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**Journal
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(Hansard)**

Thursday 8 March 2012

Jeudi 8 mars 2012

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Thursday 8 March 2012

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Jeudi 8 mars 2012

The House met at 0900.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Let us pray.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE ACT
(EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS
AMENDMENT), 2012**

**LOI DE 2012 SUR LE CONGÉ FAMILIAL
POUR LES AIDANTS NATURELS
(MODIFICATION DES NORMES D'EMPLOI)**

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 6, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 30, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of family caregiver leave / Projet de loi 30, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne le congé familial pour les aidants naturels.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to give my comments in support of Bill 30. I'm proud to stand here and discuss an important bill that will help Ontarians during a difficult time. I'm proud to stand here as this government continues to follow through on its platform promises.

The purpose of this bill is simple: It is to create a new unpaid, job-protected leave of absence of up to eight weeks per calendar year for an employee whose family member has a serious medical condition that requires care and support. I want to stress the job protection portion of this legislation.

We all know how stressful it is to go to work while thinking about the health of our loved ones: mothers thinking about their sick children, husbands thinking about their wives, sisters thinking about their brothers and children thinking about their parents. Surely this stress causes enormous distractions at work and losses in productivity.

The proposed legislation allows for Ontarians to take the time off to care for their loved ones while ensuring that they have their jobs to return to. This is an important point because when employers recognize the needs of their employees, it builds a healthy relationship between employers and employees. It creates community in a

workplace. It builds confidence among employees toward their employers. Most importantly, it allows employees to take the time to care for their loved ones so that they can return to work and be productive employees.

As a registered nurse, as a former public health nurse, as a former nursing professor and long-term-care administrator, I have witnessed first-hand the many struggles of my patients and their families. Let me share a couple of life experiences with you and how the proposed legislation would have supported these families.

Consider one patient, an 87-year-old man with dementia, stroke and diabetes. His medical condition got worse; he was admitted to a long-term-care facility. His 47-year-old daughter, who works as a registered practical nurse, is a single mom with two adolescent children and is the only next of kin. The daughter has utilized all her vacation and sick days during the past year and is struggling to provide support to her elderly father and to care for her two teenage children. The proposed family caregiver leave legislation would have enabled Kelly, the daughter, to take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave without being concerned for her employment to care for her father.

Recently, a teacher in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt had to leave for Hong Kong to provide care and support to her elderly father, who was diagnosed with a serious medical condition. This teacher works for an understanding and supportive employer who granted her the leave of absence. Bill 30 would ensure that this teacher, or any employee in Ontario, could take up to eight weeks of unpaid, job-protected time away from work to care for a family member with a serious medical condition.

Very shortly, one of my constituents, a parent, will be coming to visit the Legislature. She has taken her daughter for a medical appointment at the Hospital for Sick Children. I know Natalie well as a friend and as a constituent, and this family care leave will enable her, if she was needed, to provide support for her family.

This legislation is important because there is a gap in the current leave of absence under the Employment Standards Act. The ESA does not provide long-term job protection leave for employees wanting to care for family members with serious medical conditions that require care or support where there is no risk of imminent death.

We currently have the family medical leave program. This program is unpaid, job-protected leave of up to eight weeks for employees who wish to care for a seriously ill individual who is at risk of death within 26 weeks. Employees on the family medical leave program can apply for the federal EI compassionate care benefit.

Additionally, the personal emergency leave program also exists, which provides a short-term, unpaid leave of up to 10 days each calendar year for a broad list of emergencies and illnesses. As a nurse, Mr. Speaker, this number of 10 days is not adequate. That's just two weeks of working days. I can tell you as a registered nurse that many of the medical conditions, especially with chronic illnesses—a family member will need more than 10 days of leave in order to provide care and support for an ill member of the family.

The difficulty is that if an employee has a young daughter who is diagnosed with cancer and her physician does not believe there's a significant risk of death within 26 weeks, the employee is not eligible for family medical leave. Yet, through this proposed legislation, the employee would be able to take up to eight weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for his or her seriously ill child.

Now, my colleagues may have stated that this would be a significant cost on small businesses. In this case, I would like to remind my colleagues across the floor that this is just the right thing to do. Our employees need to know that their employers will let them have the time off if they need to take care of their loved ones. Moreover, it is an unpaid leave and employers wouldn't have to pay for it.

Other colleagues have complained that this program is unpaid, that people can't take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave. Here I would like to remind my colleagues that the EI premium benefits are paid out by the federal government. The Minister of Labour has already written to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to encourage the federal government to extend the EI coverage to this program, and I would encourage my Conservative colleagues across the floor to contact their federal cousins up in Ottawa to let them know that the EI premium should be extended to this program once this legislation is passed.

Additionally, not all the eight weeks have to be used at one time. They can be staggered, which will allow greater flexibility for employees, should they need it. I gave the example earlier, Mr. Speaker, about my constituents coming to visit the Legislature. So if a family member only wants to take one week instead of the full eight weeks, this particular legislation will allow that. Most importantly, employees need to know that they can take the time off to care for their loved ones with the security of knowing that they have a job to come back to.

0910

In a recent survey by the Human Resources Professionals Association, the respondents stated the following—let me share some data with all of you. Almost 96% support family caregiver leave either fully or in part. Over 30% of the respondents are either currently caregivers or have been in the past. Over 50% have noticed an increase in requests for caregiver leaves over the past five years.

A majority of the respondents to the survey noted that this issue is timely and urgent, and has an impact on

many Canadians. Respondents also noted that this is a complicated issue, difficult to legislate and difficult to administer, and that they will give the government support and credit for addressing it, noting that the legislation is progressive and a step in the right direction for Ontario.

Many have noted that the issue of aging and ill family members affects productivity, and that regardless of the financial impact, it is in the employer's best interests to have the legislation passed. Respondents in general stated that failure to address this issue will result in expensive turnover, claims of short-term disability, sick leave and stress leave.

From this survey, Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that both employers and employees recognize the importance of allowing employees to take unpaid leave away from work to care for family members with serious medical conditions, provided their job is protected during the leave.

Across Canada, there's similar legislation to support workers. Quebec allows certain employees to be absent from work without pay for up to 12 weeks over a period of 12 months to stay with family members because of a serious illness or a serious accident. Saskatchewan allows employees to take a maximum of 12 weeks—not the eight weeks we're proposing in our legislation—12 weeks off without pay in a 52-week period for a serious illness or injury of dependent immediate family members or 12 days total in a calendar year for a non-serious illness of a dependent family member.

Ontario would be the first province to provide stand-alone, unpaid job-protected leave of up to eight weeks for employees to provide care for a family member with a serious medical condition.

The proposed legislation has received stakeholder support, Mr. Speaker. They include the Ontario Home Care Association, which "welcomes the government's proposal to introduce amendments to the Employment Standards Act that would protect jobs for workers taking time off work to provide care for a family member." The Alzheimer Society of Ontario stated that "family caregivers who provide the bulk of care for people with dementia will especially benefit" from our proposal. The cancer society listed family caregiver leave as one of the measures it hoped to see implemented by this government to help Ontarians living with cancer.

There are a number of benefits to the proposed family caregiver leave legislation. It is anticipated that the proposed leave would help to reduce the financial and human resource burdens on health care services and reduce stressors that can lead to ill health among employees who are caring for their ill relatives. Families may avoid costly privately funded caregiving. With the growth of the aging population, the issue of aging and ill family members affects productivity, and regardless of the financial impact, it is in employers' and employees' best interests to have the proposed legislation passed.

The proposed legislation, as I said earlier, may prevent high turnover rates for some of our organizations and

reduce claims for short-term disability, sick leave and stress leave. I've seen that one too many times in my career as a registered nurse. I've seen request after request when registered nurses, staff and colleagues have consistently asked, "Can I take a leave? I've already exhausted my sick benefits and my vacation plan; therefore I need to take unpaid leave, okay?" And this is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker.

I can share many stories with this House. Just last year around this time, I was at a well-renowned rehabilitation hospital. When you do rehabilitation nursing, it's not one day or one week; it's months, okay? I have met with many families, patients, extended family, who take long leaves—two to three months for cardiac rehab; two to three months or even years for neurological rehab. This is not days. We're talking about compassion. We're talking about care. Most importantly, it's about the right thing to do.

The proposed legislation is, most importantly, to protect jobs. No employees need to be fearful of losing their jobs when they have to take care of a loved one. Protecting jobs, the leave benefit, is what this proposed legislation is about. The employers would be creating a positive, loyal and productive workforce.

Our government wants to give every employee in Ontario the one thing they need during the difficult time caring for a loved one: the time to be there to listen, to provide care and to provide support. That's what this legislation is about. The proposed family care leave legislation, Mr. Speaker, is about taking care of Ontarians during difficult times. It is the right thing to do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: I did listen reasonably closely to the member from Scarborough–Agincourt, and I'm very impressed. She's a former nurse, and I believe she was a school trustee before she came here.

I think the key issue here if you look at the bill—in general, the sentiment would be that we would be supportive. However, in closer detail, I think the member who spoke yesterday from our side, the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London, who himself is a health care expert—he's a pharmacist—explained, in terms of his small business where he operates, what it means to small business.

I think the NDP in their comments—also I think the requirement to take a week at a time when it may only be necessary for an appointment, a day to take your mother or a loved one, put it that way, to an appointment or to the hospital for a procedure. You could maybe go back to work for a couple of days until she was being discharged or they were being discharged.

It's the structure of the bill, like in many other bills; I think the intent is laudable, but the implementation is terrible. That's really what I find most difficult with the bill.

You might say, on closer examination, there is no cost to the government of McGuinty at all. There's no cost to him—not a cent. But what it is for small business, maybe

a mom and a pop and a few other people operation, is that they're going to be missing a person who could be operating their computer or their laundromat, whatever it is they're doing in their small business. And the individual who's off gets no pay. Who can take eight weeks off without pay?

It is a good idea. Let's rehearse here: It is a good idea; the implementation is faulty. I think they should withdraw the bill, send it to committee and get it right.

But there are so many examples of this under McGuinty. The energy file is completely messed up. The economy—there are no jobs: 600,000 people are unemployed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Good morning, Speaker, and thank you. I'm glad to be here in the House today to comment on G30, the family caregiver leave bill, that's proposed today. I don't think we can argue that this is not a feel-good bill. Everybody feels good about giving time off to someone who needs to be with their loved ones. I know for myself, if I was in that position, that I certainly would enjoy the flexibility of my employer having allowed me the time off to be with a family member who had a serious illness and who I had to attend to. I don't think that's the question or the purpose of the bill that we really need to debate. We all agree on that. We all need to be with our loved ones in a time of need.

I think the intent of the bill as it's described is well received for the idea, but the structure absolutely needs to be reviewed. There needs to be consultation with the community, with workers and with employers so that it's not a matter of the employee taking time off and perhaps feeling a reprisal from the employer and also perhaps the employer feeling that a valuable employee is lost to them perhaps for eight weeks and their business could suffer.

0920

On top of that, with an employee taking that time off, they may not even have the financial means to support themselves. So you're really putting that employee, unfortunately, in a difficult situation: being tugged at their heartstrings by financially leaving work to look after their loved ones, and the employer having perhaps a very challenging time when that employee leaves.

There has to be more thought in that leave with regard to helping the employee economically get through that time, and then perhaps the employer as well being involved in that process. So I urge this government to please review that before anything like this is considered and passed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: First of all, I would like on this day to wish a happy International Women's Day to all the women in Ontario, to all the women who are maybe following these proceedings and to all the women in the House. I want to commend women for their contributions to our society, for their strength that they often show and for the care that they often show.

We know, in regard to this legislation, that very frequently there's a group to whom an unequal share of the responsibility of caregiving has historically fallen, and that is women—and women who have the least are the most vulnerable. So I would like to, first of all, wish all the women a really happy International Women's Day. It's also a day for us to reflect on their contributions.

Getting back to the bill that we're debating this morning, I think we all agree we wouldn't want a mother to worry about a child who is seriously ill or injured. We wouldn't want a daughter to worry about their mother or father being seriously injured.

As my colleague has pointed out, when the time is needed, when a loved one is seriously ill, you need to take that time. So a business will have to come to terms with that. But what happens most often nowadays is that you risk your job. So this bill's intent is really not to put the caregiver in that situation of risking their job.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Mr. Rob Leone: I want to thank the member for Scarborough–Agincourt for her comments. I think she presented it very well.

I also want to just touch upon what the member for London–Fanshawe said. I think her words are very, very pertinent to the discussion. This is a kind of policy that really touches at people's heartstrings. It kind of warms the heart to know that we're going to be compassionate to those who require extra care. I think, from that perspective, there's a lot to be commended about the intent, as the member for Durham had said about this policy. But I also agree with the member from Durham, who said that the implementation lacks—there's something to be desired.

In the comments that the member for Scarborough–Agincourt made in this debate, she is asking us in the Ontario PC caucus to ask our federal cousins to actually implement a policy that they're actually talking about. Do you believe this?

Interjection: It's their job, isn't it?

Mr. Rob Leone: We have to do their job for them. And I say, we're happy to do your job for you; just give us the keys to your offices. We'll gladly make the policy, we'll gladly do the things that we need to do and we'll gladly pick up the phone and call our federal cousins. That's exactly what you want us to do. We'll gladly do that job for you.

In addition to doing that job, we'll fix the fiscal crisis that you got us in. We'll fix the debt crisis that you got us in, because that's what honest-to-goodness government actually does. We don't sit back and wait for other people to do our job for us, we do it ourselves. How novel an idea: a government actually makes decisions; it has a spine; it has a backbone; it implements what it says and has the capacity to do that. That's all we're asking for in this House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for the time.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Scarborough–Agincourt, you have two minutes to reply.

Ms. Soo Wong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the members opposite from Durham, London–Fanshawe, my colleague here from York South–Weston, and Cambridge for your remarks.

Very clearly, this is not just feel-good proposed legislation. This is about every employee being given an opportunity to look after their loved ones, okay? Every one of us in this House has been an employee. We all have family challenges. To say it has good intent or it's difficult to implement—well, let me be very clear: We have a very fast-growing aging population. This proposed legislation ensures that every Ontarian who is in that sandwich generation, like myself and many others, has an opportunity to look after their loved ones during their time of need and not be fearful of losing their jobs.

The other important part here is the concern about the implementation difficulties and for small businesses there. What kind of employer-employee relationship will you have if you do not listen and you do not support your employees when they need that support? What kind of employer are you? I need to challenge that, okay?

At the end of the day, all of us—this government, this province—developed through small businesses. We are not saying that every business will go bankrupt or be disturbed because of this proposed legislation. The key piece here is the fact that now, for the first time in Ontario, every employee will be given an opportunity to look after their loved ones during the time of a serious medical condition, and that's the right thing to do.

At the end of the day, this is why we need to go through the committee: to review the various parts of the legislation and have comments and concerns be heard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate? The member from Burlington.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 30.

All of us here at some point or another find ourselves in unfamiliar territory: A loved one is sick, has had a terrible turn, is in need and is alone. At that moment, there is nothing in the world that we want more than to be with them, to do all that we can for them, to help them with their recovery or lend comfort while they battle for their lives. We are not concerned with spreadsheets or speeches. We are not concerned with work that has, in a flash, become drained of all importance. In those kinds of difficult times, there is nothing we want more than to be with family to share strength and consolation.

In principle, I suspect that we agree that caregiver leave is a civilized initiative, an initiative that shows great compassion toward Ontario families at a time when it is most appreciated and needed—in principle.

In reality, Bill 30, the Family Caregiver Leave Act, is a classic case of appearances being deceptive. While the intent is good, you don't have to look at this bill too long or too hard to see that it is lacking credible weight. As previous speakers in this debate have pointed out, the most substantial thing about it seems to be the holes in it.

In a broad sense, you can argue that, yes, it would be helpful to be able to take eight weeks of leave from a job without endangering your hold on that job. But in family medical leave and personal emergency leave, there are measures in place that address much of that concern. Some have suggested that compassionate employers would be open to these measures with or without legislation. That strikes me as credible.

Even setting those concerns aside, it seems to me that there are also going to be pretty basic issues with this bill as it is written. How will this impact the province's entrepreneurs and small businesses that often have highly specialized staff, no duplication of work and who are already up against their share of operational challenges? Who will it impact: contract workers or part-timers, who make up an increasing share of our workforce? Why is it mandatory to take time off at this point—unpaid time off—in blocks of whole weeks?

How do we determine who is eligible for this leave? Who decides the eligibility? How would you objectively define a serious medical condition or injury? Who protects the interest of the worker? Who protects the interest of the employer? Who will enforce standards around this proposed legislation? How will the government bankroll that enforcement?

0930

As workers rights advocacy groups have pointed out, the McGuinty government has hinted that the Employment Standards Act budget will be slashed by \$6 million. This is a government that is apparently prepared to short-change workers' rights by \$6 million. But I don't want to suggest for a second that the McGuinty Liberals don't care about people's rights, Speaker. Far from it.

After all, this is a government that is contributing \$5 million to build a human rights museum—in Winnipeg; Winnipeg, Speaker. True, it is a massively over-budgeted museum, so you understand how the Liberals would naturally gravitate to it. But \$5 million? You do start to wonder about their focus. You do start to wonder about their priorities.

On Bill 30, as with any legislation, success depends on monitoring and enforcement of the law. The protections we're reading about here only exist to the extent that they are defended. Legislation without enforcement is just sentimental PR. I don't want to suggest that we are looking at that, not just yet, but at the same time, it's pretty obvious that we are a long way from solid ground.

If you were a cynic or truly jaded soul, you might also suggest that this is a way of spinning employment status, because under this arrangement both the person on leave and the replacement worker—presumably a contract worker—have jobs; they just happen to be the same job. They could have a way of padding labour statistics and masking the very real and serious challenges that this province faces when it comes to getting its economy back on track. Of course, we now have some 600,000 Ontarians out of work, so you would understand if the government was inclined to spin wherever possible. But this is not a time for funny business with numbers; this is a time

for getting down to business—full stop. We are talking about workers who are already emotionally exposed. This is not a time to be offering them job security based on hopes and wishes.

You get the feeling that there has been little stakeholder consultation in this process. You also get the feeling that this bill is founded on the notion that the federal government will ride in to save the day. You get the feeling that Bill 30 imagines the feds will offer up to eight weeks of financial support to workers on leave by way of unemployment insurance. As I say, it's a feeling. It's just a feeling, because at this point on second reading, there has been no agreement of terms with the federal government.

But under the rosier interpretation, we're looking at the possibility of ill-defined paid leave with bulletproof job security—an insurable benefit with no monitoring or enforcement; a program with no criteria for eligibility and no credible safeguards against people taking advantage of loopholes. That seems like a situation that is ripe for abuse, ripe for fraud. Would people misuse the new system? Perhaps, Speaker.

Even without Bill 30, you could argue that demand for employment supports exceeds supply. Despite Ontario having an unemployment rate that has been above the national average for more than five years, less than a third of unemployed Ontarians receive employment insurance.

When you poke a hole in the daydream and size things up in the cold light of day, the shortcomings of this bill come into sharp relief. The lack of detail is not surprising, of course. It's not unexpected. This is becoming a trademark of the back-of-a-napkin brand of planning we've seen from the McGuinty government. I wish I didn't think that way. I am in my fifth month here, fewer than 20 days in the House, and I'm trying really hard not to become disillusioned. But I look across the aisle, and in my short time here, I have to tell you that the reckless behaviour and disrespect for anything other than the government's pet programs is pretty brazen.

Let me go back to October. The throne speech was a sobering signal that Ontarians should buckle down and get ready for yet another crushing year. The McGuinty government has failed to adequately respond to our province's economic predicament. Honest, hard-working Ontarians are losing their jobs, energetic students are graduating into an employment wasteland and government spending remains undisciplined and unfocused.

In the throne speech, the government rolled out, to great fanfare, an extra \$2.5 billion in new program spending, this despite Ontario's dizzying \$16-billion deficit—which has ballooned by more than \$1 billion since the election—and sickening projected debt of \$300 billion. Then, as now, the government's math just doesn't add up.

I've said it before: The government strategy is like a fad diet. The Premier is drinking twice as much diet soda and eating twice as much diet ice cream and hoping he'll find a six-pack under all that budget bloat. Let me assure

you, Mr. Speaker, although I have absolutely no desire to see the Premier in a Speedo, I would very much like to see him whip the province's finances back into shape. The government has racked up a historic level of deficits and debts, as well as presiding over some of the deepest and most painful job losses in generations.

In short, Liberal economic policies have failed. Ontario's unemployment rate has surged above the national average for more than five straight years. Ontario has lost more jobs during the recession than all other provinces combined. We need to optimize the public sector and eliminate waste, reducing the size and cost of government. You can't simply spend your way to prosperity. Speaker, it's time for Dalton McGuinty to stop digging us all an even deeper hole. Everything should be done with a view to fiscal responsibility.

But I suppose we shouldn't be that surprised that there is also the smoke and mirrors, the sleight of hand we see again and again from this government. The southwestern Ontario development fund, for example, will apparently be financed by shuffling funds around from other initiatives and programs within the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation. During the debate on Bill 11, the so-called Attracting Investment and Creating Jobs Act, we learned that some \$66 million in research funding at universities and hospitals was going to be siphoned off and put into the creation of this fund. Apparently, the government feels the connection between research and economic innovation is a little shaky.

The Ontario PC Party remains committed to the belief that we cannot support any new spending without identifying an equivalent saving somewhere else. Spending more than you take in isn't going to balance the budget. In fact, that kind of behaviour is how Premier McGuinty got us into the debt crisis in the first place.

Speaker, it reminds me of that kind of math that went into calculating the province's deficit at the end of August, just six weeks before the election. Things were looking up, we were told. The deficit was coming down faster than projected, thanks to the McGuinty government's superhuman powers of fiscal restraint—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): On both sides of the House, I'd ask you to come to order, please.

If I could just remind the speaker also, we don't refer to people in the House by their names but by their title or their riding.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: The Minister of Finance pegged the deficit for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2011, at \$14 billion. That was down \$2.7 billion from the shortfall projected in the 2011 budget. Less than two months later, we knew that the number had risen to \$16 billion. That's a heck of a margin of error; that's a heck of a wobble.

Speaker, I would like to know that our government's policy is being built on evidence. I would like to know that it is helping to promote the kind of activity that will make a real difference in the economy today, tomorrow and in years to come. Ontarians need the assurance that

the Premier's government will be fundamentally reforming its way.

Do we need to get on with the business of government? Yes; yes, we do. Do we need to get Ontario working again? Yes, absolutely; no question about it. Will the McGuinty Liberals get on with the job without playing all of their same old ridiculous games—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would remind the member again: Refrain from using people's names.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: Unfortunately, Speaker, the answer to that very important question is still up in the air. Obviously, employees will want to have the freedom to put work to one side when we have to. And obviously, we'll all have reason to feel like doing exactly that at one time or another.

0940

You hear a lot of talk about the sandwich generation, the generation caught between aging parents and growing children—a generation that is financially extended on both fronts. Members of that generation certainly feel the tension between work and home life, and that's not going to change anytime soon.

My home riding of Burlington is an example of what we're looking at. In the decade from 1996 to 2006, Burlington's population aged 50 to 65 grew by 36%, and its population aged 65-plus grew by 44%—and this while the city's total population increased by 20%. I'm sure that new census information will paint a picture that is every bit as dramatic as that. In case you missed it, this is the baby boom making its way through the pipeline.

In her introductory remarks, the Minister of Labour spoke about our aging population, which is growing steadily. She cited some statistics: We're going to have 43% more seniors a decade from now; we're going to have twice as many seniors 20 years from now. We're living longer lives, more active lives, but that doesn't mean that we're escaping everything that goes along with being human. We still get sick, we still get injured, we still fall prey to disease. We hope that there will be someone there for us at those moments and that they will have compassion and love in their hearts.

Older Ontarians obviously have a greater need for chronic care and long-term-care facilities. At some point, their families will inevitably need to intervene on their behalf at a time when the whole world seems like it's ready to capsize.

Six years ago, more than a third of Burlington's population was 50-plus, and that age group represented well over half of the city's total population in the decade leading up to that. Fully 57% of the population growth in Burlington during that period was in the 55-plus demographic. So yes, the silver tsunami is very real. I can tell you that it has hit Burlington earlier than most communities.

As boomers age, the strain on the health care system will obviously be immense. The challenge for policymakers and public officials will be unprecedented. That's not a reason to throw up our hands in defeat; it's an argu-

ment for investing very carefully and very intelligently in the system that we have. And the fact is that the existing system has obvious shortcomings in terms of long-term care and home care. The fact is that the system has shortcomings in terms of geriatric support.

In 2008, it was estimated that there were only about 200 geriatricians in all of Canada. That's about one geriatrician for every 30,000 Canadians aged 65-plus. In some Ontario communities, it can take a year and a half just to get in to see one. So at worst, it strikes me that we're taking people who are emotionally raw and on edge and giving them a crash course in the shortcomings of the system: about the limitations of OHIP, about all sorts of petty aggravations that do nothing to promote care and compassion.

So I think that this bill could use a lot more meat on its bones. If the government is serious about extending these rights to workers, serious about making a meaningful change to the existing Employment Standards Act, there needs to be more to it. If the government is going to hand employees a new obligation and expect them to fulfill the spirit of the legislation without any real structure, definition or boundaries, I think that's asking an awful lot.

I come back to my original caution about judging a book by its cover. For all of its sound bites and appeal, this bill plays into all of the worst stereotypes about the kind of legislation we've seen from the Premier's government for eight years: long on posturing, lean on practicality. We in the Ontario PC caucus have feelings and families; we have suffered and we have lost. We have recognized that there may be a time and place where something like the Family Caregiver Leave Act would have a place in the order of things—something like Bill 30—but not Bill 30 as it stands.

My honourable colleague from Chatham–Kent–Essex has pointed out that ministry personnel have barely any statistical evidence that Ontario workers are being denied time off from their jobs to care for loved ones in time of crisis. Standing here in this House last week, he said, “Not only have there been no studies, there aren't even mechanisms in place to collect the kind of data that would give the members of this House—and the Ontario taxpayers who must pay for it—a clear idea of any real or imagined problem this bill claims to solve.” That's one of the bigger holes I mentioned earlier.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, Bill 30 offers less protection than a hospital gown and more holes in it than a roll of surgical gauze. I applaud the sentiment, but I cannot in good conscience support this bill as it is currently written.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to congratulate one of our new members in this House for her depth of knowledge of her riding. Some of the statistics that she brought forward show that she took the time and effort to really get to know the people who could be impacted by such a bill. The statistics that she shared with us this

morning regarding her particular riding and the percentage of people who are elderly, the growth in her population—I was kind of taken aback when I heard that 57% of the demographic growth in Burlington came from the 55 and over. Those statistics are very telling. They're telling of a need for action.

I think her interpretation of the bill, which certainly has a good title, the family caregiver act—I mean, who wouldn't want to do something for a family caregiver? We all know that when they need to be brought into action, it's usually in circumstances that are hard on families. She also was quite eloquent at talking about some of the shortcomings of the bill.

I find her comparison about a hospital gown quite interesting. We all know that they don't cover much, and I think it describes this bill quite adequately: It doesn't cover much either. Well done.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I just wanted to join the conversation this morning. I was listening to the member from Burlington, and I wasn't sure what bill she was talking about there. Originally, I felt quite hopeful, in that I thought she was going to provide some useful and constructive advice with regard to the family caregiver leave, and then it deteriorated rapidly.

At the end of the day, I think we ran on this particular issue. I want to remind them that the family caregiver leave was part of our platform in the last election. We campaigned on the idea of giving families support.

Certainly, when she spoke a little bit about the businesses and what a hardship this would be for them—we had some very interesting results that were passed along to us, when we originally introduced the bill, by the Human Resources Professionals Association. They did a survey and they had 616 responses—a very, very interesting group of studies that they did. They talked with a lot of businesses. Of course, this is a group of professionals who go out and recruit people for business. They came back with some interesting quotes, and they said that it was a very good retention initiative. They reminded us how costly it is to recruit, select and train new employees, and that it's better to allow family caregiver leave, to go through the process, rather than going out to hire a new employee.

At the end of the day, this is an opportunity to debate legislation. I didn't hear anything constructive from the member from Burlington. Really, she's very cynical about the bill. This is a place to provide constructive, useful suggestions on how to make legislation better. The people of Ontario expect that of us. They expect us to not take cheap shots about what legislation should be, what it could be. This is about providing useful, thoughtful suggestions. The residents of your riding expect that and they need it. When they're in crisis, they expect us to be there to support them, to be that safety net. That's what this legislation is designed to be. I would encourage her to have another look at the legislation, to provide some useful conversation with regard to it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

0950

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the bill, the Family Caregiver Leave Act.

To me, there's nothing more important than family. We can all agree that family has an imperative and a profound impact on our lives on a day-to-day basis and the kind of individuals we are.

I've noticed, however, that this bill doesn't actually address the concerns that day-to-day families are facing. Quite frankly, when I was campaigning and going out in my riding, door-knocking, I was hearing that families are struggling to make ends meet. Sure, they would love to stay and take care of their loved ones who are at home and need assistance, but they don't have the opportunities financially to do that when their hydro bills are too high or they don't have a job. Oh, maybe that's the government's position—over 300,000 manufacturing jobs lost in Ontario; lots of individuals can look after their family members now. That's not our approach.

One of the things I've noticed as well standing here—and as an educator, one of the things you look for is patterns, the development of patterns. This is a classic manoeuvre by this current government: to divert. They use cute little names, making it sound—Family Caregiver Leave Act—very compassionate but, in truth, it's full of holes, like the member from Burlington, my colleague, pointed out.

Interjection: Window dressing.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: It's window dressing, and enough of this. Let's get to the heart of the matter. Let's actually present a bill that is going to do some good for individuals who need it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Good morning, Speaker. I'm happy to stand here and comment on the presentation from the member from Burlington.

What I observed today in this House is that you can't have the back-and-forth little digs. It's a minority government. We were given a mandate to come here, respect each other, respect each other's options, choices and decisions, but collaboratively come together and make a bill the best it can be.

So though I respect the bill that's being presented, I also have the right or the mandate from my constituents to stand here and say I don't agree with some of the things that you have. I agree with the premise. We all do. But we need to maybe listen to each other, try to accommodate or incorporate and compromise and make this bill the best it can be for everyone, not just one person's thought.

When we talk about how the employer's perspective will be perceived, how the employee's perspective is going to be received, that's what the open discussion is about. From an employee's perspective: "I'm not going to be paid for the leave," that is a hardship for many employees. From the employer's perspective—"Can I

have that valuable employee away for eight weeks?" Like the member from Scarborough–Agincourt said, how could employers not be compassionate? The reality is, employers may be put in a hard place. The reality is, employers sometimes can't afford to do that or some just don't.

In a perfect world, it would be great if we could all just agree and allow someone out for eight weeks. The bills would stop coming and the employer could carry on its business, but it's not a perfect world.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Burlington, you have two minutes to reply.

Mrs. Jane McKenna: First of all, I'd like to apologize, Speaker, for saying the Premier's name.

Then, I'd also like to speak to the member from Scarborough–Agincourt. It was very well received. I'd also like to thank the member from London–Fanshawe—that was very articulate, how you spoke there—the member from Nickel Belt, the Minister of Labour and the member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

I have enjoyed the comments here today in second reading, and I'm confident that they will help to enrich understanding of the bill before us and perhaps strengthen the compassion of legislation being produced here.

Today we are discussing Bill 30, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, in respect of family caregiver leave. The bill proposes the introduction of compassionate, unpaid, job-protected work leave for up to eight weeks so that they can take a leave of absence without pay to provide care or support to a family member who has a serious medical condition. Those employees would be entitled to take up to eight weeks each calendar year with respect to each family member covered by regulation.

On the face of it, it is a compassionate bill, a bill that allows family to care for family, to allow Ontarians to look after Ontarians. This is an interesting proposal, and it certainly touches on some of the key issues coming before us both here in the Legislature and across the province.

As I say, it is an interesting proposal, and it certainly sounds a feel-good note. It tugs at the heartstrings. It touches us all. On that count it is a success. But in my opinion, it has a lot of blind spots, a lot of loopholes and a lot of unanswered questions, some of which I outlined here today. Until those substantial shortcomings are addressed, Bill 30 will not have the ability to deliver on its promises.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I think it is my turn to say a few words about the Family Caregiver Leave Act. I would like to start by reading the paragraph in the bill that really sets out the entitlement. Actually, before I even start, I would like to thank the Minister of Labour for being in the House to listen to the comments that are being made about a bill that she brought forward. I appreciate her dedication to making sure that the bill she brings

forward—she is aware of ways to make it better. I appreciate her being here. We're not allowed to say when they're not there, but we're allowed to say when they are there, Mr. Speaker.

So back to the bill: "Entitlement to leave"; this is paragraph 2 if some of you want to go on the Internet and check out the bill. It reads as follows: "An employee is entitled to a leave of absence without pay to provide care or support to an individual described in subsection (4) if a qualified health practitioner issues a certificate stating that the individual has a serious medical condition."

First, I will speak a little bit about the "qualified health practitioner." In the bill, a qualified health practitioner is defined as "a person who is qualified to practise medicine"—quite easy to understand; that's a physician, and we all know who they are. Then the act keeps going and says, "or, in the prescribed circumstances, a member of a prescribed class of health practitioners." This, Mr. Speaker, is mumbo-jumbo that means a nurse practitioner.

I dream of the day where, when a bill is presented in front of us where a nurse practitioner is allowed to do something such as give you the leave of absence slip that you need, we will actually call them by their name. We call physicians "a person who practices medicine." We all know what that means. Why is it that when we talk about nurse practitioners—it seems like there's a reluctance to recognize that they are a bona fide, qualified, primary health care provider.

More and more Ontarians, more and more people in this province rely on nurse practitioners as their first point of contact for primary care. They are the ones they would be going to if they need such a paper to have the leave of absence. But you see, the laws are kind of reluctant to identify them, so we describe them as—and if anybody can see the link here—"in the prescribed circumstances, a member of a prescribed class of health practitioners." Nurse practitioners are also called "Registered nurse extended class."

So this is how we describe them in the bill. I hope a time will come where we won't be shy of calling nurse practitioners and putting them into our bills. They have certainly taken their place within the primary care sector in Ontario. I hope at some point we will see them in our bills.

1000

Then it goes on to say, "a qualified health practitioner issues a certificate stating that the individual has a serious medical condition." A bill is words, and in a bill, words mean a lot. "Serious medical condition" is a term, terminology, that the insurance companies in Ontario have more or less appropriated to themselves. The insurance companies use that terminology, "serious medical condition," to define a pretty narrow range of serious medical conditions.

I have been listening to the debates of colleagues from all sides of the House, and a lot of us talk about elderly parents needing a little bit of help. They talk about seniors as they age maybe needing a little bit of care-

giving. A lot of examples have been given linking home care needs to the need for a family caregiver, which is absolutely true. If you're in need of home care, you're probably in need of a family caregiver also.

But then we have this bill that limits who can qualify. In order to qualify, you will need your physician or your nurse practitioner to sign you a slip. In order for them to sign this slip, they will have to assess the person as having a serious medical condition. Well, the aging parent may have high blood pressure, their vision has gone down, their hearing has gone down, they cannot eat as well as they used to, they have a little bit of a problem with their balance and a little bit of arthritis, or maybe their memory is starting to fade. But although you put all of this together, and they are in need of help because they cannot cope at home anymore, I don't know one physician or one nurse practitioner who would look at the patient I just described to you and say they meet the serious medical condition that has been imposed into this act.

Terminology means everything in a bill, and in this bill I have no idea why we have chosen those particular words, "serious medical condition," because this is a term that the insurance company uses all the time. In my knowledge, they have branded this term to mean—and usually, if you have to fill out an insurance slip, they have a very selected few conditions that mean this. For some of the insurance companies, a lower limb amputation, the losing of a leg, would not qualify as a serious medical condition in the way that they use this terminology. This terminology is used by every physician and every nurse practitioner in Ontario, yet we have chosen to put it in the bill.

This means that all of the feel-good examples that we have talked about, where we have aging parents and grandparents or neighbours, who go through the natural process of aging—you have to realize, Mr. Speaker, that aging is not a medical condition; aging is not a disease. Aging is a natural process that happens to each and every one of us. It is not a medical condition, and it is certainly not a serious medical condition. But with aging, there often comes a time where we need a little bit of family caregiving. There often comes a time where we need caregiving altogether; it doesn't matter if it comes through the home care system or through your family or your friend or your extended network. Aging is not included in "serious medical condition," because aging is not a disease.

So it doesn't matter how many chronic ailments we pile on those people. If you go to see your nurse practitioner or your physician, and you say, "I need time to help my mother move into a retirement home," or "I need time to help my mother move in with me," or do a renovation in her house or "take her to a series of important health appointments," you are not going to qualify for that leave the way we have it written now.

I think when I heard the minister speak, and when I heard some of her colleagues speak, in their minds, they had the intention of making that available to the aging

population of Ontario. But this is not what the bill in front of us is saying, is it, Mr. Speaker? The bill in front of us used “serious medical condition.” So I think we need a little bit of revision.

I see that the time is going by, so I will move on to another part, which is one that has been talked about quite a bit, and that is the fact that in the bill—and I will read the bill again—under section 5, it talks about the periods that you can take this leave: “An employee may take a leave under this section only in periods of entire weeks.” You’re allowed up to eight a year.

This is also problematic. Although a lot of workers don’t have caregiver leave that is afforded to them, a lot of workers do have bereavement leave. I don’t want to wish any harm on anybody, but it could very well be that if you qualify for a really serious medical condition—a loved one gets into a motor vehicle accident, we pick them up in pieces from the side of the highway, bring them to a tertiary care hospital and then the worst happens. So now you’re stuck in that one week of unpaid leave, but your employment contract tells you that you’re allowed paid bereavement leave and it has to be taken within so many days, which means that you may be stuck in that unpaid caregiver leave and miss out on the paid bereavement leave if the serious medical condition turns for the worse.

I spent 25 years in health care, and unfortunately, a lot of serious medical conditions don’t turn out the way we all wish. We all wish for a loved one to recover, of course, but we have to be looking at this with a set of eyes that looks at what a serious medical condition really means and how it sometimes ends. It sometimes ends badly, with the person leaving us, and then you’re into funeral arrangements.

Many people in this House have said that it could be useful to be able to take one or two days at a time, to be able to bring a loved one to Toronto for a specialist appointment and bring them back to Sudbury; there could be a use for that. But, no, you will have to take an entire week. I don’t get it. I don’t understand why the bill has been written so that it has to be a week at a time.

There are, as I said, a number of issues with the way the bill is written that I hope everybody in this House will consider changing, and changing for the better; changing the way that we describe who can give you this paper that allows you the leave.

I wish we would also be more specific as to not being allowed to charge to give you such a certificate. It is all fine to say that you will need a qualified health practitioner—we all understand now that those are physicians and nurse practitioners—who will issue a certificate. Well, unfortunately, issuing a certificate is not something that is covered by OHIP. So unless we prescribe it in legislation—and some legislation does that; you’re not allowed to charge to fill out a certificate for WSIB. There are a number of certificates that are required where the family physician, or any physician, is not allowed to charge. But if you don’t specify it in the bill, then not only will you not get paid to take that leave, but you will

have to pay to get the certificate. And God forbid that you decide that you and your sister will take Mom to Toronto for her appointment, because she will have to pay and so will you.

1010

It would be, I think, a nice gesture toward those people that are the caregivers if we were to add into the bill a little bit of a descriptive as to how those certificates cannot be charged for. We do this in a lot of other circumstances. I think in this one, I have heard nothing but good words toward caregivers. We know what they do for the people of Ontario, for families, for communities and for our province, and we appreciate their great work. Wouldn’t it be a nice way to appreciate them by saying that they will be able to get those certificates without having to pay for them?

Another point that I have talked about many times before, when I had the opportunity to do little two-minute responses on this bill, is the fact that you don’t get paid. The issue of who qualifies is very problematic to me, because if you have to meet the criteria of a serious medical condition, Mr. Speaker, those people will be in bad, bad shape.

The one that always qualifies is the young kid who gets into a motor vehicle accident and gets flown to Sick Kids or to CHEO. And then, if you live where I live, in northern Ontario, the family tries to make its way down there as fast as they can because your child needs you. That would qualify for a care leave. But then, I don’t know one employer who would tell his employee, “No, you cannot be with your son or daughter on their hospital bed as they are clinging to life and you don’t know how things are going to pan out.”

It would have been nice to come out with a little bit more substance as to who will this bill apply to, because once you put this criterion of a serious medical condition—so really limited the field as to who that is—and you look on the ground as to how difficult it is for those people to be absent from work, I don’t think we’re talking a whole lot of people. Don’t get me wrong: There are a lot of workers in Ontario who are in very precarious work, but when your child has been picked up by an ambulance and flown to Sick Kids, you are a useless worker, because every cell in your body tells you that you want to be with that child, with that husband, with that spouse, and employers recognize this. They can try to keep you at work all they want; you’re not going to be productive whatsoever, because your mind will be forever with that person who needs you.

So the fact that it’s a very narrow range of conditions which would qualify you for the caregiver leave, the fact that if you do qualify you don’t get paid, makes that bill certainly a feel-good, but it could do so much more. It could do so much more if we already had in place a way for them to have access to income replacement, but we haven’t done that part. It could be so much more if the definition was not limited to serious medical, but have more things that include more types of needs, basically targeting seniors who are often, as they age, in need of caregivers—but none of this is there.

There are people in very precarious work who will benefit from this some of the time, but it is so limited. We all agree, everybody who has spoken before me, to the valuable work that caregivers bring to our communities. Why don't we go the extra step and make sure that the spirit of the bill is captured in the words that we use in the bill? Right now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is. I think it's a wasted opportunity and I think in some points, it's kind of a disrespect to people who invest a lot of time, effort and energy looking after their loved one, who now know that this bill is coming but don't realize that it won't apply to them.

So there's some good intention; I hope we will be able to modify the bill to turn the good intentions into good actions.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to draw attention to page William Hume's family in the gallery today: his mother, Heather; his father, Colin; his brother, Trevor; his sister, Victoria; and his aunt, Marla Hume, and to say that page William Hume was the page valedictorian of this session. Welcome.

M^{me} France Gélinas: We have some personal support workers with us today. They are home care workers—our heroes. It's my pleasure to introduce Pam Huckle, Connie Ndlovu, Kelly O'Sullivan and Annabelle Zarate. Welcome to Queen's Park.

M. Grant Crack: Merci, monsieur le Président. Il me fait un grand plaisir de souhaiter la bienvenue aux élèves de 40 écoles secondaires francophones de l'Ontario, qui sont ici derrière moi. Bienvenue.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Introductions. The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London—

M. Grant Crack: Ces élèves, qui représentent les écoles de leur région, participent—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Sorry, I was excited about keeping things moving. Finish.

M. Grant Crack: Thank you, sir. Ces élèves, qui représentent les écoles de leur région, participent au sixième Parlement jeunesse francophone, qui se déroule ici même à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario. Merci à Thérèse Nadeau pour son excellent travail. Aussi, il y a 10 étudiants de ma circonscription qui participent au Parlement. Bienvenue.

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Let the House know that this week has been Pharmacy Awareness Week. I have a guest today from London, Ontario: Mr. Jim Semchism, owner of Ealing Pharmacy. He's the one who led the charge to remove the sale of tobacco products from pharmacies in 1995. Eight members of his extended family are pharmacists.

Miss Monique Taylor: Today I'd like to welcome my dear friend Alexander Brown and his students from the International Language Schools of Canada. Today he has students with him from Brazil, Switzerland, Colombia, Korea, Japan and Mexico. Welcome to them.

Also, I'd like to welcome the CUPE members and the PSW, and at the same time I'll take a moment to wish everybody a happy International Women's Day.

Mr. Mike Colle: I have a group of people here from Snowball Corners who are here with the Moraine Can't Wait campaign. They have delivered an 8,000-card petition in support of protecting this incredible jewel we have, from Peterborough to the Niagara escarpment. They are Debbe Crandall, Victoria Foote, Debbie Gordon, John Hassell and Josh Garfinkel. Thank you for coming and supporting the moraine.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I am very pleased today to introduce John Gillespie, president, and Pat Jilesen, vice-president, of the Bruce County Federation of Agriculture; Bethanee Jensen, provincial director of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario; and Jennifer Small, wife of CFFO president Lorne Small, as well as Bill Palmer, a professional engineer who has done extensive research on the impacts of industrial wind turbines.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Merci, monsieur le Président. J'ai de la grande visite qui est venue de très loin aujourd'hui. Ça me fait extrêmement plaisir de vous les présenter. De l'École secondaire catholique Champlain : Steffany Byrnes et Edréa Fechner. Du Collège Notre-Dame de Sudbury, j'ai Patrick Diotte, Émilie Bouchard, puis Benjamin Doudard. Merci beaucoup d'être là. Merci d'avoir fait le voyage.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'd like to welcome the Matthews Hall student Parliament, who are here to watch proceedings along with Alana Hepworth and Jen McKay.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my great pleasure to welcome to the Legislature this morning Mr. Steve Berg, the executive director of the Canadian Christian Embassy. He's currently overseeing activities in the Canadian Christian Embassy in Ottawa. His organization, Power to Change, is committed to helping Canadians reach their world and address their needs through the power of faith.

Mrs. Teresa Piruzza: I rise today first to say Happy International Women's Day to all the women in this chamber and all the women in our lives.

I also rise to introduce to Sylvia Kim, who is with the legislative internship program, who has been with my office over the last number of weeks. It's with mixed feelings that I say goodbye to her because I know she'll move on to future endeavours, but I certainly hope that she enjoyed her time with my office. Sylvia, thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On behalf of the member from Vaughan we have at Queen's Park today to see page Samantha Mariano, Sabrina Mandarello, the mother; Domenic Mariano, the father; Sara Mariano, the sister; and Josie Mandarello, the grandmother. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Also, in the Speaker's gallery today, we have M. Gilles Morin, the former member who represented the

riding of Carleton East from 1989 to 1999 in the 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliament. Welcome.

It is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Premier—especially for the members in the gallery and for our friends. For the last two weeks our party has been offering ideas to tackle Ontario's biggest challenges: the deficit and the jobs crisis.

While we've been proposing ideas that save billions and create jobs, you continue to spend. We propose energy policies that add jobs while your FIT program kills jobs and drives up costs. Our leader, Tim Hudak, has presented the Affordable Energy and Restoration of Local Decision Making Act.

Premier, if you don't have any solutions, will you get behind our party's bill?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, to the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Let's just be clear what we all stand for. When we brought forward tax reform a couple of years ago to strengthen the economy, attract investment and build jobs in Ontario, the party opposite said no. When we brought forward initiatives such as the southwest economic development fund and the eastern Ontario development fund to strengthen the economy, attract investment and build jobs, the other party said no. When we brought forward the green investment act and the feed-in tariff to attract investment, strengthen the economy and attract jobs, the other party said no.

We're for jobs. We're for growth. We're for new ideas. They're the party of no.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker. I'll try for the Premier again. Our bill cancels the job-killing FIT program and restores local decision-making powers to municipalities. Premier, last week at ROMA you spoke of letting municipalities have more say. Yet only a few weeks ago, your party voted against the member from Prince Edward-Hastings's bill that would do exactly that.

I realize you're conflicted, Premier, but you have a second chance. Will you vote to restore local decision-making power?

1040

Hon. Christopher Bentley: So we know where we stand: In 2003, we said we were getting out of coal because it makes people sick. We're cleaning up the air. We've been consistent. They like coal.

We said we were going to bring in renewable energy to accelerate getting out of coal and clean up the air. They've been consistent in here and they've said no in here.

We've said we are going to bring in a review of our green energy approach to build on its strengths so we can continue to get out of coal, grow the economy and build jobs. We are determined to clean up the air, determined to attract investment, determined to make sure that we are the solid foundation for the green economy of the future. That's where we stand. We know where they stand. The future is with us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Let's talk about a few consequences of your job-killing FIT program. You actually use wind and solar to replace clean, affordable, reliable hydroelectric power. Last year alone, spilling water cost our ratepayers \$300 million. And because you give wind and solar priority on the grid, you're abruptly shutting down nuclear units, venting steam on a regular basis. We all know these units were not designed for that. So you're spilling water, venting steam and draining jobs.

Premier, isn't it time you mopped up this mess and supported our bill?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: You know, it's an interesting suggestion that the party opposite makes for us when we're drilling a third tunnel at Niagara Falls and we've got the Lower Mattagami—both hydroelectric facilities that will be coming on very soon.

It's hard to know which way the wind blows for the party opposite, because when they're back in their ridings, speaking truth to neighbour, my colleague opposite and his colleagues say yes to solar and yes to wind, and when they're here, they say no to solar and no to wind.

He put up solar panels when he was the member on the roof of city hall. He stood to support wind projects when he's in his riding. When he's here, he says—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question?

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, my question is for the Premier. We'll try again.

Let's talk about the 20,000 phantom jobs that you say exist. When I met with the Samsung executives, I asked them how you came up with that number, and they explained to me that there's steel coming from the Soo for the turbines, so you count those existing steel jobs. You also count the existing truckers. There are concrete companies with existing employees who pour the footings, so you count them, existing employees, as well. I guess all that's left are the temporary labourers and your lobbyists.

Minister, aren't your claims based on nothing more than fictitious jobs and voodoo math?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I think the question provides the answer. When you put up a renewable energy project, you do need steel from the Soo, and those workers are producing that steel. You do need plants like

Siemens in Tillsonburg and CS Wind down Windsor way to actually produce the components. You do need electricians and millwrights and other trades to put it up. Those are all good jobs in the province of Ontario which do not exist but for the renewable energy initiative.

We're for jobs. They're for no. The question is clear.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, the Auditor General also questioned their jobs claims. But he also noted that FIT subsidies are driving up the cost of power to make us one of the most expensive places in North America.

Let me read a quote: "If businesses can't count on a secure and inexpensive supply of electricity, they won't invest in Ontario." Premier, we agree with your very words. Yesterday, the CFIB reported the main cost pressure on Ontario businesses surveyed is energy.

Premier, will you admit that the FIT program is killing jobs and join us in putting an end to it today?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'd like to thank some of the "phantoms" in the province of Ontario for the investments they're making and the jobs they're producing. I'd like to thank CS Wind in Windsor for the 300 direct jobs and 400 indirect jobs that they're producing right now. I'd like to thank SunEdison in Newmarket for the 50 jobs and the 35 indirect jobs that they're producing right now. I'd like to thank KB Racking in Guelph and Mississauga. I'd like to thank OSM in Welland. I'd like to thank—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. Member from Renfrew, come to order.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: —power in Newmarket. I'd like to thank SunRise Power Corp. for the work they're doing up in Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes. I'd like to thank Enphase Energy, Highland Solar, Hybridyne, Essar Steel Algoma, Steel Tree Structures and countless more that are part of the 20,000 jobs, \$27 billion worth of investment.

When is the party opposite going to stand up for jobs, stand up for investments and stand up—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, this week we've presented clear and compelling evidence that your job-killing program is an economic disaster. We can mention some names as well: Xstrata Copper in Timmins, which lost 670 jobs as they went to Quebec for cheaper power. Another example: The largest manufacturer in my riding was here in the gallery this week, and you heard for the first time of global adjustment, that million-dollar charge that now threatens those 250 jobs. You also heard that countries the world over are abandoning these crippling subsidies.

But Premier, you're in luck. We have a CARE package for you: Clean, Affordable, Reliable Energy. Premier, your CARE package is there. Will you support our bill and end the job-killing FIT program?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: You know, Speaker, in the Legislature they're consistent and they say no, but when they're back in their ridings it's a different tune, and sometimes it's hard to know which way the wind blows.

The MPP from Oxford said that the Samsung agreement would stay under a PC government. The MPP from Nipissing—

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: You're a liar, Minister.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Oxford will withdraw.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Withdraw.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: St. Thomas Times Journal, May 11, 2011. The MPP from Nipissing puts the solar panels on the city hall roof and puts the wind project outside the community. The MPP from Haldimand-Norfolk says, "The SunE Sky parks here in Norfolk represent a great opportunity to diversify our economy ... improving" the life of our—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question this morning is for the Premier. Over the last week, I've asked the government to account for the millions of public dollars that they have given away to companies that just aren't creating jobs. And over the last week, the Premier hasn't offered any answers whatsoever. For example, why did a \$20-billion hedge fund with five staff get a \$350,000 handout paid for by the people of Ontario?

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: It's becoming increasingly evident that the NDP don't support efforts to create jobs in the province of Ontario, don't support efforts to build our globe-leading financial services sector, don't support efforts to build our North America-leading auto sector.

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When you look at the investments we made some time ago when that auto sector was hanging on a thread, where were the NDP then? Mr. Speaker, 485,000 workers in this province depend on that auto sector; 485,000 jobs that would not be there today if we had listened to the NDP and not made those investments. Twenty billion dollars of investment in our economy is dependent on that auto sector. Today, if we had listened to them, our economy would be \$20 billion—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What New Democrats don't support is the failing efforts of this Liberal government that just gives money to companies that ship jobs somewhere else.

New Food Classics got a \$1-million handout and shut their doors within months. Silicon Knights got a \$2.5-million handout and laid off 75% of their workforce. Navistar got a \$30-million handout and shipped thousands of jobs south to Mexico.

The government says that they have agreements in place that are going to ensure that jobs are protected in these situations. I want to know if the Premier has gotten a single dime of any of this money back?

Hon. Brad Duguid: There was so much misinformation in that, I'm not even going to respond specifically to it.

But what I'll say is this: The opposition thinks that it's their job to run down Ontario's economy. I don't know where they get their economic advice from. I take my economic advice from the people who want to build this economy up, like the people at Avaya and Ciena, who recognize the talent and innovation of our workforce and are investing in Ottawa's high-tech sector; like the people at Toyota, who decided that Woodstock was the place to build their first North American electric vehicle; like the people at Goodrich, who decided that Oakville was the place to build their world-leading landing gear for the world's largest aircraft; like the people at Magna, whose plants in Aurora, Brampton, Concord and St. Thomas are providing key facilities for a world-leading economic entity.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, this week, this minister insisted that money handed out to Navistar was clawed back, but we haven't found any evidence at all that this in fact was done, and the government is hiding the information in the contracts that they won't make public.

This public money comes from people who worked hard and who paid their fair share. Why is the government refusing to tell them how much they've given away and what the conditions were under which they were given it?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member asked the exact same question yesterday, and I gave her a very direct answer to that. She's basing her question on a freedom-of-information request that she sat on for weeks, if not months; that's outdated. The numbers are there; they're public. I said it yesterday. They've paid back \$6 million.

I'll say it again for the member, because she put out a press release yesterday that was not correct: They've paid back \$6 million. The investment that this government made and the investment that the federal government made helped preserve jobs in Chatham for almost 10 years, because this plant was going to close down in 2002. It's unfortunate they made the decision to move. At the same time, we've done what we said we were going to do. We've clawed back \$6 million. We were able to preserve hundreds of jobs in Chatham for another 10 years—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is back to the Premier. For the people who make this province work every day, the situation is pretty hard to stomach. Their

wages are falling, their jobs are at risk and the money that they send here is being handed out by the millions to companies that are laying them off. Does this make a lick of sense, Speaker?

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: The only thing that doesn't make a lick of sense in here are the continual questions coming from the NDP based on misinformation. Many of the questions they've asked this week on these issues are concerning companies that are working hard in this province, trying to make a go of it. On many of these occasions the money hasn't even flowed to them yet.

So let me say this: We're going to continue to work tirelessly to build up this economy. We're going to continue to work for the people of this province, to ensure we have the best-educated workforce. We're going to continue to invest in the infrastructure of this province, to ensure we have competitive infrastructure.

I would think that the NDP would be with us in this effort. It's obvious that they're not. We're on the side of workers—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The people who sent us here have a lot on the line, and we need to make some pretty smart decisions. We need to be doing a much, much better job than what this government has been doing.

The Premier's policy on no-strings-attached corporate tax cuts and on multi-million dollar handouts simply is not creating jobs. Now, he's already admitting that his corporate tax giveaways have not delivered. Will he adopt a plan that actually rewards the job creators in Ontario and links tax relief to creating jobs, to training and to investments in this province?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The leader of the NDP may think it's her job to continue to talk down our economy, but we're going to keep building it up.

But if she doesn't want to take our word for it, let's listen to a magazine like Forbes, a pretty well-respected business magazine. This is what they had to say. Forbes said Canada ranks number one as the best country for business. They said that's because of Ontario's reformed tax structure with the HST, which directly refutes what you just said.

Let's talk about Site Selection magazine. It ranked Ontario as the most competitive province in Canada for 2010-11—the most competitive province. Here's what they had to say: "When a province is creating more than half the new jobs for its nation, chances are it's a leader in competitiveness."

We're proud of the work we're doing. We're going to keep doing it, with or without the support of the NDP—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Forbes—well, the minister might cater to the people who hold Forbes subscriptions, but here are the facts for everyday people in Ontario. Wages are rising across Canada, but in Ontario, wages

are falling. Unemployment, too, in Ontario is higher than the national average. People in this province have a higher debt and are more worried about their jobs than anywhere else in the country. They look to their government for leadership, and when they see public dollars handed out to companies that are laying people off, they lose hope.

Isn't it time for a better strategy in Ontario, one that ensures that tax breaks go to real job creators and not the companies that are leaving Ontario—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm not sure how much confidence the member opposite has in the people of Ontario, but I think the people of Ontario are quite capable of reading magazines in this province. I think they're well-educated enough to understand what's going on in our business community, and I think they'd be very interested to know what the Financial Times of London had to say. They ranked Ontario as first in North America in foreign direct investment per capita, and second in absolute terms.

The member may refuse to take our word for it, Speaker, but these are pretty, pretty respected publications that I'm quoting today.

Look, Mr. Speaker, we've got a plan that's working. Companies confirm it, because they're investing here. We've got a plan that's working.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The numbers confirm it, because we've had over 300,000 jobs created in this province since the recession—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. A reminder to the member: When I say, "Answer," you have a wrap-up to do, and do so quickly.

New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: To the Minister of Health: The \$140-million deal that Ornge executives cooked up is under criminal investigation. The money that paid for that deal was raised in a public offering that featured the credentials of one of its executives, Mr. Rick Potter. The minister knows that Mr. Potter lied about those credentials; she knows he was intimately involved in cooking up that deal.

Front-line staff, the paramedics, pilots at Ornge know Mr. Potter's record and lost confidence in him long ago. The minister said she would fire any of her staff who did what Mr. Potter would do. Yet, rather than fire Mr. Potter, last night the minister and her new leadership—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Frank Klees: —gave Mr. Potter a soft landing into another job at Ornge.

I ask the minister to explain this: How can she justify holding on to her job with such a blatant—

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The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. I also remind this member to please wrap up as quickly as possible. When I say stop, we stop.

Minister?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. This is, of course, an operational issue that human resource people in an organization make. My job is to make sure that there is strong leadership in place. I have accomplished that. There is new and very strong, credible leadership in place at Ornge. They will make decisions related to personnel in that organization.

I can assure you, Speaker, that I do not make decisions about personnel within the organizations—the many organizations, the hundreds of organizations—that the Ministry of Health is responsible for funding. We have made important changes at Ornge and those people are doing their job.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary question?

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, Speaker, given those circumstances, the minister should take it upon herself to make those decisions if her leadership doesn't have the wisdom to do so.

Here is the new job that Mr. Potter has been given: Entrench the plan that he and his friend Dr. Mazza cooked up, a plan that was blindly and irresponsibly endorsed by the Management Board of this government and nurtured along by the current Minister of Health.

Here's the plan: Start a new aviation business; take contracts away from experienced aviation companies that have been delivering excellent service to the province of Ontario for two decades; force those companies out of business; lower standards of operation; reduce staffing levels and to heck with patient care and crew safety.

So I want to ask the minister this: If she doesn't have the capacity to get the job done and show leadership, why doesn't she step aside and let someone—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister of Health?

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Health?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, the member opposite has had no shortage of advice to offer when it comes to the operations of Ornge. He actually thinks the minister should decide what planes fly, what helicopters fly, what the qualifications of paramedics are, who should work and what their job should be. I just reject that definition of what the responsibility of the minister is.

My job is to put in place strong leadership and let them do their job. My job is to make sure that we have the oversight that we need to ensure that taxpayers are getting best value for their money and patients are getting the highest quality care. If you look at the record that I have led, we have done all of those things. The member

opposite has different priorities. My priority is to get care to the patients—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question?

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

New question?

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Merci, monsieur le Président. Ma question est pour le premier ministre.

Every day this week I've asked the Premier questions about the fact that his senior staff in his office were told about what was going on at Ornge but they didn't do anything. The Premier hasn't answered a single question as of yet.

Will the Premier break his silence and tell this Legislature about his office's knowledge of Ornge's tangled web of for-profit companies and executive perks?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for that. The briefing that the member opposite has referred to has been in the public domain for quite a while now. There are no secrets contained in that.

The fact is that we have taken decisive action in the ministry. The Auditor General tried repeatedly to get answers to questions that they thought the people of Ontario were entitled to receive. When the former leadership at Ornge refused to share that information we had to take very strong actions.

We have replaced the board. We have a new interim CEO. We sent in a forensic audit team that in fact has led to an OPP investigation. We are now focused on moving forward. The people of this province deserve access to very high quality air ambulance care.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Back to the Premier: Mr. Speaker, I tried to ask what I think are important questions, and I asked them in a respectful way. But I can't even get the Premier to look at me when I talk to him, and I can certainly not get him to answer any questions.

The facts are straightforward. This written document was given to his top adviser. It was given to Jamison Steeve.

Instead of hiding behind the health minister, will the Premier step up and explain to families why his office did not act when they found out what was going on at Ornge? We deserve a word from our Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm very pleased that the Premier has confidence in me to do my job, and that job is to make sure that we move forward, making the changes at Ornge that need to be made.

I can tell you that front-line staff are seeing the changes that are happening. They are very pleased with the change in leadership. They are pleased with the decisions that this government has made.

Our focus is on patient safety. Our focus is on addressing the issues that are being raised by the Auditor General and others, Speaker.

We are winding down the for-profit entities that were created under the former leadership. We have taken the appropriate steps, and we will continue to act in the interest of the people of this province.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the Minister of Government Services. These are tough economic times. We're dealing with a mounting public deficit. We've got the public debt to retire. Indeed, this is the challenge of our times here in Ontario.

Minister, yesterday, the Premier raised the issue of an MPP pay freeze. What's happening with respect to the MPP pay raise or pay freeze?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I want to thank the member from Willowdale for asking this question. He absolutely is correct. We are facing a \$16-billion deficit, and we need to face this deficit head on. This will require real leadership for us to demonstrate—not only to face the challenge but at the same time protect our key priorities as well.

I just want to say that the Premier said yesterday that it's important that we continue to lead by example. We are asking people to do some things that are not easy, especially our public sector partners. That's why it is critical that we lead by example, so we will be asking all MPPs, once again, to freeze salaries for an additional two years. This means that, for five years, Ontario's MPPs will not have any salary increases.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Here's what my constituents in Willowdale are concerned about. They have read about the 5% reduction in the OPS. They've read about another 2% reduction over the next two years. They've read about cutting the number of service agencies in Ontario by some 5%, meaning some 14 fewer agencies.

Minister, what they want to know is, allowing for those reductions—staff reductions and agency reductions—what's our plan to continue to maintain the quality of our core services in Ontario, combined with those reductions?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member from Willowdale again for asking this question. Our government is absolutely committed to balancing the budget by 2017-18. We have committed to reducing the size of the Ontario public service by 5%, and we are on track on that as well by the end of March this year, and a further 2% decrease in the next two years. As the member said, we are cutting the number of key agencies by 5%. But we are making investments in the programs that we feel are important to Ontarians, like education and health care.

In these challenging economic times, we must all work together to ensure that Ontarians continue to receive the quality services they have come to expect.

We will continue to lead by example in asking all MPPs in the House to freeze their salaries for an additional two years.

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AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

The galleries are full today; people are observing question period. I believe that one of the reasons there is so much cynicism about the political process is because they have observed a Premier who has refused to engage in the debate that relates to one of the biggest scandals that has ever hit this province. For the Premier not to stand in his place and respect members of the opposition who put specific questions to him about this important issue is an insult to the members of the opposition and it is an insult to the people of this province.

I would just ask him one more time: Would he at least stand in his place, would he at least look at the person who's asking him a question, would he have say—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Another reminder that when I ask you to be seated, you do so—in particular the questioners or the people giving the answers: When I ask you to be seated, you be seated, please.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, I'm delighted to take the question.

I want to begin by saying that I draw a distinction between the interests being expressed by my colleagues in opposition and our responsibility owed to the greater public interest. I think that's an important distinction for us to draw.

There is a political interest over there; they are pursuing that. That is their option to do so and, in some ways, I would also argue it is their responsibility. But on this side of the House, our responsibility is to the greater public interest. What does the public demand of us in these circumstances, Speaker? The public demands of us to act responsibly.

The Minister of Health sent in a team of forensic accountants. Given the results of that investigation, she turned it over to the OPP. She's co-operating fully with the provincial auditor. That's the way to act responsibly.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you very much.

Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Back to the Premier: Here's what the public do not understand. Why does the government have to be dragged, kicking and screaming, into striking a committee that would only help to get to the truth about this scandal and would allow front-line staff to come forward and tell their story about how to restore con-

fidence in our air ambulance service—a committee that would allow us to establish who knew what, when, and who was responsible for the actions taken?

The minister and the Premier may want to avoid the scrutiny of this committee, but we on this side and the public want that scrutiny. That's why we tabled our motion yesterday that will force a debate and express the urgency of striking that committee.

Will the Premier support striking that committee so that we can get to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier?

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague raises an important issue. I think we're all looking for a foundation of objective, non-partisan, reliable information.

First of all, we've asked the police to conduct an investigation, and we look forward to the results of that objective investigation. The provincial auditor is looking into this matter as well, and we look forward to the results of that objective, non-partisan, arm's-length investigation.

Beyond that, Speaker, my House leader tells us that this is a subject that is going to come before a parliamentary committee: public accounts. That's one committee there. The minister is also going to be introducing legislation which we hope will become the subject of a committee hearing in this House. That's the second committee.

So we have an OPP investigation; we have an auditor looking into this; we have a public accounts committee; and we have a parliamentary committee looking into the bill itself. It seems to me we're going a long way.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Start the clock.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will share with the House that somebody wrote me an email and said, "Watch for the farmer's cycle; pay attention to the moon." I don't know what that meant.

All I have to say is I would appreciate it—references have been made to our gallery. They do go away with thoughts in their minds—two of them, probably: whether or not I can do my job and whether or not you are doing yours. I hope we would all maintain the civility that I've asked for.

New question.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le premier ministre.

I would like to preface my question by reminding our Premier, as well as everybody in this House, that today is Women's Day and maybe when a woman asks a question she can get an answer from the Premier.

My question is simple, Premier: Can you tell this Legislative Assembly what you know about Ornge, and when did you find out?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, I think it is important that we give some recognition to the important role that women have played in all our lives and in this House.

And I think we're all very lucky to have a very strong Minister of Health in Deb Matthews, serving all Ontarians.

Again, I draw a distinction between the political interests being advanced by the opposition and the responsibility we owe to the greater public interest. In addition to those independent, objective assessments that I've talked about—and I want to make it perfectly clear: I have not said that we should reject the committee being put forward by the opposition; I'm saying that we have a number of investigations under way. We should allow for the completion of those.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France G elinas: Back to the Premier: I got the Premier to speak but not to answer, so let's try it again.

The right to know, Premier, is also in the public interest, and what I'm asking you right now is that—your top adviser, Jamison Steeve, had the document 14 months ago. He knew of the tangled web. I am absolutely positive that a million red flags went up when he saw this.

What I'm asking you is: What did you know and when did you find out?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, again, I draw a distinction between the political interests being advanced by my honourable colleague and what we owe the public.

Now, as a matter of courtesy, I don't provide advice with respect to the kinds of questions that my colleagues opposite put to me—although, of course, they have an interest in how I answer those questions—but I think we might want to reciprocate in that regard. They put the questions in the best way they see fit, and I do the same with respect to the answers.

With respect to this particular answer, I think what we owe Ontarians is to ensure that we are on top of this, that we are bringing in the necessary oversight, that we're allowing the police to do their work, that we're allowing the auditor's office to do its work, that we put in place new rules by means of new legislation which will further tighten up the oversight that we bring to a very important public responsibility.

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SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr. Mike Colle: A question to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: Today I'm going to be celebrating my aunt's 107th birthday.

Interjection: Going to have some pasta?

Mr. Mike Colle: It's pasta fagioli; that's the key.

It's just that she was able to stay in her home—she lived in Etobicoke and Mississauga—up until a of couple months ago. That is an amazing thing for a senior who has worked her whole life to stay with her family.

She now is in a long-term-care facility in Mississauga, and when I go to see her today, I'm sure she's going to ask me, "What are you in government doing to help seniors," like her, "stay in their homes?"

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I think all of us are inspired by someone like Luigina Grimaldi, 107 years young, the aunt of the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. She inspires us, because we need to do more to support people to stay in their own homes as long as possible, and that is what our action plan is all about: providing more supports at home and in the community.

One of the things we are moving forward with is bringing back house calls for the people of Ontario, so that people who have difficulty getting to appointments will actually have those health care professionals come to their homes. It won't just be doctors; it will be other health care providers like occupational therapists, nurses and others who can help support people, because home is where we all want to be. Home is where we want to be.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Minister of Health. I just wanted to say that the house call program has really been received very positively by a lot of seniors, certainly in my riding and I'm sure in ridings right across Ontario, because they feel, as seniors, that sometimes, especially in Ontario's winter months, they can't get out to see a doctor. Many of them, as they get older, can't drive. So making that house call available is really something that they think will be of great benefit. Can you just give our seniors an idea of how the house call by doctors program will work?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This is a great question. A few months ago, I went on a house call visit with Dr. Mark Nowaczynski here in Toronto. We visited an 83-year-old woman who would have been in long-term care, had it not been for the care that Dr. Mark and his team of people were able to provide her in her own home. That's where she wants to be, with her family in her community.

Speaker, it's better for patients; it's also better for the system. We know that long-term care costs about \$150 a day; a hospital is up to \$1,000 a day. Keeping someone in their own home is a far more cost-effective way to care for people as they age. So it's better patient care, and it's better value for taxpayers.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question today is for the Minister of Energy. I am joined today by dozens and dozens of Ontarians who have made the trek to Queen's Park, and later this afternoon, I look forward to welcoming busloads of additional people who are here today. They have travelled from all corners of Ontario to watch you, Minister, and all of us, as we vote for a moratorium

on industrial wind turbines until real health and environmental studies are done.

Folks from across Ontario were heartened by all Liberals, just two days ago—all Liberals, just two days ago—who said they supported studies, consultations and local decision-making. Minister, will you prove the Liberal talking points weren't just crass politics by supporting my call for a moratorium until third party health—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister of Energy?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I just want to make sure that we're all clear: We stand for clean air; they stand for coal. We stand for clean energy; they oppose it. We stand for clean energy jobs; they don't. We stand for the health studies and the health advice from the medical officers of health of both Ontario and Canada, and countless other studies out there that make it clear that it is safe and that we've taken the appropriate steps. I just want to make sure that we're all very clear in here.

When I travel through rural Ontario, I see a heck of a lot of farmers and communities participating in the clean energy, green energy, clean air agenda that my friend opposite opposes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, I am embarrassed for all the good folks who have travelled to Toronto today. That was disgusting.

Just this week, Minister, Premier McGuinty said that it is "our shared responsibility at all times to respect the expressed will of our" municipalities. Ontario MPPs have received a record-breaking 1,700 emails in support of my moratorium. Municipalities throughout Ontario have also passed resolutions supporting a moratorium and studies.

Minister, I ask again: Will you do the honourable thing and recognize the will of thousands and thousands of people who have travelled to Queen's Park today, signed petitions and sent emails to all of us here in this House supporting my moratorium? Will you do the honourable thing?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: We've made it very clear that we're going to build on the strengths of the green energy review through our Green Energy Act, through our review. We've been listening very carefully to communities, to municipalities, to organizations both rural and urban, and we're going to come out with a strengthened program very soon to make sure we continue to clean up the air, continue to grow jobs in our economy and continue to make sure that Ontarians, rural and urban, can participate in the green energy economy.

But it's tough sometimes when the members in here, on the other side of the House, oppose green energy, but back in their ridings they support green energy; when the members opposite, on so many issues, have a morning press conference that says no to green jobs, and this afternoon they're having a press conference that wants to unlock green jobs; when they oppose subsidies, and they

support subsidies for racetracks; when they like the HST and then they say no. Where do you stand?

TEACHERS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. Why won't the Premier sit down face to face with teachers to discuss issues he's so eager to talk about on YouTube?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I just want to take this opportunity to say how proud I am of Ontario teachers and of the partnership that we've entered into with Ontario teachers.

The fact of the matter is, it's one thing for us in government to come up with new ideas, to provide more funding, and to try to improve the quality of the curriculum and the education that we provide our teachers. But at the end of the day, it's the men and women who work inside those classrooms every single day who are making such a powerful difference in the lives of our children and our young people. They are single-handedly building a brighter future for all of us.

I have every confidence that we will maintain the strength of our partnership. We will find a way forward together. We will continue to ensure that Ontario schools are the best in the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Tough times require real leadership. The Premier knows, or should know, that locking yourself in your office with the blinds down, making videos on YouTube, isn't leadership. It's exactly the sort of tactic he used to disparage.

He just spoke glowingly of teachers. He's asking them to take a hit. Why can't he look them in the eye?

1130

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There may have been a Premier who has visited as many schools as I have, but I'm not aware of such an individual. There may have been another Premier who has created so many opportunities to celebrate Ontario teachers, but I'm not aware of such an individual. There may have been a government that has so dramatically increased funding for publicly funded schools in Ontario, but I'm not aware of one either, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I am trying to get the shouting back and forth down. Some members on both sides just want to yell, and I would like that to stop, please.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Thanks, Speaker. We've come up against a challenge at this point in our history. The global economy has slowed. The outlook is uncertain. We are confronted with a significant deficit here in Ontario. So I am inviting our teachers, our doctors, MPPs and all our public sector partners to participate in being some part of the solution as we tackle this deficit and make sure we have the continued capacity to support, among other things, great schools.

VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Today is International Women's Day, and I'd like to ask a question about the rate of violence against aboriginal women. It's a problem that must be addressed.

In recent years, the Native Women's Association of Canada, Amnesty International and other human rights organizations are sounding the alarm against the number of women in Canada who are missing and have been murdered. These organizations have urged the United Nations to investigate what the federal government is doing; its inaction. The United Nations, in December, asked for an inquiry procedure through the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women, and we do have commitments. The national chief has indicated that there are Premiers, territorial leaders and provincial ministers all prepared, but where is our federal government? It's clear they have a responsibility to develop a nationwide strategy.

So my question, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is: Please tell me what we're doing to make a difference with the federal government—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank the member for Etobicoke Centre for raising this important issue. I think everyone in this House can agree that it is completely unacceptable that, across Canada, the rate of violence against aboriginal women is triple that of non-aboriginal women and the rate of spousal homicide for aboriginal women is eight times greater than for non-aboriginal women. It's a completely unsupportable and unacceptable statistic.

As chair of the aboriginal affairs working group, which is the national working group of ministers responsible across the country, we've been calling on the federal government to take action on the issue of ending violence against aboriginal women. This was one of the three identified priorities on which we're going to be focusing.

The minister responsible for women's issues is going to speak, and she is going to talk about some of the specific initiatives that we've been taking. But the issue of the 500 missing and murdered aboriginal women is something that ministries need to work collaboratively on, and we need to work with community groups.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you, Minister. It's nice to know that we are actually urging the federal government to move forward on a national strategy. But in the meantime, the First Nations themselves have identified that the province has a responsibility as well. So, what are the things that we are doing in the interim to be able to help initially, and ultimately to be able to work with that federal government when that national strategy is developed?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the minister responsible for women's issues.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I'm very proud to lead, with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the work to make sure that there is a coordinated response from ministries across Ontario to address the recommendations and the strategic framework to end violence against aboriginal women.

We've established a joint working group on violence against aboriginal women. It brings together 10 different ministries and five aboriginal organizations to work collectively to better prevent violence against aboriginal women and to provide better support to the victims. We've done some great work together. We've started a program called Kanawayhitowin, which helps raise awareness about the signs of abuse so that friends, neighbours and families know what to do. We've begun a pilot project for an aboriginal women's helpline. We are providing support to women in communities.

We're doing our part, but we need a strong federal partner to make the difference in the lives of women—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Norm Miller: My question is for the Premier. Quebec's Premier took the time to attend the prospectors and developers' convention this week in Toronto. He outlined Plan Nord, a comprehensive 25-year plan that allocates \$85 billion to develop the resources, people and opportunities for the people of northern Quebec. Some 30,000 people from all around the world attended this conference. Every hotel room in the city is booked this week. Premier, you didn't even bother to show up. Why is it that the Premier of Quebec recognizes the importance of mining, but you don't?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Well, thank you, Premier, for allowing me the opportunity to congratulate the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada for hosting another incredible success story. Do you know what? They highlighted Ontario. In almost every delegation I went to, everybody spoke about the wonder that is Ontario when it comes to mineral development and mineral exploration. There is absolutely no question about it: Ontario is the choice for so many people around the world to invest money, to explore, to develop, to bring out the natural resources from underground so that everyone benefits from the incredible, incredible thing that is Ontario.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Supplementary.

Mr. Norm Miller: Speaker, I have no idea what the minister just blabbered on about, but I would like to redirect my question back to the Premier.

Premier, your approach to mining is sending mixed signals. This week, in the middle of the prospectors' con-

vention, you removed 23,000 square kilometres of northwestern Ontario from exploration. When the De Beers diamond mine was about to open, you jacked up their tax rate. Mining companies are leaving Ontario because of your high energy cost. You are doing precious little, other than issue press releases, to help get the Ring of Fire discovery to an active mine. It's no wonder that mining companies, that ranked Ontario as sixth in the world in 2003, now rank us as 25th.

Premier, how can you call Ontario open for business based on your—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Speaker, it amazes me that the critic for the Progressive Conservatives would say that supporting the Ontario mining industry is blabbering. Well, let me blabber some more. We have 246 exploration companies exploring in Ontario; more than in Quebec. We have a value in exploration of \$11 billion; more than in Quebec. We have exploration spending of \$1.2 billion; more than Quebec. We have 27 metal mines; more than Quebec. That's why Ontario is the choice destination for exploration and development in the mineral industry, and I'm proud of that.

I'm ashamed of that member over—

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Kitchener–Waterloo on a point of order.

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'd like to introduce Mr. Gerald Van Decker from Kitchener, the president and CEO of Renewability Energy Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister on a point of order.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Speaker, on a point of privilege, I missed out yesterday, and I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce a fourth-year student of politics and history from U of T. Welcome to the public gallery, Mr. Adrian Zita-Bennett.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Everyone be seated, please.

I will be making a statement on this very thing in the near future.

Since there are no deferred votes, this House stands adjourned—while this is happening, the members are supposed to be seated.

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

The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I would like to introduce, in the gallery, my legislative intern. His name is Patrick DeRochie and he is part of the Ontario Legislature internship program. I will say here that he was the

gentleman who crafted my soon-to-be-presented private member's bill.

Mr. Michael Coteau: It's my pleasure today to welcome to the Legislative Assembly several members of the Don Valley East Armenian community. Today, we're joined by Armenian National Committee of Toronto chairman Hagop Tchakmakian; the Armenian National Committee of Toronto administrator, Araz Hasserjian; the Armenian National Committee of Toronto executive, Raffi Sarkissian; the Homenetmen Athletic Council executive, Paul Ternamian; and the Bolsahay Cultural Association of Toronto's representatives, Murat Nisan and Abraham Celikoz.

Also, we're joined by Hratch Aynedjian, who, by the way, is also an assistant for one of our ministers. Welcome very much to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to acknowledge a number of visitors that are touring the Legislature today. I had the pleasure of being with them a few minutes ago at the Royal York. They're winners of the Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year award.

Alysha Dykstra, from Guelph; Madelaine Frank, from Whitby; Sarah Lewis, from Windsor; Rebecca Marsh, from Burlington; Kalem McSween, from Toronto; Stephanie Murchison, from Sarnia–Lambton; Mackenzie Oliver, from Barrie; Breanna Pede, from Sarnia–Lambton; Andrew Sigmaringam, from Toronto; Stephanie Simmons, from London; Isabelle Wilson, from Kincardine; and River Wong, from Thornhill. They'll all be joining us later in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Soo Wong: Today I would like to introduce one of my young constituents, Caitlin Wong, from my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt; a daughter of Natalie Wong, one of my assistants in the constituency office. Caitlin is a great young student in grade 4 at Bridlewood public school who loves to be active. She's an avid tennis player, and just one week ago her school won the conference championship in volleyball. Please join me to welcome Caitlin and her mother, Natalie, to the Legislature.

Mr. Toby Barrett: We welcome Haldimand and Norfolk constituents, here by bus—they're coming into the visitors' gallery now—including Ernie King, Stephana Johnston and others too numerous to mention, here to support legislating a moratorium on further industrial wind power.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We have with us today in the Speaker's gallery the committee on taxation from the Parliament of Sweden, led by committee chairman Mr. Henrik Von Sydow. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature today. Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Todd Smith: Tomorrow, Bancroft Light and Power will be put into receivership by this government.

It's a sad story. There are only a few members of the House who know this story, actually, and one of them is the Minister of Energy.

Four years ago, Infrastructure Ontario gave a loan to Bancroft Light and Power. The money was used to put two new water power generators into a facility that had operated in Bancroft for over 100 years. They did this, believing that a workable RESOP or a FIT contract would be available to them. Unfortunately, it wasn't; they were denied. As has so often been the case with this government, a group of Ontario residents kept up their end of the bargain, and this government, unfortunately, has left them out in the cold.

The icing was on the cake, though, for the town of Bancroft. It came last week at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association conference here in Toronto when the Minister of Energy, after the mayor had camped out at his door, could barely give her the time of day. Considering the \$2-million commitment made by the Infrastructure Ontario group in this project, you'd think that the government would put a real effort into ensuring that a renewable energy investment wouldn't go ignored. But Don Drummond and many others have documented, in damning terms, this government's history with mis-managing money.

Mr. Speaker, apparently you can put up unreliable, expensive wind turbines in Prince Edward county but you can't put a reliable and proven renewable-energy water power project on the York River in Bancroft, and that's sad.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Paul Miller: The Ontario horse racing and breeding industry employs 60,000 people, more than 31,000 full-time, including trainers, grooms, feed store owners, feed growers, barn crews and concession staff, paying \$1.5 billion a year in wages. Workers in the racing community pay taxes and contribute to our economy. Tomorrow, they could be on the welfare and unemployment lines.

One writer to me quoted Minister Duncan, "If it's not a subsidy, then why do they need it?"—to which he replied, "My paycheque is not a subsidy, but I really need it." Another said, "I know one thing: the Liberals are sure waking up a lot of sleeping votes. Scare enough horses and you'll get a stampede."

Cripple the rural community and the economy, and \$2 billion in horse racing and breeding industry expenditures will disappear in primarily rural and agricultural communities. Any change to this agreement should be negotiated because it could virtually end the successful revenue stream, costing the government \$1.1 billion a year.

Speaker, the horse racing industry revenue is not—I repeat, not—a subsidy. It is a revenue-sharing partnership with the OLG, providing the government with revenue of more than \$1 billion a year towards funding health care and education. This agreement is not a secretive subsidy

for just a few wealthy horse owners; it was reached because Ontarians mostly voted that they did not want slot machines.

Don't throw out the baby with the bathwater.

VERONICA PENNY

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you, Speaker. It's great to see you in the chair.

I rise today to recognize the Ottawa Citizen Regional Spelling Bee champion, Veronica Penny, from my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Veronica is a home-schooled student from Rockland. She won the regional spelling bee held at the National Gallery in Ottawa this past weekend. Her championship word was "ascetic." Veronica will next compete in this year's Postmedia/Canspell National Spelling Bee in Toronto later this month.

Let me spell out this incredible accomplishment: About 18,000 students from 71 schools competed to reach Sunday's regional final. From that group, 50 students competed through 13 rounds. Needless to say, Veronica had an impressive performance, successfully defending her regional title. From there, she'll try to earn her fourth trip to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC.

This young woman has been called a spelling marvel. She's made her family very, very proud, and as one of Canada's top young spellers, she has made Rockland, Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and député/MPP Grant Crack very proud as well.

Way to go, Veronica. Keep up the good work and good luck in Toronto. We'll see you later this month.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my absolute pleasure today to stand in this House to support my colleague from Huron–Bruce, Lisa Thompson, in her call for this McGuinty Liberal government to place a moratorium on further wind developments until appropriate studies have been in place and completed.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, representing a large suburban rural riding that is on its way to being assaulted by this McGuinty Liberal government, that we expect in our rural communities to have locally-based decision-making restored to our communities. We expect that that subsidy for the FIT program is going to be ripped up so that our seniors and our small businesses don't have to continue to subsidize their crazy experiments with energy. And we know that there have been lots of complaints from our communities right across Ontario that there may be health and environmental effects because of this energy scheme of Dalton McGuinty.

1310

That's why the Ontario PC caucus will stand firmly behind the member from Huron–Bruce, and we're

challenging other members from rural communities in this chamber to do the right thing. If you don't vote for this motion today, you'll be opposed to rural Ontario. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Ms. Cindy Forster: I rise today to recognize and congratulate women, on International Women's Day, for their achievements, in spite of the barriers they encounter daily. Women represent more than 50% of the population; however, inequities still exist at all income levels, regardless that women are more likely to be university graduates. The Ontario Legislature is a prime example, with only 29% of MPPs being women.

Equality will only be achieved when there's equal access to well-paid jobs in every sector at every level. Women continue to be paid 30% to 40% less than their male counterparts in non-union middle- and low-income workplaces.

Women, and in particular senior women and single-parent-family women, are often the poorest in our province. The McGuinty government could do more to improve the lives of Ontario women by amending the Ontario Labour Relations Act to make unionizing easier through card-based certification for all, but specifically women in female-dominated industries, like they did for the male-dominated construction industry; by ensuring child care services in Ontario are adequately funded; by building more affordable housing to reduce the high percentage of income spent; by raising the minimum wage; and by adequately funding training programs for the unemployed and the underemployed.

I am honoured to be here today as an MPP in the NDP caucus, which has 41% women.

HRANT DINK

Mr. Michael Coteau: I rise today on a very serious matter. The date January 19 this year marked the fifth anniversary of the assassination of Turkish Armenian journalist Hrant Dink. Hrant Dink was an internationally respected journalist, intellectual, and prominent Armenian voice in Turkey. He is most famously recognized as the editor-in-chief for the Turkish Armenian newspaper AGOS.

During his distinguished career, Mr. Dink was outspoken against the state, pointing out the fact that the Ottoman Empire committed genocide against the Armenian population in 1915, which resulted in the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians. Because he spoke truth to power, Dink was arrested multiple times. In 2007, Dink was assassinated outside of the AGOS newspaper office by a 17-year-old ultra-nationalist.

Nearly five years later, the trial of his murderer was brought to a close this January. While the youth was convicted to a life sentence in June 2011, many in the Armenian community continue to raise questions about the original investigation.

I stand alongside the Armenian community in my riding of Don Valley East, throughout Ontario and abroad, as they continue to commemorate Dink's life. Together, let us stand with the Armenian community. We stand against genocide. We stand in support of freedom of speech for all, especially journalists, whose contributions to democracy are invaluable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

YOUTH OFFENDER FACILITY

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: It saddens me to stand in the chamber today and address the closing of beds at Brookside Youth Centre in Cobourg. This loss would be bad enough, Mr. Speaker, were it not for the knowledge that over the past five years, the current government has added four new youth detention facilities and expanded one other, all of them in Liberal-held ridings. At the same time, it has closed jails throughout rural Ontario and is now closing a youth detention facility in a Conservative riding in southwestern Ontario, cutting the facility in my riding in half and taking the hatchet just as viciously to the facility in the NDP-held riding of Nickel Belt.

It is a small wonder why this province is so far in debt. For purely partisan reasons, the government has spent millions of dollars building new facilities in Liberal-held ridings, only to then spend another small fortune paying severances to the men and women working in the existing secure-custody facilities. Why did the government build new facilities when they knew that the capacity of other facilities like Brookside was still available?

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable, and I stand here today on behalf of those individuals who are losing their jobs at Brookside because of this partisan government.

PARLEMENT JEUNESSE FRANCOPHONE DE L'ONTARIO

M. Bob Delaney: Merci, monsieur le Président. Cette semaine, l'Assemblée législative accueille les jeunes participants du Parlement jeunesse, qui en est déjà à sa sixième édition. Cette activité annuelle a été initiée en 2007 par Jean-Marc Lalonde, l'ex-député de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell et l'ancien président de l'Assemblée des parlementaires de la francophonie pour l'Ontario.

Le Parlement jeunesse permet à nos étudiants et étudiantes francophones de 11^e et 12^e année de venir nous rendre visite ici, à Queen's Park. Ainsi, ils pourront nous observer, nous, les députés élus à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario, afin de mieux cerner nos rôles et responsabilités.

Ces jeunes auront par la suite l'occasion de recréer ce dont ils seront témoins aujourd'hui, incluant le travail des députés, des pages, des greffiers et des journalistes. Ils pourront aussi discuter avec les députés francophones dans le cadre d'une rencontre sociale.

Aujourd'hui, je tiens donc à souligner le travail du ministère de l'Éducation, de la Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne et du député de Glengarry-Prescott-

Russell, Grant Crack, pour leur engagement soutenu à la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Je sais donc que tout le monde ici se joint à moi pour souhaiter la bienvenue à tous les étudiants et étudiantes présents aujourd'hui.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, I've been through Mr. McGuinty's Drummond report many times, and it appears Mr. Drummond has failed to mention the low-hanging fruit that's costing Ontario billions: the Green Energy Act. He also failed to address the Samsung fiasco. As one of my constituents wrote me, "Think that this alone could almost solve the deficit."

My constituents—many are here today—want to know who directed this extreme oversight: 700 pages, not a word about industrial wind turbines.

Parker Gallant, vice-president of Wind Concerns Ontario, has noticed as well that the Drummond report is disappointingly low-key on the massive amount of waste going on in Ontario's renewable energy sector. How can this be, after Ontario Auditor General Jim McCarter's devastating report on the subject just a few months ago?

A February 25 editorial in the Toronto Sun sums up the shortfall nicely: "By contrast, the Drummond report on electricity and green energy often reads as if it was written by government bureaucrats defending the indefensible."

This government owes an answer to the people of this province who are being adversely affected by this government's knee-jerk decisions. There are families in my riding, Speaker, who are paying mortgages and they're also renting safe houses to escape the horrors of windmills.

Drummond is a Liberal government commissioned report. Taxpayers funded McGuinty's Drummond report. They deserve an accounting on this, Speaker.

MEMBER FOR NIAGARA FALLS

Mr. Bob Delaney: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Mississauga–Streetsville on a point of order.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, on a point of order: May I seek unanimous consent for the member for Niagara Falls to be present in the House in uniform for the presentation of his ballot item?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Is there unanimous consent? Agreed? Agreed.

I'm being asked to let everyone know it's a costume of Isaac Brock, so that you fully understand.

Interjection: Make sure he leaves the horse at home.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay. Consent has been granted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SUPPLY ACT, 2012

LOI DE CRÉDITS DE 2012

Mr. Bradley, on behalf of Mr. Duncan, moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 46, An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012 / Projet de loi 46, Loi autorisant l'utilisation de certaines sommes pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2012.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Agreed? Agreed.

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for a short statement.

Hon. James J. Bradley: No statement.

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MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. James J. Bradley: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Do we have agreement? Agreed.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that during consideration of private members' public business this afternoon, in the event that Bill 35, An Act to proclaim October 13 in each year as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock Day in Ontario, receives second reading, the order for third reading shall immediately be called and the question put immediately without debate or amendment.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DE LA FEMME

Hon. James J. Bradley: I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each party to speak in recognition of International Women's Day.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: It's my pleasure to rise today to mark International Women's Day. I'm so proud to celebrate the tremendous strides and achievements made by women around the globe and right here at home.

Strong women mean a strong Ontario. As minister responsible for women's issues, it gives me great pride to speak to what women in our province have accomplished. As we make this progress, we create a brighter

future for women and for Ontario. Agnes Macphail, the first female member of Parliament in Canada, said, "I want for myself what I want for other women: absolute equality."

La Journée internationale de la femme nous rappelle que nous devons toujours remettre en question et transformer les attitudes, voire la culture, qui perpétuent l'inégalité des femmes.

International Women's Day reminds us that we must keep our focus on challenging and changing the attitudes—the culture—that perpetuates women's inequality.

Canadian women have always been pioneers in the quest for equality. From getting the vote in 1916 to being defined as "persons" in 1928, bit by bit, strong women have worked to change the culture. But almost 100 years later, there is still more to be done.

The TDSB recently hosted a conference for girls in Regent Park called Sister 2 Sister. One of the sessions was called, "I Don't Need a Prince to Rescue Me." What a wonderful message that sends to young women and what a powerful statement as to the progress that women have made over the past 100-plus years.

Today, during International Women's Week, it's important to look at how far we've come. But, Mr. Speaker, it's also important to reflect on how much more work there is to be done.

Les femmes gagnent en moyenne 30 % de moins que les hommes du même niveau de scolarité, et les hommes sont plus de deux fois plus susceptibles d'occuper un poste de cadre supérieur.

On average, women earn 30% less than equally educated men, and men are more than twice as likely to hold senior management positions. That's why it's so important that girls today have strong women as role models.

I was very proud to be here in the Ontario Legislature when the Order of Ontario was recently awarded; to many, but on that day in particular, to 11 exceptional, unique and inspiring women who were recognized. These women demonstrate the breadth and depth of what women in our society have accomplished and continue to accomplish.

Nathalie Des Rosiers leads the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and works tirelessly to ensure that victims of child sexual abuse get compensation for their injuries, amongst many other endeavours.

Dr. Sandra Black is an internationally recognized cognitive neurologist and the driving force behind the Ontario stroke system, which she designed to improve stroke care, from prevention to rehabilitation and reintegration.

The Order of Ontario also recognized Linda Schuyler of Toronto, co-creator and executive producer of the award-winning TV show *Degrassi*.

I'm so proud, Speaker, to live in a province where young girls can look to women like Nathalie, Sandra, Linda and so many others to see examples of powerful, successful women who are making a mark in the world in such diverse arenas.

Monsieur le Président, notre gouvernement a déployé des efforts inlassables pour habiliter les femmes.

Mr. Speaker, our government has worked hard to empower women with programs like full-day kindergarten, child care investments, the poverty reduction strategy, increases to the Ontario child benefit and training for low-income women in the skilled trades. We're making a tangible difference in the lives of women in this province.

As someone who has fought hard for women's dignity and equality for many, many years, I've seen first-hand the progress women are making. Women are leaving their mark in business, in the arts, in education, in law, in health care. Women are mothers who work both inside and outside of the home. They are entrepreneurs and community activists. Women celebrate in community. We must celebrate their diversity, and today of all days is a day to acknowledge many of the important women who have played roles in our province, in our country and in our lives.

So, Speaker, on International Women's Day, let me say thank you to some important women in my life: to my mother, who supports me; to my sisters, who are always there; and to many of the women who went before, grandmothers who were strong and fought against all of the odds to make sure that their grandchildren could have the future that they wanted. On International Women's Day, let's hope nothing less for all the grandchildren and all the grandmothers and all the mothers and all the sisters in this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus in recognition of International Women's Day.

The concept of a women's day goes back to the early part of the last century. Those early demonstrations and days of protests were rooted in the suffragette movement and the drive for equal rights. A wide variety of events with varying goals were observed all over the world, often with political overtones which were considered radical in their day.

It's hard to believe that in the long span of human history, women being granted such basic rights as the right to vote, hold property, sign a contract or even be legally considered a person under the law was only a heartbeat ago.

International Women's Day, as we now know it, was first observed as a popular event after 1977, when the United Nations General Assembly invited member states to proclaim March 8 as the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. The official UN theme for this year's day is, "Empower ... Women—End Hunger and Poverty." This is a poignant reminder that although tremendous strides have been made over the last century, the challenge to meet some of the basic needs of life is still not within the grasp of hundreds of millions of women and their families around the world.

We can become complacent that the remaining inequities in our society are quite benign compared to those fought for by our ancestors 100 years ago. However, in much of the world, little or no progress has been made in 100 years, and that is a tragedy in itself.

This year's theme in Canada, as stated by the Status of Women, is, "Strong women, Strong Canada—Women in Rural, Remote and Northern Communities: Key to Canada's Economic Prosperity."

Being from rural Ontario myself, I have seen and experienced first-hand the integral role which women have played and continue to play in the economic and social fabric of Ontario. Women have made great progress on all fronts, even in politics. However, if you look around this chamber and count up the number of women who actually represent rural ridings from all parties, it's not a large number. In fact, I'm the first woman ever elected to the Ontario Legislature from my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

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In this Legislature as a whole, only 28% of us are women, indicating that there is still work to be done. However, I am quite optimistic that the next generation of young women entering political life will grace this Legislature in even greater numbers.

Despite the hard-earned progress that has been made by and for women in our province and country, employment and economic challenges still exist, particularly in rural Ontario. In November, I rose in the House to support the minister's statement on Woman Abuse Prevention Month and the commemoration of the Montreal massacre. On that occasion, speakers from all parties rightfully talked about the tragedy of spousal abuse and violence against women.

I wish I could claim that this horrific legacy is confined to less-developed countries, but I can't. It is a serious problem in our own backyard and needs to be given our highest priority.

However, as November was a time to highlight the worst remnants of women's drive for equality, today is the time to celebrate our successes while never forgetting the significant work and inequality that still exist.

Today, the government of Canada has the highest percentage of women in cabinet in Canadian history. The majority of full-time students in post-secondary institutions in Ontario and Canada are women. More women hold senior managerial positions in Canadian companies than ever before. Entrepreneurial women are starting their own businesses in ever greater numbers. In recent years, Canadian female athletes have shone on the world stage in unprecedented numbers, often surpassing the successes of their male colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, when the first women's day events were held in the early days of the 20th century in North America and across Europe, the protests and demands were targeting basic rights and discrimination based on gender. Today, in Ontario and Canada, most of the injustices that our great-grandmothers fought against have, for the most part, been addressed. However, as I

indicated earlier, full equality has still not been achieved for all women, especially in Third World countries.

International Women's Day is a day to reflect on the struggles of our ancestors, to celebrate their victories and to consider what still needs to be done here and abroad.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to speak on behalf of my leader and the PC caucus on such an important occasion as International Women's Day.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day offers us an annual opportunity to celebrate the pioneering individuals who have led the struggles to create a society that promotes diversity, tolerance, safety, social justice and equality between women and men.

Even in a country as young as Canada, there is no shortage of courageous women who led the struggle for voting rights, reproductive rights, child care, employment equity, peace and disarmament, and many other important causes whose impacts resonate to this very day.

It is only fitting, Speaker, that we honour the accomplishments of these women—these women of vision and courage—who provide inspiration for today's generation of women and men. Their inspiration is doubly important, because International Women's Day is also an opportunity to take stock of how far we've come and how far we, as a society, have yet to go.

The NDP has a proud history and a great track record when it comes to women's rights and women in politics. I'm very proud to be the leader of our party and to have the opportunity to work alongside the six other great women in our NDP caucus, actually making up 41% of our caucus.

While we have accomplished so much, we're also reminded daily that there is more work that needs to be done. The recession has left more women carrying the burden of family finances, and women still earn less than men earn in Ontario. In the 500 largest and most influential companies in Canada, men hold 93.8% of the top earning positions, making up 99% of the top 100 chief executive officers in terms of pay at publicly traded companies. Even among average wage earners, Speaker, women continue to fare poorly. Among those with full-time employment, women continue to take home only 70 cents on the dollar earned by men. Women are more likely to live in poverty in our province, even when they are working. A new Liberal crisis in child care in Ontario once again leaves parents, usually mothers, wondering whether they can afford to go to work or whether they'll be able to go back to school to get a better job.

Women's issues today remain at the bottom of the priority list, as adequate funding for preventing or ending violence against women remains scarce and other issues that impact women's equality, women's equity, remain off the table.

New Democrats have long called for the implementation of a province-wide plan for closing the pay gap in Ontario. New Democrats have a plan, actually, for economic security for women and, in fact, for all persons in Ontario. We know that investing in good jobs will help

women to be able to become economically secure and economically dependent. We know that most Ontarians who are looking for work now would actually do well by our job creation plan, particularly women.

As we look at recommendations from the Drummond commission and see a government that is looking at deep cuts to social services and programs, we must be aware also of the potential impact of these cuts, particularly on women, because it is women who end up picking up the pieces. Far too often, cuts to social services, cuts to health care and cuts to education are made invisible because it is the women who are left filling the gaps and picking up these pieces as these programs are cut. We need a strong province, a province where equality and opportunity are shared, where women's needs and contributions are equally valued. We don't have that society here in Ontario yet.

New Democrats are very, very proud to be a party working towards that change. As a woman leader, I'm very, very proud to be here to speak to International Women's Day, and I say to all women: Take up your space. Take up your space every day.

I'll end with a quote that I put on Twitter today: "Well-behaved women seldom make history."

PETITIONS

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Toby Barrett: A petition that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

"Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects; we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

"Whereas Ontario's largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

"Whereas there have been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan for green energy in Ontario and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

"That the Liberal government support Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson's private member's motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine

development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed."

Speaker, I support this petition, support the names on it, and affix my name.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to present this petition from the people of the northeast. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario government" is making PET scanning "a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients...; and

"Whereas," since October 2009, "insured PET scans" are performed "in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

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"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario," with Health Sciences North, "its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through" Health Sciences North, "thereby serving and providing equitable access to the" people of the northeast.

I fully support this petition, Mr. Speaker, will affix my name to it and ask my trusty little page Ryan to bring it to the Clerk.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition from my constituents in the riding of Durham. One of the leaders there is Heather Rutherford of Clarington Wind Concerns. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed;

"Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative" and adverse "health effects; we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of" industrial "wind turbines;

"Whereas Ontario's largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

"Whereas there have been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan for green energy in Ontario, and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development” immediately “until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this and pass it to Judy, one of the pages, on their last day.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Michael Mantha: This is from residents in the region of Algoma–Manitoulin.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have been paying over millions in extra charges on their hydro bills to help retire the debt. The amount collected to date, as per the Auditor General’s report, is \$8.7 billion, but the amount owing was \$7.8 billion;

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers are asking: ‘Where is the money being invested?’;

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers are asking why this was not addressed at the time the debt was paid;

“Whereas electrical rates have increased with the new creation of green energy coming online, to include solar and wind, refurbishment of the nuclear plants, and deregulation of Hydro One;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows to obtain answers to the following questions:

“How much of the debt remains?

“When will it be eliminated from Ontario taxpayers’ hydro bills?”

I agree with this petition, I will affix my name, and I will present it to page Rachel to bring it to you.

WIND TURBINES

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

“Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

“Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects; we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

“Whereas Ontario’s largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

“Whereas there have been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan

for green energy in Ontario, and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

Mr. Speaker, I completely support this petition and have affixed my signature to it.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Rob Leone: This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

“Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects; we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

“Whereas Ontario’s largest farm organization”—the OFA, and the CFFO “have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

“Whereas there has been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan for green energy in Ontario and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

“That the Liberal government support” our very popular “Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition. I will affix my name to it and hand it to page Grace.

TAXATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this very short petition from the people of Nickel Belt, and it reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario” to “immediately exempt electricity from the harmonized sales tax.”

I fully agree with this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Mackenzie to bring it to the Clerk.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Kim Craiton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought, for a minute, you couldn't see me.

Interjection: General Brock.

Mr. Kim Craiton: I want to thank Alison Hegarty from Niagara-on-the-Lake for putting these petitions together for me. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the province of Ontario is the only province in Canada that does not allow the provincial Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints against hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities; and

"Whereas the people wronged by these institutions are left feeling helpless and most have nowhere else to turn for help to address their issues;

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

"To grant the Ombudsman of Ontario the power to investigate hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children's aid societies, police, retirement homes and universities."

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

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I have petitions from around the province in support of paved shoulders on provincial highways.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas pedestrians and cyclists are increasingly using secondary provincial highways to support healthy lifestyles and expand active transportation; and

"Whereas paved shoulders on highways enhance public safety for all highway users, expand tourism opportunities and support good health; and

"Whereas paved shoulders help to reduce the maintenance cost of repairs to highway surfaces; and

"Whereas the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka's private member's bill provides for a minimum one-metre paved shoulder for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;

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

"That private member's Bill 9, which requires a minimum one-metre paved shoulder on designated provincially owned highways, receive swift passage through the legislative process."

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I support this petition.

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr. Jeff Leal: This afternoon I have a petition from Lindsay McFarlane, who lives at 902 Philip Street in Peterborough, Ontario.

"A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned residents of Ontario, Canada, draw the attention of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to the following:

"Whereas kidney disease is a huge and growing problem in Canada;

"Whereas real progress is being made in various ways of preventing and coping with kidney disease, in particular the development of a bioartificial kidney;

"We, the undersigned, call on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make research funding available for the explicit purpose of conducting bioartificial kidney research as an extension to the research being successfully conducted at several centres in the United States" of America.

I agree with this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page William, on his last day here.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition here signed by a great many residents of the great riding of Oxford and the ridings surrounding it. It is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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"Whereas Tavistock's Bonnie Brae Health Care Centre is an 80-bed, D-class nursing home that must be either rebuilt or closed by July 2014; and

"Whereas there is currently an application by a private operator to move the 80 licensed beds outside of Oxford county to the city of London, despite the recent opening of two other long-term-care homes in Middlesex county in 2010; and

"Whereas long-term-care wait times in Oxford county can be as much as 134 days longer than in Middlesex county; and

"Whereas Tavistock receives referrals from the nearby Waterloo Wellington CCAC, which has among the highest waits for long-term care in the province;

"We, the undersigned, request that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario retain these beds in Tavistock and seek partners to fast-track replacement of the Bonnie Brae as part of Ontario's 10-year plan to modernize 35,000 long-term-care beds."

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to present the petition. I affix my signature, as I wholeheartedly agree with this petition.

WIND TURBINES

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

"Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

"Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects; we need to study the physical,

social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

“Whereas Ontario’s largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

“Whereas there has been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan for green energy in Ontario and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

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

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Laurie Scott: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents of Ontario want a moratorium on all further industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed; and

“Whereas people in Ontario living within close proximity to industrial wind turbines have reported negative health effects; we need to study the physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

“Whereas Ontario’s largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed, and the Auditor General confirmed wind farms were created in haste and with no planning; and

“Whereas there has been no third party health and environmental studies done on industrial wind turbines, and the Auditor General confirmed there was no real plan for green energy in Ontario and wind farms were constructed in haste;

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

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

It’s signed by many, many people from the riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. I affix my signature, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The time for petitions has expired.

VISITOR

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Durham on a point of order.

Mr. John O’Toole: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to introduce quite a good friend of mine, Jeff Mole, who is from Trillium Energy Alliance. Welcome to Queen’s Park, Jeff.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Welcome. I’ll remind the member that that’s not a point of order.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ISAAC BROCK DAY ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LE JOUR DU MAJOR-GÉNÉRAL SIR ISAAC BROCK

Mr. Clark moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 35, An Act to proclaim October 13 in each year as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock Day in Ontario / Projet de loi 35, Loi visant à proclamer le 13 octobre de chaque année Jour du major-général Sir Isaac Brock en Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation. Mr. Clark?

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to begin by thanking the co-sponsors of my bill, the members for Welland and Niagara Falls. I want to thank them for the enthusiasm that they showed right from the very start after I spoke to them about this bill. I also want to recognize—

Applause.

Mr. Steve Clark: That’s great.

I also want to recognize the Minister of the Environment for his early endorsement of the bill. I appreciate his support and that of all three House leaders.

Really, the co-operation that we’ve had between the three parties makes this day possible. I know that sometimes Ontarians who watch our proceedings here must wonder, if our parties can’t agree on the colour of the sky, how can we possibly agree on the importance—

Interjection: Blue.

Interjection: It’s blue.

Mr. Steve Clark: I set you up on that one.

Certainly, but there are times when MPPs can come together and work co-operatively on issues like this. Unfortunately, sometimes that’s done out of the sight of the cameras, but when we do have an opportunity to work together in a public way I think it’s very, very important that we as MPPs acknowledge it.

Speaker, it’s truly a privilege for me in this, the bicentennial of the War of 1812, to speak about Bill 35,

An Act to proclaim October 13 in each year as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock Day in Ontario. It will create an opportunity, every October 13, for communities across Ontario to celebrate the life of this patriot, to whom we all owe such a great debt. And the timing to recognize Brock in this special way could not be any better: Over the next two years, in ridings all across Ontario, communities will be holding special events to commemorate the many battles which were so fundamental in the birth of our great nation.

Of course we know there will be many historic figures whose sacrifices in those battles were integral to the ultimate victory and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on Christmas Eve in 1814. Some of those heroes we continue to celebrate today because they're historical icons, like Laura Secord and Tecumseh. Many others, sadly, have long since been forgotten by the passage of time.

But there's one image our minds conjure when we think of the War of 1812: It's that proud pose of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of Upper Canada. He was mortally wounded by a sniper's musket ball during the critical battle of Queenston Heights on October 13, 1812, two years before the official end of the war. But without his leadership in the years prior to the war and in its early days, Canada as we know it would not have come into being. His troops and the commanders who assumed his leadership took the last word Brock uttered before his death—"Surgite!"—to heart. They did indeed press on, all the way to victory.

As we speak about Brock's contribution to Canadian history and the legacy of his leadership this afternoon, I think it's important to set the scene of the immense challenges he faced. Quite frankly, the atmosphere on this side of the border was one of defeatism and hopelessness. We looked across that ribbon of water that divided us from the Americans, whether it was the St. Lawrence River or the Niagara River, and asked how could we possibly defend ourselves against such a powerful enemy. Indeed, here's what Brock wrote in a letter after meeting with the provincial Legislature on July 27, 1812, just over a month after the US had declared war and mere days after the invasion along the Detroit frontier by forces under Brigadier-General William Hull: "My situation is most critical, not from anything the enemy can do, but from the disposition of the people—the population, believe me is essentially bad—A full belief possesses them all that this province must inevitably succumb—This prepossession is fatal to every exertion—Legislators, magistrates, militia officers, all have imbibed the idea...."

It was, Mr. Speaker, a crisis of confidence that threatened to allow the American forces to sweep through Upper Canada and change the course of history. Against this backdrop of seemingly inevitable defeat at the hands of an enemy who outmanned us nearly five to one, stood Brock. As the writer Robert Collins noted, those badly outnumbered soldiers, whose own population had little faith in their chances of success, had four things going

for them: discipline, training, purpose and a leader. In all of those things, they had Major General Sir Isaac Brock to thank.

1400

Collins noted that Brock possessed, in his physically striking, six-foot-two frame, all the qualities of greatness. I love how Collins described the way Brock carried himself, which brings the major general back to life. His quote: "He cut a fine swath in colonial society, but he was no ballroom general." He wasn't sipping tea. He rolled up his sleeves and got to work, even though we know that Brock, like many British officers of the day, found his posting to Canada in 1802 to be a little less than appealing. That disappointment was quickly erased by his sense of duty, and he worked hard to bolster the nation's defences and to address the problem of desertions that plagued the army at that time. Those early preparations, particularly his work to equip and train militia units in Upper Canada, would prove critical in those years to come.

I want to return for a moment to Collins writing about Brock in the book *The Formative Years: Canada 1812-1871*. "He had taken the Canadian posting reluctantly, yearning for the action and glory of European campaigns. But with characteristic thoroughness and fluent French learned in his native Guernsey, he studied the people and problems of the Canadas.

"He grew so committed to the colony that he later turned down a posting to Spain.

"Brock's troops, in turn, liked him, for he was fair—a rare trait in an age when a lost tunic button could earn a soldier 50 strokes from a lash pickled in brine. He was utterly fearless and made quick, accurate decisions. He knew the future battlegrounds as no other commander did. And in a war that flickered sporadically over three distinct fronts—the Niagara Peninsula and Upper Canada west, the Montreal and lower St. Lawrence region, and the Great Lakes—Brock was the standout, the first real Canadian war hero, the pacesetter for all who followed."

In other words, Speaker, this great leader, born in the Isle of Guernsey on October 6, 1769, became one of us. So it is with great reason that many roads, schools, institutions and municipalities honour Brock today by bearing his name. Who wouldn't want to be associated with him?

I'm proud as a former mayor of Brockville, which was renamed in his honour from Elizabethtown months before Brock's death in 1812. Today, a bronze bust of Major General Sir Isaac Brock proudly stands in the heart of the city on Court House Square, with the majestic Leeds and Grenville County Courthouse behind and a vista all the way down to the beautiful St. Lawrence River.

One of the great citizens of Brockville, historian Doug Grant, helped me tremendously in putting together this bill. Doug is a passionate, passionate lover of history, and his popular Brockville History Album series has encouraged generations of city residents to take an interest in our past.

He wrote about the ceremony held August 19 during the centennial year of the War of 1812 when the monument was unveiled to culminate a seven-year project launched by the General Brock chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. This bronze bust remains and rests atop a granite base that was done by renowned sculptor Hamilton MacCarthy, whose grandfather served under Brock and was wounded during the war. Guests of that August afternoon included Colonel Sir Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia and Defence. Photographs from the day show a huge crowd around the platform, and Hughes would pull back the flag-draped monument.

In 2008, a restored version of the monument and two informational plaques were unveiled in front of the new General Brock Gardens by Lieutenant Governor David Onley. This June, I'm looking forward to attending the rededication of the Brock monument, which I'm proud to say will be graced with the attendance of 13 descendants of the major general. This is such a special event, organized by Kim Barr of Brockville Tourism as part of a highlight of our local food and wine festival on June 22 and 23.

As I mentioned earlier, there are countless events going on across the province of Ontario. Our own War of 1812 bicentennial committee, which is called the St. Lawrence War of 1812 Bicentennial Alliance—I know that Jan Bonhomme, their executive director, and Alicia Wanless, their manager, are watching today. I was privileged last week to hear Alicia Wanless talk with such great enthusiasm of the events planned in our region and the economic impact that those tourists have. Up to 30% of the tourism market in Ontario is comprised of what is called the "history traveller," as they pump an estimated \$1.76 billion into Ontario's economy every year. And that, I might add, is at the bottom end of the estimate.

So with events planned right across this province, from Cornwall to Windsor, I think it gives us a great opportunity to celebrate Brock's commitment.

Just some of the events in my riding: a garrison weekend at Fort Wellington, near Prescott, on May 19 and 21; the Spencerville Mill heritage fair on June 1 to 3, when we hope to capture a Guinness Book of World Records for most people in period costume; two events in Gananoque, the unveiling of Joel Stone Park and also the re-enactment weekend of the Raid on Gananoque. The annual summer St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival has a performance of Othello, set in 1812. And of course, next year's highlight will be the Battle of Crysler's Farm bicentennial. It will mark 200 years since that decisive battle where a vastly outnumbered British unit, under Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Morrison, repelled an American attack and essentially ended the quest to capture Montreal.

Speaker, just in my closing few comments, I hope that members will support this bill. I can think of no more fitting way to honour this true hero of Ontario. Thank you, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'll be sharing my time with the member from Welland.

Speaker, I'm not going to read from notes because this is very close to my heart. I'm from Stoney Creek. In Stoney Creek, the battle of June 5 and June 6 of 1813 was the most critical battle of the War of 1812-14. It was the turning point of the war. A little over 700 British regulars, who had been put to the run by the Americans, were stationed at Queenston Heights, and they were joined by local militia from the Stoney Creek-Hamilton area, plus a few native Indians who joined in, which came to a total of just under 900. There were 2,600 Americans camped in Stoney Creek at Battlefield House, with two American generals. At the time, it was the first night battle of the War of 1812-14.

The British forces figured they might as well do a counterattack because, if they didn't, York would have fallen, Toronto would have fallen to the Americans, and the flag hanging outside this building would have been a little different. In that battle, they put the run to the Americans. They captured the generals and sent them packing back to Niagara. It is a battle that is overlooked by historians. It's overlooked by a lot of books. Yet, it was the most crucial, important battle of the entire war. So I just wanted to bring it to your attention.

Getting back to General Brock, General Brock was definitely a hero of his time, a great British leader, a great general and respected by his men. There were many other skirmishes that took place under General Brock's direction and a couple of larger battles that took place, but the biggest battle and the biggest result we ever had was in Stoney Creek.

For some reason—I don't know why—there's not a lot of history about it, but finally a local author came out with a book: *Strange Fatality, The Battle of Stoney Creek*. It was, without a doubt, the turning point of the entire war. We are looking forward to June 5 of next year, in 2013, to the 200th celebration.

I see my counterpart from Niagara Falls is dressed in period costume.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: He looks good.

Mr. Paul Miller: He looks good. I too have dressed as a British artillery officer and lieutenant, and I have been in four re-enactments. I will be involved in the re-enactment on June 5, 2013, as a British officer. I'm looking forward to it and I'm thinking that right across this great province, it's going to be a wonderful, wonderful event.

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Many communities will be taking part in this. I certainly hope that the government spreads the money around equally to all areas. We certainly could put on a good show for all the visitors who will be here from Europe and from America. Many historians will be coming. Our group took part in Napoleon's wars—we sent people over from Stoney Creek to take part in the Battle of Waterloo. So there's a lot of history here in southern Ontario—in Upper Canada and Lower Canada—and I'm truly excited about what's going to

happen. I think it's going to bring a lot of focus onto Ontario. A lot of positive dollars will be coming into our province. We should take full advantage of it, Speaker. I'm truly, truly excited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member from Welland.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to get up today and co-sponsor this bill. The Legislative Assembly of Ontario, through its community exhibits program, has proudly displayed War of 1812 exhibits for the last few months, at least since I've been here. They're located in cases throughout the building, if people who are touring or in the gallery are interested in viewing them. The displays are evidence of the historical importance of the War of 1812 in shaping Canada as the nation we know today.

Ordered to Canada in 1802, and although his path never led him to a battle in the Welland riding, it was Brock's leadership and influence prior to the war that honed Canada's defences so they were able to successfully drive the southern invaders back over the border.

Alun Hughes, past president of the Thorold and Beavertams Historical Society board of directors, authored a work for Niagara this Week in 2004 entitled *Hidden History*. It is about the area's rich but sometimes forgotten history. In one segment, he writes, "But the evidence for much of Niagara's history lies concealed from view, sometimes neglected and forgotten, sometimes changed out of all recognition, and too often lost" forever.

How many motorists passing through the Thorold tunnel under the Welland Canal in my riding know that the Battle of Beaver Dams, a pivotal encounter in the War of 1812, raged right above their heads, on June 24, 1813? Mr. Hughes correctly recognizes that, over time, we tend to forget about our history. It was kind of interesting to be able to go back and actually read a fair amount of history that I probably learned in high school but had forgotten most of.

So I stand here today on Bill 35, hopefully to recognize October 13 every year as Sir Isaac Brock Day. I also do so remembering the different perspectives that even people of that time had on the War of 1812. I'm honoured that these two striking exhibits here in the Legislature, displayed in the west wing just outside the NDP caucus area, are from community museums in the Welland riding. They're examples of different perspectives of the residents in the surrounding area during this time period.

Nora Reid, who is the curator of the Welland Historical Museum, whose ancestors actually fought in the War of 1812, remembers the sacrifices made by soldiers about 200 years ago during the war. The Welland exhibit proudly displays artifacts. It goes into great detail about the Battle of Cook's Mills, which is a small hamlet in my riding, where 700 or 800 people actually reside. That took place on October 19, 1814. British and Canadian troops forced the Americans to withdraw, following a heavy skirmish at Cook's Mills.

Stephanie Powell Baswick is the curator of the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum. She explained that their contribution to the program was worked on by Tami Daoust and Michelle Mason, both from the riding. The exhibit explains the War of 1812 from the perspectives of the settlers of the Port Colborne and Wainfleet areas in the riding.

The wives and mothers of the men who fought the battles worked the farms to supply the food. Also, many of these settlers were Quakers and Mennonites, whose beliefs were against war, but they were farmers and skilled workers such as blacksmiths, coopers, wheelwrights and millers. It was their work too that was relied upon to provide and transport the necessities such as food and equipment to the war effort. Though the work was of great benefit to the outcome of the war, these conscientious objectors had to pay heavy fines for their beliefs.

Award-winning and recognized Canadian writer Pierre Berton called Brock Canada's first war hero in his 1980 book *The Invasion of Canada, 1812–1813*. There are many reasons to pay tribute to Sir Isaac Brock for his contributions and his sacrifice in ultimately shaping Canada, but in doing so, we also need to remember, as Pierre Berton did, to be reflective on Sir Isaac Brock and the nature of war and the effects that war has on all members of society.

I'll use the rest of my time to actually highlight some little tidbits that came out of the research that we did: the fact that Alan Taylor, an American historian, wrote about the close connections between diverse populations which supported the two sides of the conflict.

"In this North American civil war, brother fought brother.... Like so many on both sides," some "thought of the war as continuing the revolutionary struggle between Loyalists and rebels.... At war's end in Upper Canada, the retreating invaders left behind a wasteland of plundered farms and burned mills...." During the summer of 1815, an American woman visiting the Niagara area could find "not a house or a barn but what was burnt or the inside destroyed.... It presented such a sight" that she felt ashamed of her own countrymen.

Numerous First Nations made great contributions to this war. In 1812, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe's act to limit slavery had made Upper Canada a safe haven for freedom-seekers and escaped slaves from the United States. So when the United States actually declared war against Britain in 1812, the blacks living in Canada rallied to the flag to defend their new homeland and liberty.

The last piece that I found very interesting was actually a discussion. This was out of "A Day with a Veteran of 1813–15," and the author was the veteran's grandson. He's talking about being in a carriage with his grandfather and his uncle, and they're talking about Laura Secord. The uncle says, "Father, did not Mrs. Secord, the heroine of the Beaver Dams, live near here?"

"Yes," was the reply, "but she gets all the praise for that Beaver Dams exploit, when the larger share is due to a young girl, a cousin of Mrs. Secord's. This cousin was

the first to propose to go and warn the British and accompanied Mrs. Secord on that famous 20-mile trip through the forest....’

“How is it, Father, that no one has corrected the story?”

The father states: “I suppose someone wrote it who didn’t know all the particulars and no one has been willing to incur the risk of being considered so unpatriotic as to spoil so good a story by telling the whole truth,” suggested Grandpa in reply.”

There are a lot of interesting facts when you go through the research about the War of 1812.

There are many bicentennial events going on across Niagara, in Niagara-on-the-Lake and in the various ridings across the Niagara Peninsula, so I encourage all Ontarians to take part in these events and go out and support them.

Once again, I will thank the member from Niagara Falls and the member from Leeds–Grenville for asking me to participate in this historic event.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Kim Craiton: It is certainly an honour for me to stand here in this place that we call Parliament and have the opportunity to speak in support of this bill. I want to thank Steve. You’re not supposed to say members’ names, but, Steve, I want to thank you for asking me. Little did I dream I would ever have this opportunity to support such a significant bill. And Cindy as well: Thank you.

I’m honoured to stand here, wearing an official, authentic uniform worn by an officer who fought in 1812. I want to thank the Niagara Parks Commission for providing me with this uniform. I’ve had the pleasure of wearing it on a number of occasions.

I should tell you that in my riding of Niagara Falls and in Niagara-on-the-Lake, this is normal attire. We see the history of this country as so engrossed in our community. We have re-enactments where 2,000 or 3,000 people show up, and we have a chance to see what it was like, what took place, the wars that took place and the conditions under which these wars were fought. It’s just so exciting to see.

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In my riding, we always talk about, “The future is because of what we know from the past.” Sir Isaac Brock—what he accomplished is why we’re here today. So I want to talk a bit about Sir Isaac Brock.

There are really few individuals, Mr. Speaker, who in our past have shaped the course of our province so definitively as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock. His story is forever linked with a defining moment in our province.

He was born on the island of Guernsey and he trained in the British military tradition. He was not extremely well experienced in battle before he was assigned to North America. When he was sent to Canada, what he said was he felt that he was “buried in this inactive, remote corner.” That’s how he felt when he came here. Little did he realize that this corner would not be

inactive, for by 1815, he would be considered forever the saviour of Canada. During the war of 1812, Brock would provide the leadership required during one of Canada’s most defining moments.

Historians have used many adjectives to describe him. He was bold, he was honourable, he was audacious, he was brave, he was impulsive, he was aggressive—he was just like me.

Laughter.

Mr. Kim Craiton: There is no denying that his leadership, his personality and his charisma were essential in the defence and early development of our nation.

Leading up to the War of 1812, Brock was both a civilian and also the military leader of the province of Upper Canada. The British government was occupied with its battle for survival over in Europe and had stationed fewer than 2,000 soldiers in our province.

Upper Canada was surrounded by a nation that had defeated the British generations ago, so what they saw was the potential to expel them from the continent forever. They thought simply, “You just cross the river, you boot them out and you take over Canada.” That’s how simple they thought it was going to be.

In the years preceding the declaration of war, Brock identified many of the challenges in the defence of this province and, long before 1812, did all he could to correct as many of the issues as possible. It was the measures he took before the declaration of war that created an everlasting legacy.

Brock’s foresight identified the need to better train the militia as more forces from Britain could not be relied upon to defend the long border. He started the Provincial Marine to defend the Great Lakes. He established new militia acts to engage the population and he sought the co-operation of the native allies.

For all his efforts to prepare the province for invasion, it was truly his boldness on the field of battle that has given him a place in history forever. Brock consistently wished to go on the offensive at the start of the war; that’s what he believed. He was repeatedly told by his superiors, “Hold back. Hold back.” However, at Detroit in July 1812, he saw the situation called for desperate remedies. He quickly moved his outnumbered forces across the Detroit River and forced the ill-prepared General Hull to surrender and won a bloodless victory.

His actions didn’t go unnoticed. He was knighted for his decisive action but, more importantly, he set the tone for the rest of the war. He inspired the inhabitants of the province and he allowed them to believe an American invasion could be repelled.

Later that year in October, as American forces were threatening the province, Brock led the troops into battle. This time, Niagara was the target. The invading army had landed at several points and had taken a stronghold on the redan overlooking the village of Queenston. Something had to be done before more troops were allowed to cross the Niagara River and provide a foothold in the province.

October 13 is the day that his boldness and his courage pushed him to stare down the enemy and to lead the forces of Canada against the invading enemy. He died leading the charge up the hill. He died because of his determination to protect this province, to protect this country. He was a leader among leaders in the early days of our province.

Some of the province's most important individuals served under him. They believed that his role in our history should not be forgotten. They started to erect monuments. They named towns, they named streets, eventually schools and a university in St. Catharines—and I myself, Mr. Speaker, was quite honoured to introduce a bill a number of years ago to change the name of the 405, which goes right by the Sir Isaac Brock monument, to the Sir Isaac Brock parkway, and we were able to make that change. That was a historic day and a special day for me, and so to my friend that's introduced the bill: I know how he feels as well; why this is so special.

Sir Isaac Brock, because as they said when they were erecting these different monuments, he's a person—his leadership, his qualities were that required of a young nation: his perseverance, determination and boldness.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to mention a couple of the—you know, I believe that all the battles, no matter where they took place across this province, are significant. We had a number in our riding. I just wanted to touch on some of those battles. I wanted to share them with the House. Of course the battle of Queenston—and that's why we're specifically talking about Sir Isaac Brock.

You know, it's not that easy moving these papers with these gloves on, Mr. Speaker. With your indulgence, I'm talking them off. I was thinking on the way up here, Mr. Speaker—I had the opportunity to bring a musket with me, but I wasn't sure what the reaction of the House would have been. Somebody would have thought it might have been loaded and been a little worried I might have fired it inadvertently.

We also had the Frenchman's Creek battle that took place in Fort Erie, another significant battle. We also had Fort George. If you ever have an opportunity to come down to my riding, you're going to see the historic fort in Fort Erie. It's absolutely gorgeous. You're going to see the fort at Fort George. You're going to see major re-enactments. I hope you have some time. One of my colleagues mentioned that there is going to be, throughout this province, a real party: a party of celebrations, all the different events that are taking place.

We had the Battle of Chippawa in my riding. We also had a significant battle that took place up on Lundy's Lane, and every year it's recognized. So we have had, in my riding alone—and I know throughout the province—so many historic events, so many battles that helped define this province.

I want to close with a couple—what I believe is fitting to end with, and that would be the words of William Hamilton Merritt—

Interruption.

Mr. Kim Craitor: I think a musket just went off, Mr. Speaker. Has anybody fallen yet? No. Okay.

It's fitting to end with the words of William Hamilton Merritt, and here's what Merritt said. First, Merritt was a veteran of the War of 1812. He was chairman of Brock's monument committee, and he went on to become the developer of the Welland Canal and one of the province's most influential individuals. Upon the opening of the second Brock monument at Queenston, he provided a sense that it wasn't just a monument for Sir Isaac Brock or for those who fought alongside of him. He stated, "If Canada is worth preserving, we owe it to them."

The declaration of October 13 as Sir Isaac Brock Day isn't just a recognition of one individual, as important as it is to all of us in the House; it is to recognize all of those who survived the War of 1812, because we owe it to them.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mrs. Julia Munro: Today, it's my pleasure to speak to Bill 35 and add a few comments about Major-General Sir Isaac Brock and the great contributions that he made to our province and our country.

Before I begin, I would also like to thank my colleague the member for Leeds–Grenville in bringing forward today this bill, because I think that we don't often enough spend time recognizing the pillars and the foundations of the society that we have here in Ontario and in Canada.

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Brock believed it was his duty to protect Canada in the war against the United States. Before the war of 1812, he advocated enhanced training of military recruits and the arming of volunteer corps. There were a number of times, actually, when he spoke to the then provincial Legislature and brought them up to date, reminded them of the cost of being able to conduct a war, and generally, in a way that today we would feel certainly unencumbered by rules and regulations, he was able to come forward and speak.

He also secured Fort Michilimackinac on the west to make sure that his flank was protected, even though, at the time, most Canadians did not expect an attack.

As we have heard described, he was imaginative and bold in action, with an ability to calculate the enemy's plans and counteract them, and that certainly was true in the case of the American General William Hull, who was planning and preparing an attack on Niagara from Detroit. Brock precipitated Hull's action and in fact took Detroit from the Americans.

We've heard earlier speakers refer to how there was generally an air of pessimism and maybe depression amongst Canadians who didn't see that they had a hope against the numbers of Americans. But obviously the success of Brock in taking Detroit was a huge boost to the morale of the Canadians, as he had been successful with a much smaller force, reckoned to be 300 regular soldiers, 400 militia and 600 First Nations. Brock's partnership with the First Nations proved to be crucial to

the military success of Upper Canada. Tecumseh led his First Nations militia to circle around Detroit, which resulted in the surrender of General Hull.

Despite the victory for Brock at Detroit, American forces were together again for an assault on Niagara. It was on October 13, 1812, that Brock died at the Battle of Queenston, a battle that was started when the Americans crossed the Niagara River. Brock ordered an attack against the Americans and personally led the charge on foot. A true leader, Brock felt it was important to lead the troops himself. During this battle, he was killed by an American sharpshooter. He was buried shortly after, near Fort George, with nearly 5,000 people attending his funeral. The war dragged on for two more years. The failure of the Americans to take Niagara in the first year clearly demonstrated that taking Canada was not, as Jefferson had remarked, “a mere matter of marching.”

Brock’s legacy is that of a Canadian war hero. He had the foresight to plan and defend Upper Canada and partner with the First Nations and Chief Tecumseh. He led the troops himself, putting himself in danger. He sacrificed his life for this province and this country, and for that we should all be thankful.

It is also with thanks to Canadian publishers, such as Dundurn Press, who continue to explore our history and print books about the War of 1812. Because of these books, Ontarians and Canadians can continue to relive our past and learn about the great challenges that we have overcome together as a province.

I’m happy to support my colleague’s bill, which I believe complements a 2007 resolution that I introduced, that passed in the Legislature, commemorating the War of 1812. What I said then is relevant today: that the War of 1812 is one of the defining moments in Ontario’s history. The conclusion of the War of 1812 has meant that the development of both countries has continued for 200 years along the world’s longest undefended border. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Speaker. I’m pleased to be able to participate in the debate today. I want to thank my colleague the member from Leeds–Grenville for introducing his bill, An Act to proclaim October 13 in each year as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock Day in Ontario.

I grew up in Essex county, near a little town called Cottam. I can remember my grandmother telling me stories about the War of 1812, as she had a real interest in history. She would tell me about the strategic placement of Amherstburg along the Detroit River and about the defeat of the Americans at Detroit. She also told me a story about Tecumseh, as she knew it, and his relationship with General Brock. Some of you may know that the town of Tecumseh near Windsor is named in his honour.

In my travels throughout the United States, I have noticed how the Americans recognize and admire their heroes. Canadians, on the other hand, have often struggled to do this throughout our history. We should not

glorify war; however, we must recognize our historic figures. We must remember and record how people such as General Brock and others have helped to mould our history. Indeed, they shaped the outcome of what we now call Ontario.

General Brock fought with distinction, as did his troops. When he died, he was leading. He didn’t follow in the background, as some of the leaders on both sides did.

I read with great interest a book about the War of 1812 by Pierre Berton. He goes into great detail about how General Brock was a visionary in his relationship with aboriginal people and how he was able to form relationships with them. For too long, native people had been persecuted, and they saw the opportunity to ally themselves with the British and help them bring peace for their people in the midwestern United States.

To be fair to the Americans, they were tired of blockades of American ports and the practice of impressment the British carried out if they captured American ships.

When the war started, it took place in the United States, and our forces were successful. However, this changed midway through the war, and the Americans were determined to invade.

General Brock’s stance and his death at the Battle of Queenston Heights is well-recorded in our history books. A sniper’s bullet took his life. This battle showed the Americans that Canada would not be a pushover, as many of them had thought.

I am pleased to support my colleague from Leeds–Grenville, and I want to commend him for introducing Bill 35 and for highlighting an important part of our province’s history.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: It gives me great pleasure to stand in the chamber today on the recognition of Major General Sir Isaac Brock.

I’m an alumni member of Brock University in the fine city of St. Catharines, class of 1997, Mr. Speaker. I often, as a historian myself—I teach history—and the member from Perth–Wellington put it quite well that we here in Canada sometimes forget the noble duty and the noble work that our predecessors have put in place for us.

So as an alumni of Brock University, I just want to touch on Brock University a little bit, because I think it’s significant that the great institution of Brock was named accordingly. It was established in 1964. I wasn’t around when it was established; I was just a young pup—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: You were, or you still are?

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: I still am, thank you very much.

It’s considered a smaller university. When you walk through those hallways, the relationships that you build and the camaraderie with your fellow students—it’s a great opportunity to show the leadership. We plant the seeds at Brock University of leadership.

One of the mottos of the university is “Surgite,” the last words of Sir Isaac Brock as he was lying there on the

field, as his life was being taken from him. Surgite; push on. I think that's important. General Brock had the vision of what Canada could be, what Ontario could be, and Brock University stands for that today.

Great, great professors—the fine member here from Cambridge, Mr. Leone, taught at Brock briefly. Professor Salisbury, Professor McLeod, Professor Matheson, Professor Brian Crick: These are individuals whom I admired, I look up to. These are individuals who inspire the young great minds of the province to look for something better, look for something that Major-General Sir Isaac Brock had and the vision of what we have here potentially. This is what he fought for, what he believed in.

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I'm very happy to stand here and talk about Brock University and my experiences there. Just before I attended Brock, there was a student lounge called Alfie's Trough. Alfie, of course, was Sir Isaac Brock's horse, so this is a fond recognition of Alfie, whom Sir Isaac Brock adored. Of course, the faculty decided that it was a great little location to have their staff gatherings and it soon turned into a staff facility overlooking the Niagara Escarpment, and it's quite fitting. So Isaac Brock had a profound impact on my life.

I'm happy to say that with the leadership here of the member my colleague from Leeds–Grenville, I wholeheartedly support this endeavour. I'm glad to see that all parties can actually collaborate to work together on something so important not only for ourselves but for the future generations of this great province and the vision that Sir Isaac Brock had and what we could be, what we can be and what we are.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to address that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Leeds–Grenville, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr. Steve Clark: I just want to take the opportunity to thank the members who presented today: the members for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, York–Simcoe, Perth–Wellington, Northumberland–Quinte West and, last but certainly not least, the two co-sponsors of my bill, the member from Welland and the very flamboyant red-coated member for Niagara Falls. I just want to take the opportunity to thank all the members for their speeches, for their comments, and for all their co-operation today.

As I mentioned earlier, over the next couple of years there will be countless special events taking place across Ontario to commemorate the battles that saw the War of 1812 go in our favour. While we do this, it's an opportunity to celebrate the 200 years of peace, prosperity and partnership that we have with Canada and the United States. Two greater allies the world has never known, and it's fitting that the 1812 bicentennial committees across the province are working very closely with our friends on the other side of the border to plan these activities. I think it's very important to mention that.

The member for York–Simcoe talked about the War of 1812 being a defining moment in this province, and I

have to agree wholeheartedly with her. I encourage all members to promote 1812 activities in their area, to grasp that history traveller. I know that my own St. Lawrence Bicentennial Alliance will be promoting events. We want the history traveller to come. We want them to know—in the words of the member for Niagara Falls—about the saviour of Canada, Major-General Sir Isaac Brock. I hope that if everything goes as favourably as I hope in my heart, on October 13, communities around the province will help us celebrate this saviour of Upper Canada, Major-General Sir Isaac Brock.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal with the vote at the end of private members' business.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I move that, in the opinion of this House, a moratorium should be placed on further industrial wind energy development until third party health and environmental studies have been completed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Thompson has moved private member's notice of motion number 8. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased today to stand and debate my motion for the first time as MPP for Huron–Bruce.

Before I get started debating my motion, I first want to say some thank you's to people for their guidance and support in the development of my first motion. Thank you to Patrick Jilesen and John Gillespie of the Bruce County Federation of Agriculture; and Bill Palmer, Bethanee Jensen and Jennifer Small from the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. Your support today means a lot to me. I'm proud that both Pat and Bethanee stood up on behalf of their respective memberships and shared their position, joining me in calling for a moratorium on further industrial wind turbine development, in an earlier news conference today.

To my team, Ashley Hammill, and Lauren Hanna in Toronto, and locally, Janet Haines, Lynne DiCocco and Sarah Ross: You know first-hand how hard the rising costs of energy have impacted our folks at the local level. I appreciate your dedication, and I thank you for your commitment in dealing with this issue.

To the thousands of people who have sent emails, signed petitions and travelled from home from as far as Amherst Island today to join us at Queen's Park: I appreciate your support so much. I sincerely thank you.

To my PC caucus: Your support has been a tremendous confidence booster, and I look forward to reciprocating in days to come.

Interjection: Good team.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It is a good team.

I also would like to specifically address the good folks who were demonstrating outside Queen's Park today in support of my moratorium. I tried to get outside to greet you, but I got tied up. We have many issues in Huron–

Bruce, such as the closure of the Bluewater Youth Centre.

Two hundred people who work for Bluewater went to work on Monday to find out that their jobs were done. It's just disgusting how such a hasty, immediate move has caused such a negative economic impact on Goderich yet again. So we've had to deal with this difficult issue again today.

Interruption.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member is quite aware that we're not allowed to use phones.

The member from Huron–Bruce.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much.

It's just shameful, as I said, the negative economic blow that the Goderich community will face yet again with the closure of the youth centre.

But I need to get back to the matter at hand. We know that in Ontario we need renewable energy as part of our energy mix going forward, but we need to do it in a way that's respectful to communities and it has to make economic sense.

There are many reasons why the time is now for a moratorium on further wind development. Ontario has a surplus of energy. When I take a look at some of the records, suggestions and credible people who have spoken on this issue, I want to share a couple of exact comments with you today. As I said, Ontario has a surplus of power.

According to the Auditor General, Ontario hasn't hit its energy peak since 2006, six years ago. The fact of the matter is, we have been a net exporter since then. We've lost \$1.8 billion on those exports, and we'll pay FIT developers \$225 million a year not to produce energy. In 2010, 86% of wind power was produced on days when Ontario was already in a position of net export.

The OPP, or the OPA—

Interruption.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Yeah. The OPP say it's criminal, but the OPA noted that demand is expected to remain flat or decline due to continued conservation efforts and uncertain or slow economic recovery, while supply is expected to increase as a result of significantly more renewable energy coming online.

Don Drummond advised, "There are a number of potentially large opportunities to source efficiencies in the sector and slow down electricity rate increases."

Honest to Pete, hydro bills are expected to rise another 46% by 2015, and people can no longer afford this.

To move on to some physical health implications, the Ontario Environmental Review Tribunal decision in Chatham-Kent is an interesting one. I'd like to review Blakes Bulletin. It's a newsletter that is distributed by the law firm of Blake, Cassels and Graydon. They say in their July newsletter:

"On July 18, 2011, the Ontario Environmental Review Tribunal ... released its first decision regarding an appeal of a renewable energy approval ... which is issued by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment ... under the

Environmental Protection Act.... Appeals of REAs are significant to those opposing renewable energy projects, such as wind farms, because they constitute the last opportunity under the EPA to block a project."

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In this particular newsletter, in the Blakes Bulletin, it goes on to say, in their legal opinion, "This appeal is unlikely to be the last legal challenge to wind farm projects. Indeed, the ERT left the door open to further appeals, citing the need for additional research into the effects of turbine noise on human health."

Interjection: Looks like they get it.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: They get it, absolutely.

Further to that, in Ontario, citizens living in Huron, Chatham–Kent–Essex, Dufferin, Bruce, Prince Edward, Grey, Haldimand and Norfolk counties, as well as Nepean–Carleton, to name just a few, have filed hundreds of complaints with the Ministry of the Environment regarding adverse health effects since wind turbines started operating.

On the social health side, many rural communities are being torn apart, as most wind turbine projects are being developed in a top-down approach as opposed to bottom-up, which would facilitate community buy-in. Particularly in my home riding of Huron–Bruce, five families in the Ripley area—I know some of you are familiar with that area—have had their homes purchased and they have relocated under a corporate gag order used by wind companies to prevent fair and open discussion of these projects.

Interjection: Shameful.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It is shameful. The gag orders were implemented to stop impacted people from speaking about negative experiences. While the McGuinty government fiddles, the tension in our communities is reaching crisis proportions.

Another example of the—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Can I ask the member to refrain from calling members' names and to stick to riding names or titles.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Duly noted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier this year, I want to note that a church in my area called our constituency office expressing concern that they would not be able to meet their energy cost bills. I'm telling you, every fabric of our community is being impacted by these terribly expensive projects and ideals, if you will.

We have to look at wind energy as it relates to the economic health of our communities as well. In the UK, the Civitas Institute has concluded, in a 2012 report, that there is no economic case for wind power. In Germany, wind power has been noted as a threat to the economy. In Spain, the government is ending green energy subsidies. Two weeks ago in Britain, more than 106 government MPs publicly demanded that the Prime Minister, David Cameron, end or at least dramatically cut the \$700-million payout in annual subsidies for wind farms that produce less than 0.5% of Britain's total consumption.

Wind power is more expensive to produce than any other form of power. Based on the present 10- to 20-year contracts, wind power producers are guaranteed fixed rates of payments between 13 and 19 cents per kilowatt hour, whether the power is needed or not. Alternatively, nuclear energy costs the consumer five to six cents per kilowatt hour, and hydro-generated power—

Interjection: Water power.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: That's right—costs 4.5 cents per kilowatt hour.

The Auditor General's report points out that billions of dollars of new wind and solar power projects were approved in Ontario without many of the usual planning, regulatory and oversight processes. The Auditor General states that the Ministry of Energy and the Ontario Power Authority must conduct an objective cost-benefit assessment of the situation so that a balance can be achieved between the pursuit of renewable energy and a reasonable price for electricity.

By 2015, the power grid is going to have around 8,000 megawatts of renewable energy, mostly wind, and 10,700 megawatts by 2018. With just over 1,700 megawatts of wind today, the grid is unmanageable during peaks of surplus baseload generation. Whether we have to export this power at a loss or power down nuclear plants, the question needs to be begged of the government of the day: What kind of business plan is that, when we're powering down baseload generation at a reasonable cost?

According to Tom Adams in the National Post just last week, "Ontario is in the midst of a policy-created power crisis of profound significance to the future of the provincial economy."

You know, it's sad; when I look out throughout the chamber today, it's really, really disturbing that so few members of the party opposite and of the third party are actually in their seats when literally thousands of people are asking for relief from energy—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Again, I bring it to the attention of the member: It is not parliamentary to indicate that members are not in the House. It is quite okay to say who is here.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My riding of Huron–Bruce is called Ontario's west coast because of its picturesque coastlines and thriving tourism sector. I would hate to see tourists no longer want to vacation to what I consider one of the most beautiful parts of Ontario because of an excessive number of wind turbines dotting the shoreline that, frankly, we don't need.

The sad reality is that municipal governments and farm organizations are now calling for the Liberal government to act in the best interests of its citizens and to put a moratorium on wind and solar projects until proper health and economic studies are done to determine long-term ramifications on individuals, environment, communities and our economy.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, the National Farmers Union, the Perth dairy producer committee, the Bruce

County Federation of Agriculture and 80 municipalities have all taken a stand and asked the government to do the honourable thing: to take a sober second look at what the Green Energy Act is doing to rural Ontario.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have an opportunity today to do the right thing. I challenge you all—

Interjection: Do the honourable thing.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Do the honourable thing: Listen to the thousands of people who have asked for relief. Do the right thing, ladies and gentlemen: Support my moratorium.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Just as a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order: the member from Nepean–Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It was indicated that we're not allowed to mention who's not here; we can say, however, there are only 12 Liberals sitting in their seats.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Reza Moridi: It's my pleasure to contribute to this debate on the motion of the member from Huron–Bruce.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all my lady colleagues in this House and also all the women in my riding of Richmond Hill and in our beautiful province of Ontario on this very day, International Women's Day.

I also want to acknowledge four people from Zero Carbon Ontario who are sitting in the members' gallery: Patricia Warwick, Shawn Khan, Rita Bijons and Angie Orellana-Schwalm. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in 2009, our government made a policy decision: We decided to introduce green energy, renewable energy, into the energy mix of Ontario. We did this because we wanted to get rid of dirty coal. Why did we want to get rid of dirty coal? Because burning coal in our power plants, Mr. Speaker, was actually costing Ontarians \$4.4 billion a year in human and environmental costs.

We decided to shut down our coal-fired power plants by the year 2014. Up to this point, Mr. Speaker, we have shut down 10 coal-fired power plants, and we are going to shut down the rest within about two years.

Burning coal to produce electricity is the worst way of producing electricity because of its human and environmental damage. I'll just give some examples from the medical association of Ontario: Every year, 700 Ontarians are dying prematurely because of burning coal in our power plants; every year, 900 people are admitted to hospitals because of burning coal in our power plants; every year, 1,000 people are visiting emergency rooms in hospitals because of burning coal to produce electricity. Every year, Mr. Speaker, over 330,000 Ontarians are developing minor diseases such as coughing and other respiratory diseases. That's why we wanted to shut down coal power plants. That's why we wanted to create a new

technology, a new mix of energy in this province, to go to renewable energy, to bring in solar energy, wind energy, biomass energy, biogas energy and geothermal energy. These are the renewable energies.

1500

Shutting down coal-fired plants, Mr. Speaker, in terms of its environmental impact, is equivalent to removing seven million cars off of the streets, roads and highways of this province. Just to put this in perspective, it is equivalent to more than half of the cars already on the streets and the roads of this province.

This is our approach. But let's look at the approach of the other side, the Conservative Party, on this energy issue. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party has no credibility—absolutely no credibility—when it comes to energy issues, when it comes to the energy file.

I'll just give you some examples. I'm not going to get into details, but go back to the days of Ontario Hydro. They broke Ontario Hydro into four companies. They wanted to privatize Ontario Hydro. They sold electricity to a price list and its cost value. They created a \$20-billion debt for Ontarians, and still we are paying for that debt as a debt retirement charge on our electricity bills.

They mismanaged the nuclear power plants in this province. For the first time in the history of the province of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, the federal agency, came and shut down our nuclear power plants solely because of the safety issues in the Pickering and Bruce power stations. That is their—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order, please.

I would remind everybody that, as this debate started, the House was very quiet.

The member from Richmond Hill.

Mr. Reza Moridi: That's what they did. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, they created a vacuum in terms of our generating capacity of electricity in this province. As a result, they increased burning coal in our power plants by 127%. As a result, we had blackouts in this province for the first time in generations—for a long, long time. This is basically the work which they did when they were in office when it came to electricity. Now they talk about nuclear energy, but while they were in office, actually they couldn't manage our nuclear power plants, which used to be one of the best in the world in terms of safety and efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to give you a couple of quotes from our colleagues here from the other parties. For example, when the MPP for Essex was asked about putting a moratorium on wind energy, he said, "I think it sends the wrong sign to green energy producers and green energy manufacturers in the province."

I will give you another quote from the member from Renfrew–Nipissing, who actually supported, like many of the Conservative MPPs—they supported green energy, wind energy, and then they changed their minds. "We recognize the importance of wind. I want to make one

thing abundantly clear: We should be making every investment we can in renewables in this province.... We support renewables: Any kind of energy that you can get without burning anything is good energy—damned good energy, in my mind. It's good for the province and it's great for the environment. We support that 100%." This is the MPP for Renfrew–Nipissing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share my time with my colleague the MPP from Mississauga–Streetsville, but before doing that, I want to just tell concerned Ontarians that the minister is listening. We have set up the committee to review the Green Energy Act. The report will be coming. There will be some consultations with the people concerned on this very issue.

I will leave the rest for my colleague from Mississauga–Streetsville.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Todd Smith: Thank you to my colleague from Huron–Bruce for putting forward this very sensible private member's bill today. I think the evidence has been mounting for a long time now, and this is the perfect opportunity for the government to hit the pause button, put a moratorium in place and take a real close look at this, for a myriad of different reasons.

I just want to tell you a little bit about Ostrander Point, which is in my riding of Prince Edward–Hastings, down on the south shore of Prince Edward county. I think there are only two members of the House who have actually been to that spot: our energy critic, the MPP from Nipissing, and of course myself have been down there. It's a beautiful spot.

The member from Huron–Bruce outlined some of the beautiful landscapes in her riding. There are many on the south shore of Prince Edward county, particularly where this turbine proposal is being planned for. For those of you who don't know—and I've talked about Prince Edward county in the past—it is a beautiful place: wineries, beautiful shorelines. We have cottage country there and all kinds of farmland as well.

It's very insulting, I know, to the people of Prince Edward county when the government side always makes the claim that they don't care about renewable energy. They make the claim that it's renewable; it's wind versus coal. Well, that's not an argument that you should be making in this House because none of us over here want coal. As a matter of fact, as we pointed out here through a couple of heckles today, our member from Kitchener–Waterloo is the only person to have ever shut down a coal-fired generating plant in the province. This government has said that they're going to close down coal plants for years now and none have shut down under their watch.

As I move along very quickly, I have to make a point about the public consultation sham, that this government says they consult the public. This government does nothing to consult the public. As a matter of fact, just after Christmas, in my riding, I had a town hall meeting. We packed a church. There were hundreds of people in a

church—a church that's not closing because of rising energy prices. It was pretty hot in there that night, though, because people have a lot to say to the government. The unfortunate thing is this government isn't listening to them.

I just want to give you a few items that I have here on what the public consultation process looked like for the Minister of the Environment. They called it a public consultation process. There were no meetings in Prince Edward county hosted by the MOE. The ministry's own EBR posting for the project provided incorrect mailing addresses for people who were writing in to provide comment on the proposed project down there. The Internet website went down more than a dozen times during that process—who knows how many different pieces of correspondence didn't make it to the intended recipient? And perhaps that's the way the government wanted it; I'm not sure. But it was a sham. The public process was a sham.

This shouldn't be, as I said earlier, a debate about coal versus wind. I think the Minister of Energy makes a fool of himself when he stands up in the Legislature and makes such claims. There's reason for debate on this, and it's not about wind versus coal; it's about smart and reliable energy. I think the evidence is mounting every day and we should take a closer look at it. Now is the time to put a moratorium in place.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Monte McNaughton: The issue of industrial wind turbines and Dalton McGuinty's failed Green Energy Act is something that is of great concern to my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and to the people all across this province.

To date, as we've heard, nearly 100 municipalities have passed resolutions calling for a moratorium on further turbine development. The most recent of these is, of course, in my riding: the municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Association have joined the call for a moratorium on further wind development.

Industrial wind turbines have raised serious concerns regarding health effects and property values, and the McGuinty government needs to answer these questions before—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Once again, I will remind this member, as I have to others, to stay away from names.

Interjection: You said “McGuinty.”

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Oh, sorry. The current Liberal government needs to answer these questions before continuing to move forward. By ignoring these concerns, the current Liberal government has sent the message to the people of rural Ontario that they do not matter.

1510

Speaker, I oppose the heavy-handed approach that the Dalton McGuinty government is taking by forcing these wind turbines on rural Ontario. This approach is not

democratic and it's not productive. I've said it before, but truly, the greatest injustice facing rural Ontario today is that Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal government sit here, in Toronto, at Queen's Park, and dictate to rural communities where and when they must install industrial wind turbines.

Speaker, I believe in democracy. I believe in giving a voice to rural Ontario. That is why I will be holding a turbine and Green Energy Act public town hall meeting this Monday, on March 12, at Amy's Place Restaurant in Strathroy, in my riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. I extended, almost two weeks ago, an invitation to the Minister of Energy, the Honourable Chris Bentley, and the minister has not even bothered to respond. I think that this issue is important enough that the minister should attend—or at least should have the courtesy of a reply. Locally elected officials in my riding have committed to attending. I have many mayors, deputy mayors and councillors throughout the riding who are coming.

For the minister: This meeting in Strathroy is a 20-minute drive from his riding. To date, several MPPs from our side of the House, including PC energy critic Vic Fedeli and MPPs Bob Bailey, Lisa Thompson and Rick Nicholls, have confirmed their attendance.

Speaker, I stand here today in support of my colleague the member from Huron–Bruce, Lisa Thompson's motion calling for a moratorium on all wind turbines until a third party has conducted a comprehensive study on the side effects of wind turbines. This is an important motion. I ask all members of the House to please stand with the Ontario PC Party and stand up for rural Ontario. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Well, thank you very much, Speaker. I first of all want to commend my colleague from Richmond Hill. Mr. Moridi, of course, is an eminent scientist in his own right, with a Ph.D. in physics. I think that members would do very well to listen to some of his remarks and to pay attention to them.

Now, you know, in a nation that properly consults its citizens, where they've developed a consensus on renewable energy—and I'm speaking of the Netherlands—wind power has a long and successful history, from powering flour mills to generating electricity using the abundant North Sea wind. As of December 2009, 1,975 wind turbines were operational in the Netherlands. With an aggregate capacity—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order. Stop the clock.

The member from Nepean–Carleton, you know better, and I'll call you to order. The next time, I will have to take action.

I would advise the audience: You're welcome to be here with us today and you're welcome to observe, but I would discourage you from any applause or participating in the debate.

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Thank you again, Speaker. The Dutch are trying to meet the EU-set target of producing 9% of their total electricity from renewable sources.

When global installed wind capacity was only 6,000 megawatts in 1996, contrast that to today, when it's more than 200,000 megawatts worldwide, and it's growing quickly. Who is the world leader? China. It has more than 50,000 megawatts of wind-generated capacity in operation, more than anyone else in the world. And in second place? The United States of America. Canada is in the top 10 worldwide, but only just ahead of Denmark and only just behind the UK.

Now, Speaker, noise and vibration from wind farms are far less than the equivalent traffic and industrial uses to which residents of urban and metropolitan areas have been exposed, without measurable effect, for centuries. The premise of this resolution is without scientific merit or basis.

Wind energy is a benign technology with no associated emissions, no harmful pollutants and no waste products. In more than 25 years and with more than 68,000 wind generators installed around the world, no member of the public has ever been harmed by the normal operation of a wind turbine.

In response to recent unscientific allegations in the UK that wind turbines emit what is called infrasound and cause associated health problems, Dr. Geoff Leventhall, a consultant in noise vibration and acoustics and author of the Defra Report on Low Frequency Noise and Its Effects, says: "I can state quite categorically that there is no significant infrasound from current designs of wind turbines. To say that there is an infrasound problem is one of the hares which objectors to wind farms like to run. There will not be any effects from infrasound from the turbines."

In fact, the truth is that, at about 50 decibels, wind turbines are just slightly noisier than a quiet bedroom and less noisy than a room in an average house. Wind turbines are far less noisy than normal office interiors and far less noisy than the interior of our cars.

Speaker, I am advised that a company in Prince Edward-Hastings has received a \$160,000 grant from the federal Conservative government to explore small-scale wind projects. That's bringing investment right into their own riding.

Let's talk about some of the things that others say about wind turbines. Says Bart Lavis, a project manager with Leader Resources Services Corp., "I wake up every morning proud to be part of a preventive mandate, a proactive, pioneering movement in clean energy."

Says Bonnie Van Tassel of the Ernestown Wind Park Inc., "I work for a small wind developer based in Toronto"—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Dufferin-Caledon, would you come to order, please.

Mr. Bob Delaney: —"and I cannot imagine a more inspiring and exciting career. I cannot imagine a future

where my family would not be able to live a long and healthy life because of short-sighted political action interfering with the mandates of the Green Energy Act."

You know, Speaker, we've got quote after quote after quote. Basically, there is no scientific merit or basis to this resolution, and I urge that it be defeated. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to speak briefly in support of the resolution brought forward this afternoon by the member for Huron-Bruce. In the five months since she was elected to this Legislature, she has done an outstanding job on a number of issues representing her constituents, and it's in that spirit that she brings forward this resolution today.

Our caucus is on the record for at least two and a half—almost three—years, calling for an independent health study before the government goes whole hog into the wind energy business in Ontario. A number of resolutions have been brought forward in the past. Our former colleague the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Bill Murdoch, brought forward a resolution similar to this, not quite as brief and to the point but certainly in the same spirit. Our colleague the member for Kitchener-Waterloo has raised these issues in the Legislature. My colleague the member for Dufferin-Caledon and myself—I have brought forward a similar resolution. So I think we've demonstrated a great deal of consistency and credibility on this issue, and obviously we would hope that at some point the government will begin to listen.

The fact is, in the election on October 6, the government lost its majority, but it's also true and, I think, arguably true, that a significant number of the seats that the government lost were directly attributable to this issue and the mishandling by the Liberal government and their unwillingness to listen to communities.

There are a significant number of people who are with us in the visitors' gallery today. They are here because they're very, very concerned, obviously, about the health impacts, and it's very disappointing to see the government members unwilling to take this issue seriously. The fact is, we have an opportunity today as an Ontario Legislature to express support for a moratorium on further wind farm development until a fair and independent health study is done. I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker: That is in the public interest. The member for Huron-Bruce is right, and I would ask all members of this House to support her resolution when it comes to a vote this afternoon.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I, too, am very pleased to rise in the House today in support of the member from Huron-Bruce, whose bill calls for a moratorium on further construction of industrial wind turbines until there are third party health and environmental studies done.

1520

Thank you to all the people in the gallery for coming today. Thank you to all the people in my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock who keep up the fight against the industrial wind turbines for the right reasons.

The members have all spoken today—and we've heard time and time and time again that there needs to be a moratorium on industrial wind turbines.

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville: I mean, what part of “whoop, whoop” don't you get? Come on. These people are here. There are 5% to 15% who have health effects from wind turbines. What, are we just going to ignore this situation? I can speak as a nurse to say that the people are real, the symptoms are real and the effects of the industrial wind turbines are real on them. And yes, we can have consultants on both sides. We're saying, “Put a moratorium on it.” The member from Huron–Bruce is exactly right in what she says. We've said it again and again and again.

The Auditor General—you can go on to the business case of this, which we've discussed many, many times.

The other member who spoke about coal: We're all agreeing that coal plants should be shut down. Why do you keep bringing that up? That is of no relevance to this discussion at all. Don't listen to the Minister of Energy, who brings these things up in question period. It's absolutely ridiculous. I mean, stop that message track over there.

I have people who phone my constituency office every day because they can't afford to pay their hydro bills because of these expensive green energy experiments that are driving them out of their homes or making them choose between putting food on their table and paying their hydro bills. We're saying to you that you've messed it all up as an energy policy. There's no question about that. Real people are suffering financially. Real people are suffering the health effects. Dr. Petrie's coming in in a couple of weeks to speak to people about the effects on the environment, on the birds. What, do you just ignore all these things that are out there for the greater greener good, and you put this province in bankruptcy and people out of their homes? You should be ashamed of yourselves.

I'm pleased to support the member from Huron–Bruce today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to speak today to the motion from the member for Huron–Bruce, in which she calls for a moratorium on the development of wind energy in this province. I want to start off with some of my main points, and then I'm going to go back to those points and enlarge on them.

Now is not the time to slow down or stop wind development and development of green energy jobs in Ontario. Third party health and environmental studies have already been conducted. The jury is in.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, I—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, I would remind you that when all your members spoke, the House was extremely quiet, and I would like to give the member from Toronto–Danforth the same privilege.

The member for Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Why, thank you, Speaker. It's, as I've said before, good to know that someone is listening.

The studies have already been conducted and the information is in. The government does need to change the way that renewable energy projects are being implemented; they need to adjust the tariffs to make green energy more affordable; they need to give priority to community-owned and public projects, and they need to substantially improve the consultation process with local communities.

The NDP has made concrete suggestions on how to maximize the economic benefits and minimize health and environmental impacts of energy projects. We proposed in our platform a full provincial environmental assessment of the province's energy plan to assess and minimize health and environmental impacts. We have recommended that, before all other things, we pursue all cost-effective conservation and energy efficiency options to minimize the need for new generation of any kind.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Water power.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member from Northumberland–Quinte West, this is the last warning.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And we've recommended that the province maximize the potential for local economic development by giving priority to community-owned and public energy projects and putting in place strong domestic content requirements.

I made many of those points in the course of the debate over the Green Energy Act. It was unfortunate that the Liberal Party did not support those motions, those amendments, because that would have dealt with many of the concerns that we see exhibited in this province today.

I want to speak to the question of health and environmental assessments in a bit more detail. Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health has reviewed the studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals. She concluded there is no direct link between wind turbine noise and adverse health effects, but recognized that sound could annoy some people.

Other independent third party studies have shown that when properly sited, wind turbines have minimal health and environmental impacts. Dr. Cornelia Baines, University of Toronto epidemiologist, states that “large and well-designed comparative studies have examined the health effects of wind turbines in Holland, England and the” United States. “There is no evidence of any significant negative impact on health.”

A Stanford University study concluded that wind power has less impact on human health, on water supply, on land and wildlife than solar, geothermal, tidal, wave, hydroelectric, nuclear and coal. Wind is a better bet.

A September 2009 report by Dr. Ray Copes, director of environmental and occupational health at the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, concluded that “there is no scientific evidence to date to demonstrate a causal association between wind turbine noise and adverse health effects,” although it “sometimes may be annoying to some people, which may result in stress and sleep disturbance.”

The impact of wind turbines on the environment, including birds and bats, is much smaller than other sources of energy. Less than 0.01% of bird fatalities are caused by wind turbines. The National Audubon Society “strongly supports properly sited wind power as a clean alternative energy source that reduces the threat of global warming.”

This motion has come forward, asking for a moratorium because we need health studies, and I say to you, Speaker, the health studies are done. The jury is in.

Other sources of power have greater health and environmental impacts. In contrast to wind, coal is a major contributor to air pollution, which has caused premature deaths of thousands of Ontarians, according to the Ontario Medical Association. The McGuinty government’s decision to keep coal plants open until 2014, instead of shutting them down today—which it could do—will lead to the unnecessary death of 1,000 Ontarians, according to the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario.

Nuclear energy is also far more dangerous to health and the environment than wind power due to ongoing emission of low-level radiation, risk of accidents and the unsolved problem of trying to isolate radioactive waste for tens of thousands of years.

The member from Huron–Bruce is, I am sure, aware of the health studies showing the relationship between the siting of nuclear power plants and cancer. A variety of studies have shown elevated risk of cancer to those living close to nuclear power plants. In January, the International Journal of Cancer published a French study on nuclear power plants in France and their relationship to childhood leukemia. There is a direct relationship, Speaker. If the member is concerned about energy and health studies, where is the motion calling for a moratorium on any further nuclear development until the health studies are done? There is still no proven way to store radioactive waste from nuclear plants safely for tens of thousands of years. There’s growing concern about the siting of gas plants which are less polluting than coal but still generate significant greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, the shift towards shale gas exploration has raised significant environmental concerns, such as the potential contamination of groundwater.

1530

In this province, Ontario used to have a commitment to holding full environmental assessments of its long-

term energy plan. The McGuinty government quietly removed that requirement in 2006. We need to reinstate that requirement so we can ensure the power mix in our long-term energy plan is one that minimizes health and environmental impacts.

Speaker, slowing down renewable power will hurt Ontario economically and environmentally. Renewable energy creates large numbers of jobs spread across the province. In Germany, over 350,000 renewable energy jobs have been created in the last few decades. As many in this House may well be aware, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium are phasing out nuclear power. They understand the costs and the risks.

If we’re going to have an energy sector in Ontario that builds our economy and deals with our environmental and health problems, this motion will be a setback.

Renewable energy is more affordable than investing in new gas or nuclear. The Pembina Institute recently found that cancelling the Green Energy Act would lead to higher hydro costs over the long term. People often say that renewable energy is more expensive than the power rates on the spot electricity market, but wind and solar prices are falling, while nuclear and gas costs are projected to rise. According to the chief executive at Bloomberg New Energy Finance, the price of photovoltaic modules fell by close to 50% during 2011, and now stands 75% lower than in 2008.

Speaker, we fail to take into account the heavy subsidies for traditional sources of power when we talk about the cost of electricity. The federal government provided \$20 billion in historic subsidies to nuclear power, including \$650 million in 2009 alone. The federal government also picks up the tab for any liabilities of over \$75 million in the event of a nuclear accident. I will note that the Fukushima accident is projected to cost a minimum of \$3 billion.

The government should do more to maximize the economic benefits and minimize the health and environmental impacts of wind projects. The province is requiring significant setbacks for wind turbines, including a minimum of 550 metres to ensure noise levels do not exceed 40 decibels at the receptor. These are the largest setbacks in Canada, the United States and eight European countries. Proponents are required to monitor and address any perceptible infrasound as a condition of the renewable energy approval.

That said, there’s more the McGuinty government could and must do. First and most important, the government should reduce the need for new energy generation by pursuing all possible conservation and efficiency measures.

Secondly, the government should give priority to community and First Nations, local co-operatives and community power projects which have community buy-in. Communities should control and benefit from wind projects, not companies that have no vested interest in those communities.

Lastly, Ontario needs to sit down with local communities and renewable power proponents to hammer out a consultation process that will work in this province.

Our colleagues were at the Ontario Good Roads/Rural Ontario Municipal Association meeting. It was clear those municipalities did not want to take on the responsibility for energy planning, but they did recognize the need for a better consultation regime. We need that here in Ontario. We need action on rebuilding our industry. We need to deal with climate change.

This motion will push us backwards. I urge everyone in this chamber to defeat it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Huron–Bruce has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the members of my caucus who spoke up today in support of what Ontario wants: a moratorium on further wind development and industrial wind turbines until third party health and environmental studies are completed. We need the real, real results.

Specifically to the MPP from York–Simcoe, thank you for recognizing the time-sensitive issue this is. To my colleagues from Prince Edward–Hastings, Wellington–Halton Hills, Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Nipissing and Nepean–Carleton, thank you for speaking up. Your constituents will be so proud of their provincial representatives today.

I also listened to the members from Richmond Hill, Mississauga–Streetsville and Toronto–Danforth, and I have to ask: How many turbines do they have in their ridings? Where are the government's and the third party's representatives from rural Ontario? Why were they not allowed to speak?

The member from Guelph has constituents here, and she wasn't even allowed to speak. I'm sure her constituents who are present today will be very interested to see how she votes.

But seriously, all of us here in this Legislature—

Mr. Grant Crack: What about subways in the rural areas?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Oh, don't get me started on that, because it's a two-way street there. People spoke out of both sides of their mouth—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order. Would you please address the Chair?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, the government proved to be hypocrites when they chose to say the will of—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask you to withdraw.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I withdraw.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have to protect those in the province who are looking to be positioned as collateral damage—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order, please.

HAWKINS GIGNAC ACT (CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS), 2012

LOI HAWKINS GIGNAC DE 2012 (DÉTECTEURS DE MONOXYDE DE CARBONE)

Mr. Hardeman moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 20, An Act to amend the Building Code Act, 1992 to require carbon monoxide detectors in certain residential buildings / Projet de loi 20, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1992 sur le code du bâtiment pour exiger l'installation de détecteurs de monoxyde de carbone dans certains immeubles d'habitation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise once again to speak to the Hawkins Gignac Act because this bill will ensure Ontario families are protected by having carbon monoxide detectors in their homes, and it will save lives.

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that is colourless, odourless and has no taste. Most of us have a potential source of this gas in our homes—a furnace, space heater, gas stove, hot water heater or even the garage where we warm up our cars in the winter. Without a detector, you have no way of knowing when your house is filling with poisonous gas.

Currently, the Ontario building code only requires carbon monoxide alarms in homes that are built after August 6, 2001. That leaves too many families at risk. The Hawkins Gignac Act would require carbon monoxide detectors in all Ontario homes that have a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage.

Andy Glynn, deputy chief of Oakville and representative of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, says, "This bill has the support of fire chiefs across the province because all families, regardless of the age of their home, need protection from this silent killer."

I was pleased that recently Safe Kids Canada declared their support for the bill. This is the national injury prevention program of the Hospital for Sick Children. They said, "The same safety provisions should apply across the province. The safety of Ontario families should not depend on the location or age of their homes."

As we work to make our homes more airtight and energy-efficient, the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning continues to increase. Three years ago, Ontario's chief coroner investigated the death of a Sudbury woman due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

As a result, he recommended that carbon monoxide alarms be installed on every level of every home. This is similar to the recommendations of several coroner inquiries.

1540

A week ago in Florida, an elderly couple passed away in their home. It is believed they were poisoned by carbon monoxide from a car running in their garage.

They were not required to have carbon monoxide detectors in their home.

Just over three years ago in my riding of Oxford, we experienced a tragic consequence of not having carbon monoxide detectors in your home when we lost Laurie and Richard Hawkins and their two children, Cassandra and Jordan. As an OPP community relations officer, Constable Hawkins touched the lives of many people throughout Oxford, particularly in schools, where she taught the VIP program: values, influences and peers.

Years after being part of the VIP program, students mentioned to their teachers the great impact that Laurie had on them. In fact, the first time that we debated this bill—and I want to point out that this is the third time—many of the students whom she taught were here in the public gallery to see this happen.

Laurie's impact was recognized recently when the Thames Valley District School Board decided to name a new school in Ingersoll in her honour.

Richard Hawkins was an accomplished hockey player and shared that passion as coach of the local hockey team. He was an active member of the community and a dedicated father.

Cassandra was a grade 9 student. She was a member of the social justice league and enjoyed figure skating and swimming.

Jordan was 12 years old and already working as a paper boy. He played hockey and loved camping, swimming and fishing.

The family had been feeling ill for several weeks and thought they had all come down with the flu. Mr. Speaker, that's one of the factors that makes carbon monoxide so dangerous. It's almost impossible to detect early symptoms; headaches, fatigue and dizziness are similar to the flu. In fact, the Hawkins family was suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning. The exhaust on the basement fireplace had become blocked and was filling their home with carbon monoxide.

Following the tragedy, Laurie's uncle, John Gignac, who is in the gallery today, committed to preventing other families from experiencing the same loss. He founded the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO Education, which increases awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide and raises funds for the purchase of carbon monoxide detectors to be distributed through fire departments.

Last month, the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation reached out to provide assistance in the wake of another tragedy in the Yukon: A family of four and their tenant were killed by carbon monoxide. Following the tragedy, the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation provided carbon monoxide detectors to ensure that those in the community who could not afford one would be protected against carbon monoxide.

Last fall, John Gignac joined me in my riding of Oxford, where we made a similar donation. I want to thank John for his support for this bill over the last three years and all the efforts on the issue.

I first introduced this bill in 2008, only a few days after the tragic loss of the Hawkins family. The bill passed second reading on April 2, 2009, and was referred to committee. It died on the order paper when Premier McGuinty prorogued the House in March 2010.

A few months later, in May, I reintroduced the Hawkins Gignac Act, Bill 69. In December, it once again passed second reading and was referred to committee. It died on the order paper again when the Legislature prorogued in 2011.

Today, I'm asking for the support of the Legislature—not just for second reading, but to help me move this bill forward through committee and through third reading. The time has come, Mr. Speaker.

Over the three years since I first introduced the Hawkins Gignac Act, I've heard from many people and organizations about the need for carbon monoxide detectors, and I've received many comments and suggestions on the bill. I want to thank everyone who took time to share their thoughts. I was pleased to incorporate many of those recommendations in Bill 20 to ensure that we are protecting Ontario families without placing any unnecessary burden on people who are not in danger of carbon monoxide poisoning.

This bill would only require detectors in homes that have a potential source of carbon monoxide, such as fuel-burning appliances or an attached garage. Homes that are all electric with no garage would not be required to have a detector.

For multi-residential units, detectors would only be required in suites where there is a fuel-burning appliance, or suites that are adjacent to the storage garage or service room with fuel-burning appliances.

I want to thank the Federation of Rental-housing Providers for working with me on this new version of the bill and for their extensive input.

For new homes, carbon monoxide detectors must be hard-wired and interconnected. We recognize that this would be cost-prohibitive in existing homes, and so for these homes a battery-operated or plug-in carbon monoxide detector would be acceptable.

Carbon monoxide detectors range in price, but there are models available for \$20 or \$25: not a high price to pay to protect lives. I know the people across Ontario accepted the importance of having smoke detectors at every level of their home. I hope that we can make people aware of the need for the same with carbon monoxide alarms.

While I have been working to get this legislation through the Legislature, many municipalities have taken the initiative to protect their citizens, enacting bylaws to require these carbon monoxide alarms. I want to commend municipalities, such as Niagara Falls, Mississauga, Caledon, North Bay, Pickering, Georgina and Sault Ste. Marie, that have taken the steps—and I know that there are more that are considering it. In fact, just this week, my home municipality of South-West Oxford passed a bylaw requiring carbon monoxide detectors.

Over the past few years, there have been numerous stories about families who have been saved because there was a bylaw in place and their family installed the detector. Dana Melanson bought a carbon monoxide detector to comply with the bylaw in her town of Sault Ste. Marie. Last summer it started going off, so she called the fire department, who discovered that a family hot water heater was filling their home with carbon monoxide. If she hadn't heard the detector, it could well have been another tragedy.

In December, a Keswick family was also saved by their detector going off. The Georgina fire department responded and the deputy fire chief said, "If this family had not had a working carbon monoxide alarm and responded as they did, the outcome may have been fatal."

Around the same time, the town of Ingersoll, in my riding of Oxford, passed a bylaw requiring carbon monoxide detectors in all homes with fuel-burning appliances or attached garages. Ingersoll Fire Chief Darell Parker said, "It is our hope that the province would pass the legislation, but with the risks involved it's important we step up and make a statement."

Mr. Speaker, these detectors save lives. Do we really only want Ontario families to have that protection if they live in certain towns? While I commend these municipalities for taking the initiative, those bylaws don't take the place of a provincial law. All Ontario families should be protected against carbon monoxide, not just those who live in new houses or certain municipalities.

As we worked with the Federation of Rental-housing Providers to refine the section of the bill that deals with multi-residential units, we researched a number of these municipal bylaws. Each one puts different requirements on the landlord; different rules in different municipalities create red tape and confusion. Our goal should be to create a situation that makes it as easy as possible for people to comply with the law and protect Ontarians against carbon monoxide poisoning. That is why we need to move forward with the Hawkins Gignac Act.

I appreciate all the support and the many people who have worked to help us raise awareness about the need for detectors, including numerous fire chiefs, municipal politicians and safety experts. David Thomson, past president of Firefighters Association of Ontario, said, "Carbon monoxide is known as the silent killer. With the introduction of the Hawkins Gignac Act, this will ensure that all homes in Ontario will have early detection on all levels of residences and that they are installed and maintained properly."

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that makes carbon monoxide poisoning so tragic is that it is preventable. Over the last three years, many more people have become aware of the need for carbon monoxide detectors, and I'm pleased that so many families have made the decision to ensure they are protected, but there are still far too many people at risk. I want to encourage everyone who is listening to this debate today, here and at home, not to wait for the legislation to pass, but to make sure that they and their loved ones have working

carbon monoxide detectors in their homes as soon as possible. Working together, we can prevent more tragedies. Working together, we can raise awareness, move this bill forward to committee and ensure that we can protect Ontario's families from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: I'd like to share my time with the member from Timmins-James Bay.

It's my honour to speak on this issue today. I'd like to first start by—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thanking Uncle Ernie.

Mr. John Vanthof: No; by paying tribute to Mr. Gignac, who has worked tirelessly for bringing this issue forward—and also thanking my uncle Ernie.

Applause.

Mr. John Vanthof: I am one of the people who knew early on how stubborn that man is, and it's turning out to be a good thing.

1550

All jokes aside, this is an incredibly serious issue, and I'm not going to replay what the member for Oxford just said. He knows this issue very well, as do most of the members in this House, because it's come to my attention—I'm new here—that this is the third time this bill has been brought forward. As I look through Hansard, it's the third time that excellent arguments have been brought forward. It's the third time that people have had to sit in the gallery and listen to those excellent arguments.

What really struck me is—today we've had some controversial subjects—this one isn't controversial. Carbon monoxide kills. This isn't rocket science. This isn't argued in any country. Anyone will tell you the same thing. I don't think anyone is going to argue. This is a good bill.

It's great if everybody puts them in voluntarily, but in the real world, that doesn't happen. We all know that. And we all know that in the real world, when we don't do things like this, people die.

I'd like to thank the member for Oxford and Mr. Gignac for bringing this bill forward once again. This isn't the type of bill that's made to divide people. It isn't the type of bill that's made for political points—to score some or lose some. This is the type of bill that, it's identified, can actually help people, save people.

That it's had to be brought forward for the third time shows that perhaps not only do we have to try harder to pass bills like this—maybe because I'm new here, I don't really understand the process, but there's got to be a way in this Legislature, in the committees, that bills like this that make sense somehow don't get lost in the shuffle. I know there are better terms for that, but for people who really aren't used to government, there are lots of committees, and things tend to get overrun by the bigger issues.

This isn't a little issue. This is probably—not probably—this is the most important issue we'll deal with today, because this is the only issue that will kill people. It could kill someone tonight, and that's why this issue is so important. It's so important that we all work together to make sure that bills like this proceed in a manner that they're expedited. On a bill where we can all agree—we've all agreed, all the parties have agreed twice already. I presume—I'm pretty sure—we'll agree the third time in this House.

It's the will of the House that we save people's lives. So it should be the will of the House that after it passes this House, passes second reading, that somehow we can put a rush on it. You know, put a rush on it, put a stamp on it: This one is important. So I urge everyone in this House to vote for this bill.

I'd really like to thank Mr. Gignac for everything he's done. I know my uncle would do the same for me, I think. But it's really important. I wish you wouldn't have to be sitting there. I hope that no one else—I hope you don't have to sit there again. I hope this doesn't have to be read a fourth time. Let's get together and let's pass it into law.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate? The member for Willowdale.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you. I wasn't expecting to be called this early.

It's my pleasure to speak in support of this bill. We've heard from members in the House that this is now the third time that this issue has come up before the Legislature. I took the occasion to dig out Hansard for the previous debates, which I have here in my hand. I've read the speeches of the then-MPPs in support of it from the Liberal side, the Conservative side and the NDP side. I read all the speeches through. Everybody agreed that this was, to use the expression commonly used on the street, a no-brainer. Why wouldn't anybody, any reasonable thinking person, not want to support this bill?

Here's what it says in the introduction. It's a very simple bill. The bill amends the Building Code Act, 1992—that's the code that governs the construction of buildings here in Ontario—to require the owners of residential buildings—what's a residential building? Well, that's where people live—we live, our children live, our grandparents live. That's where people live: residential buildings. So, any residential buildings that contain a fuel-burning device or a storage garage—because often stuff gets stuffed in these storage garages and is left there for months and sometimes years, and stuff happens, spontaneous combustion, and away we go; we've got a nasty fire—to install a carbon monoxide detector in the building, and that's not an expensive item, and to maintain them in operating condition. Then it sets out how you go about it.

Every year, in Ontario, we read about some tragedies of carbon monoxide accidents. Somebody has gone to bed and carbon monoxide has leaked out through the furnace or whatever the device is, and there are deaths. There are deaths of seniors and there are deaths of

middle-aged persons and there are deaths of children. Everybody reads it in the paper. I read it in the paper myself, and I say, "How could this happen? What an awful tragedy." Could you imagine this happening to members of your family? And then you read on in the paper and you see that one of two things has happened: Typically, there has not been a carbon monoxide detector installed, or there was a carbon monoxide device installed but it was in disrepair. It was not connected; it was not maintained; it wasn't working. And then I give my head a shake, and I say, "For the sake of having a carbon monoxide detector installed and for the sake of maintaining it, what little trouble and expense that is, think of the lives that it could have saved." Yet, for some strange reason, here in Ontario, we don't have that simple requirement in the building code. I just have to scratch my head, time and time again, why we wouldn't have that in the building code.

I circle back to my point that I think, for all of us, it's a no-brainer. I went back, and as I say, I read over the transcript of the previous two occasions that the bill came before the House at various times, and I read what Liberal MPPs, New Democratic MPPs and Conservative MPPs had to say. Essentially, they went on for five, 10 or 15 minutes, but they made the same point: Look, this saves lives; it's efficient; it's not a big deal to install it; it's not a big deal to maintain it; but the payback in terms of preventing tragedies that we read about in the paper is so enormous. I read through the debates, and I came to the conclusion that those people, on the previous occasions that it came before this House, also thought it was a no-brainer.

It's such a no-brainer that a number of municipalities—because the rules permit the municipalities to put a local requirement in their building codes, and any number of municipalities have done that. If memory serves me correctly—and I stand to be corrected here—I think, for instance, Niagara Falls is—yes. The member opposite is nodding. So I take the example of Niagara Falls, because that springs to mind. If the city of Niagara Falls, in its wisdom, has this amendment in its building code and requires carbon monoxide detectors, I don't, for the life of me, understand why other municipalities wouldn't do the same, and I know that, throughout Ontario, a number of municipalities have. If the municipality of Niagara Falls and other municipalities have done it because they see the wisdom in it, and I've said that I don't see why other municipalities wouldn't do it, why wouldn't the province do it also, just as a matter of logic?

1600

So for these reasons, I commend the member opposite for bringing this bill forward. I point out that it received all-party support the last two occasions that it came before, and I expect that it's going to have all-party support here, because it is a no-brainer. It saves lives and it's easy to do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I stand with my colleagues in the House today to speak in favour of Bill 20, the Hawkins Gignac Act.

It's before the Legislature, as you've heard, for the third time, thanks to the perseverance of my colleague from Oxford and the members of the families here, whose only purpose is to ensure that a tragedy like the one that took the lives of Constable Laurie Hawkins, her husband, Richard, their two children, Cassandra and Jordan, never, ever happens again.

Laurie and Richard were former residents of my hometown of North Bay, and this tragedy touched many in the community who knew them. As mayor of the city of North Bay at that time—our community was determined to do something to try to ensure we never see anything like this happen to another family. In March 2009, North Bay city council enacted a bylaw making it mandatory for any home with a fuel-fired appliance to have a working carbon monoxide detector.

The awareness raised through the attempts to pass the Hawkins Gignac Act in my community has saved lives and will continue to save lives, and passage of this legislation will do likewise across Ontario.

Speaker, the North Bay fire department issued a press release on January 27 of this year, stating that in that month alone, they had received 17 carbon monoxide alarm calls. Of those, four had confirmed levels of carbon monoxide in their home—four potential tragedies averted. Perhaps the members in this Legislature may want to check with their fire departments in their ridings to see how prevalent this problem is.

One of those four calls came on January 23. Colleen Point, a high school teacher in North Bay, said she was feeling nauseous but thought she was just coming down with a bug and didn't want to give it any further thought. Her husband, Gary, at the same time was complaining about a tingling sensation. Their nine-year-old daughter, Rachel, awoke, also feeling nauseous. Their CO alarm went off. It had a digital reading, which was steadily climbing, so this family of five got dressed and left the house. Thankfully, they had a CO alarm and took that alarm seriously.

CO detectors do save lives. I can't understand why anyone would object to having a device that can save a life. How can anyone not afford to have one in their home?

I want to take this opportunity to remind northern and rural residents in Ontario who have seen a lot of snow over the past couple weeks, please periodically check the exterior vents of your home, to make sure they're clear of snow and ice. This is one of the biggest dangers we face when it comes to possible carbon monoxide poisoning, and the importance of this message cannot be stressed enough.

Speaker, I wholeheartedly support the Hawkins Gignac Act, and I implore my fellow members to support it as well. Together, Speaker, we will save lives.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: First of all, I want to say that my colleague, our whip, Mrs. DiNovo, wants a few minutes on this, so I'm going to come right to the point.

One is, I support the bill. I think it's a good initiative. I've had the personal circumstance in our own home where my wife and I decided to go out and buy one of these things. We just happened to be at Canadian Tire one day and we said, "Let's put it in the basket." We installed it. We put one in the hallway upstairs and we put one down in the basement. My wife calls me here at Queen's Park a couple of years ago and says, "Jesus Jiminy, there's a noise down in the basement. What's it all about?" I say, "I don't know." We had forgotten we had plugged this thing in. It turns out that the vent for our hot water tank—there was something going on with it and natural gas was flowing back into the building, not natural gas but the fumes from burning whatever it is—carbon dioxide.

Anyway, the long and the short of the story is, the fire department showed up and found in fact there was a problem and we eventually corrected that, the point being if that thing hadn't gone off, who knows what would have happened? Would it have been my wife? Would it have been my wife and I? Would it have been the kids, the grandkids today? Who knows? These things do save lives, so I wholeheartedly support.

But I want to speak to the point that my good friend Mr. Vanthof from Timiskaming–Cochrane raised, and that is, the inability of members in the opposition to get bills passed. We have bills in the House today, all of which are good, depending on which side of the issue you find yourself on. You've got Mr. Hardeman who's got his bill on carbon dioxide. You've got the member from—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Huron–Bruce.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —Huron–Bruce—excuse me; I'd never be the Speaker because I can't remember ridings—who has a motion that's important to many, but even if it did pass in this Legislature, it wouldn't get anywhere, and that is because there's a failure in this Legislature to have rules that allow members to do their jobs. Essentially, I agree that in the end, government has to have the ability to be the one who introduces bills and motions. I understand the principle of Parliament, but there's got to be some way found so that the member from Huron–Bruce, the member from Haldimand–Norfolk or the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, when they bring issues before the House that are supportable by this Legislature, there's a way of moving forward, and I think that's rather regrettable. In the case of Mr. Hardeman, this might probably be more than strike three. It's only in our time—and I've been in this place for 22 years. I think I've seen it four or five times that members have brought this issue up before the House. It's a good idea and everybody supports it, but it doesn't get forward.

I think we have a prime opportunity in the Legislative Assembly committee. The House leaders have agreed to refer the standing orders to the Legislative Assembly committee so that we can look at how members can do

their job and represent their constituents. I think that is something that needs to be done. We need to find some way to balance off the tradition of Parliament where government has to have its way in the end, to where the opposition and individual members from either the government side or the opposition side of the House have some mechanism of moving bills forward, so that they can actually be passed into law, as in the case with the member from Norfolk.

I look at Mr. Prue. Mr. Prue, our member from Beaches–East York, had a bill to ban wooden fire escapes—wooden fire escapes. Everybody voted in favour. How many times? At least twice that I can think of. It never got passed. It got passed at second reading, but we can never get it into committee to do any work and it never got past third reading.

The member from Hamilton wherever, Mr. Miller, the Acting Speaker, has one in regard to sprinklers in retirement homes. Everybody agrees.

I look at our friends who are here from across southwestern and southeastern Ontario on the windmill issue. Even if the motion passed, it wouldn't mean anything. That's the sad reality of this place. I understand your issue is important to you, you feel strongly and you want to see this Legislature do something for you, and even if the bill passed at the end of the day or the motion passed, it wouldn't do anything because, at the end, it is only the government that has the power to say, "Yes, we're going to do X, Y or Z" with the motion or the bill that's brought forward.

I think we need to challenge ourselves as members as we work on the Legislative Assembly committee so that members of this House know, once you bring a bill or motion to this House and it passes the test of this House at second reading, there's a way to move it forward so that, in fact, you can enact it into law or you can make a difference for people's lives. I just look forward to that day where these debates are a little bit more meaningful.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to join the debate today. I think this is an example of where the Legislature is often at its best when it comes to private members' business, because it allows from time to time the opportunity to put some of the partisan nature of debate aside and deal with issues of a very practical nature.

The member from Oxford today, I think, brings forward a bill that is very practical in nature and has the potential to avoid a lot of tragedy. If there are any lessons to be learned from the tragedies that have occurred in our past, one of them is that a private member's bill in this regard would be a good way to move this issue forward and ensure that those tragedies don't happen in the future.

I want to take this opportunity also to talk about private members' bills in general. I listened with some interest to the member from Timmins–James Bay, and I certainly agreed with some of the sentiments as to finding

a method to move private members' business beyond this stage and actually to the point where it did see the light of day and turn into good legislation.

1610

Often the people we use in our offices—or the people that some of us use in our offices, and I'm not sure if there was a person involved in this—are legislative interns, who get to work on the private member's bill. Part of being a legislative intern is that for half your term you work with a member of the government and for the other half you work with a member of the opposition. Today is the last day for legislative interns, and those who are working for the government will now go and work for the opposition and those who are working for the opposition will now go and work for the government.

I've had a fantastic intern; his name is Evan Akriotis. He has worked with me at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. I've got private members' bills that are coming up in the future as well, and Evan has done a fantastic job in doing the research on that. I think the experience of the internship will allow him to see the way that this entire House should operate. I think private members' bills give us that opportunity.

There's a law school in Evan's future. He has been out to my Oakville constituency. I don't know where Evan is going next, but he's going to an opposition member's riding and office. I've been very impressed with his research skills, his enthusiasm.

Tomorrow, all the interns fly to London and visit Westminster to see the source of parliamentary democracy—

Interjection.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: That's right; I'd be loving that trip too.

But I think this bill is a very practical example of how this House can work in a way that makes a difference in the everyday lives of Ontarians. As technology has advanced, the cost of technology has advanced; these devices now are within the reach of the average person in Ontario. At some point in the past, I'm sure that these would have been a fairly expensive purchase for somebody in Ontario; now that's not the case.

I'm sure, as in most cases like this where members suggest that the government intervene a little bit in the private lives of citizens, there's a range of opinions. Some people will think we should be intimately involved and some people think we shouldn't be involved at all.

From time to time in this House, members have talked about the war on the dandelion, when we were trying to do something about pesticides. Most members have spoken in favour of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, some have spoken against. Some people who wanted to be in this House said at one point that smoking in cars with children was going a bit too far and that perhaps we shouldn't do anything about that.

I think today we're presented with an example where that sensible, non-partisan middle says that this is the right amount of intervention for the government in the

lives of its citizens because it's going to prevent tragedies in the future.

I think the member from Oxford brought forward the case that it has the support of the firefighting community, that the chiefs and the association are people that support this because when these things are not installed or if these devices fail, the people at the end of the day that we rely on to go into those unsafe situations are the firefighters themselves. It seems to me that they would see this at its worst. They would see the consequences of not having these installed. If they're in support of these, I think it behooves everybody in this House to get behind the firefighting community and throw their support behind it as well.

I think as Ontario families work hard and they go about very busy lives, our government is also working hard too to not intervene too much in their lives and not stay completely out of their lives but to find that sensible point where we do get into the homes, where we do do inspections in the homes. But I think, even above and beyond the legislation itself, we should be encouraging all residents to install a carbon monoxide detector in their home in advance of the legislation. It's something I think that's a proven aid to saving lives.

We're concerned about the safety of all Ontarians. I don't think that's anything peculiar to the Liberal Party, to the Progressive Conservative Party or to the New Democratic Party. I think all members of this House would like to see legislation introduced that's practical in nature, that makes a difference in the lives of ordinary Ontarians and ensures that the tragedies and the deaths that have occurred in the past need not occur in the future.

My support is solidly behind the member from Oxford. I would like to see this debated at committee, and I would like to see it move on to third reading and become law. I would urge all members to support the motion that's on the floor. Once again, I commend the member from Oxford for his tenacity in bringing it forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak in support of this important act, Bill 20, the Hawkins Gignac Act, that will require carbon monoxide detectors in all residential buildings. I applaud, as well, the member from Oxford for his foresight and tenacity in redrafting, in the first place, and reintroducing this bill. The third time's the charm, member from Oxford.

Previous legislators who sat exactly where we sit today had the wherewithal and good judgment to enact legislation that serves to protect Ontarians from potential threats in homes and businesses. Mr. Speaker, those members passed important legislation that required fire alarms in all homes and carbon monoxide detectors in new homes and buildings. Those members at that time saw that by enacting a simple piece of legislation, they could increase safety in our homes. This important action has saved the lives of countless numbers of individuals

and families from undue tragedy and grief that have befallen far too many before.

I was fortunate enough in my former employment to work for a very thoughtful employer who every year would make a different safety gift to employees, myself included at the time. One of those one year was carbon monoxide detectors, so there are a number of those in my home that are still there from that time and also that we've replaced over the years. So that employer was very thoughtful and looking forward to the future.

I encourage every member of this Legislature to check and make sure that they, too, have carbon monoxide detectors in their home and that they are fully operational.

Carbon monoxide is often called the silent killer because it gives no clear warnings of its presence to its victims. It's an invisible gas with no taste or smell. Without carbon monoxide alarms, families are unable to detect the presence of this poisonous gas in any concentration.

Carbon monoxide is produced by many different devices that we find in our homes. Compounding the issue is the fact that the same technology that allows us to seal up leaks in our homes and prevent energy loss can also have the effect of corralling harmful gases until they reach lethal levels. As such, it is absolutely essential that we have carbon monoxide detectors in our homes to detect any of these dangerous toxins.

I'd like to touch on several troubling statistics that I found while I was researching Bill 20. Carbon monoxide is the number one cause of accidental poisoning deaths in North America. Close to 15% of the incidents investigated by the TSSA involve carbon monoxide. Studies have shown that each year, some 13,000 Canadians experience some level of carbon monoxide poisoning.

By enacting this simple piece of legislation, Bill 20, we will be doing our part to prevent any other families from experiencing the tragedy that befell the Hawkins-Gignac family in late 2008. Richard, Laurie, Cassandra and Jordan were all overcome by carbon monoxide because a seemingly benign exhaust vent on a gas fireplace had become blocked, simply from years of use. Like any other Canadian who heats their home for comfort, this family had no expectation that simply warming the basement could put them at a risk.

I commend the member from Oxford for his commitment to this important piece of legislation. I want to thank all the family members who are here today, who have worked so hard to see this important piece of legislation become law.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, when passed, will provide a simple and effective level of protection for our families. I urge all parties to support Bill 20, the Hawkins Gignac Act.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I remember extremely vividly the first time I uttered the words "carbon monoxide" and knew anything about a carbon monoxide detector. It was

when my husband and I first moved back to Toronto after living in the country for a while. We were living in rental quarters. All of a sudden a beep, beep, beep went off in the basement. We had no idea what it was. There were obviously no flames or smoke around. We looked. We didn't even know what the detector was detecting and, quite frankly, we didn't phone 911. Within minutes, the fire department, the paramedics, everyone had descended on our street, had blocked off the street and informed us that, had this happened and we didn't have a carbon monoxide detector and we had been sleep, my husband, myself and our two small children would all be dead—couldn't smell anything, couldn't detect anything. That's when I learned about carbon monoxide, and that's when I learned about the value and the importance of having a carbon monoxide detector.

Mr. Speaker, I've told this story before in this House, and I've only been here six years. The sad reality is the member from Oxford has brought this forward before, not only once but twice before. The sad reality is that both times before it has been supported by every member of this House. So here we are again, *déjà vu* all over again.

1620

The issue here—and people should know this—is with the government. It is still, in a minority government, the government's prerogative to bring bills forward for third reading. So I would ask of my friends across the aisle that not only you support the member from Oxford in this bill, but that you actually put pressure on your own cabinet to bring this bill back for third reading so that poor Mr. Uncle Ernie from Oxford doesn't have to stand up and do it for the fourth time and I don't have to tell this scary story yet again. Surely, before the member from Oxford retires, we can also retire this discussion and keep the members of our households in Ontario safe.

So, yes, we support it. Let's get it done.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further debate?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise yet again today, this time to speak to my colleague from Oxford's private member's bill, the Hawkins Gignac Act. It's the third time it's been brought in, and that's been said many, many times. This hopefully is the last time that we discuss it in the Legislature, and it does become law. Thank you to the family members for coming yet again to the Legislature to support the member from Oxford—or Uncle Ernie to some in the Legislature.

The bill would require mandatory, functioning carbon monoxide detectors in all Ontario homes that have a fuel-burning appliance or attached garage. Currently, detectors are only required in homes built after August 2001, putting many Ontario families at risk. I think that we've heard a lot about carbon monoxide, but just for those who are tuning in at home, it is a product of combustion of organic matter under conditions of restricted oxygen supply.

We don't want to bring every bill back three times, but at least the education component does keep going about

carbon monoxide and the harm that it does bring, and how lots of people forget about carbon monoxide and the poisoning—it is the silent killer—and the tragic stories that we hear again and again throughout our ridings; I know as a nurse, receiving patients in emergency, many times too late. It is the time to bring in a provincial law that does put mandatory carbon monoxide detectors in people's homes.

There also can be long-term, slow carbon monoxide poisoning that can exist, so people, especially pregnant women—the effects on the fetus; chronic diseases where you think they're chronic diseases, but they're actually chronic exposure to carbon monoxide poisoning, some of it being confusion and memory loss, which certainly can be thought to be something else with people.

In my own riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, the city of Kawartha Lakes emergency medical services chief, Keith Kirkpatrick, told me of two tragic instances resulting in fatalities in 2008 and 2009. Of course, as I have many emergency services, I contacted them about the bill: Brock township; the county of Peterborough, in which I have Galway-Cavendish and Harvey; north Kawartha; and Cavan Monaghan—all telling me stories that are tragic and all very supportive of this bill being brought forward today that would save lives.

I want to also mention a private member's bill, because a lot has been mentioned about private members' bills and how they don't go any further. Several times in the Legislature, it's been brought in about visual alarms: strobe lighting for the deaf and hard-of-hearing in the province of Ontario. Right now, they do need some assistance—some people who are deaf and hard of hearing—getting these smoke detectors installed to save their lives, so they can be visual alarms to them—strobe lighting in this situation. The same applies with carbon monoxide detectors, Mr. Speaker. Again, I think that bill has been brought forward by maybe all three parties and has not yet seen productive, I would say, amendments. I don't even know if it really needs to be legislation, but amendments to either the assistive device program—just the awareness of it. I know the Canadian Hearing Society, of which I was for a short time a provincial board member—I have members of my family that are deaf. This needs to be brought forward again to keep in the forefront and maybe hopefully get some movement on the government side on this very important part of society. Their lives are in jeopardy just because they need visual aids for smoke alarms and maybe carbon monoxide alarms.

So I want to again thank the member from Oxford for his tenacity in moving this bill forward. I'm sure he'll enjoy all-party support here today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Oxford, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I would like to thank all the gracious speakers who spoke to the bill, without eliminating

anyone—everyone speaking solidly in favour of the bill. I'm going to make the assumption that the only reason that the rest of the members of the Legislature didn't get a chance to speak is because we ran out of time. So I won't name them all. I just hope that all the ones that didn't get to speak are as supportive of the bill as those that did.

There was one thing that I think is very important that I mentioned: The support that I've had from the fire services, in all three times that I've had this bill forward, is so important, because they are the people that get the calls, both in the cases where there are carbon monoxide detectors and in the cases where they aren't. And the difference between the two calls is the reason that all the fire services are behind doing this.

The other thing that was mentioned by the member from Willowdale, about the situation of the municipalities not doing it, the challenge, of course, is that it's part of the building code, and municipalities don't deal with the building code. They can pass a law, but it doesn't deal with the similarities between municipalities, so you have one standard in one municipality and one standard in the other, and that's not going to be very helpful.

Last, but not least, I think it's very important to recognize the issue of retroactivity. I mentioned in my presentation the year 2001. That's when they became mandatory in all residential buildings in the province—smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. They made smoke detectors retroactive so it would be all residential; they didn't do that for carbon monoxide. Only that group of housing or that group of residential units that were built prior to 2001 still have smoke detectors mandatory, but not carbon monoxide. I believe we should all have the same protection in every municipality and every dwelling unit in this province.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The time for private members' public business has come to an end.

Before we take the votes, I'd ask all members of the Legislature to join me in thanking this wonderful group of pages for the work they've done for us in the last three weeks.

Applause.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ISAAC BROCK DAY ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LE JOUR DU MAJOR-GÉNÉRAL SIR ISAAC BROCK

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item 16, standing in the name of Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark has moved second reading of Bill 35. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ISAAC BROCK DAY ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 SUR LE JOUR DU MAJOR-GÉNÉRAL SIR ISAAC BROCK

Mr. Clark moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 35, An Act to proclaim October 13 in each year as Major-General Sir Isaac Brock Day in Ontario / Projet de loi 35, Loi visant à proclamer le 13 octobre de chaque année Jour du major-général Sir Isaac Brock en Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

WIND TURBINES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Thompson has moved private member's notice of motion 8. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion, say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with the vote at the end of other business.

HAWKINS GIGNAC ACT (CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS), 2012

LOI HAWKINS GIGNAC DE 2012 (DÉTECTEURS DE MONOXYDE DE CARBONE)

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Hardeman has moved second reading of Bill 20. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole.

The member from Oxford.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: To the committee on social justice—or social policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has moved that the bill be referred to social justice—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): —social policy? Social policy. Agreed? Agreed.

WIND TURBINES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll now deal with the vote. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1631 to 1636.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Can I ask members to take their seats?

Ms. Thompson has moved private members' notice of motion number 8. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Craitor, Kim
Damerla, Dipika

Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Mangat, Amrit
Marchese, Rosario
Matthews, Deborah
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil

Sousa, Charles
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Taylor, Monique
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Fedeli, Victor
Hardeman, Ernie
Jackson, Rod

Jones, Sylvia
Leone, Rob
MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
McNaughton, Monte
Milligan, Rob E.
Munro, Julia
Nicholls, Rick
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Pettapiece, Randy
Scott, Laurie
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Armstrong, Teresa J.
Bentley, Christopher
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Cansfield, Donna H.

Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Hoskins, Eric

Milloy, John
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Oraziatti, David
Qaadri, Shafiq
Sandals, Liz
Schein, Jonah
Singh, Jagmeet

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 28; the nays are 45.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negated.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Orders of the day?

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): This House stands adjourned until Monday—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order. Mr. Milloy has moved adjournment of the House. Does the motion carry?

This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 19, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1641.

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. Dave Levac

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
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels 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	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milligan, Rob E. (PC) Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Reza (LIB) Munro, Julia (PC)	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris
Rob Leone, Taras Natyshak
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue
Mario Sergio
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Teresa Piruzza
Bob Delaney, Victor Fedeli
Cindy Forster, Monte McNaughton
Yasir Naqvi, Teresa Piruzza
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman
Soo Wong
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Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: David Zimmer
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Joe Dickson, Rosario Marchese
David Oraziotti, Laurie Scott
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David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
Donna H. Cansfield, Helena Jaczek
Bill Mauro, Jim McDonell
Phil McNeely, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Shafiq Qaadri
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren
Paul Miller, Rob E. Milligan
Shafiq Qaadri
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon
Gilles Bisson, Donna H. Cansfield
Steve Clark, Garfield Dunlop
Jeff Leal, Lisa MacLeod
Jonah Schein
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Norm Miller
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett
Toby Barrett, France Gélinas
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller
Reza Moridi, Jerry J. Ouellette
Liz Sandals, Jagmeet Singh
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof
Michael Coteau, Grant Crack
Vic Dhillon, Randy Hillier
Rod Jackson, Mario Sergio
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Bill Walker
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