX theatre? Guess what? One of the co-inventors was Ukrainian. Ever used a garbage bag? Guess what? A Ukrainian invented that garbage bag. Union Carbide took it over and called it the Glad bag, but actually it was invented by a fellow called Harry Wasylyk. He was the Canadian inventor. Harry Messel was a Canadian-born Ukrainian who went to Australia as a nuclear physicist and started the whole Science Schools project in Australia.

The literary work of Ukrainians has influenced our work here in Canada, and I'd just like to share this comment with you, because I found it fascinating how we forget about the impact of what happens with someone comes, for example, with their writing: "Because of its long history, richness, scope and diversity, Ukrainian writing in Canada offers much that is of interest to the scholar. It provides a brightly contrasting thread within the broad fabric of Canadian literature, and forms one of the most dynamic and expansive literary subcultures outside of English and French writing." Not only did they have their own literary society; they impacted and affected Canadian society, French society, all societies in terms of their writing, which made the other writing richer for being a part of it.

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It's important also to recognize that we have had people who have come to this country and set up places such as the Shevchenko Foundation, and the work that it has done throughout the years.

It's important to recognize as well that there still is work that is ongoing here within, and I give great credit to—and I know there's a guest here today, Irene Fedewicz from the Holodomor education committee. The work continues and is ongoing. They work through with our ministry, the Ministry of Education.

I'd like to acknowledge also Peter Kardash and Peter Tschenka of the League of Ukrainian Canadians in Etobicoke.

Here we are today, richer for these folks who have been here, for them coming in the first place and having the endurance, the tenacity and the willingness to create a new life with their families.

I had, this afternoon, the pleasure of sitting down and having lunch with my husband's ninth cousin. He found my husband through going through all of his ancestry—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Ninth?

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** Ninth. I thought to myself, "I just have to go home to Alberta and I can find all sorts of cousins in a heartbeat." That's how inter-knit that community is. Aren't we fortunate for it?

If you think about the food, the music—who hasn't been to see one of these dance troupes and thought, "Wow, aren't they incredible?" Who hasn't had a perogy or a pedaheh in their life? Chicken on a stick, long before it was called satay, was part of the Ukrainian culture. And guess what? It's now part of ours.

We have so much to be thankful for and so many people to say thanks to. I've mentioned some of them, but there are also those—I think of Jim Temerty. He has started Northland Power, but it's not just another company; it's in renewable energy. So the entrepreneurial spirit that came with the first settlers hasn't gone away. It's here within the fabric of this society and continues constantly, whether it's the richness through the culture or the richness through the business acumen that they have inherited from their ancestors.

Am I proud to have a little Ukrainian in me? Absolutely. I can make my holubtsi and really enjoy it, and I also am able to say with pride that the people who have come before me have indeed left an incredible legacy on which to draw.

In particular, and I say this—Rosario's around the corner. This is for Gina, right?

Thanks, Gerry.

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

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** I'm sharing my time with my colleague the member for Oshawa, and I'll just complete shortly my talk.

The great religious traditions of the Ukrainian people—

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** A point of order: Stop the clock for a moment.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** There are six minutes left, and we had arranged—Mrs. Cansfield said that she would give me six of her minutes and suddenly, Mr. Martiniuk was recognized. So I'm just wondering—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The honourable member is allowed to use part of his party's 12-minute time frame, which he's doing. Does he have his full time?

The honourable member from Cambridge.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** The great religious traditions of the Ukrainian people have made an equally important impact on Canadian life. The golden domes of the Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox churches frame the skylines of many cities across Ontario and Canada.

Here in Toronto, at the Saint Demetrius Ukrainian Catholic parish, there is a mural dedicated to our martyr, Blessed Emil Kowch, who was killed in a Nazi death camp for his work to protect Jews who came to him for help. His surviving daughter is often seen standing quietly beside her father's mural.

The Ukrainian Canadian community is today one of the most vibrant, colourful and integral aspects of the Canadian cultural mosaic. Its festivals and celebrations are attended and enjoyed by all Canadians who embrace the Kozak people of the black earth as they are embraced by them.

Canada has the honour of being the first country to acknowledge Ukraine's independent statehood, and in doing so, Canada was saying thank you to the many historic and ongoing contributions of Canadian Ukrainian people to their Canadian homeland.

I call on all honourable members today to join me in saying thank you to our Ukrainian Canadian community and in voting later today on proclaiming September 7 of each year as Ukrainian Heritage Day.

I should just say before my colleague takes over that there are two more bills to be heard after this bill, and the voting does not take place until sometime around 4 o'clock, which is quite a ways to go yet. I would invite any persons present to attend the reception in committee room 2—that includes members, of course, and members of the audience—for some light refreshment while we wait.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Thank you. Again, we'll go in rotation. Further debate?

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** Certainly, we want to congratulate Mr. Martiniuk, Mrs. Cansfield and Ms. DiNovo for introducing Bill 155, the Ukrainian Heritage Day Act, 2011. Of course, we're going to, hopefully, unanimously support this bill.

A special welcome goes to Mr. Yuri Shymko, who has been, as you know, a very famous MPP for many years. The reason I mention his name specifically is because I remember, on a personal basis, how many times together with him—and sometimes separately from him because of our party differences—we met with Ukrainian Canadians.

My first campaign manager was Ukrainian Canadian. I won and I kept on winning because we have very close ties with Ukrainian Canadians. But with Yuri—we were here on a number of occasions, but what I remember most is the raising of the Ukrainian national colours, because in those days, there was the Soviet Union. In

those days, Ukrainians did not taste freedom and liberty. So when we saw the flag, the Ukrainian colours, go up at city hall—that's how we first started—I looked around and I looked into the faces of Ukrainian Canadians and into their eyes, and I saw tears coming down, streaming down their cheeks, because they remember what they had left behind. They left behind their country. They left behind their families. They left behind their houses and their livestock. They left behind, really, a bit of themselves.

Could they ever go back? Ukrainians could never go back because it was dominated, at that time, by the Soviet Union.

Looking into their eyes gave me great inspiration and a great feeling for what they went through. Many times, Ukrainian Canadians were the leaders of those people who wanted to do away with the Iron Curtain. There were many times that they came before the Legislature. They were called black ribbon days, and, of course, the whole idea of those days was to present a view of Ukrainian Canadians to those who were in the Ukraine that they had someone here who they could rely on, they had someone here who could speak out for them because they could not speak. This great relationship—I understood somehow on a visceral basis what happens to a whole nation, what happens to a whole people when they are imprisoned, when they are in a situation where they cannot speak, where they cannot have freedom of conscience and they certainly can't express themselves. Here in Canada, of course, we became their voice.

Yuri, I want to thank you especially because you were one of the major people here in this Legislature who reminded us almost on a daily basis of what we almost forgot: the kinds of liberties that we can enjoy and the kinds of religious freedoms that we can have on a daily basis.

It is very important to understand that for the first time—actually, in 1987—we made a special proclamation here. I was minister of multiculturalism at the time and the Premier was David Peterson. We had the whole Ukrainian community here. We proclaimed the independence day of Ukraine at that time. How proud we were and how proud they were. What we said was this:

“Whereas the province of Ontario and the nation of Canada have prospered through” their courage ...; and

“Whereas we especially value the many important contributions that our citizens of Ukrainian heritage have made to our province and country since they first arrived in the 1890s; and

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“Whereas a free, independent, democratic Ukrainian state was established 69 years ago on January 22, 1918”—that was then; and

“Whereas the observance of this anniversary fosters within us a deeper appreciation of freedom, liberty and democratic ideals;

“Therefore, on behalf of the government of Ontario, we are pleased to recognize that”—in those days—“January 22, 1987, as Ukrainian Independence Day and commend its observance to the people of our province.”

Those were moments that reverberated across the whole world because we, in Ontario, for some strange reason—and some are here in this Legislature of Ontario—understood as Ontarians what they went through, what they felt and how free they wanted to become. They couldn't speak because many of them were in jails and many of them died for wanting to become independent. It is important to recognize how what we do in this place, how we speak in this place is, indeed, an important occasion.

I am reminded of the book called Toronto's Many Faces. I'm not going to tell you who the author is of Toronto's Many Faces.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Who's the author?

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** Well, it's Tony Ruprecht. Thank you very much.

The first paragraph in this book says, "Throughout Toronto, parks, monuments, and the brilliant cupolas and domes of Ukrainian churches reflect Ukrainian culture and tradition in the city. A statue of St. Volodymyr was erected in front of St. Vladimir Institute to mark the 1988 millennium of Christianity in Ukraine. Dedicated to freedom, a beautiful monument to the poetess Lesya Ukrainka is found in High Park, while the bravery of Ukrainian Canadian soldiers who fought in four wars is commemorated by the Ukrainian Canadian Memorial Park at Scarlett Road and Eglinton Avenue West."

In short, we want to thank our Ukrainian Canadian friends for being here and for helping us to celebrate not only on your behalf but on behalf of all Ontarians this special day.

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

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** Just before I begin, I would like to acknowledge a couple of individuals who are in attendance here as well.

First of all, Mr. Walter Kish: Aside from the Canadian Ukrainian Federation, he's also on the board of directors for the Ukrainian Credit Union, as well as the board of directors for the New Pathway newspaper. As a matter of fact, this individual spent two years in the Ukraine—I think it was 2004 and 2006—helping them strengthen their credit union.

Not only that, I'd also like to recognize a good friend of mine, Reverend Father Bohdan Hladio, who has joined us as well on behalf of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada from St. John's Orthodox Church in Oshawa.

I must admit, though, I've spent some time with Father Hladio for his 25th wedding anniversary, as well as coffee in his front room and on a regular occasion attending the blessing of the icons. I must say, Father, yes, I have your tapes. They're very good and I'll be sure to get them back to you next week.

I should give a bit of background. As a person with a name like Ouellette, l'histoire de ma famille remonte aussi loin que le deuxième bateau venu de France.

For our Ukrainian friends here, that would mean that with a name like Ouellette, the history of my family goes

back to 1604 to the second boat from France from Normandy.

As well, my father's mother's parents were Scottish, a Dewar, and Irish as well, an O'Neill. Now, ma mère on my father's father's side was First Nation. The Ukrainian part comes in with my mother. My mother's parents were Polish and, of course, Baba was Ukrainian. As I regularly say, that makes me Scottish, Irish, French, First Nation, Polish and Ukrainian and, just like everybody else here, Canadian. As I regularly say, love your country of origin but love Canada better.

I should give a little bit of background. Baba was born on September 27, 1901, in the Ukrainian town of Chlewczany. On December 16, she got on a boat in Copenhagen, where she came across—for nine days—on the Oscar II, and on Christmas Eve, December 24, she landed at Pier 21 in Halifax, just like many other Ukrainians coming to Canada—the famous Pier 21 in Halifax that brought so many immigrants to our country.

Baba had two brothers and two sisters. One brother had immigrated to Canada prior to her; he ended up in Alberta. His sister came afterwards and also ended up in Alberta.

When Baba came, she was supposed to go to Saskatchewan. Like many of the immigrants who came in, she was supposed to be for domestic help. When she got off the boat in Halifax, there were a large number of individuals there recruiting domestics to come and work all across Canada. So when she got on the train to head to Saskatchewan with her one bundle of clothes tied up in a sheet, she got off in Montreal, where she spent four years and where she eventually met my grandfather, whom I called Gigi. She arrived in 1927 and was married four years after that, eventually coming to our community of Oshawa.

There are a large number of other famous Ukrainians who should be mentioned as well. The members here and the attendees would know Bill Barilko, Dave Andreychuk, Mike Bossy and Johnny Bucyk. Many may not know that Ernie Eves has a Ukrainian heritage as well, or Dale Hawerchuk, Alex Trebek, Roberta Bondar, and of course The Great One, Wayne Gretzky—all individuals who have a strong Ukrainian background.

You see, the Ukrainian background—how shall I say this? [*Remarks in Ukrainian*—which means "my friend"—from Cambridge mentioned the agricultural background. The Ukraine was the breadbasket of Europe. The reason for that, which most people don't realize, is that the topsoil—how many know that the topsoil in the Ukraine is from 60 to 80 feet deep? Can you imagine that? We've got a couple of feet in good places in Ontario, but you've got 60 to 80 feet of topsoil in the Ukraine.

These individuals came to Canada. Baba was supposed to go to Saskatchewan; she ended up in Montreal, and she eventually came to Oshawa and settled down there.

We have a number of other individuals of Ukrainian descent from Oshawa who have historic, famous back-

grounds, such as the famous Michael Starchewsky. Michael changed his name later on. He was born of Ukrainian immigrant parents in the mining town of Copper Cliff, in northern Ontario. He later changed his name to Michael Starr.

For those who don't know, Michael Starr was elected in 1944 as an alderman, and in 1949 became the mayor of the city of Oshawa—Oshawa's first Ukrainian mayor. Not only that, but in 1952, he ran as a Progressive Conservative in a by-election in Oshawa and became an MP in Parliament. Later on, in 1957, Michael Starr, under the John Diefenbaker government, was appointed the Minister of Labour, the first Canadian of Ukrainian origin to achieve a cabinet post.

He also brought forward—and many people may not realize this—the winter works program. My colleagues to my left might be very interested to know that Michael Starr was also responsible for the introduction of the first minimum wage legislation in Canada. Not only that, but Michael Starr also was responsible for the creation of the vocational or community college system found throughout Canada.

He was very active in the Ukrainian community—very proud of it, as a matter of fact. He was the head of the St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Orthodox Church parish council in Oshawa, and was one of the founders and the first president of the local Ukrainian Professional and Business Men's Club.

These are just some of the individuals and the history that they have had within our community. This goes long and far. As I've mentioned, Pier 21 has a long history of bringing immigrants to Canada.

I mentioned Mr. Kish, who's giving back to the Ukraine, but there are many other programs that have taken place and have not been mentioned. For example, in 1991, I believe it was, through a joint agreement with the Ukraine on the centennial of the first Ukrainian coming to Canada, we brought forward a joint partnership arrangement whereby Ukrainian students participated in a Ukrainian parliamentary program. I had the pleasure to participate in 1998 and 1999, having a Ukrainian student coming to Canada to learn the parliamentary process here in Canada and taking that expertise back to the Ukraine, to share that with so many other parliamentarians around the world.

Oshawa has a long and proud history. We're listed as Canada's 15th-largest Ukrainian community. Not only that, but we have a number of Ukrainian halls and facilities: Odesa, which Father Hladio would know very well because that's his parish hall; Lviv Hall; and, as well, Dnipro Hall.

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One of the founders of Dnipro Hall is my uncle, Uncle Peter Kurylo. Uncle Pete is now 95 years old, and here is just a typical Ukrainian Canadian coming to Canada: an individual who worked at General Motors, never complained, loved his work, loved the opportunity to be here. For over 30 years he never missed a day of work in his entire life in Canada, and that's just typical of the

Ukrainian community contributing back to Canada. Not only that; he never visited the hospital until he was 92 years old. He's there now, and we're wishing him all the best that we can—a very proud and strong Canadian heritage coming from the Ukraine and giving back to our community. These are just some of the examples of the individuals who've made such a difference in our communities and my own community.

In the time remaining, I'm going to mention one story about Baba, whose maiden name was Matrona Jaremkowicz. As a young boy, I can recall my mom sending me down to the milkman—for those who remember the milkman. I went down to the milkman with the money in my hand and I asked for smetana. The milkman looked at me and said, "Smetana? What's that?" I looked at him and said, "Well, you know, it's the white stuff," and he said, "What is that?" And I said, "You eat it." He said, "What do you eat it with?" And I looked at him and said, "Petahe." And he looked at me and he said, "What is petahe?"

So lo and behold, here's a little guy going back up to the house with the milkman to explain about sour cream and perogies to the milkman so we could get her some smetana.

We're all extremely proud of our heritage, and I certainly hope we get the support of the House in passing this legislation. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Listening to all of these great speeches today, I have to say I had no idea that so many members of this House had Ukrainian heritage, but I should have known. I should have known by the passion with which they bring to this House the things they have to say.

We are here today to celebrate—and to support this bill, I'm sure—all things Ukrainian in terms of making the people of Ontario understand the enormous contributions that have been made by the people formerly from the Ukraine, but who now call Canada their home.

As has been said, we have an amazing mosaic of people from all over the world. From amongst the first and largest groups that were non-First Nations, non-English or Irish or French to actually arrive in this country were the Ukrainians, and they were extremely successful, as you have heard, travelling from one end of the country to the other. As a person who worked in immigration for more than 20 years before I became a politician, we met people who came from all over the world, but we also knew the history of this country and the great migrations that took place around 1900, when people primarily from the Ukraine and from eastern Europe—but mostly the Ukraine—were brought over by the-then immigration minister, Clifford Sifton.

That was the heyday of immigration to Canada. As many as 500,000 or 600,000 people came in a single year for years and years and years to populate the west, and indeed to come to Ontario. We remember with great fondness how most of western Canada was built on the



backs of labour of people from the Ukraine, and how successful they were, coming to a very harsh climate. We saw pictures when I worked in immigration of those first people who arrived, wearing rough clothes, living often in substandard conditions, their first winter or two in a frigid climate of 20 and 30 and 40 below zero, and the success that they made.

When they came here they brought enormous and wonderful traditions that everybody has spoken about here today, traditions we have all come to enjoy. Even somebody like me from Toronto has come to enjoy them as I travel around this great country, and even travel around this great city, particularly in the west end, when you see the magnificence of the churches. You see the inside, you see the dome, you see the intricate art, the iconography; you see the traditions that are great.

I love all of those things, but I have to tell you, what I love even more than all of those things is the food and the dance of the Ukrainian community. When I was a much younger fellow there used to be a thing called Caravan, and everybody in Toronto used to love to go to Caravan. You could literally travel around the world, which wasn't known to us as well as it is today, and you could sample the cuisine, the culture, the dance and the music. You could go from one place to another, usually two or three in a single night, and you could go to 20 or 30 of them with your passport. But you know, everybody wanted to go to the Ukrainian pavilion; it was number one. It didn't matter what other ones you saw; you had to see that one. If you didn't see that one, you had not really experienced Caravan.

I remember going to that and being blown away by the dancers, blown away with the energy and the sheer force with which they were able to dance these intricate and wonderful steps. They kept going and going and going. I think that's what impresses me most to this very day about the Ukrainian community, because you're all like that. You just keep going and going and going, and you're so very good at what you do.

I also remember eating the wonderful food. I'm a great devotee of holubtsi. They make them in many countries. I've had them from the Hungarian community. I've had them made in many places. I hope my Hungarian friends won't mind, but I really have never tasted any quite as good as those that are made by this community. They are undeniably the best.

So today we are here to recognize one of our oldest ethnocultural groups. We are here to recognize the enormous contribution you have made to this province and to this country, and the success you have passed down through generations to your children. You need to be very proud of yourselves, as we are of you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The honourable member for Cambridge has two minutes for his response.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** First, I'd like to thank my co-sponsors, Donna Cansfield and Cheri DiNovo. I'd like to thank each of the speakers who spoke in support of the Ukrainian Heritage Day Act: Tony Ruprecht, the member

for Davenport; Michael Prue, the member for Beaches–East York; my good friend Jerry Ouellette, the member for Oshawa; and Rosario Marchese, the member for Trinity–Spadina. In addition, I'd like to thank all individuals in the audience who took time out of their very busy lives, I'm sure, to come here today to support the passage of this bill. I congratulate you for the caring you have shown.

Again, I will repeat an invitation to all members of the House to attend, on the first floor, in the west wing, room 2. We will have a reception; I will be there, along with my co-sponsor and any other members who would like to attend. You're all invited.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** This concludes the time for Mr. Martiniuk's ballot item. We will vote on this item in about 100 minutes.

## DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2011

### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION AU DIABÈTE

Mrs. Mangat moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 162, An Act to proclaim the month of November Diabetes Awareness Month / Projet de loi 162, Loi proclamant le mois de novembre Mois de la sensibilisation au diabète.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Today, once again, I bring forward Bill 162, the Diabetes Awareness Month Act, which I believe will raise awareness about the serious nature of the disease known as diabetes.

Living with diabetes is not easy. In many cases, people must take insulin injections every day, which makes dramatic changes to their lifestyle. The serious nature of the disease doesn't affect only those who have it; their families and society as a whole are also affected.

#### 1440

In 2008, when I first moved Bill 113, the Diabetes Awareness Month Act, about 900,000 Ontarians had been diagnosed with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. In 2010, that number rose to about 1.2 million.

Diabetes and its complications cost the health care system over \$5 billion a year. This economic burden is expected to increase by 42% over the next decade. Complications resulting from diabetes can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and blindness. In extreme cases, diabetes can even result in the amputation of limbs.

There are two main types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is typically diagnosed in childhood or early adolescence. Type 2 diabetes generally develops in adults over the age of 40, but an increasing number of children are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Diabetes has a high rate of incidence among aboriginals, Hispanics, South Asians,

Asians and African-Canadians, and the 50-plus age group and lower-income families. Ontario has been working with stakeholders to provide programs, services and tools that are culturally appropriate and that build on innovative approaches for reaching these communities.

Moving beyond the statistics, the stories of people like Siva Swaminathan, who is in the members' gallery, east side, give us a good reason to take pause. I related her story when I sponsored Bill 113 in 2008 to declare the month of November as Diabetes Awareness Month. Siva continues to be a great community hero. Since being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, she took action to change her diet and lifestyle. She has improved her health and works to improve the health of those who are suffering from diabetes in her community. In addition to being the chair of the South Asian diabetes chapter, Siva has used her culinary training to design healthy meal plans for diabetics. Siva hosts "how to cook healthier" workshops for South Asian women.

Kalyani Bhattacharya is a 57-year-old woman who is watching us on TV today. She has been living with diabetes for 18 years. She has suffered several health complications, including heart attack. Kalyani is a strong advocate of early childhood diabetes awareness and always tells her three grown-up daughters and three granddaughters to pay attention to their diet, exercise more often and lead healthy lives. Kalyani is right in doing so because if children are taught at an early age the benefits of a healthy diet and physical activity, diabetes can often be avoided later in life.

It is my hope that by declaring November as Diabetes Awareness Month in Ontario, we can help to educate and encourage our young people to make healthy choices at an early stage so that the number of people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes can be reduced in future.

In 2008, I spoke to you of Deborah Gibson and her son Trevor, who are sitting in the members' gallery, east side. Trevor was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age three.

From an early age, Trevor was unable to take part in many activities alongside his peers. His day would consist of six blood glucose tests, five insulin injections, a careful intake of food, as well as exercise, with constant adult supervision. Now, at age 18, Trevor's diabetes is easier to manage, thanks to an insulin pump he received in 2006 that delivers life-sustaining insulin around the clock. This allows greater independence, which has improved the quality of his life dramatically.

A month dedicated to awareness can also draw attention to existing programs. One such program is offered by an exercise physiologist who is also sitting in the members' gallery, east side: founder of Zumba West Fitness, Shonna Turpin. Shonna offers pre-diabetic individuals in Mississauga and Oakville six months of free fitness self-management classes. Shonna knows firsthand the importance and the difficulties of maintaining a healthy lifestyle because diabetes runs in her family. She is taking action by making it easier for people to stay healthy through the classes she offers.

I'm also very proud of what our government has already done to educate the public and support patients with diabetes so that those living with diabetes can enjoy a higher standard of living. The diabetes strategy, introduced in 2008, has invested in self-management initiatives for individuals with diabetes or their health care providers. Expanding the province's insulin pump plan, creating a new electronic diabetes registry and several education programs demonstrates this government's commitment to helping diabetics manage their condition.

But it is important that we don't stop there. We must continue to raise awareness of this very dangerous disease. That is why I have brought this bill forward again.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of everyone involved with the Canadian Diabetes Association. This incredible group of volunteers, researchers and professionals is working to prevent and manage diabetes through education, advocacy and research.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Shonna Turpin, who is applying her knowledge and expertise to offer pre-diabetic individuals free healthy living classes.

Shonna; Siva; Jamie Davis, director from Versus Inc.; many members of the Canadian Diabetes Association; Deborah Gibson; and Trevor are seated in the members' gallery, east side, today. I would like to thank them all for their continued dedication to diabetes awareness throughout Ontario and throughout Canada. Let's give them a big round of applause.

I would ask all members of this House to support this bill.

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

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Let me begin by congratulating my colleague the member for Mississauga-Brampton South, Mrs. Mangat, for introducing this bill today which would, if passed—and I hope it will be—declare Diabetes Awareness Month in November of each year.

As a former health minister, I can certainly agree with what she said and attest to the fact that diabetes is a very, very serious chronic disease that, unfortunately, is increasing. It has a very dramatic impact on the lives of all those people who are diagnosed with it, as well as on their families and the rest of society.

**1450**

It's quite shocking to know that there are 1.2 million Ontarians who are living with this disease currently and that the number is expected to rise to 11.9% of the population by 2020.

I received a letter from the Canadian Diabetes Association, as I know other members did, and they are encouraging us to take this step, at a minimum, to raise awareness of the disease.

When you factor all the numbers in, it's estimated that one in four Ontarians will be living with either diabetes or pre-diabetes by 2020. Of course, that means that their quality of life is going to be impacted, and it also means

that the cost to our health care system and to our economy is going to be enormous.

There are a few issues here that we can definitely do something about. This is a preventable disease, and we have to do what we can to stop the increase in the number of people who have it.

What's so tragic about diabetes is that it is preventable. We know that individuals who have moderate to high levels of physical activity, who eat a healthy diet, who do not smoke and who consume alcohol in moderation have an 82% lower rate of getting diabetes. We keep saying that we need to eat healthy, that we need to exercise, and that we should stop smoking. It is so true. Health costs in this province could be reduced, and the quality of life for so many people could be improved. If we take a look at type 2 diabetes, if we were to live healthier, we could certainly see fewer cases in our province.

One only needs to look as far as these statistics to understand how absolutely pressing this issue is. We sometimes forget that there are complications associated with diabetes. It is responsible for 32% of all heart attacks suffered by Ontarians, 30% of all strokes, 51% of all new dialysis cases, 70% of all limb amputations in the province, and those who suffer from the disease will face annual costs for medications that are two to three times greater than the rest of the population.

I was pleased recently to meet with representatives from the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. The prevalence of diabetes in aboriginal communities, both on-reserve and off-reserve, is quite staggering. These friendship centres throughout the province are now partnering with aboriginal community leaders in an attempt to educate their members about the critical importance of healthy diets and healthy living. They were telling me that they've already seen great success simply by empowering people; in other words, educating them and raising awareness about making smart choices in lifestyle, in food and the need to exercise.

Our government did recognize the threat that was posed by diabetes. In 1995, Mr. Speaker, you will well remember, when you were Minister of Health you introduced the diabetes strategy, which was a five-year approach to prevent diabetes complications. We expanded the programs into southern Ontario, as we had already done in northern Ontario. In 1999, we initiated additional initiatives that were focused on children and also on the development of a primary prevention framework for type 2 diabetes.

There's more to be done. We not only need to treat the cases we currently have, but we need to focus on prevention. That's what this bill is all about. This is about educating our fellow Ontarians here in this province.

I hope that the bill will be passed, and I hope then we can use every method available to us to open the eyes and the ears of people in this province and provide them with motivation to re-evaluate their lifestyle.

I hope, most importantly, that children and teenagers, where we see increasing incidence of this disease, will

become more aware of the gravity of the disease and also recognize that they can be empowered to establish healthy eating habits and a healthy lifestyle at a young age.

I will support this bill. I want to, again, commend the member for Mississauga–Brampton South, Ms. Mangat, for her passion and her work on this issue, and to thank all of those individuals who have contributed information to this discussion and this debate.

Let's do what we can to raise the awareness about diabetes.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm just going to tell the member from Mississauga–Brampton South that I'm going to support her bill again. It's remarkable how kind she has been to her own government. Let me explain. We passed this bill on November 6, 2008—all of us; there wasn't even a vote. There was overwhelming support. It went to committee and it simply died there.

I looked at the member from Mississauga–Brampton South—composure, no recrimination, very kind to her colleagues and the Premier—and I thought that was so nice. If it was me, I don't know, I would be shooting bullets. I would be aiming a couple of guns, saying, "Who's stopping this?" But not her—

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** Rosie, you're not violent.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I try not to be violent.

I just want to read, for the record, the complexity of the bill, because surely it must have been very complex to deal with in committee. Let me read it for you. Article 1: "The month of November in each year is proclaimed as Diabetes Awareness Month"—complicated stuff; article 2: "This act comes into force on the day it receives royal assent." That's it.

I know it must have been very difficult to deal with in committee. I know that the committee must have been working very hard at many different issues, and they had probably feared thousands of amendments to this bill and that it would tie the committee up in so many complicated ways. They just couldn't do it—not in 2008, not in 2009, or 2010; two and a half years later, we're here.

The good doctor from Oak Ridges–Markham spoke to this bill; the now Minister of Children's and Youth Services from Etobicoke–Lakeshore spoke to this bill; my colleague from Nickel Belt and I said a couple of words. We all spoke very favourably to this. It's not complicated.

So we're here again debating a very, very simple issue. That's why it puzzles me that government just couldn't find it to proclaim it, to deal with it.

This bill is meant to bring awareness of a disease that has devastating effects, if not managed. That's pretty well what the member from Mississauga–Brampton South said earlier on, repeated by the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. We all have the same opinions on this. We pretty well know.

I know the member from Nickel Belt thanked the Canadian Diabetes Association, as did the member who introduced the bill, because they're doing tremendous

work. Other volunteers are here today, and other people who are solving the problem are here today. We know many of them are doing a great deal of work in this field.

The member from Kitchener–Waterloo, as did the member from Mississauga–Brampton South, talked about the devastating effects that diabetes has on First Nations people. We know that in certain age brackets of First Nations, one in three suffer from diabetes. It's devastating to a huge number of people in that community, and it goes on.

**1500**

The consequences of untreated diabetes can be dire, as has been stated. We know that people need dialysis because of kidney failure; there's blindness that comes with this; people have limbs amputated as a result of diabetes; strokes and heart attacks—all of these are elevated in people with diabetes.

What the member from Nickel Belt argued two years ago was that we need a comprehensive chronic disease management strategy to reduce serious complications, and we need a comprehensive health promotion strategy to limit new cases of diabetes. That's what we need. Awareness is nice; we need a strategy, and this comprehensive chronic strategy comes with governments. It doesn't come from any other sector; it comes with governments.

The member from Mississauga–Brampton South said we spend \$5 billion treating that disease. She said it two and a half years ago, and she said it today again. What do we spend on prevention? Eight million bucks; 1% of the budget. We know, and the member knows, we need to deal with prevention. The member stated we're spending \$5 billion that we don't have, and we don't have a comprehensive chronic disease management strategy.

We spend little on prevention. Why? I ask those staffers at the back, "why do you still do it?" I ask the ministers who are sitting here, why are you still doing it? I ask the backbenchers in the Liberal government, why do we do it? We know it. We know what we have to do, yet we do so little. It's just sad—sad to even have to debate it.

My colleague from Nickel Belt says chronic disease management strategies directly link to access to interdisciplinary care; that is, physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, nutritionists, dietitians, social workers, health promoters and many others. They all work together toward the best practice of managing the care of people with diabetes. Those interdisciplinary teams are found in community health centres, in aboriginal health access centres and in community-governed family teams.

My friends, there's much we can do. A number of other people have talked about different issues that we are dealing with. I had a bill that I presented, that I will reintroduce very soon, that talks about banning commercial advertising for food or drink directed at children under 13 years of age. Why? Because these children are incredibly influenced by commercials. What are these commercials about? They're calorie-rich, calorie-dense and nutrient-poor. That's something that we could do as a

government. Many, many children are eating the wrong things because of the direct influence of the commercials they watch on a daily basis. There's so much more that needs to be done. My colleague from Beaches–East York will soon articulate a few others.

I just wanted to say to the member from Brampton–Mississauga South, I'll be supporting you again. I hope your government does.

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

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I'm certainly delighted to speak yet again, some two years later, on this act introduced by the member for Mississauga–Brampton South, my seat-mate. Of course, this act is to proclaim the month of November as Diabetes Awareness Month.

I'm going to concentrate my remarks on type 1 diabetes, particularly type 1 diabetes diagnosed in very young children. Also joining us in the east members' gallery is Shana Betz, who lives in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham. She came to visit me last fall to tell me the story of Emma, her daughter, diagnosed at 10 months of age with type 1 diabetes. She certainly didn't acquire her diabetes from eating too many doughnuts or drinking soft drinks. We all know that type 1 diabetes is not actually preventable, but it can be well managed. The crucial thing, when your pancreas no longer produces any insulin, as is the case in type 1 diabetes, is that you manage the disease to the very best extent you can, to prevent some of the dreadful complications that have already been outlined today.

Shana came to visit me because she was quite concerned that as Emma approaches kindergarten in a couple of years—Emma is about to turn three—she will be very dependent on what happens in our schools in terms of the type of support that Emma will receive. She has an insulin pump. She will need blood glucose testing. If she exhibits any unusual symptoms, it may be a question of her needing some glucose to balance out her situation.

It is unfortunate that across the province, as I have been informed, various school boards take different approaches to how they assist children with diabetes. In York region we're fortunate. The York Region District School Board is one of the few school boards in Ontario that does have a fairly comprehensive policy toward children with diabetes. But in many places in the province, the type of assistance children need is simply not available, and a parent needs to negotiate. That's why this bill is so important.

We need to increase everyone's awareness about this disease and what they can do to help, and that includes personnel in schools. We need to demystify diabetes, to a certain extent, because the assistance that's required is really very modest. Any adult would easily be able to provide it.

That is why I've been urging our own Ministry of Education to introduce a more comprehensive provincial policy. New Brunswick has done this—there is an expectation of assistance to children within the schools—and I would very much like to see that. As I earnestly do

hope that this act proceeds to committee, this is the type of amendment I would be very interested in introducing to see a uniformity across our school system in terms of the assistance given to children.

This is an extremely important disease. We've heard how it is increasing in numbers due, certainly in part, to the increase in obesity, poor nutrition and lack of physical exercise. Whatever the cause, we need to minimize the complications. We need to take this situation very seriously here in Ontario.

I also would like to commend all our visitors for all the activities and work they've been doing, as well as the Canadian Diabetes Association.

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

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Certainly, we'll be supporting this bill for all the right reasons. But I have to say to the member for Oak Ridges–Markham that she must perhaps be more frustrated than the rest of us, being a former medical officer of health and a member of the government caucus, and not being able to convince her own Minister of Health and her own government of the importance of doing something about this issue.

It's almost to the day that we debated a bill here that was tabled by our colleague Mr. Levac. I well remember that bill. It was Bill 5, an Act to establish a bill of rights for pupils with diabetes. It was in the context of that bill that I was in touch with Shana Betz as well. Shana had a group at the time—I'm sure it's probably still functional, is it?—called Diabetes in Ontario Schools. They had conducted a survey, which I read into the record during debate of Bill 5, and that survey of parents from across this province—if nothing else, the information contained in that survey surely should have moved this government to action, and that bill didn't even go to committee. That bill had second reading here, and it died. The reason that it died is because this government is satisfied to just give private business hours some debate. Individual members, with all due respect, are well meaning and they'll put out—after this is passed today, you will see the press release and you'll see how the Legislature of Ontario supported this initiative, and then nothing will happen. Although perhaps in this case something might happen because it is the second time here and all we're really doing is asking for a month to be designated Diabetes Awareness Month.

1510

But I say to you that that is not enough; in fact, quite frankly, it's an insult to the many people in this province who suffer with this disease and who have children in schools, schools that don't know and don't have the ability or the resources to ensure that the very basic support for them is provided in the classroom. Children come home at the end of the day and parents are frustrated because their child perhaps was on the verge of death because something as simple as monitoring that child has not been done in that school.

It's fine to recognize that we have to be aware, but it's much more important that this government do something

about this issue. We need not only to pass legislation here that says we're going to recognize things, but that we're going to solve them.

The Minister of Finance is going to stand up in this place and we're going to hear about a budget. He'll tell us how the province is in wonderful shape, thanks to their good management, and to stakeholders they'll say, "We can't do what you're asking us to do because we're in tough and dire financial straits." As with any other issue, it's a matter of priority, because this government, in the short time they've been in business, has more than doubled the debt of this province, and what do we have to show for it? Are we better off in this province than we were seven years ago? Are people with diabetes better off today than they were seven years ago, notwithstanding the doubling of the debt?

**Interjection:** Yes, they are.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** No, they're not. The member says yes. I want you to talk to the parents in the galleries and ask them if they're better off. You may say that we're spending more money, but the question is, where is that money going? What we have to do, and what I'm asking and hoping that this government will do, is look at issues like this and prioritize where that money is going and ensure that it goes to issues like this that can in fact prevent many more serious issues that are much more costly. This is called investing in our children and investing wisely.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** To the people in the audience and to the people watching TV, you will probably hear a lot of angst coming from people on this side of the House, and that is because we feel the same frustration, I'm sure, as the honourable member who put the bill forward today. Private members' bills very seldom become law. That's because in all of the committees there is this rule that they will not allow them to proceed to committee hearings and to third reading without the government's say-so.

There are some very good bills brought up by all members of this House, excellent bills that never see the light of day, and this is one of them. So you can see that, after two and a half years, we're back doing it again. Why there is any controversy about this bill, I don't know. I have no idea why this government will not allow it and probably 25 other bills to go forward that would assist the people of this province.

Having said that, this government, and I'm sure the members opposite, will vote today to send this to committee, where it will probably die. But what is it that's in their power that they will not do? That's what I want to talk about today.

Next week, there's going to be a budget. Next week, the finance minister is going to stand up, and I will all but guarantee you that there will be very little in that budget that will assist the cause of keeping people away from diabetes.

You have heard from some of them—and it's absolutely true—that if you live in a First Nations com-

munity, if you live far away from a big city, you are probably many times more likely to get diabetes in your life than if you live here in Toronto.

There's a reason for that. If any of you ever have the opportunity to travel to remote communities, those that don't have a railway or a road going into them—mostly First Nations communities up and around James and Hudson's Bay—you will see that the food is flown in. You will know, if you go into that store, that an orange or an apple costs about \$2 or \$3 each—not a bag; each. And you will know that you're not likely to see, through most of the year, any fresh fruit or vegetables at all. You will know that if there's something for your kid to buy, the only thing that costs about the same in that store as it costs here in Toronto are potato chips and soft drinks. That's the only thing.

You wonder why those kids get that. I remember having the debate with the Minister of Health Promotion, who's here today. She talked about how their government is starting to send in fresh fruits and vegetables so that people in those communities get them twice a month. But we know, and the Health Council of Canada knows, that you should be eating them five times a day. If there's any wonder why diabetes is rampant there, there ought not to be.

On April 1 this year, this government, in its wisdom, is going to cut out the special diet allowance for all pre-diabetic conditions. That's what they're going to do next week. That's the answer.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** That's not true.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Oh yes, it's true. It's been removed from the list and the money is not going to be there for that condition anymore. So is it any wonder that people are going to develop this condition?

If this government is truly serious, they'll do a lot more than vote for this private members' bill that they'll kill in committee. They will actually take some action to make sure that the people of Ontario are healthier and safer, live longer and have more productive lives, because in the end, it's way cheaper to give people fresh fruit and vegetables than it is to pay for a full-blown diabetic condition.

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

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** I'm proud to rise in support of the member from Mississauga–Brampton South's Bill 162. I appreciate the comments that have been made by some of my colleagues in the House.

Let's just set the record straight here about private members' bills. We went around the horn a couple of times on the insulin pump bill, you may recall; we brought that back.

There have been other bills. I have a bill that passed without a dissenting vote in this House to make defibrillators available in all public buildings. Maybe we should have some sort of rule around here that any bill that is almost a no-brainer, for which there's no dissenting vote, must come back to the House for third reading.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** Let's make it clear. It's the House leaders together who decide what private members' bills come back to this House. The House leaders together vote on that. They cut the deal one way or the other on the bills.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ted McMeekin:** Anyhow, I'll go back to my substantive remarks, because I've obviously touched a sensitive nerve here.

We all own this problem. Nobody is guilty, but we're all responsible. Let's own up to that. I'll own up to that. Let's all own up to that.

Anyhow, I am pleased. I want to say for the record—some people know—I'm a type 2 diabetic. I discovered I was a diabetic as a result of a community clinic awareness day. The little kid wouldn't get his finger pricked and somebody said, "Well, Mr. McMeekin is not afraid to get his finger pricked." That was the beginning for me. Thank goodness. I was fortunate that that happened because I had to change some significant things in my life, and I work at that.

**1520**

One of my co-workers has a son who's a juvenile diabetic, and they had a heck of a time. I remember going away to Mexico with them for a week, and they had to call home twice a day because they were worried. That situation found some useful resolution when this House voted unanimously, for the second time, and it was finally approved, to provide insulin pumps to juvenile diabetics. There are things we have to do when our lifestyles change.

I'm very fortunate; I'm married to a family physician who's always on my case about what I should be doing. She fortunately offers me a lot of tips, some of which I take and some of which I ignore. I'm not going to talk about the obesity part. I'm working on that. That's something where the exercise is really important, right? In my case, I can lose 30 pounds and still have 30 more to lose, right? But we're working on it, in any event.

I'm really thrilled to be the sponsor of Canadian Diabetes Association Day at Queen's Park on April 4. This bill will, in fact, make it a lot easier for us to be about the important process of educating Ontarians.

It may come as a bit of a surprise or maybe even a shock to a couple of members opposite who talked about nothing happening, but I can tell you, as a diabetic, that there have been all kinds of good things that have been happening, like the \$741 million that are being invested in the diabetes strategy. That may be insignificant to some folk in this House but it sure as heck isn't insignificant to me and a number of others who have to deal with this disease every single day.

I was impressed with the stats that the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, a former health minister, shared about the consequences. I live in dreadful anticipation of some of those things befalling me, which is why I take it so seriously, and everybody in Ontario should.

They can't take it seriously unless they know about the disease and what they can do. We need to spend a lot

more time, I agree, dealing with things like obesity, making sure our kids are fit; making sure they know how to respond to a crash or a spike in blood sugar. There are people around who can help us do that. Fortunately, they're there.

Most people know about diabetes, but they don't always know about the symptoms and the causes. Having a full month dedicated to this, as the honourable member opposite has suggested, is a very good step.

Let's change the process around here so these things that we all agree on that just make common sense become the law of the province.

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

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** First of all, I want to take this opportunity to welcome members from the Canadian Diabetes Association, who are with us today, and other partners in the fight against diabetes.

In Ontario, approximately 1.2 million Ontarians live with diabetes every single day. This number is anticipated to increase to close to two million over the next decade. Diabetes is a huge health issue, not just here in Ontario but throughout Canada and, in fact, throughout the world.

According to the Canadian Diabetes Association's annual report, diabetes currently costs Ontario approximately \$5 billion per year. Without increased efforts to prevent diabetes, annual costs may reach \$7 billion by 2020.

Diabetes is a chronic disease with serious consequences, including devastating health effects on our population and escalating financial costs to our health care system.

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness, end-stage kidney disease and amputation in Canadian adults. It is also a significant cause of cardiovascular complications, hypertension, stroke, cataracts and glaucoma.

The government of Ontario is taking a number of steps to address this very important issue through the Ontario diabetes strategy, a four-year plan focused on prevention, management and treatment of this debilitating disease.

Prevention of type 2 diabetes is important. The risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced by more than 50% through nutrition and lifestyle interventions. It is crucial to continue to expand the critical prevention work we have to date. Cross-sectoral collaboration is also crucial to addressing this very serious issue. Education, raising awareness, making healthier food choices, engaging in daily physical activity, not smoking, and adopting healthier lifestyles are also important in the prevention and management of diabetes.

Through the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, we have an EatRight Ontario program, which is providing Ontarians with free access to registered dietitians via telephone and through an integrated website to provide important nutritious education and further raise awareness about this disease.

We know there is more work to be done, and we all have to work together and join hand in hand in fighting

the debilitating effects of type 2 diabetes, and diabetes in general.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Mrs. Mangat, you have two minutes for your response.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I would like to thank members of all three parties for supporting Bill 162, the Diabetes Awareness Month Act, 2011. Specifically, I thank the members from Kitchener–Waterloo, Trinity–Spadina, Newmarket–Aurora, Beaches–East York, Oak Ridges–Markham and Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, and the Minister of Health Promotion and Sport, for their insight and thoughtful comments.

We have seen significant advances in our ability to manage and treat diabetes. Despite these advances, I strongly believe that education, awareness and prevention remain the most important tools for the management of diabetes. That is what Bill 162 is all about: awareness and timely prevention. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The time for Mrs. Mangat's ballot item has expired. We'll vote on this matter in about 50 minutes.

#### DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH ACT, 2011

##### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS DU PATRIMOINE NÉERLANDAIS

Mrs. Witmer moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 166, An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month / Projet de loi 166, Loi proclamant le mois de mai Mois du patrimoine néerlandais.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** It is an honour and a privilege to rise in the Legislature today to speak to Bill 166, An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month. I want to warmly welcome all those who are here today and those watching this debate on TV. I'd like to extend a special warm welcome to the consul of the Netherlands, Arie Plieger, who is here today, and also to Wilmar Kortleeve, the president of Dutch Treat, which is a social and cultural organization. Welcome.

Dutch Treat actually does a lot to keep the Dutch culture alive, and each year they celebrate Sinterklaas-feest with Sinterklaas, which is very similar to our Santa Claus. I appreciate their contribution to doing that.

I also want to acknowledge Jacob van der Laan of Burlington, who is watching this debate on TV. For many years, Jack has spearheaded efforts through the Canada Netherlands Friendship Association to strengthen the ties of friendship between the two countries and keep alive the history of the sacrifices made by Canadians to liberate the Netherlands. There will once again be a celebration this May in Burlington to do exactly that.

**1530**

I want to acknowledge and thank the co-sponsors of this bill: the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex,

Maria Van Bommel, who like me was born in Holland, and the member from Parkdale–High Park, Cheri DiNovo. I also want to recognize the other two members in this House who are of Dutch descent: first, my colleague Ernie Hardeman, the MPP for Oxford, and of course my colleague the Honourable John Gerretsen, the member for Kingston and the Islands.

I'm also pleased that all three parties in this Legislature are going to support third reading passage of this bill today, thereby allowing our province to declare May as Dutch Heritage Month in Ontario.

The month of May is appropriate because every year on May 5, the people in the Netherlands celebrate their independence and their liberation, as well as the heroic efforts of the Canadian Forces and the pivotal role that they played in liberating Holland, with a national holiday known as Liberation Day. The Dutch will eternally be grateful to the Canadians for playing such an important role in their history. Even today, Dutch children are taught about the very significant, important role that our Canadian Forces played in the liberation. When our soldiers have returned to the Netherlands, they have always been hailed as heroes.

In fact, I would say to you personally that when we first came to Canada, my mom and dad were new to Exeter. They went into a local butcher shop and there was a person called Fred Darling. Well, of course, he recognized that they were Dutch and he told them that he had been one of the soldiers who had been there for the liberation. They hugged and they kissed, and until the day that Fred Darling passed away, my mom and dad had a great friendship with that man because they were so appreciative that he had been one of the liberators.

The month of May is also the time when tulips bloom, and tulips have become the symbol of the friendship between Canada and the Netherlands—a friendship, I will say to you, that has grown stronger over the years. Princess Juliana first sent tulips to the city of Ottawa as a token of her gratitude for the safe haven and hospitality the Dutch royal family received while living in Ottawa during the Second World War. Indeed, her daughter, Princess Margriet, was born in Ontario during that time. One million tulips now bloom in Canada's capital each year. Thus, by proclaiming the month of May as Dutch Heritage Month, the province of Ontario recognizes and celebrates the bonds of friendship established in 1945 between Canada and the Netherlands.

This bill also celebrates and recognizes the significant contributions that Dutch Canadians have made to the growth and prosperity of Ontario, particularly in the economic, political, social and cultural fields. Today, Ontario is home to about 500,000 Ontarians of Dutch descent, and there are roughly one million Dutch Canadians in Canada.

The Dutch first came to Canada in the early 1800s. However, Canada became a strongly favoured destination of choice after the Second World War, during the period of 1950 to 1955, when large numbers of Dutch citizens made the crossing to Canada, including a number of war brides of Canadian soldiers.

It was during this time that I arrived in Canada from the port of Rotterdam with my mother, father and brother. My mother tells me it was a rough trip of seven days on the ocean in a ship called the *Vollendam*. We landed in Halifax at Pier 21, as did so many other immigrants.

My family came with little in the way of material goods, but they came with that desire to work hard to provide a better life, a better future and more opportunity for their children. Work hard they did as they settled in Exeter, Ontario, doing whatever job was available and sometimes working at two or three jobs at a time in order to support their family and put food on the table.

I want to thank my parents for the sacrifices they made for me, as many other immigrants have done for their children.

I know that my mother is watching today. She just turned 90, and I just want to wish her a happy birthday.

Many of the immigrants who came after World War II settled in rural Ontario and found jobs in the agricultural sector. They quickly adapted to their new country, Canada, and they became involved and respected members of their communities. Many of the descendants of the original settlers still remain in these rural communities throughout Ontario to this day, but many others, like myself and my brother, have relocated to urban communities.

Today fewer Dutch immigrants come to Ontario, but, like the original immigrants who made the journey, the modern-day immigrants come with the same entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic and the desire to contribute to our great province and our great country. I would say to you that like all the previous immigrants, they soon come to love this country with their whole heart, as our family did, and consider themselves Canadians.

Today, I'm proud to say that the province of Ontario and the Netherlands are close and reliable partners. We share innovation, ingenuity and creativity. We share common values and goals, and we work together to produce, innovate and build. Whether in the sphere of the green economy, engineering, architecture, urban planning, agriculture or sustainable development, we work together to create more prosperous and healthier communities. We share expertise and experience. Our governments and private sector firms collaborate to work co-operatively in the global economy.

There are also strong ties and partnerships between the universities in Ontario and the Netherlands. This includes a recent partnership between McMaster University in Hamilton and the university of Maastricht to develop a program of global health. It is intended to educate the leaders who will work in global health in the future.

We are very fortunate to have both Ambassador Geerts in Ottawa and Consul General Horbach in Toronto, who actively support and encourage the partnerships between business and also are involved in the maintenance of the Dutch cultural traditions in Ontario and Canada. In particular, they were very involved in the recent celebrations to commemorate the 65 years of friendship between our two countries. These celebrations included a very strong emphasis on the pivotal role our



Canadian men and women in uniform played in securing freedom for the Dutch people. As well, in many Canadian cities we had “Go Green, Go Dutch, Go Bike” bike rides to focus on the environment, health, bike safety and bike infrastructure.

By passing this particular act and proclaiming May as Dutch Heritage Month in Ontario, we will be able to recognize those special bonds of friendship between Ontario and the Netherlands, and we will also be able to recognize the contributions of Canadians of Dutch descent to the growth and prosperity of our great province. We not only will be able to look back to our history, but we will be able to look forward to our shared future as partners and as friends.

Again, I thank all those of Dutch descent who have played a significant role in the growth and prosperity of Ontario. There are so many that I couldn't possibly name all of the individuals.

I also want to thank the co-sponsors of my bill.

I would ask you to give your support today in order that we can recognize this group of people and our shared friendship and partnership.

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

1540

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I rise very much in support of this bill and I thank the mover for moving it.

As I stand here—and I hope I don't tear up. My father died two years ago. He was one of those thousands of men and women who fought their way through the streets and canals of Holland. He instilled in me his love and admiration for the people he met there, because when he got there, it was after that horrible winter, before the liberation, when the people were starving, when they had been reduced to total poverty, when many of the buildings in which they lived had been reduced to rubble and they had very little or nothing, except an enormous hope that they would soon be free.

He had a very strong pride in Holland and in the Dutch people. He had that pride and was overjoyed when the pride that he had was reciprocated to Canadians, particularly after he came back to Canada in 1945. He ended the war in Germany, not in Holland. He often told me of stories of all of the countries where he was forced to fight and that he had visited as a young man.

As a young man, he took me to Ottawa for the first time to see the tulip festival. I think I was about 15 or 16 years old, and I had never been to Ottawa from Toronto. It seems so close today, but it was so far away in those days. We went to see the tulips that were a gift from a grateful nation.

My father often talked about wanting to go back to Holland. In fact, almost every time I would see him throughout my entire life, going to visit, he'd always talk about Holland and always say that one day he wanted to go back. He lived till 88 years of age, but unfortunately, he never got back there.

But it has been my privilege to go back for him. I've been there twice. It's an amazing place. It's absolutely

wonderful. Anyone who has never been there, you deserve an opportunity to go to see a beautiful country. I mean, it doesn't have too many hills or mountains or things like that; it's pretty flat. But it is absolutely pristine and beautiful for the length and breadth of that place. If you travel by boat up and down the canals or along the rivers or in the Zuiderzee, you will see amazing architecture. You will see beautiful countryside. You will see trees and orchards and farms. You will see water. You will see places of culture.

If you have an opportunity to go into Amsterdam, you'll probably see one of the most vibrant cities on the entire earth. It is a place of great culture and of freedom and of the mixing of peoples.

That is what I have experienced here with the Dutch in Canada as well and, in fact, when I have travelled around the world to those places that were formally part of Holland, like Indonesia. If you go there and see the Dutch influence and what was left behind, if you go to little places in the Caribbean, like St. Maarten, and see the influence and what was left behind, it was all good.

So we who live here in Canada and who have known the Dutch for our lives, know of them as people who came here with a huge work ethic, with a real desire to make this their own country, with a real desire to share with us the very best of their own culture. And I have to say, they often do it in a very quiet, unassuming way. You would sometimes not even know of their Dutch ancestry, but very subtly you would be influenced by the things they had to say.

I know when I was a boy, my father's friends, many of whom were soldiers and buddies he had met in the army, were married to Dutch women. It wasn't till I was a little older I discovered the reason why is because they had met them in Holland and had sent for them or brought them back as war brides. They were all, I remember in my youth, such wonderful women who spoke so very well and who looked after their children so incredibly well.

This is a bill that needs to pass. I did not know that the member was hoping to get third reading today. I had not been informed of that. Usually you have to seek permission from the whip in order for to you vote that way. But being unaware, and he not being here, I can give you every assurance that, whether I'm supposed to or not, I will because I think this needs to pass. I don't want for this to be stuck in a committee somewhere as so many other bills are.

There is absolutely not a person in this province that I am aware of, not a soul who would resent that this bill became law, and certainly many, many hundreds of thousands of people of Dutch ancestry want it to pass.

I also have to close with a statement that I am a very proud member of the Royal Canadian Legion. I'm an associate member because I was never a soldier, and I'm a member because my father was and because he had served.

There is a huge love for the Dutch people, a huge sense of pride and accomplishment that one can hear, no

matter what Legion branch you go into in this entire country and certainly in this entire province. If they have one thing for which they are proud, and universally proud, it's the role that Canada played in Holland.

When you talk to the men and women who were there, when you talk to the sons and daughters of those men and women, unfortunately many of whom are now deceased, you will know that this is a sense of overwhelming pride and commitment that each and every member of the Royal Canadian Legion shares.

I thank the member for bringing this forward. I will vote for it on second reading, and if it gets to third reading, I will vote again. Thank you very much for bringing it forward.

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

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** First of all, I want to thank Ms. Witmer for asking me to cosponsor this bill. I feel very honoured to have done that as we both share our Dutch heritage.

Certainly, as she has said, the real Dutch love affair with Canada began during and after the Second World War. My own family came here in 1948 on the *Kota Inten*, which was a troopship. At that time, the men were at one end and the women and children at the other and everybody slept in hammocks. They came across in March, it was a really awful trip. Everyone was just simply glad to arrive at pier 21 in Halifax.

My husband René's family came in 1957. By that time, passenger liners were bringing them, and he came on what was known as the *Maasdam*.

My mom was always a great storyteller. One of the things that made doing the dishes—and I'm the oldest of 10, so you can imagine the amount of dishes that that implies—was the fact that during dishes mom would tell her stories. She certainly told her stories about being in Holland during the Second World War, about the hongerwinter, about the soldiers coming and the vlucht. My mom left with her mother from their home. They were forced out of their home, and they lived with other Dutch families waiting to return. She'd tell the story of waiting for the Canadians, and a rumour had already come out that the Canadians were coming. She said that on about the third day she started to worry that maybe they weren't. But she said, "True to their word, there they were."

The Canadians were so trusted by the Dutch and so embraced by the Dutch that when it came time, at the end of the war, when the country was so wartorn and families started to look for places to move to, as Ms. Witmer said, Canada was the first choice. That was simply because we had links there.

My own grandfather, my mother's father, was a kloppenmaker. He made wooden shoes. My mother never had anything but wooden shoes until her wedding day, and on her wedding day she got leather shoes. Three days later, she got on the *Kota Inten* to come to Canada with her new husband. On the way, because it was so rough on the seas, there was an event that led to her losing her nice

leather shoes, so she got off the boat in her wooden shoes. She tells us about this all the time. There she was on pier 21, and she was so proud that she had these lovely shoes, and she still had to wear her wooden shoes to get off the boat.

**1550**

That was the kind of thing that we heard about as children—and the fact that our parents wanted to come here so badly. We've heard so many stories—and we heard earlier today during the Greek independence festivities—about immigrants coming here with nothing in their pockets. I think that could be said of every nationality: that so many of our ancestors immigrated here with nothing in their pockets.

I think the one thing that can be said of Canada is that we are not a melting pot; we are a quilt. We are a beautiful quilt of many colours and wondrous shapes that have been stitched together to become a blanket for those who need it. That's what Canada is to many of us.

As Ms. Witmer said, the majority of Dutch immigrants settled here in Ontario. They pursued many careers—teachers, doctors, nurses—but the majority started their lives here in Canada as farm labourers and working in hospitals and factories. But from there, they grew.

When Mr. Prue was talking about the affiliation and the love that the Legion has for the Dutch, I think they also have a pride in where the Dutch have gone since they came here, and I think they share in that, as we do. I'm also an associate member of the Legion, just simply because I was taught by my parents that we owed them that. We have a debt to Canadians and to Canadian soldiers for what they did for our home country.

If I look in my own riding, I see that a number of my constituents of Dutch descent are farmers. They certainly brought their love of growing things like tulips here to this country. The concession roads are dotted with mailboxes that all have Dutch names on them. As you go along, these are now third generation, as is my own son, and a lot of them are still on the original farms that their families bought. They grouped together and created a credit union in our area called the St. Willibrord Credit Union. This was a way of helping each other, in a co-op, to become farmers and to own their own properties. Now they're very successful families, who are third generation with multiple brothers and sisters, all operating in farm operations.

The Dutch have a great sense of humour, I think. We may be quiet about it, but we always tease each other and say, "If you're not Dutch, you're not much." We certainly enjoy laughing at ourselves.

I am very proud to have been asked to participate in this and certainly very proud to have been asked to be a co-sponsor of this bill. I certainly feel that there is a special bond between Canada and the Dutch nation, and I think a heritage month is very appropriate.

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

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I am so pleased to stand in support of my colleague and friend the member for

Kitchener–Waterloo. She's doing for her community what I would expect of her, because she so typifies the strength of character that I have come to know is really emblematic of Dutch Ontarians and Dutch Canadians in general.

My ties to Holland are tenuous but not zero. First of all, I can tell you that there are Shurmans in Holland to this day. I've had the pleasure of visiting the country and visiting some of my relatives and have enjoyed every moment of it and taken an interest in the country as a result.

Further to that, as members know, I represent a riding that is one of the most—if not the most—diverse ridings in the entire country. One of the things the last four years has given me is an opportunity to look first-hand at the cultural backgrounds of people who have come together, all of us from different lands—being separated from them by one, two, three generations, whatever it happens to be—to preserve them and at the same time integrate those cultural elements into the Canadian fact. Dutch immigrants to Canada have had such a vibrant history of community building and civic responsibility, and that's one of the reasons I'm sure my colleague got into this business in the first place. This bill honours those Dutch Canadians who have added and enhanced the Canadian experience for so many of us.

We have a spate of these bills setting aside days or weeks or months to honour different cultures. We heard one earlier this afternoon on Ukrainian Ontarians. Now, we're dealing with Dutch Ontarians. A couple of months ago, I, together with the member for Trinity–Spadina and the member for York West, were successful in getting a bill passed to honour Italian Ontarians. I think these are important things to do. When you have a province like this, where, really, the only people who can say that they were originals are Native Canadians, we have to set people aside and direct something in their way by way of a week or some sort of recognition to honour their contribution.

The 2006 Statistics Canada census recorded 1,035,965 people of Dutch origin in Canada. Think about that: That's about 3% of the entire population. I, like many in this Legislature, had parents who immigrated to Canada from Europe, all of them—my parents and everybody else—seeking a better life in Canada. I think I can say with agreement from everybody here and everybody I know that they found a better life, and that we all continue to contribute to making it so. I have a full appreciation for the struggles that many immigrants have endured in order to come to our country and enhance their lives.

One of the things that occurs to me when I think about Dutch Canadians is that about 15, 16 or 17 years ago, I learned how to fly an airplane. I learned from a young girl, 21 at the time, who came from a dairy farm in southwestern Ontario. Her mother's side was entirely Dutch.

I had the pleasure of going to that farm and seeing how a modern dairy farm works, and I was informed at the time that a lot of people who settled in our midst from

Holland wound up gravitating towards southwestern Ontario, and very particularly into farming and dairy farming. Lest anybody think, when you say the word “farmer”—if you're not a person who has visited a farm or knows about farming, farmers are not people who ride the turnip truck; farmers are people who are educated, and no more so than people of Dutch origin who have gone into this business. And it is a business: agribusiness.

That farm watered crops on the basis of satellite feeds to computers. My pilot friend's dad was a bachelor of science graduate from Guelph University.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Whoo-hoo!

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you very much, Guelph.

Mom considered this farm business very much a personal thing, and it was entirely family in orientation. The Dutch side of it settled in the second migration, which was between 1923 and 1930, where we saw settlement here in Ontario, in Alberta and in British Columbia.

There's a lot of significance to what the contribution is from Dutch Ontarians; there will continue to be, undoubtedly. My time is up, so I'll say simply this: I'm proud to be a supporter of this bill and I look forward to its passage later today.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's a pleasure again to speak to another bill, Dutch Heritage Month, that is very similar to the one we dealt with about an hour ago, Ukrainian Heritage Day.

It is really a treat to listen to the different stories from different members. What you realize is that, unless you are a refugee—and refugees have a different experience than other immigrants—the rest of us have really talked about the same kind of immigrant experience. It was fun to talk about Italian Heritage Month just about a year ago, and we've done the same with the Portuguese. We do the same with so many other different communities. That is the remarkable beauty of what we represent here as MPPs and just as a community.

There is no one singular identity, but there is one Canadian identity made up of a multiplicity of linguistic and racial communities, and it's just beautiful. I just get excited every time we talk about our differences, because as we do we realize how similar we are.

**1600**

As I talk about the issue of Dutch heritage month—for me, everything is personal; how do I relate to the different communities? The way I relate to the Dutch is through soccer. I'm a big Italian fan, obviously. So when the World Cup and the European Cup come, I'm just there. So immediately, my relationship to the Dutch is through soccer players, and there are quite a number of greats. I had to think of the many greats I could remember, and where I couldn't, I called my son, Michael Marchese, who filled in.

Who are these greats? Well, we have Rafael van der Vaart; Ruud van Nistelrooy; Jaap Stam, a defenceman—I forget whether he played for Inter Milan or Juventus;

Dennis Bergkamp, a well-known striker; Edgar Davids, a great player who used to play for Juventus; Edwin van der Sar; Patrick Kluyvert—a long-time national soccer scorer; and Arjen Robben: great soccer players. That's how I relate to you guys, because you are strong opponents of the Italian team.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** We beat you most of the time.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** From time to time you beat us, but it's not usually the case.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Most of the time.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Don't get carried away.

The other relationship I have with the Dutch is that my son, Michael Marchese, has a partner—they bought a house a year ago—and she's half Dutch. Her name is Angela Westelaken; a delightful person, happy to have her in the family. They're not married yet; they might at some point, given that they bought a house. They could potentially at some point. But I'm happy to have met Angela, and my son is quite happy with her.

These are the relationships we build with people on the basis of so many contact points. This is what Ontario is about; this is what Canada is about. It's a wonderful thing to be part of, and as I said earlier, this is our identity and when we mix them together we create one hell of a race. Congratulations.

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

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I'm very pleased to speak to this bill as well. It brings back so many memories.

I, perhaps a bit unlike the other members of Dutch descent, came here a little bit later on in life. My dad always used to call me a half-price Canadian, because when we got on the boat on June 8, 1954, I was 11 years old and when we got off the Ryndam in Montreal I was 12. We settled in Kingston shortly thereafter.

Of course, the one thing I remember quite vividly is that I finished all of my grade schooling in Holland. I finished grade six. I think they gave me a special exemption in the last two weeks of June to actually finish it.

But what I do remember very vividly and very correctly is that far as the Dutch history books were concerned in those days, the liberators of Holland were the Canadians. With all due respect to the Americans, the Brits and what have you, in the Dutch history books, the Canadians liberated Holland.

I can remember my mother telling me—I was about three or four years old when the war actually finished—that she remembered so vividly the Canadian soldiers coming into our city. I was born in Hilversum; my parents were both born in Amsterdam. Hilversum is one of the few places that is actually above sea level. We always used to call it the Hollywood of Holland. It's where the communications, radio, television and movie industries are located. As a matter of fact, as a youngster I sang in a radio choir, believe it or not, once a week for a good three or four years. These are all very vivid personal memories that I have.

One of the things my mother always tells me is that she can remember what the Canadian soldiers did as they

came down the main street—we lived on one of the main streets; my dad had a store there at the time. They were handing out, dare I say, cigarettes and chocolate.

The other picture that we have is that right after the war you would have these neighbourhood celebrations, and for some strange reason I was the child that cut the ribbon that actually started the festivities that day. Now, I have no idea whether that's got any connection with my political career, but there it is, for whatever it's worth.

I had the great privilege of being part of the Canadian delegation in 2005, as minister responsible for seniors, at the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Holland events. I can remember going to cemeteries, like Holten, and there are so many others, particularly in the southern part of Holland, where tremendous fighting took place in 1944, where literally thousands upon thousands of graves are there that have young Canadian soldiers in them.

I was extremely moved by all that because I was told of situations, for example, where on Christmas Eve children from those communities still to this day, three or four generations later, light a candle at each and every gravesite of each and every soldier, and there are thousands of them buried there.

I always believed that one of the reasons why there is such a great interaction between Canada and the Netherlands is that we're both mid-sized powers. We're not quite up there with the big guys, but we both feel that we have an influence around the rest of the world because we are a balanced people.

I think what the Dutch always pride themselves on is the ability to look at both sides of an argument and, yes, come down on one side or the other, and sometimes it's not necessarily the same side, but that's the way we view ourselves. We've always been sort of regarding ourselves as the negotiators in the world, the kinds of people that try to bring a consensus amongst people.

May is a very appropriate month. On April 30, which is actually the day before May 1, the queen's birthday is always celebrated. With Queen Juliana, who was the queen for many, many years after the Second World War, who followed her mother, Queen Wilhelmina, that was April 30, and current Queen Beatrix has kept that date.

It's followed, as has already been mentioned by Ms. Witmer, on May 5 by Liberation Day, but there's a very significant event that takes place on May 4 at 8 o'clock in the evening. That is the time when the whole country comes to a standstill and we remember the tremendous sacrifices that the Canadian soldiers, by and large, made to liberate us in Holland.

When I think of my parents—and I haven't got much time left—they were 40 years old, like so many of the other people that we've talked about, other immigrants as well. They came to this country—and we didn't have to come; quite frankly, we had it quite good in Holland, comparatively speaking, to the rest of the Dutch population. But what they always felt was that this was the country where they could give their kids—and there were three of us at the time—the best possible start in life.

That's why they came here at age 40 without speaking a word of English and with all of the things and all of the problems that people initially have, without, I might dare say, any government support in those days. But they made it, like so many other people from so many other countries. That is truly what has made this province and this country great. We're all the beneficiaries of that.

I'm very pleased to be part of this, to be able to speak today on the contribution that the Dutch have made to this province in declaring the month of May Dutch Heritage Month. I'd like to thank the mover and seconder for moving this forward.

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

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to have this chance this afternoon to speak in support of Bill 166, the Dutch Heritage Month Act. This idea was originally initiated by my colleague the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. I want to commend and congratulate her, and also acknowledge the co-sponsors of the bill.

This gives me the opportunity to talk about the contributions of Dutch Canadians, the contributions they have made and continue to make in our communities and in our country.

When I think of the courage and the character of the Dutch people who came to live in Canada after the Second World War, I'm reminded of a Dutch family I have come to know quite well: a young couple who together survived the hardships of the war and the occupation, and we know how the people of Holland suffered. When it was finally over, they were blessed with two children.

Like so many of their neighbours, they dreamed of a better life in a distant land, and they made the decision to come to Canada, but when they arrived here, in 1951, their dream of a better life was almost shattered. After arriving in Halifax during the month of March, a four-day train trip to Alberta followed. The train cars had no heat and they had no winter clothes. Fortunately, someone had insisted that they take the blankets from the ship so that the children could be kept warm on the long train journey.

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When they arrived at their destination, a farm near Lethbridge where they had been offered work, their new home was little better than a shed—one room, no running water, no kitchen, no washroom, scant furnishings. They were all expected to work, even the children aged four and three, tending a 12-acre field of sugar beets. The work was manual, hard—horrible, even. It became more than they could bear, and when the chance came to move once more, this time to southwestern Ontario, they were back on a train, this time heading east to Ontario.

With the help of a local church, they were welcomed into a new community, and it was their faith and the love and mutual support of the family that allowed them to make it. They made this new community their own, contributing to it and to the province of Ontario as a whole in more ways than I will go into this afternoon.

With all the hardships they endured, all the challenges they overcame, all of it was worth it. Like so many who came to Canada from the Netherlands, they did it for the sake of their children. Their story is not unique. Many Dutch families had the same experience. And this beautiful, wonderful lady I know, who just celebrated her 90th birthday, told me this morning how proud she is to be able to say that she is a Canadian.

This family and stories like theirs make me proud to say that I'm a Canadian. That's why I'm very pleased to speak in support of Bill 166, which recognizes the more than half a million Dutch immigrants who have made Ontario their home. Dutch Canadians have made important contributions to the life of our province, from the essential role Canadian soldiers played in the liberation of the Netherlands to the enduring friendships we see today. Dutch Canadians know how to be loyal to their roots and traditions while at the same time being very proud Canadians.

Many Dutch Canadians have become farm leaders here in Ontario. Think of the Holland Marsh near Barrie, or, closer to home for us in Wellington county, the hundreds of farm families of Dutch descent who strengthen our community.

And so I want to congratulate the many Dutch Canadians who are making such a difference in our communities, one of whom is our very own member for Kitchener–Waterloo. Coming here with their dreams and a willingness to work hard and sacrifice much, they realized their dreams, and in the realization of those dreams, Canada has been enriched and strengthened, helping to make us the best country in the world.

*Remarks in Dutch*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Further debate? Frank—the honourable member for Newmarket–Aurora.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I think you should put some time back on the clock here for me.

I'm honoured to have just a couple of minutes to speak to this. First, to my colleague the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, I want to say through you to your mother: happy birthday.

An immigrant as well, we celebrate our origins and our cultures.

I want to tell the member who made reference to Holland Marsh that while in fact it was Dutch settlers, the term “Holland Marsh” was not because of that. It was actually named after Major J.A. Holland, who was not Dutch. But it does consist of 7,000 acres of reclaimed land in the Schomberg River Valley. John Snor, the Canadian representative of the Netherlands Emigration Foundation, visited that area in 1931 and proposed that in fact Dutch settlers should go there. As a result of that, the pioneer Dutch settlers did end up there, and we know it now as the breadbasket of Ontario.

A number of farmers joined that settlement: the families of Voorberg, Verkaik, Snor, van der Kooij and Rupke. In fact, it was Jack Rupke who nominated me when I first ran as a candidate in 1995 for the PC Party.

So I suppose I'm very much a part of the Dutch family, and certainly in terms of my political life I claim that background.

Last year marked the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Holland by the Canadian Armed Forces. Reference has been made to that. As is the custom, the Dutch Canadian Association of Greater Toronto and the consul general of the Netherlands hosted a Thank You, Liberators conference last year, held on May 8, to express their gratitude to Canadian veterans for their sacrifice. Mr. Evert Akkerman of Newmarket, the association treasurer and conference coordinator, said at that time, "I thank these veterans, my parents thank them, my grandparents thank them; my country thanks them." Mr. Akkerman is also involved in the documentation of stories by Canadian veterans who helped liberate Holland. As he said, "These soldiers spent years away from their families. They won us our freedom. I'm still impressed that Canadians went. What happened in Europe was none of their business."

It is an honour for me to support this bill to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month. This act of the Parliament of Ontario will be a historical way of saying thank you to Ontario's Dutch-Canadian community for its many historic and ongoing contributions to our province and our nation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The honourable member for Kitchener–Waterloo, Mrs. Witmer, has two minutes for her response.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** Let me begin by thanking the members for Beaches–East York, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Wellington–Halton Hills, Kingston and the Islands, Thornhill, Trinity–Spadina and Newmarket–Aurora.

I think one of the points that has emerged today is that there are extremely, extremely strong bonds of friendship between Holland—I should say the Netherlands—and the province of Ontario and Canada. I think we can see that those bonds of friendship began as a result of the Canadian forces playing such a pivotal role in the liberation of the Netherlands at the end of World War II. Like some of the speakers here today, I've heard many, many stories about the hardships that the Dutch people endured during World War II and also the joy and anticipation they had when they heard that the Canadians were going to be liberating their country. My dad was a member of the Dutch underground, and so he was personally involved in the war.

As well, we have heard about the contributions that those of Dutch descent have made to the province of Ontario. Many of them who first came were involved in agriculture. But in more recent years, we've had many, many people who have made contributions: They've been business people, and we've seen them involved in construction, in finances and in technology.

Certainly, they continue to value and appreciate their roots, but they're also a group of people who, like myself, have become totally integrated into the Canadian way of life. I'm sad to say my children don't speak Dutch, nor does my husband. But I will tell you, when it

comes time for that Dutch soccer team to play, my kids are Dutch, and they do say, "If you're not Dutch, you're not much."

Thank you today for the support that I have received.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired. It's now time to vote.

#### UKRAINIAN HERITAGE DAY ACT, 2011

##### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DU PATRIMOINE UKRAINIEN

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** We will deal first with ballot item number 70, standing in the name of Mr. Martiniuk.

Mr. Martiniuk has moved second reading of Bill 155, An Act to proclaim Ukrainian Heritage Day. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

#### UKRAINIAN HERITAGE DAY ACT, 2011

##### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DU PATRIMOINE UKRAINIEN

Mr. Martiniuk moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 155, An Act to proclaim Ukrainian Heritage Day /  
Projet de loi 155, Loi proclamant le Jour du patrimoine ukrainien.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

*Third reading agreed to.*

#### DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2011

##### LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION AU DIABÈTE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** We'll now deal with ballot item number 71, standing in the name of Mrs. Mangat.

Mrs. Mangat has moved second reading of Bill 162, An Act to proclaim the month of November Diabetes Awareness Month. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I ask that Bill 162 be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Is it agreed that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy? Agreed. So ordered.

## DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS  
DU PATRIMOINE NÉERLANDAIS

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** We will now deal with ballot item number 72, standing in the name of Mrs. Witmer.

Mrs. Witmer has moved second reading of Bill 166, An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month.

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

*Second reading agreed to.*

## DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE MOIS  
DU PATRIMOINE NÉERLANDAIS

Mrs. Witmer moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 166, An Act to proclaim May as Dutch Heritage Month / Projet de loi 166, Loi proclamant le mois de mai Mois du patrimoine néerlandais.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? 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):** All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, I do now call orders of the day. The Honourable Minister of Consumer Services.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson):** The minister has moved adjournment of the House. It is the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until next Monday at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1621.*

**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
<b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
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	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	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, P.C., Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie



<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC) Elliott, Christine (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB) Fonseca, Peter (LIB)	Oakville Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	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) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River 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
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex 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	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
<b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Moridi, Reza (LIB) <b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	Richmond Hill 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) <b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB) O'Toole, John (PC) Oraziotti, David (LIB) Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC) Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB) <b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b> <b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre Durham Sault Ste. Marie Oshawa Kitchener–Conestoga Elgin–Middlesex–London Scarborough–Agincourt	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP) <b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	Beaches–East York Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Ramal, Khalil (LIB) Ramsay, David (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) Ruprecht, Tony (LIB) Sandals, Liz (LIB) Savoline, Joyce (PC) Sergio, Mario (LIB) Shurman, Peter (PC) <b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord London–Fanshawe Timiskaming–Cochrane Northumberland–Quinte West Davenport Guelph Burlington York West / York-Ouest Thornhill Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB) <b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b> Sterling, Norman W. (PC) Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Vaughan Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud Carleton–Mississippi Mills Toronto–Danforth	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail  Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB) <b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b> <b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex Perth–Wellington Simcoe–Grey	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC) <b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b> Yakabuski, John (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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Garfield Dunlop, Peter Fonseca  
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Bas Balkissoon, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle  
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos  
Reza Moridi, Lou Rinaldi  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi  
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark  
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones  
Amrit Mangat, Yasir Naqvi  
Michael Prue, Mario Sergio  
Maria Van Bommel  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
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David Ramsay, Liz Sandals  
Peter Shurman, Norman W. Sterling  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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David Caplan, Kim Craitor  
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk  
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi  
Tony Ruprecht  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo  
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones  
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin  
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Select Committee on the proposed transaction of the TMX  
Group and the London Stock Exchange Group / Comité  
spécial sur la transaction proposée entre le Groupe TMX et le  
London Stock Exchange Group**

Chair / Président: Gerry Phillips  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Frank Klees  
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs  
Gilles Bisson, Michael A. Brown  
Frank Klees, Gerry Phillips  
Peter Shurman, Maria Van Bommel  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day





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