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**Thursday 31 October 2013**

**Jeudi 31 octobre 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
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Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 31 October 2013

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 31 octobre 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Good morning, Speaker. On this morning of Halloween, when we hope that all our children will be safe and sound tonight, the government is pleased to call government order G91.

WASTE REDUCTION ACT, 2013  
LOI DE 2013 SUR LA RÉDUCTION  
DES DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 29, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to establish a new regime for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 91, Loi créant un nouveau cadre pour la réduction, la réutilisation et le recyclage des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On this Halloween day, it's my pleasure to speak to this bill, which is full of tricks on the part of the government; not a treat here in Bill 91. On behalf of my constituents in Newmarket and Aurora, I want to register my concerns regarding this legislation.

The bill is entitled An Act to establish a new regime for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002. It should be entitled An Act to establish a new regime of taxation, to shift eco fees from receipts to price tags and supersize Waste Diversion Ontario into a tax creation machine called the waste diversion authority. That's what the title of the bill should be.

Let's start with this so-called supersized Waste Reduction Authority. Speaker, what will it be empowered to do? Well, a lot of things that, quite frankly, if the people of this province fully understood the implications of this new mandate and the new empowerment of this authority, I believe they would have reason to be concerned. It has the authority to impose new taxes, to levy fines and arbitrarily decide how much Ontario businesses will pay for the blue box program—all consistent with this Liberal government's agenda of tax and spend, but the absolute wrong thing to do for consumers in this province and for

businesses who, quite frankly, are still struggling and are doing their best to cope with the burden of red tape and the over-taxation initiated by this government.

How many more rogue agencies and authorities does this government want to unleash on the citizens of this province? Not only are they creating another tax machine, they'll have no control over how high those taxes go or how much more businesses will have to pay into what I predict will become yet another hole, a black hole, compliments of this government.

As it stands now, Ontario businesses and municipalities split the cost of the blue box program. Property owners across this province are paying for the municipality's share of the cost of the blue box program. Under this bill, the government will empower this supersized Waste Reduction Authority to increase the amount that businesses will have to pay by hundreds of millions of dollars a year, without any offset to the property taxes.

It would be one thing if there was an offset and we could justify that on perhaps a revenue-neutral basis, but here's the clue: the fact that there is no offset on the one side, the fact that this new authority is going to be empowered to increase by hundreds of millions of dollars—now, the siphoning of money from businesses into this new authority indicates that this is yet simply another tax grab.

The result is that Ontario consumers will see the price of the products that they purchase increase because businesses will simply pass through the cost of this to their product. In the final analysis, it's the consumer who pays. Given the fact that consumer prices will increase and there is no offset on the property taxes, it is yet another double hit on the consumers and property owners in this province.

Why am I compelled to vote against this legislation? If for no other reason, it's the fact that I can't justify having anything to do with adding one more dollar of tax onto the backs of people who are already having a hard time making ends meet in this province or further putting up hurdles and increasing the cost to businesses struggling already in this province.

Beyond raising taxes and fees, both for consumers and businesses, is the fact that this legislation would spawn a legion of bureaucrats that will multiply and reach into every corner of this province. The last thing we need is more government, larger government, because we know where that ends: with higher costs yet far beyond the initial costs of this program.

We hear the minister tell us all of the supposed treats that are in this bill. What he fails to tell us is that he is

creating yet another bureaucracy that will far, far outweigh the benefits that he's telling us are in this bill.

So who can we expect in that bureaucracy? Well, let's start with the registrar. Of course, if you have a registrar, you have to have a deputy registrar, and I have no doubt that those deputies will feel that they'll need assistant registrars; and so we start the growth.

Of course, along with the compliance aspect of this bill, guess what we are going to hire? We're going to hire a host of inspectors who will be empowered with seizure responsibilities. They will actually have seizure powers. If you have that, of course what you need is another bureaucracy so that people can appeal on the actions of the inspectors, and so what the bill will do is give us another appeal mechanism, and that appeal mechanism is referred to as a tribunal.

**0910**

We're all familiar with tribunals. It's a bureaucratic process. It's expensive. People will spend a great deal of time—first of all, trying to figure out what the access is. But in order for any tribunal to do its work, guess what we need? We need more staff. So it doesn't take long for us, as we consider what we have in front of us here—it's the making of another massive bureaucracy that will bring with it a mountain of regulations, that will carry with it new provisions for penalties and fines and, in the end, make environmental criminals of innocent people right across this province, because the waste police are going to be chasing them.

Speaker, this boondoggle—we have to give thanks to the Liberal-NDP coalition government of this province. I have no doubt that the New Democrats will be supporting this bill, as they have been supporting most other bills. I believe the people of this province are waking up to the fact that we do not have a Liberal minority government; we have a Liberal-NDP coalition government in this province. That's what we have. If they would only be willing to tell us that. The truth of the matter is that there isn't—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** You know, it's ironic that the member from Essex stood up in the House just the other day and eloquently boasted about how incredibly proud he is to be a member of the NDP. God bless you for having that pride. But what he doesn't tell us is that he has to also take along with that pride the shame of being part of a caucus that boosts and has propped up this government that, in our opinion, and I believe in the opinion of the vast majority of Ontarians, has lost the moral authority to be the government in this province.

So when the people of this province start to look at the cost of this bill, let alone all of the other legislation and regulations that we have to pay for, when they start to go to the cash register and when they start to see the increasing bills and when they find it difficult, even more difficult, to make ends meet at the end of the day, I want to remind them that that will be compliments of the Liberal-NDP coalition government that we have in this province today. I believe that the day of reckoning will come. It's

not just about this waste management bill; it's about the waste that people have seen of their tax dollars, thanks to the Liberal-NDP coalition government of the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's quite interesting how you can—oh, I forgot to wish you a happy Halloween. You forgot to wear your costume, though, but we'll forgive you this time.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm going out as a Speaker tonight.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The member for—I always forget your riding—

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Newmarket–Aurora.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** —Newmarket–Aurora says he's going out as a Speaker tonight for Halloween. This could be scary, actually.

So here we are discussing the Waste Reduction Act. There's a word in there that piques all of our interest: waste. Since I've been here and followed the government more closely, you realize that this is a word that applies to this government quite nicely, actually. We can lay out on page after page waste in our government. I guess this is what the member was trying to draw attention to, rather than the actual bill, which is the Waste Reduction Act, which has to do with recycling.

Has there been waste in the government? Absolutely. We just had a constituency week. I travelled throughout the 33 beautiful communities of Nickel Belt, and everywhere I went people waited for me with their hydro bills, with all of the new fees that have been added to their hydro bills, and then the total, which sometimes represents as much as a third of their pension income in northern Ontario, which is being spent on hydro. And the winter months are not here yet. It's going to get worse before it gets better, because you will be turning that light on way earlier than you were in September. And then we know about the \$1.1 billion wasted on moving gas plants. It's rather a good title for that bill.

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

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Good morning, Speaker, and thank you for allowing me to enter this debate as well.

We have to go back a little bit. Ten years ago, in 2002—11 years ago—the former government passed a waste reduction act, which worked to some extent but not to the full extent that it was intended to. People are doing great with respect to household recycling, green boxes, blue boxes, grey boxes etc., but where we aren't doing so well is with respect to industrial and commercial waste. As a matter of fact, only about 12% of the waste that's created that way is being recycled right now.

The essence of this bill is to allow the government to take much greater control of our waste reduction processes in the province of Ontario. What the bill really says in its very essence is that when you, the producer or manufacturer, make an item and that item has outlived its usefulness, then you have to pay for the proper dispos-

ition or reuse of that item, or put it into new material so that other products can be created.

We simply cannot go on by just opening dumps all over this province like we have for the last 150 years. We now call them landfill sites or we give them some other environmental name etc., but at the end of the day, we are putting stuff in landfills that is polluting our land, polluting our waterways, and the ultimate cost of getting rid of the pollution and the toxic material that's in these landfill sites is going to be megatons more than the amount of money for which we can do it right in the first place.

So we're saying to the producers, "You're responsible for the ultimate disposal of this item in the same way that you're responsible for the cost of material and labour in that product." That's what this bill is all about. That's the way to go. That's the way the modern world, the western world, is going out there, and we should join that.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I was listening intently to the member from Newmarket–Aurora. When he started, the phrase I think he used was "trick-or-treat," and that's very appropriate for Bill 91, because it's more trick than treat. There's no question about it.

Not to be playing fun on words, but he also used the reference of supersizing. I've heard from—for instance, I have one here. This is from the president and COO of Sony Canada, Mr. Doug Wilson. He's totally opposed to the bill. The industry itself—if they'd only work with them—made a suggestion here of the EPRA, which is the Electronic Products Recycling Association.

I can tell you this, with the bill itself, the trick part of it is this: They're not cancelling any of the fees, and they're outsourcing any responsibility. The fact is, the eco fees are not going away; they're increasing. I think the member from Newmarket–Aurora said that. But here's the trick: They're actually buried in the price now. For a government that talks continuously about accountability, now they're hiding the tax. Today it shows on your receipt at the cash register, that you're paying so much for batteries, chlorine, tires, whatever it is. It's shameful, actually. Now you won't be able to find out what you're paying; it's going to be buried in the price.

They're not doing a single thing in this bill. It's tragic. The member who just spoke in response to the member from—Mr. Klees, I mean—he was at one time the minister. I remember the day he did a press conference on the eco fees and the whole conference went sideways on him. It was tragic. I'm not saying that—because he's a great, great guy. I like Mr. Gerretsen very much.

Here's the deal, though: It really is a shame. This bill is another example of the government hiding from the truth.

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's always a treat to add to the comments of the member from Newmarket–Aurora. He's a veteran member in this Legislature, and I'm always

pleased when I have the opportunity to sit down in here and listen to his—I'll even go as far as saying "his wise words."

**0920**

But I feel your pain. I feel your pain when it comes to waste reduction, because maybe there's an amendment that we might put to this bill which is the wasted amount of time that you have not benefited from by maybe participating in this discussion about what we can accomplish.

I looked at your theme and I heard you as far as what the Conservative caucus perspective is in regard to a government-NDP coalition. Quite frankly, I just think it's an NDP government, who is in a third opposition, that's getting things accomplished here.

Under Bill 91, there's a theme: using the three Rs, which are reduce, reuse and recycle. Well, we've got our own three Rs that we've been using, and those are results, results and results. We've been doing what we're supposed to do.

My good friend here, my good friend from Essex, a very proud member, a very good working member from Essex—and I have my other colleagues who are here with me this morning. We practise those three Rs. We go out and we actually get and achieve results for our communities.

But I've got to get back to you, to Bill 91, and the treat of following my esteemed colleague from Newmarket.

We've stalled on this initiative for the last 20 years; we haven't done anything. From my perspective, from my northern communities' perspective, we have a lot of communities that do want to participate but don't have the programs in place to participate. This will maybe give them an opportunity to participate.

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

**Interjection:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Oh, sorry. Two-minute response from the member for Newmarket–Aurora.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** In response to the member from Algoma–Manitoulin, I would suggest that we need a fourth R, and the fourth R would be recovery—recovery from the mess that this government has put us into, thanks to the support of the NDP.

I want to just say this: It's interesting how this government can take a good idea and bungle it through implementation. What we're concerned about is the massive bureaucracy that is being constructed under the guise of a good intention. This government could not find a file that it couldn't bungle up, so with something as well-intentioned as recycling, they've done it again, and it will be a multi-million-dollar, if not a billion-dollar, boondoggle.

Why did the government not take the proposal put forward more than a year ago by the PC caucus? That plan has, as a starting point, the scrapping of each and every eco fee foisted on the people of Ontario by this government. We would get rid of the out-of-control, costly bureaucracies that have been established by this govern-

ment and put control back into the Ministry of the Environment where it should be, where there is also accountability. We would treat recyclable material as a valuable resource and allow business to actually turn those recyclable materials into products that have a benefit.

This government couldn't get it right if we tried to show them how, because they wouldn't understand common sense. What I am saying to the people of Ontario is don't be fooled by the trick-or-treat on this Halloween day by this government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Good morning.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Good morning, my esteemed colleagues, and good morning to the member from Newmarket–Aurora. I will use a couple of brief moments at the beginning of my 10-minute hit here, just to address his comments.

I listened intently. I respect the member. He's tempered, and I think his ideas come well nuanced in everything that he says, so I certainly respect him. He is the quintessential Conservative, as I see it. You can rely on where he's coming from: lesser government—you heard that—smaller government or almost no government. He would like no government, I would imagine, no revenue stream to fund some of the most important social programs or policy programs that people want out there.

But I didn't hear, in his 10-minute speech, any reference to what the Conservatives would do to reduce the amount of waste that our regions and our communities are faced with, and that our municipalities are faced with, in terms of the increased cost. Not only did I not hear from him specifically, but I haven't seen anything in the dozen or so white papers they've put out that spoke about the three Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle.

I would say that the only way they do address some of the pressing problems in terms of waste reduction, or the three Rs, would be that they reuse old principles and old policies from the Mike Harris era, they recycle their talking points and they reduce any comprehensive dialogue—or any true public policy discussions that we should have—to absolutely the most basic, fundamental bottom line here: Throw your hands up and let the free market deal with it. Well, that hasn't worked, and I think this is what the bill attempts to do.

Of course, I'll speak a little bit about the mechanics of the bill. At the beginning, it sets diversion targets and enforceable standards for producers to meet. So it gives them benchmarks, it gives them goals, it gives them qualified targets. Anybody in business will tell you that what they want is certainty. They want to know that there is a certain policy and process to fulfill, to manage in their daily business activity.

One of the things we know is that this province has failed miserably when it comes to achieving its waste reduction targets, and the burden of that has typically

fallen on municipalities. We see it in each and every one of our regions, where landfill and tipping fees and waste management fees have really gone through the roof.

We know as well that the industry-funded Stewardship Ontario organization has been a failure in terms of its ability to address waste reduction targets and address the, I guess, producer responsibility aspect of waste reduction. By and large, that burden has again been left on consumers. We see it in eco fees. When you go and buy a television, you see that fee as a supplement to what the actual price tag would be. It's fair for consumers to say, "Well, what's happening here? Are we really achieving our targets?"

I don't think anyone would argue that people in our communities don't want to see landfills around their regions growing exponentially. We're a developed province and a developed nation. It's certain we can find the technological means and policy means to effectively deal with waste reduction.

What this bill aims to do, I guess, is remedy some of the failures within the Stewardship Ontario program. One of the main planks is that it does initiate somewhat of a producer-pay methodology, one that makes sense to me. The member from Newmarket–Aurora mentioned that once we lump the cost of waste reduction into the final price tag, those fees, those costs, will simply be passed on to the consumer. I would say it would be an abject failure by industry to not find the means, not find the incentive, to reduce their costs so that that price tag, on a competitive basis—that final bill you get, whether it would be on a television or a microwave or any other product that might be encompassed under the waste reduction targets—I think they would be hard pressed to do nothing about it.

You would think they could find mechanisms and efficiencies, and indeed that is the incentive. If they so choose, they won't have to pass the bulk of their costs on to consumers, in terms of hitting these targets; they can certainly find those efficiencies within their product, within their supply chain. And they are to be found, Mr. Speaker. I would say that one of the closest links we have to waste in this province is packaging—over-packaging.

Some days, when I buy something from a store, I feel it's like a Russian nesting doll. I've got to take the package out of the package to get to the package of the product that I finally want, and that final product is just a small little thing, but yet I've got a pound of packaging that comes along with it. You know, it seems simple economics that we can find a better way to distribute our goods and services to people of the province.

**0930**

Again, there are ways to address this encompassing other industries. I have a great friend in the Chatham-Kent area. His name is Joe Dama. Joe Dama has developed a process to supplement or to use soybeans to produce the little kernels that you see, the Styrofoam kernels that go inside of packaging. So, instead of seeing Styrofoam chips inside of a box, Joe Dama has developed a natural, organic process that fills that gap, that is bio-

degradable, that is cost-effective, that has triple net benefit when it encompasses other aspects of our economy, mainly agriculture. Yet he can't compete with the massive packaging companies that are able to certainly cut their costs on Styrofoam—I guess it wouldn't be cheaper.

But if we as a government were able to recognize that there are other areas, that there are ways that we can hit our targets and incentivize and stimulate our economy here, we should be doing that, and I think it is expected of us. It is our responsibility. We also know that waste reduction and resource conservation, as I had mentioned, is a huge economic sector, contributing over \$3.2 billion in revenue and 14,000 direct jobs in Ontario, but it could be much more. This bill, I think, is attempting to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I do not claim to be any expert on waste reduction. I would like to hear from experts, and that's why I think this bill should go to committee, because there's a lot of technical and policy information that I think we need to hear about. There are best practices around the world from jurisdictions that have gotten their waste reduction targets under hand, under wraps. I see no valid reason for us not to address this issue and attack this issue in earnest because, in fact, our communities are demanding it. Our municipalities are demanding it. We believe that it's good public policy. It can be effective and it can set the stage for generations to come in terms of doing it a different way and not simply the old way of waste. I think the time has come for us to actually put some effort into this and make it happen.

Again, this comes about because previous programs have failed. It was outlined by the Environmental Commissioner, who stated quite clearly that we are not reducing our targets. And Ontario has the worst record; this province has the worst record in Confederation. So, you know, it's our responsibility, as the worst province when it comes to waste reduction targets and meeting them, to do something about it.

For the members of the Conservative caucus to simply throw up their hands I guess is indicative of the way that they've addressed other legislation in this building, without putting any effort into it and any real, tangible, comprehensive policy. I expect that from them, but I'm going to take my job seriously in this House and do my due diligence on this bill, work it through, and actually deliver good public policy and results for the people of Ontario. They expect nothing less.

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

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I want to thank the member for Essex for what he has said. It's very close to what this bill is trying to do. I agree with him. We should get this bill into committee, where we can hear from the industry, hear from various experts and improve the bill. It's the right direction to go in.

Producer responsibility: I think the third party and ourselves agree that that's where the responsibility should be. We know that when dealing with this and when dealing with these products when they're no longer useful to the consumer—that dollar can be shown very clearly as

another of the costs that the retailer has for that product. It's very important that we do this. I think enough people here have said that the existing system is not working.

This is from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and I think we have to listen: "The Legislature is currently debating if Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, will move beyond second reading. It reflects municipal perspectives on producers' responsibility for their products and packages. It would offer relief to property taxpayers by providing more industry funding for waste diversion."

I have something here from the city of Ottawa. It's from the mayor but it includes the thoughts of Maria McRae, and the chair of the planning committee, Peter Hume, who is eagerly following this, following his long record with AMO: "I understand that Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, is scheduled for further debate at second reading this week. Copied on this email are the chair ... Maria McRae, and the chair of our planning committee, Peter Hume...."

"I am writing to encourage your support of Bill 91, at the very least to move it to committee, as it is something that is important to municipalities across Ontario, including the city of Ottawa. I believe there have been seven or eight days of debate at second reading and there can be virtually nothing left to say 'on principle.' It should now move on to committee for in-depth review."

I like this letter from the mayor. I think that's what we should do: We should vote on this legislation and get it into committee.

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'd like the opportunity to quickly introduce a few visitors who are here today in our members' gallery: Shelagh Kerr, from Electronics Product Stewardship Canada, and Rob Cook and Peter Hargreave from the OWMA. I know they're listening intently to this debate, as I was this morning from my office.

I couldn't help but come down and add my two minutes to the debate, after listening to the Attorney General speak, because we all know that he and the former Premier were really the godfathers of the eco tax scheme here in Ontario. He actually had the opportunity to introduce true reform when he was the environment minister. But what did he do? He worked to create hundreds of millions of dollars in eco taxes with the godfather of eco tax himself, the then Premier, Dalton McGuinty, in a rush to nickel and dime Ontario consumers. The now Attorney General and the Liberals spent five years constructing elaborate eco taxation schemes for just 3% of the waste stream—that's right, just 3%. That means Ontarians are paying hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year to recycle just a fraction of Ontario's total waste stream.

What I find truly tragic is that the Liberals ignored the largest part of the waste stream, that of the ICI, or the industrial, commercial and institutional sector. In fact, the ICI sector makes up 60% of the total waste stream, yet the Liberals have ignored it for the last 10 years.

Speaker, I know you want to know a little bit more about what was going on behind the scenes, so I couldn't help but pull out an old Toronto Star article by Robert Benzie. It reads: "McGuinty Led Eco Fee Push Over Cabinet Objections." It goes on to talk about a senior minister who led the charge but warned the Premier that the policy could spark a backlash. Well, that's an understatement, perhaps, in July 2010, and I'm sure I'll have more opportunity to bring this article to light in the future.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's a pleasure to be able to stand in this House and add my comments on the Waste Reduction Act and follow up on my colleague from Essex.

I think, for those people involved in this debate—and I speak more to the people like the people in the gallery and the people who are really intently involved, the stewards, the municipalities—it's a very, very important debate.

The member from Essex talked about packaging. You know, we do have too much packaging, but in some cases the stewards can't control that. It's an issue.

The municipalities and the stewards are worried. Let's put it in simple language: The stewards are worried because they feel the municipalities have the control but they have to foot the bill.

There are pretty basic things we're talking about here. I think one thing that we're all worried about, given some of the past experiences with this government, is the waste management authority because, although it sounds very authoritative, it will conceivably be another authority like Ornge. That's what we're all worried about.

**0940**

But our goal here—where we are isn't good at all. Let's move this bill to committee and try to make the best of it, because we can make a lot of changes in this bill that will make it better. Let's understand where the problems are, and let's try to work to actually improve what we have.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The toughest job in this House is to be the critic for the environment in the Tory party. There is no tougher job, because let's face it: They basically don't care about the environment.

The other thing that I have absolutely no use for are personal attacks. I'll tell you what happened four or five years ago when I was environment minister: We were undermined by a significant sector of the manufacturing and retail industry. Items that they darned well knew should have cost a penny more for the so-called eco fee all of a sudden were sold in stores for a dollar more. They did not like the scheme in which we wanted to make the producers responsible to keep toxic materials out of our landfill sites. That's what it was all about.

They didn't like the government's plan, and a majority—not everybody, not all the retailers out there, but

there were a significant number of retailers that had been well in the know, because they had been consulted six or seven months before that as to what we intended to implement on July 1, and some of them, purposely, as far as I'm concerned, undermined the system by charging a dollar on a tube that cost nine bucks when they darned well knew that what the fee structure set out was a penny.

What we're trying to do in this bill is to make the government more responsible and more accountable, and also give them greater control over the whole recycling and reduction of waste issue.

The bottom line is this: We cannot keep continuing to put toxic materials in our landfills or our waterways. The cost of cleaning that up in the long run is mega, mega times more than to do it right in the first place.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** A point of order from the member for Kitchener–Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Speaker, quickly: For the Liberals, it's not about protecting the environment; it's all about the money.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** That's not a point of order.

The member for Essex, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thanks to the members from Ottawa–Orléans, Kitchener–Conestoga, Timiskaming–Cochrane and the Attorney General.

I have two small kids; my son is six and my daughter is nine. I envision, I look forward to a day, 20 or 30 years from now, when we set a target and there is zero waste, when they can walk on a beach and not see a plastic container or a hypodermic needle or a six-pack container. I look forward to a day when they can take a walk in a park and not see refuse thrown randomly. I look forward to a time when they can buy a product at a store and know that there is some environmental responsibility there. It's incumbent upon us to do that.

To stand here and listen to the PC caucus throw their hands up, absolutely take no responsibility, placate industry, backstop industry, protect industry and not indicate that they have any responsibility to protect the environment—it's an abject failure on their part. It shows that they're too out of touch with 21st-century thinking and our responsibility as members of this Legislature to actually do something.

If they want to stand and defend primary producers of goods, that's fine. But sometimes you've got to make tough decisions. Sometimes you've got to actually bring people to the table and say, "The process is wrong. Let's come together and fix this, and let's do it so it has a triple or quadruple net benefit for the people of our province." That's what our job is.

You can stick to your speaking points and the message wheel, as the member from Newmarket–Aurora did, but it doesn't help the conversation, and it abdicates our responsibility here in the House.

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



**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm very pleased to have the opportunity this morning to rise in the House and speak on behalf of the people of Wellington–Halton Hills to this Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act. It has been said, of course, given the date today—Halloween—that this bill is more Liberal trick than treat.

I first of all want to express my appreciation to the Ontario egg farmers, who served us breakfast this morning. I know many of the members were there, and we all enjoyed our time with the egg producers of Ontario, an important agriculture group in our province. They do a great job on behalf of their members. We're obviously delighted when they come once a year to update us on the issues, and we were very fortunate to have a delicious breakfast in the members' dining room.

Now, Mr. Speaker, someone tuning in to watch this session of the Legislature this morning might think that we'd be talking about jobs and the economy. They might think we'd be talking about the gas plant scandal, where \$1.1 billion of taxpayers' and ratepayers' money was wasted on a shameless Liberal plan to eliminate two gas plants to save a small number of Liberal seats—nervous Liberal members who were afraid of the electorate in their ridings. They might think that we'd be talking about the deficit and the debt. Of course, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the provincial debt is going from \$253 billion to \$273 billion this year alone, and the debt has doubled under this Liberal government over the last 10 years. The deficit is unacceptably high, notwithstanding the government's claims that they've actually reduced it somewhat with their accounting tricks.

They might think that we'd be talking about agriculture and small business, with of course this month of October being Small Business Month in the province of Ontario. We celebrate their achievements; we know and understand how important agriculture is. People would expect us to be talking about that.

People would expect us to be talking about infrastructure needs. Of course, as you know, Mr. Speaker, there are a significant number of infrastructure needs in all of our ridings in the province. I have a whole list of things that need provincial government partnership to support.

They might expect us to be talking about research and innovation, that important field of the government's responsibility, and I'm pleased that the Minister of Research and Innovation is in the House today. The fact is, research and innovation represents the future opportunities in our economy and in our health care system and in many sectors, and it should be a greater focus of the provincial government.

They might expect that we would be talking about how we're going to work together with the other orders of government to ensure that decisions are made in the public interest and that we're working together and not just pointing fingers.

However, we are talking about another important issue, which is Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act. I want to express my appreciation and congratulations, really, to our critic for the Ministry of the Environment, Michael

Harris, who is the member for Kitchener–Conestoga. I was privileged to represent the riding of Waterloo–Wellington from 1999 to 2007, and when redistribution created a new riding of Kitchener–Conestoga, much of my old riding went into that riding. I think Michael Harris, the member for Kitchener–Conestoga, has done an outstanding job representing the constituents that I was privileged to represent for those years. He has really gotten into this responsibility in the Legislature and jumped in with both feet and hit the ground running, to mix my metaphors. Certainly, he has done an outstanding job as minister—as critic to the Minister of the Environment, and possibly a future Minister of the Environment, if the Progressive Conservatives are privileged to form the government in the future.

Let's get to the bill. This Waste Reduction Act would repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002, yet it would continue every recycling program, agency and fee created under the old act. That bill, the Waste Diversion Act, was a bill that was passed by the Progressive Conservative government of Ernie Eves, I think, in 2002, and we've been living under it for the last 10 years. I wouldn't say that it was perfect; I wouldn't say that anything is perfect in government. Over time, these things need to be evaluated and reviewed. But certainly we don't see Bill 91 as the solution to the problems that are out there today.

We also know that Bill 91 would give the Minister of the Environment the power to designate new materials and classes of materials for recycling and service standards, which must be established by cabinet through regulation. We say that one would assume that these standards would refer to recycling targets and accessibility to collection sites.

We know that Bill 91 would give the government the opportunity to require, through regulation, that producers meet these yet-to-be-determined standards for designated materials. Under the bill, the producers would include manufacturers, importers and brand owners, as well as e-tailers, as they're called, which is mentioned only in the accompanying Waste Reduction Strategy. So, for example, companies such as Canadian Tire, Coca-Cola, Goodyear tires, Panasonic, Samsung, Target, Tim Hortons and Walmart would all be considered to be producers.

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We know that Bill 91, as it stands now, continues Waste Diversion Ontario and gives this unaccountable organization enforcement powers, a bigger multi-million-dollar budget and a new name, the Waste Reduction Authority. Similar to the College of Trades, this authority would have the power to set and collect fees or taxes to fund its operations, and we know that this regulatory agency would be headed up by a registrar, or what we call a "waste czar," whose job it would be to register producers in the authority's registry. The registrar would then appoint deputies to help seek out producers who would be forced to pay a tax to fund the operation of the authority. This tax, of course, would then be passed on to consumers as an eco tax. The registrar would then

assemble an army of inspectors—or waste cops, as our critic has called them—to fan out across the province, looking for violators to fine for not meeting its standards. The revenue generated from these fines would then be funneled back into the authority.

The authority would also be in charge of resolving disputes between municipalities, who would collect recyclable materials, and producers, who are financially responsible for recycling these materials. The strategy states: “The Waste Reduction Authority will need to acquire the human resources skills and expertise necessary to perform this important function.”

We also know that the authority is disconnected from the Legislature, and it is not subject to the freedom-of-information act and can only be reviewed by the Auditor General if the minister feels it’s necessary. We believe that’s a significant weakness in the bill, and it doesn’t provide the necessary accountability that should be built into it.

We also say that the Liberals claim that their bill holds individual producers responsible for recycling. These businesses may join an intermediary, which we call cartels, which would also be required to register with the authority. This cartel would then be required to follow the recycling and service standards established by the minister and would be fined if found in violation.

We know that right now under the Waste Diversion Act in the province of Ontario, municipalities and producers split the cost of the Blue Box Program about 50-50. Bill 91 creates a new framework that the government could use to increase the amount industry must pay for this recycling program; however, this transition would, again, be left to regulation. If the minister chooses to proceed, there are three ways to establish the amount the authority pays: municipalities and industry can strike an agreement; the authority can create a funding formula; or cabinet can set the amount. Obviously, this represents some concerns for industry, which could be strong-armed into paying more.

Our caucus has been clear on this bill. We say that the Waste Reduction Act is a Liberal shell game or, as I said earlier, a Liberal trick more so than a treat that shifts eco taxes from consumers’ receipts to price tags on store shelves. This bill not only fails to meet the Ontario PC Party’s demand to scrap eco taxes, but it also fails to eliminate the Liberals’ recycling cartels and the government’s unaccountable oversight agency Waste Diversion Ontario.

We have a better plan. We suggest that the Waste Reduction Act fails to meet the Ontario PC Party’s two biggest demands: that they scrap eco taxes and eliminate the useless bureaucracy. That’s why we can’t support this Bill 91. In November of last year, the Ontario PC Party presented a better way forward to protect our environment, to lower costs for businesses and to treat recyclable materials not as waste but as valuable resources that could be recovered and recycled into new products. The Ontario PC Party would scrap eco taxes, get rid of Liberal recycling cartels and return all oversight back to the

Ministry of the Environment where it truly and justly belongs. Under our plan, government would set measurable and achievable recycling targets, establish environmental standards and measure outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important debate about the environment, and there are a number of environmental issues that are of concern to my constituents in Wellington–Halton Hills. I have been meeting with residents of the town of Erin, and they are very concerned about unregulated fill being brought into their community and dumped on farmland. I have raised this issue on a number of occasions with the Minister of the Environment, and I know the member for Durham has expressed his concerns as well, as it affects his constituents.

Going back to February 13, 2012, I wrote to the Minister of the Environment asking that an inter-ministerial committee be established to establish a provincial policy for the effective regulation of the dumping of fill. I would suggest that all the relevant ministries should be involved: the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, Finance, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Natural Resources, Transportation and perhaps others. I know that the minister is aware of this issue because I have discussed it with him. He has responded to me in writing indicating that they have a guide for best management practices for soil management, and they look to municipalities to establish proper bylaws, but at the same time, we believe that these best practice guidelines do not have the force of law, and greater steps need to be taken on this issue to ensure that the fill that is going into our communities is safe and that the groundwater is not going to be polluted and property values are going to be respected.

I also would suggest that there’s a big environmental problem in the community of Morriston, south of Guelph, an air pollution issue, because of traffic jams resulting from the bottleneck on Highway 6. The Morriston bypass project that I have put forward as a private members’ resolution, which is the first resolution on the order paper today—

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It was rather interesting listening to the members. You can really see the Conservatives’ train of thought that if we trust the industry and we give them standards, somehow they will comply.

How I wish they were right. How I wish that over the 20 years where we have set standards, where we have told the industry, where the entire planet has been shouting out that we want the three Rs and we’re not happy with what’s happening—the industry has not lived up to their end of the bargain.

Why is the government setting up new laws? It’s because when we left it up to the industry to do their corporate responsibility as a corporate citizen and participate in the recycling, reducing and reusing, they failed us. We wouldn’t be here today debating a new bill if the industry had stepped up to the plate and said, “We understand the environmental damage that some of those products are

doing. We're going to be a good corporate citizen and we're going to do what's best for the environment, for the people, for our air, for our water, for our ground." But for the last 20 years that the industry has spoken those words, they have not delivered.

So we stand here today debating Bill 91, which is far from perfect, as far as the NDP is concerned. I'm way more interested in zero waste than I'm interested in debating Bill 91. But we are here today because, for the last 20 years, the industry has not been a good corporate citizen when it came to recycling the material that they use, the material that they overproduce.

Am I happy with the turn of affairs? Absolutely not. Do I think that I want to trust the industry for another 20 years? Absolutely not.

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

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I have a lot of respect for the member for Wellington–Halton Hills, a lot of respect, so I couldn't believe that he was following the script that was written, from the Conservatives.

Like my colleague the member from Nickel Belt, we have been waiting for the industry to be more responsible. We have been waiting for them.

Years ago, when I was going to buy new tires, I bought new tires and I had to pay extra because of the disposal of my old ones, not knowing that I was paying for my old ones to go into the garbage—le site d'enfouissement.

When you trust the industry to monitor themselves, it's not working. That's why, on this side of the House—and I'm also glad that the third party is in line with us. The bill may not be perfect. Let's move it to committee and improve it.

I applaud the comments from the member from Essex. Yes, what do we want to leave behind to our children? You know who are the best ones to make the people from my generation more conscious about the environment? The kids; the kids are telling you, "Don't put that in the garbage. Let's recycle it."

We need to take advice but not from that party, because they don't want any rules. "Let it go in the garbage, and you, the consumer, you're not paying anything"—that's not true, because you're paying through your taxes. You're paying three, four, five times what you should pay if there are rules and regulations around recycling.

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

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It was a real pleasure to listen to the member from Wellington–Halton Hills. I know just how effectively he has represented his riding for over 20 years. He's been here, and he's seen what the NDP did and what the Liberals have done. In fact, I can't believe it: The fees that they brought in on agricultural tires were absolutely disgusting, a 200%, 300% increase.

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Here's what this bill does, and this is what the people of Ontario should know. First of all, you heard, from both

of the people who talked from the NDP and the Liberals, that they don't trust business, even small business—the father-knows-best attitude that is so pathetic, technically. They've had 10 years. Ask yourself: Is it any better in Ontario? Just ask yourself.

The waste, just in the gas plants alone: a billion dollars that could have gone to children's mental health and other programs.

They have no respect for the taxpayer. They have no respect for business. It's tragic, quite honestly.

There's a word that's missing in their vocabulary, which I think the member from Wellington–Halton Hills said in his thing—it's the "recover" component. The industry has put forward ideas. I spoke this morning to Shelagh Kerr, one of the people with Electronics Product Stewardship Canada, who's here listening, and other people from the industry side who are listening. They want the authority to do the right thing, not to be taxed.

Here's what this government is doing. They're hiding the eco fee in the price. You'll no longer know how much revenue you're collecting from those products for the end management of the product packaging etc., and it's just a tax grab. That's all it really is, a tax grab by this government.

It's just pathetic, what they've done to Ontario. We're paying more taxes and we have less health care. We're paying more for everything, and we have less of energy and everything else in Ontario. It's sad, and this member—

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd just like to say that I've been involved in heavy industry most of my life, and the by-products of heavy industry are very damaging to the environment, and can be—in recent years, we've moved in a direction where we're trying to recycle some of these things, but my big thing here is innovation and research. We have to come up with better and better things to get rid of this waste.

The bottom line is, we could start right here in downtown Toronto. The building I live in and rent doesn't recycle. Everything from all those floors goes into one bin, and this is all over Toronto's downtown. If you don't start in your own backyard to clean up the mess, where are you going to start? I thought that Toronto would be miles ahead of the rest of the province. Hamilton does a better job at recycling than downtown Toronto does. It's bad. They've got to do something about it.

If you look at the expansion into the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors of our province, the recycling rate is only at 13%. I would like to see this up to a minimum of 50%, between 50% and 75%, in the next five years, in recycling. Why? Because we're leaving a big mess for our grandchildren and their children. It's going to get to a point—we all know, with global warming and the things that are going on on our planet, that if we don't do something heavy-duty with the help of municipalities, with provincial, federal and all of North America, our lovely planet is in big trouble.

I want to see things done faster. I want innovation to move ahead. We need to save this planet for our future generations.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Wellington–Halton Hills, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm glad to respond to the member for Nickel Belt, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the member for Durham and the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. I thank the New Democrats for their comments and I think that, obviously, they are sincerely put and they believe in their ideas and their principles. But as the member for Durham indicated, it seems that the Liberals and the New Democrats, together, do not trust business.

Last night I had the opportunity to attend the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Awards, where we celebrated the business community. Again, this is the month of October, this is Small Business Month, and I think that we can look to our business community for solutions. The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke suggested to me just a minute ago, of course, and reminded us that business responds to consumers, and that is absolutely true. The late management theorist Peter Drucker said that business exists to serve a customer, and the fact is that businesses will respond to customer demands in a competitive market economy. That's a good thing. I think we have to look at it from that perspective as well.

The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services: I want to say that I certainly appreciate the work that she does here, and I want to thank her as well for her work to assist us in achieving the community safety zone for the community of Morriston, south of Guelph, a few weeks ago. We unveiled the signs. Of course, that's part of the solution to the environmental problem that exists in Morriston because of air quality, the challenges we're facing because of the traffic jams, where we need to build the Morriston bypass, the Highway 6 bypass, around the community of Morriston. I continue to raise that issue and ask the government to put it on its five-year plan for future construction. It is, as I said earlier, the number one resolution on the order paper right now, and I would continue to call attention to it and urge the provincial—

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I support it.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The member for Cambridge has written and expressed support for the Morriston bypass. I thank him for that as well, because I think it's an important issue for the entire part of the province. The bottleneck happens to be in my riding, but it affects the whole province in terms of the movement of goods and traffic.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** Happy Halloween, everybody.

Well, we are here today debating Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, and frankly, I wish we were not. I wish that during the last 20 years, Ontario had not fallen to the bottom of the heap when it comes to waste reduction. I

wish that during the last 20 years, when people clued in that the environment had a direct effect on our health, on the survival of our species, that things would have been done.

But all is not bleak. Many things were done. Wonderful programs were put into place, the blue box programs and the grey box, where individual households started to sort out their garbage and started to put everything that could be composted into a green box, and everything that could be recycled. Then the Blue Box Program expanded and we could put more and more of our waste in there. And it worked: Families really participate well in this, no matter where you live in Ontario. If the program is available, they do.

But there are some outliers in there that are not holding up their end of the bargain, and that is why we are standing here today. It's called the ICI. I didn't know what it stands for. It stands for "institutional, commercial and industrial sector."

Institutional: Think long-term-care homes, hospitals, prisons, any institutions. Commercial is pretty easy too: anything from the pizza shop to the tailor shop. Industrial: Whether you think about a steel town or you think about a mining town anywhere, they produce a lot of waste. All of them together, over the 20 years where we have set targets after targets of what we wanted them to reduce, reuse and recycle—waste reduction—they have failed us. Altogether, this sector, after years and years and years of telling us that they were getting better and they were on it and they understand the importance of recycling and reducing, they're at 13%.

The goal back in 2004, almost 10 years ago now, was that we were to be at 60% in 2008. The industry and the commercial and all of this, they promised, "Yes, we can do this. We don't need legislation. We are good corporate citizens, and we will deliver on our own." The target was 60%; the target was 2008. We're at 2013, and we are at 13%. Would you call that a success? I don't. I don't.

I come from a heavy industrial environment. I come from a mining town where what comes out of those processing plants, whether you talk about the tailings or whether you talk about the smelter or about the mills, has a profound, unhealthy effect on humans, on animals, on our environment and all of this. There are environmental guidelines specifically for the mines.

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When it comes to waste, we trust the industry will do the right thing because it is the right thing to do. Man, I wish they would have delivered. I wish that in 2004, when we set that target of 60% by 2008, they would have done what we all know was the right thing to do. But we are in 2013 and we have missed deadline after deadline. We now have a record of failures, nothing to be proud of, nothing to be bragging about, and here we are saying that we will now move forward with the full cost of goods.

I come from northern Ontario. When I buy a product, I pay the same price that you guys pay down south, although it may be down in Essex someplace or in the States or whatever. When they advertise a sale price of a

television for \$399 at Future Shop, I pay the same price in Sudbury that you guys do down south. Does anybody think that the transportation cost to bring stuff to Thunder Bay—the member from Thunder Bay is here—or to bring stuff to Sudbury is not taken into account in the price of the goods? Some people will say, “Oh, this is an extra tax on buying a television.” No, it is not. It is part of doing business. If you’re going to bring your products to market in northern Ontario, you take into account the fact that you’re going to have to pay to transport those goods to wherever you want to sell them.

Industry has adapted to this. We are asking them to take the next step. That’s all we are asking them to do. We are not putting a new tax on; we are asking them to be responsible for what they do. So not only do they pay for the goods, to assemble whatever it is that they want to sell, pay for the labour for the good people who put it together, pay for the transportation costs, pay for the packaging, for getting it safely to market; we also want them to pay for the disposal of whatever it is they put together. To me, it couldn’t be further away from a tax. It is the price of doing business.

Now that we know what waste costs us, now that we know that there is a real human and financial cost associated with waste, when you do a product, not only will you pay for it to be assembled and the staff to put it together and the packaging to be able to move it and the gas to be able to ship it, you will also pay into the price of your goods to have it disposed of. This is the price of doing business.

Will it drive innovation? Absolutely, because now that they will have to take into account the price of disposing of the goods before they actually sell them to me and you and everybody else, I’m sure some very intelligent people will put their bright minds together and start to look at ways to decrease those costs so that they can bring their products to market at a cheaper cost so that they sell more—like they did with transportation, like they did with automation, like they did with everything else.

I can tell you—and the Minister of Northern Development and Mines is here in the House this morning—that when a new mine is put together, they have to pay ahead of time for what it will cost to clean up the site. For years and years and years, they didn’t have to do this. A new mine would open up, and then the good people of Nickel Belt were stuck with billions of dollars of cleanup of mining companies that merged, that failed, that disappeared, but the mess stayed behind.

We learned from that. Now, if you are going to open up a new mine in Ontario, you are going to pay upfront and tell us exactly how you are going to go about cleaning it up and—

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** A mine closure plan.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The mine closure plan. Thank you, Minister.

So the mining is a very viable industrial part of our economy, and they take full cost of their production. Not only do they pay for the exploration, but they pay for the closure plan ahead of time, so that the good people who

live there are not stuck with a mess when they leave the place.

The same principle will now apply to other parts of our economy. That’s all we’re doing. We’re saying that when you bring your products to market, you will have to take into account the value of the goods to put it together—the value of the staff, the automation, the packaging, the transportation—and of disposal. That’s all.

When people want to label this as a tax—I realize this is a dividing issue, and in here we like to fight and divide, but that’s not what this bill is about. This bill is about making sure that the full cost of goods is included in the price you pay, so that the price to dispose of them—it’s like what mining companies do when they open a mine. They pay the price to dispose, and to rehabilitate the site to its original state. It’s included in the price. That’s all that this bill is about to do. Could it be doing more? Yes. I want to talk about zero waste. We’re not talking about that at all. We’re talking about bringing goods to market—that are responsible for their full cost. That’s all.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** This House now stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** It’s my pleasure to welcome the members of the 1st Ingersoll Girl Guides to Queen’s Park today. They are Ara Sackrider, Kaytlin Matthews, Julia Widmer-Bailey, Nikole Daltrey, Kelly Byers, Nancy Matthews, Stacey Hanlon and Amy Boddy.

Last year, while on a group trip, their cabin was filled with carbon monoxide. Luckily, they inspected the detector beforehand and no one was hurt. They are now here to support my private member’s bill this afternoon that we will be debating. I commend them for being prepared and welcome them to Queen’s Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That was a nice introduction.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I would like to introduce two of my constituent assistants. They are Jessie Huang and Roderick Tom-Ying. They are part of a very hard-working team that proudly serves the people of Markham–Unionville. Jessie and Roderick, welcome to Queen’s Park.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I know this guest was introduced earlier by my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga, but it’s my pleasure to introduce Shelagh Kerr, visiting the Legislature today. Shelagh is from the Coalition for Effective Waste Reduction in Ontario.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I’d like to welcome the people from Egg Farmers of Ontario here this morning. We had a very great breakfast courtesy of them. I’d especially like to welcome two very close friends, Donna Lange and Bill Mitchell.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I’d also like to welcome the egg producers of Ontario this morning, particularly Scott Craw-

ford, Harry Pelissero and Vance Drain from my riding of Peterborough. All members had a very egg-citing time this morning.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'd like to welcome my very dear friend Derrick Tuyl and his beautiful daughter Karlee, who is here today with the John Knox Christian School. She made me this beautiful bracelet this morning. We'd like to welcome all of them today.

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** On behalf of Etobicoke North, I would like to acknowledge Mr. and Mrs. Patel and brother Prey Patel, and Mr. and Mrs. Hull. Mr. and Mrs. Hull are teachers of Anal Patel, one of the legislative pages. Welcome to the Legislature and enjoy this morning's session.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's a pleasure to welcome to the House today Brian Miller. He's the provincial director for the Egg Farmers of Ontario. He does a wonderful job representing my riding of Huron-Bruce.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** We're joined in the west public gallery and the east public gallery by 81 students from the John Knox Christian School in Oakville. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Scott Helps from the Egg Farmers of Ontario, a district director from the county of Lambton representing Sarnia-Lambton.

**M. Taras Natyshak:** Ça me donne plaisir d'introduire à l'Assemblée aujourd'hui M. Gérard Malo, qui est l'ex-directeur national des affaires francophones de la Guilde canadienne des médias et aussi un journaliste de la CBC à la retraite. Bienvenue, monsieur Malo.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I too want to thank the Egg Farmers of Ontario for the lovely breakfast we got this morning, and to introduce Dan Veldman, who represents the great riding of Oxford.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

With us, in the Speaker's gallery today, we have a delegation from the federal Parliament of the Republic of Kenya, led by Senator David Musila. They are accompanied today by Her Excellency Ms. Lily Sambu, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kenya to Canada. Welcome to our delegation.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I guess, Speaker, I'll ask a question to the House leader today. I will say as I lead off, I want to talk about the fall economic statement next Thursday. I will say to the House leader that I do feel let down; I guess it's partially my own fault. When I met with Premier Wynne over a number of bills, including Bill 74, she said she'd support it. She did. Then she abstained. Then she voted against it, or fled. I guess the next time I want to cut a deal with the Liberals, I'll just go directly to

Pat Dillon and find out how you're going to vote. That's what I'm going to do.

As you are House leader, you'll be deciding what legislation comes forward. You'll consult with Pat Dillon and the Working Families Coalition, I guess.

But let me ask you this: In the fall economic statement, you've been given a heads-up. Will we actually see some bold ideas to get spending under control, or are we going to see a lot more Liberal fluff?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the interest the third party now has and what it is that Ontario will be doing going forward for the long term.

Our fall economic statement is going to talk about how we're going to continue to invest in our people, what we're going to do to continue investing strategically in infrastructure so that we build and create more jobs—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm hearing the noises from both sides while a question is being put and an answer is being put. It stops.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker—and of course, how we're going to continue to maintain a very dynamic business climate to encourage that investment. This is what's important for Ontario—not only for Ontario but for Canada. We're doing a number of initiatives in this fall economic statement which I'll address in the supplementary.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I don't know how to respond to that. Respectfully, Finance Minister, every day I'm asking you questions or the Premier about jobs and the economy, getting spending under control. I've asked probably a dozen questions about the economic statement. I've not had answers yet, so let me give it a try, to you.

As I pointed out yesterday, we passed the four-year anniversary of Ontario's credit downgrade. Next week we'll hit the fifth anniversary of Ontario becoming a have-not province, all under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals. We have 300,000 lost manufacturing jobs and almost a million people who want to work who can't in the province of Ontario. Quite frankly, we helped clear the decks so you could put a plan forward, but all I've seen since that time is legislation on restaurant menus and 24/7 dispatch for pets, when you can't even run Ornge air ambulance for human beings in the province of Ontario.

Minister, with all due respect, enough of the fluff, enough of the clutter: Are we actually going to see a plan come Thursday to put Ontario back—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I do not get quiet for somebody to poke—carry on.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, smiled and smirked at the hard work that Ontarians have been

doing over these last many years, including the work that we've done on this side of the House without their support. That includes reducing spending on a per capita basis on this side. As a government, we are the lowest-cost government anywhere in Canada as a result of the work that we've done. For four years in a row, we've controlled our spending at less than 1% growth year over year. Last year, as audited by the Auditor General, our spending actually went down, and that's the first time in over a decade.

But apart from all the control measures that we've put in place, it's the stimulus and the strategic investments that we're making to support our economy that has mattered, and that has created more than 475,000 net new jobs since the recession.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Well, I guess Thursday will be a watershed moment. We'll see if the finance minister acts like a finance minister or just a parrot for tired, old talking points.

1040

I mean, truth be told, Finance Minister, you can torture statistics and get them to confess to anything, but the reality is there are a lot of people who are out of work in the province of Ontario. There are a lot of people who are losing hope in this great province, and they're losing hope in you because, quite frankly, they don't trust a word you say anymore.

What's frustrating too is why the third party, the NDP, see their role to be the defense attorneys for the Liberals, as apologists for the Liberals, whenever you have to get off the hook. I know why you put the fluff forward: because they'll support it. They'll keep this plan going. They'll bail you out no matter what you do.

I'm saying enough is enough—enough with your fluff, enough with the baubles and trinkets. I want to see a real plan. I want to see Ontario working again, and if you're not going to do it, we're prepared to do the job for you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs will come to order.

Answer, please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Talk about fluff. The opposition has no plan, and the only plan that they have put forward is one of destruction, and it's going to harm our economic recovery.

The members opposite should stand in this House and support our employer health tax program to help small business. It's being stalled by that side of the House. We need to pass that now to support those small businesses. Sixty thousand more small businesses would be exempt from paying that tax. They're holding it up. They should be supporting businesses and supporting all those families that are working hard.

We're taking leadership. We're supporting them by way of pension reform. We're introducing new forms of raising capital so when we renew our capital and our debt, we're doing it at better rates. They're stalling us. They should stand up for Ontario.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Today, the committee investigating the gas plants scandal was cancelled. The Premier is refusing to be called as a witness to respond to the Auditor General's report, and as consistently reported by the CP this week, the Premier is holding off-site press conferences during question period so journalists can't cover both. That pattern of behaviour reflects something very seriously wrong with her leadership. It shows she is hiding something. She would make Rose Mary Woods, President Nixon's secretary, blush by her behaviour.

Will the minister explain why the Premier continues to put obstacles in our place and why she told the House and committee that the cancellation would only be \$33 million to \$40 million when she knew over two years ago it would be well over \$700 million?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Although I'd like the opportunity to answer that question, I'm referring it to the government House leader.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The convention is simply to move it to another minister and that's all.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the member is simply wrong. The Premier has not refused to appear in front of committee. She has indicated to the committee that her office will work with the committee to find a date in the coming weeks. I would remind that when the Leader of the Opposition was called in front of the committee, it took three tries before he went in front of the committee.

I would also point out, in terms of—if they want to talk about timing, why will they not allow their candidates to come before the committee to talk about the spending analysis that was done by the Conservative Party before it made the very aggressive promise in the last election to cancel these plants, to talk about the type of work that was done by the Conservative Party and to bring their costing to the table? We've called them over and over again, and they are being blocked by the opposition.

Will the member commit today that she will allow the candidates to come forward?

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Yes, I'm going to go back to the energy minister. I do notice he has a pattern of only answering the last question I have so I have no opportunity for rebuttal. I'd really like to go back to him. You have been withholding information. Your Premier is hiding from questioning, and you are denying debates in this House. They are not tactics of an honest broker, Minister. The Premier would not get away with not telling the truth if it were not for the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not acceptable. Withdraw.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Withdrawn, Speaker, but we wouldn't be in this position—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Simply a quick withdrawal and then you proceed.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Withdrawn, Speaker.

So let's review the facts. In the last two weeks, the Deputy Minister of Energy and the head of the OPA told us in the justice committee that the government knew the cost of the Oakville plant exceeded the \$40 million the Premier cited repeatedly for over two years. She continued to use that number in the House, and now she refuses to come before us under oath.

Will the minister tell me what the Premier is hiding and what she is afraid of?

**Hon. John Milloy:** The member is simply wrong. The Premier has indicated that she will go before the committee again, and they were working out a schedule, just as the Leader of the Opposition did with the three tries it took for us to get him before it.

I think we understand where the member is coming from. I'd like to quote from a press scrum that she had just this morning. A reporter said to the member who's asking the question, "You've got an AG report on both plants. You've had former leader McGuinty twice. We've had Premier Wynne there once. We've had Colin Andersen at least twice, maybe three times. I mean, at what point are you going to wrap this up?" And the member who just asked the question said, "Well, when we get the answers that we want."

We have been forthcoming. We have brought forward tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of documents. The Premier has stood in the House day after day and answered the questions. I can't help it if the truth doesn't fit her reality, Mr. Speaker. The simple fact is that we have co-operated—

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Maybe the third time is the charm.

Back to the energy minister, because I won't have an opportunity for a rebuttal: Let's be perfectly clear. The reality of the facts is this: Your government wasted \$1 billion. Your leader told us it only cost \$40 million. And then yesterday you had the gall to stand in this House and deny a dying woman the cancer drug she needs because you are too busy wasting money, and that is not what the priorities of your government are. If this government's priorities weren't all wrong before, I don't know, Speaker, how much more they could go wrong.

No wonder the Premier wants the press gallery off-site during question period. No wonder—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. She has a right to put the question.

Continue, please.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** No wonder the Premier wants the press gallery off-site during question period. No wonder

she won't appear under oath. No wonder she cancelled the gas plants investigation for today.

Will the government House leader or the Minister of Energy stand in this place and commit to the people of Ontario that the Premier will testify—

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** April 16: Four opposition candidates were invited to testify at the justice committee, including PC candidates Geoff Janoscik and Zoran Churchin; they all declined.

April 30: On the same day the Premier of this province appeared, the Leader of the Opposition is asked to testify; he declines. Backup witnesses Janoscik and Churchin also decline. We then invite PC candidate Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan; she accepts and is scheduled to testify, then mysteriously calls back a few hours later to cancel.

May 2: Janoscik, Churchin and DeMonte-Whelan are called to testify. Janoscik tells the Clerk to stop calling, and the other two do not respond.

May 7: The Leader of the Opposition is once again invited to testify; he declines, even though he had written a letter to the committee saying that he would try to work for that date. Since he refuses, the Liberals call on Janoscik, Churchin, DeMonte-Whelan and the member from Halton, but none of them agree to testify—

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

**Hon. John Milloy:** May 23: Janoscik, Churchin and DeMonte-Whelan all refuse to testify—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. That's it.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll take care of that part of it.

New question.

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Ontario households and businesses are paying the highest electricity prices in Canada, and they're tired of being kept in the dark about electricity decisions. We've been pushing to get some answers, but despite promises of transparency and openness by this government, we're not getting them.

I'll start with a simple question. The Premier was not available to take questions at today's hearings on the cancelled gas plants. When will she be available, or is she refusing to attend?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We've been very clear that the Premier, who has appeared in front of the committee before and who was asked over 200 questions in this House, has indicated her willingness to appear in front of the



committee, and her office is working with the Clerk of the Committee to find a date.

Mr. Speaker, again, when we invited the Leader of the Opposition to appear in front of the committee, it took several tries before he would agree. We've asked the member from Halton to appear in front of the committee; he has refused. We have asked Conservative candidates to appear in front of the committee; they have refused.

**1050**

Mr. Speaker, we have been forthcoming. It was this Premier who asked the Auditor General to look into the Oakville situation. It was this Premier who asked me, as House leader, to work to set up the committee, with a broad scope and broad powers, to undertake the examination that's going on. As I think I've mentioned already, she has answered over 200 questions in this Legislature, and she will be forthcoming in front of the committee in the near future when a date can be arranged with her office.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Well, that wasn't the straightest answer I've ever gotten.

People hear the government talk about transparency and openness, but they see the Premier scrambling to avoid testifying in her role in the cancellation of private power plants and refusing to let the auditor look at the \$180 million or more that they spent on nuclear plans that aren't going ahead.

People paying the bills think they deserve some answers, so I'll try an easier question. The minister insists that he's moving ahead with plans to refurbish nuclear plants. In fact, the government has already signed contracts worth nearly a billion dollars. Has the minister done any cost-benefit analysis, and, if so, will he table that analysis today?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Minister of Energy, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** There were several issues raised in the question, and I'm going to answer the question by asking a question, Mr. Speaker.

The New Democratic Party, both on transit and on energy issues, have no program; they have no policy. They stand up and ask questions. They are not accountable to their own base. They are not accountable to the public in Ontario. They have no answers for energy; they have no answers for transit.

I would like the critic who is responsible for creating alternative policy to the government's to come forward with a platform on energy, transit and transportation that makes sense.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** So I take that as a no.

Again to the Minister of Energy: Households and businesses are paying the highest electricity bills in the country, and they see a Premier refusing to answer basic questions about a billion dollars handed to private power interests for gas plants that won't be built, a government that refuses to answer questions about hundreds of millions spent on abandoned nuclear plans and a minister

who is signing nuclear power contracts worth hundreds of millions but can't produce a business case to justify the expenditure. Does that minister think that's acceptable to people who are paying more and more?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the questions have been asked on a number of occasions, and they have been answered, and I'll answer them again.

Expenditures to date on nuclear refurbishment are for definition phase activities such as the establishment of project organization, scope finalization, engineering, planning, procurement and contracting. In fact, the project itself is going to create 25,000 jobs for the province of Ontario, particularly here in the GTA.

We also have an independent oversight adviser who will provide regular updates on the progress of the Darlington nuclear refurbishing project to the Ministry of Energy.

We are moving forward responsibly. We are moving forward on the basis of not building new nuclear in the foreseeable future, a decision which that critic has agreed with. He said yes to no new nuclear.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Somebody should tell him not to point all the time. It's not polite.

My question is to the Acting Premier. People are concerned about the cost of everyday life. Families across Ontario haven't seen a real raise in years. The cost of everyday life is going up, and instead of making life more affordable, your government is letting people fall further and further behind.

New Democrats and Andrea Horwath have worked hard to deliver results that will make life affordable so that people can stop treading water and start getting ahead, like people getting a 15% reduction in their auto insurance rates. Can the Acting Premier tell us why people's auto insurance rates are still going up?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Well, I'm pleased to say that as a result of the hard work that this side of the House has been doing, we've been fighting to reduce the cost of the claims, trying to ensure that the degree of fraud and other circumstances that are creating those premiums to have gone up over these past number of years—that we start to get them going down.

As a result of the legislation that we've passed with your support—and I appreciate the work of the third party in these endeavours. But I am pleased that rates have, in fact, on average, been reduced to a point. We are anticipating greater reductions in the next release, in January, as a result of the work that we've done to give FSCO more control, more teeth and more oversight. As a result of those initiatives, we are confident that that work will enable us to have better premiums overall.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, Minister, I'm going to quote my good friend the member from Trinity-Spadina and say that drivers are being whacked. We're seeing

people's insurance rates go up. We have an email from William, who says his auto insurance in Durham has gone up 16%. Lena from Hamilton writes in and says her auto insurance has gone up 11%. So as people are getting squeezed, they're falling further and further behind.

Many of these same drivers who are seeing their auto insurance going up are getting hit when it comes to the Drive Clean program, having to pay twice for tests that they've actually passed, but the machinery says that they failed.

So I ask you: Can the Acting Premier explain to me, and to those people, why people are falling further behind under this government's watch?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I'll tell the public, who may be watching, to call this hotline if they wish to issue a complaint to FSCO. It's 1-855-584-7669. Now, you can call that number or you can call the Ombudsman to create or at least explain some of the difficulties that may be arising.

But I can say this: Rates, for the third quarter in a row, have been dropping on average. I can cite issues where people have actually received more than 15% reductions on their renewals as a result of making those calls and shopping around. So I encourage people to do just that.

We are fighting fraud. We're looking at what happens with regard to the tow trucks, the collision repairs, the health clinics. We're providing greater rates for safe drivers. We're implementing new dispute resolution reviews. All of these, and the watchdog that's going to be implemented, will enable us to champion and fight on behalf of our consumers.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To the Acting Premier: It's clear that people back home are feeling squeezed, and what's clearer is that it would appear this government is dragging its feet when it comes to dealing with auto insurance rates going down, or dealing with the Drive Clean program.

People under Drive Clean are having to pay more than they should in order to make sure that they meet the standards. Why? Because the program doesn't work effectively, as they are failing, even though their cars are safe because of the equipment.

So I say to you, whether it's big costs like auto insurance or lots of smaller costs like multiple Drive Clean tests for cars that aren't big polluters, people are feeling like they're falling further and further behind.

Why is the Premier, and the Acting Premier, letting people fall further and further behind in this province?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, this side of the House has been fighting hard to find jobs and create stimulus so those people could be working, and that's the issue. There is a lot of concern still as a result of our global recession that continues to exist. But here in Ontario, our fundamentals are strong. People are working, and there is greater confidence in where we're going.

We're fighting auto insurance rates. We're doing everything necessary to protect individuals with their

pensions, Mr. Speaker. No one on that side of the House is even looking forward. We're doing that here. We'll continue to fight for the people of Ontario.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. Speaker, following the Premier's announcement last week of a new era of transparency for her government, I asked her to table the Metrolinx-Bombardier \$770-million contract. That's a contract that was sole-sourced, is costing taxpayers millions in penalties today and is another indication of the mismanagement of her government.

I received a letter this morning from Metrolinx. Not surprisingly, this letter confirms that the government will be dealing with this document in the same way that it dealt with the gas plant documents. From Mr. Bruce McCuaig: We're working on it, but "parts of the contract may be redacted." Why is that not surprising?

I'm going to ask the minister to ensure that we get that contract into our hands unredacted so that we know what the—

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**1100**

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm getting to feel a great, great amount of empathy for the member from Newmarket-Aurora. He just seems to have trouble getting any position which the facts will support.

First he was proffering that there was a \$70-million penalty. Bombardier told him it wasn't true; Metrolinx told him it wasn't true. I told him it wasn't true, but he keeps on repeating it. So let me say again, it's not true. The contract is proceeding.

This is a party that seems to have something against not just public transit, but Bombardier. They want to cancel all the projects, freeze GO, cancel LRT. That would destroy Bombardier. I have never seen a Conservative Party attack business the way they did. Bombardier provides excellent service and gives us great value.

The Premier and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities were out doing a partnership with Centennial College to increase job creation.

Bombardier is one of our biggest employers and fastest-growing companies—

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

Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I have no problem with Bombardier. It's the government that's bungling millions and millions of dollars through contracts that are, quite frankly, a bungling on his part. Why doesn't the minister know what is in this contract?

The fact of the matter is I now have a letter from Metrolinx that insists that the contract I referred to was,

in fact, competitively bid. That is patently false; it is not true. This was an option, under a contract that was signed a year before, under which that contract gave Metrolinx an option. That option should never have been taken out; that option should have been publicly bid and saved the taxpayers some \$200 million.

I want to say to the minister now: Get your facts straight. Bring that contract forward. Let us all see what the facts are and then we'll draw the conclusion about who—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question?

**Mr. Frank Klees:**—wrong.

Will the minister agree to get that contract into this House, unredacted, so we know what they did?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Speaker, if business has friends like that, they don't need enemies. This is a party that wants to cancel almost every major rapid transit project in Ontario. That would, first of all, cost billions of dollars to that company. It would cost billions of dollars in cancelled projects. This is the party that thinks they can buy gas plants for free at garage sales; I guess that's where they want to buy their transit projects. They don't seem to understand that infrastructure costs money. They don't have any plan to pay for it, but they want to cancel it.

The contracts negotiated between Metrolinx and Bombardier are quite transparent.

As the city council in Kitchener–Waterloo said to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga, “You're dead wrong.” I have to agree with the council in Kitchener.

My dear friend from Newmarket–Aurora is just simply wrong.

#### ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Last week, you announced a land use planning review that specifically excludes OMB operations. This is not what communities were asking for, and this is not what you promised two months ago. It's another bait and switch, just like Bill 26 in 2004, which was supposed to make OMB decisions consistent with provincial policy, and just like Bill 51 in 2007, which the government said would “make municipal councils the decision-makers with respect to planning.”

Despite these bills, the OMB remains out of control. Earlier this year, the OMB ignored Waterloo region's official plan and defied the province's own Places to Grow Act. When will the government finally reform the undemocratic and out-of-control OMB?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I appreciate the member's passion on this issue. We have spoken about this many times and I think that, certainly at the province, this government believes that we have a strong and modern land use planning system, and we believe we have a well-

established development charges system, which is what I announced just last week.

We heard from many municipalities, community groups and developers who want more accountability and more transparency in the system. We believe it's time for a refresh, and certainly we believe that good land use planning is important to ensuring the long-term prosperity of our province for our environmental health and the social well-being of Ontarians.

When I spoke about the land use planning announcement last week, we talked about including the OMB and development charges to better meet the need of 424 municipalities across Ontario. We need to hear the views of everyone. Certainly, we have conflicting views. I look forward to any input that the member makes going forward, and I look forward to the supplementary.

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

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** In 2011, the Minister of Labour promised the people of Ottawa that, if re-elected, he would reform the OMB. He was re-elected, and nothing happened.

In 2012, the Minister of Finance promised the people of Mississauga that he would rein in the OMB—in months, not years, he said. It's been over one year, and nothing has happened. Instead, we have a bait-and-switch government review that focuses more on the needs of developers than the needs of communities and municipal planners.

When will the government stop making false promises and admit it has no intention of ever reforming the OMB?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I don't share the negative perception that the member has. Certainly, I understand that everybody has concerns, and the member from Ottawa and many of my colleagues on both sides of the House have expressed concerns about how we can improve the system.

We have a very short-scoped period of time. Before the end of the year, I'm hoping to hear from developers, from municipalities and from community groups. I think we certainly want a more accountable and transparent system, and we believe it's important to find a balance with all of land use planning across Ontario. Everyone has a stake in making planning work across Ontario, whether it's community groups, whether it's municipalities. From the building and development industry I've heard that they want to put in changes that will implement predictability, transparency and cost-effectiveness for communities and for businesses across Ontario because these moves will attract and retain business in Ontario.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is to the job-creating Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member must use the title or the riding only.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I agree. The member should withdraw.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Our government's economic plan—investing in people, investing in infrastructure and creating the right business climate for job creation in Ontario—is something we are prioritizing. We can't do this unless we help the small businesses and the people they employ across the province.

On Wednesday, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, a body which represents over 42,000 small businesses across Ontario, released an open letter. It was addressed to the minister and also to the Minister of Finance, requesting that this House pass Bill 105, the Supporting Small Businesses Act, and proceed with the next stage of the legislative process. Could the minister please inform the House, along with the members of the CFIB, why this bill has not moved to committee yet, even though it has been debated for 15½ long hours?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** It's a great question and, yes, small businesses are an integral part of Ontario's economy. Bill 105 will help to support small business in Ontario and ensure that 60,000 small businesses will pay less employer health tax—in fact, it'll eliminate that tax altogether for 12,000 small businesses in this province. This legislation is exactly what we need to help drive the economy forward, help small businesses and support the creation of new jobs.

Now, the PCs have stood up in this House time and time again to ask us where our plan is. This is part of our plan. But members of the official opposition continue to denigrate the hard work that Ontarians do for this province and do for Ontario's economy. Some 42,000 small businesses have voiced their opinions, and we're trying to do something good here for the small businesses of Ontario.

The fact that this bill has not moved forward to committee despite over 15 hours of debate is disappointing, to say the least. I urge all members of this House to work together, heed the calls from CFIB, do the right thing and push this bill—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Stop the clock, please.

Weaving in and out of government policy is one thing, but I want to remind both the questioner and the answerer to stay on government policy, please.

Carry on.

1110

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for the update. It's disappointing to hear that we're unable to find some common ground on doing the right thing for the economy, and also the right thing for our small businesses in Ontario.

We received another letter on this issue from Tanner Financial, a small business located here in Ontario. It stated, "Our firm provides benefits to financial planning to small and medium-sized businesses in Ontario. We

have found that many of our smaller clients are still in a stage of growth where any tax is prohibitive to their success." It goes on to say, "Increasing the exemption by any amount will have a positive impact."

The letter goes on to urge this House to work together and pass this important bill.

Can the minister please inform the members of this House how it might implicate small businesses like Tanner Financial, and the small business owners who run them, if this House cannot work together to pass this important bill?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you, again, to the member for his question. There are roughly—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Prince Edward–Hastings will come to order.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** There are roughly 400,000 small and medium-sized firms in Ontario. This figure represents 99% of all businesses operating in this province; it's obviously a significant source of employment. By providing the right kind of support that small businesses need, Bill 105, the Supporting Small Businesses Act, can play a very strong role in the economy. That's exactly the work that all of us need to do as elected members of this House.

This government's priority is to create good jobs and grow our economy, and we're doing this by investing in people, investing in infrastructure and creating a dynamic and innovative climate for businesses to succeed. Bill 105 will do this. By not supporting this important legislation, we're not supporting organizations like the CFIB and Tanner Financial. Ultimately, we're not supporting a growing business environment in Ontario which is good for the economy and an integral part of creating good, meaningful jobs.

#### DRIVE CLEAN

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Minister, the Supreme Court has ruled that profits made off of revenue-neutral programs are illegal and must be paid back, yet you continue to flout the law in order to keep collecting multi-million-dollar surpluses every year using the Drive Clean program. In fact, in just two years, the Liberals have collected an additional \$30 million using their illegal Drive Clean tax grab.

Minister, it's time to show some respect for the law, so will you comply with the Supreme Court's ruling today by ending this abuse of Ontarians' hard-earned money and by paying back all of the revenue you've collected in your illegal Drive Clean tax grab?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Here we are again with the Conservative Party attacking a program which is designed to improve air—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I guess you might not be getting the message.

Minister of the Environment, please be seated.

The member from Renfrew will come to order, the member for Leeds–Grenville will come to order and the member for Halton will come to order. That's enough.

Carry on.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The member will be aware that, for the first decade, this program was actually in deficit. In other words, it was costing money to provide this program, which was established by the Conservative government a number of years ago, in 1999. I want to tell him, and this may surprise some of the new members in the Conservative Party, that the only increase in price that has come for the Drive Clean program was implemented in 2002 by the Conservative government of Mike Harris—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You ask, you're going to get it. The member from Prince–Edward Hastings is warned.

Finish your answer: a 10-second wrap-up.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** —of which some members sitting on the benches, including your leader, were part. That's the only increase that we have seen.

I am working at the present time with the Minister of Finance—

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Minister, now that your government is getting advice from former PC environment minister Norm Sterling, I'm wondering if you're going to be taking his advice on Drive Clean. From your conversations with him, you clearly know that a Progressive Conservative government would have phased this temporary program out long ago. That's why we've been calling on the Liberal government to scrap the program for years.

I'm sure you watched CTV News and saw Mr. Sterling recommend that it's time to sit down, work together and phase out Drive Clean. Minister, will you accept Mr. Sterling's advice and start working with us to scrap Drive Clean once and for all?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** It's interesting that you would, in fact, ask me to accept the advice of a member of your party who was thrown under the bus, who was denied the nomination.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order: You spoke to that before, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There's no point of order right now. Stop the clock, please.

If you would take my advice, maybe we would be able to make sure that these things didn't happen. I didn't hear it because I was dealing with somebody heckling over here.

If you need to withdraw, I would ask you to withdraw.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I will withdraw, of course.

But here we go again with the Tories and their inexplicable war on clean air. They won't be happy until they stoke up the coal plants again, including the Nanticoke plant. It appears they want to rev those up again.

They want to put some 36,000 tonnes of smog pollutants in the air we breathe by replacing Drive Clean with their drive dirty program, and ultimately, I can say this is what—

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

## BEAR CONTROL

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Last year, the government cut the MNR program for the live trapping and relocation of nuisance bears, and since then there have been several near-fatal bear attacks across the province, the last one in Peterborough. In parts of my riding, human-bear encounters are a daily occurrence, further increasing the risk of attack.

This afternoon, your government will have the chance to support my motion to create a special committee to develop a provincial bear management strategy. Will you?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to respond.

I think what we can say is that our government certainly supports the spirit of the motion that's coming forward. We are always interested in having further discussions about important matters such as the one that will be coming forward this afternoon, and I think the member understands that the Ministry of Natural Resources treats this as a very serious issue as well. We maintain that public safety is the number one priority, particularly as it relates to the issue of human-bear conflicts. The ministry is looking at instances of human-bear conflicts across the province, looking at available options to address the issue and evaluating some of the wildlife management options.

I think it's also important that the member opposite and certainly our members here acknowledge the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, who has brought forward a private member's bill as well which recognizes the challenges before us. Certainly we thank you for that.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again to the Acting Premier: In response to my question on October 3 regarding the Liberal government's cuts to the bear management program, the Minister of Natural Resources stated, "This is an issue that we take very seriously, and we are developing a plan." Don't you think that it's about time you consulted with the people who actually deal with bears on a daily basis, the people who actually live in bear country? This special committee would travel throughout the province and actually consult with them.

Once again, will your government support my motion to create an all-party committee to actually address the bear management issue in this province?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Well, indeed, when the minister addressed that issue and said we were looking at a plan, that's indeed the case. He understands very much how this is a very significant issue. It's a public safety

issue, and indeed the wildlife management options are being explored. Again, our colleague from Thunder Bay–Atikokan has a private member’s bill that’s also going to be coming before the House, and I think it’s important to accept the real leadership being shown by him as well.

Again, the spirit of the motion is one that we welcome, and further discussion with northerners is always welcome, but again, the Ministry of Natural Resources is taking this very seriously, evaluating various options, and we want to continue to work with the member opposite and all members in the House to find some solution to this challenge.

#### ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Minister, each summer I attend musical, artistic and cultural festivals in western Mississauga. I watch our artists and our performers just pour their hearts out into their music and their choreography, and I appreciate that the musical community in our province of Ontario is passionate about its work.

1120

Earlier this year, you and the Minister of Finance announced the Ontario Music Fund, which focuses on stimulating economic growth, raising the global profile and building a dynamic market for our music companies and performing artists. Much anticipated in the arts community, the Ontario Music Fund was officially launched earlier this week. Would the minister please explain to the House some of the highlights of the Ontario Music Fund?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the member from Mississauga–Streetsville for asking that wonderful question. I say “wonderful” because the Ontario Music Fund is really a wonderful program. This is a program that contributes a \$45-million commitment we made in the 2013 budget. It contributes \$15 million over three years to capitalize on the success of our music industry and accelerate Ontario’s economic growth.

The OMF will support sound recording in Ontario, marketing and promotion of Canadian artists, live performances, both in Ontario and abroad, and business development initiatives. This will be accomplished through four streams: music company development, music industry development, music futures and live music. The music company development and music industry development stream will launch October 28.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Minister, Ontario is English Canada’s cultural and artistic hub. Like any type of business, the arts community needs a state-of-the-art infrastructure. We have the creative and performing talent, and Ontario’s music industry also needs the tools and facilities to succeed in today’s dynamic and rapidly changing music industry.

Ontario’s musicians of tomorrow—bands like Nigel and the Senators—need to know how to get their music produced, promoted and protected. Mississauga’s local

studios like Metalworks and Sonic Sound need to connect the best musical talent with both world markets and local gigs. Minister, please explain how this funding benefits Ontario’s music industry.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you very much for the question again. Ontario’s vibrant and diverse music industry is a vital contributor to the province’s cultural and economic prosperity. In 2011, Ontario’s music sector generated over \$429 million in revenues, accounting for almost 82% of Canada’s total revenues.

Our province is home to Canada’s largest and one of the world’s most diversified music sectors. The new Ontario Music Fund represents a significant commitment by Ontario to strengthen our music industry. This is why we created a new Ontario Music Fund as part of the 2013 Ontario budget.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Tomorrow, November 1, is the start of financial planning awareness month. Also, tomorrow, you will meet other provincial finance ministers to discuss enhancing the CPP. Our employees and employers cannot afford any more mandatory deductions that an enhanced CPP or new OPP would entail. They’re already having trouble making ends meet. Why, then, Minister, are you failing Ontarians by not allowing PRPPs, pooled registered pension plans? You adopted our PRPP plan into your 2013 budget; why are you stalling?

Instead of a new Ontario pension plan, why don’t you allow PRPPs for Ontarians to save by themselves, for themselves, with lower costs and greater flexibility? Or don’t you trust Ontario’s workers with their own money?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Well, there you have it. That side of the House feels it’s not important to support the families of Ontario by suggesting that we not give them other opportunities. We are introducing PRPPs, a voluntary program. We said we would, and we’re proceeding to do that. That’s not in question. The point being made, though, is they feel middle-class families can live on \$12,000 a year when they retire. We don’t accept that on this side of the House. We’re going to work and champion the cause for them in the years to come.

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

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Minister, I’m concerned with your inaction on improving the retirement security of Ontarians. In 2016, there will be more people drawing from a public sector pension than paying into one. This is leading to \$100 billion in unfunded liabilities. People are living longer, and the return on retirement investments has never been lower. As the tsunami of retirees appears on the Ontario horizon, we need to deal with the reform of the public pension system.

Minister, what is your government doing to reduce the over \$100 billion of unfunded liabilities within the public sector?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I’m not trying to be cute here, I think we all share the concern that the people of Ontario

deserve to retire with some decency, with security and with a degree of comfort, knowing that when they do retire, all the hard work and the investments they made will pay off.

The member opposite has been doing some work to that effect with voluntary pooled retirement pension plans. We are proceeding with that. It's a voluntary program. We're going to provide more choice. There are a lot of Ontarians who do have flexibility, but we know that more than 50% to 60% do not, and it's those we're trying to protect. It's those middle-class citizens, especially, who need support, and I look to that side of the House to recognize that, to accept that we need to work with all of the provinces across Canada. That's what I'll be doing tomorrow with my colleagues, so that we can propose and encourage—

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

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. As the minister knows, Windsor hospitals are being threatened with the loss of funding for all cancer surgeries if they do not comply with a Cancer Care Ontario directive to transfer thoracic surgeries to London by December 1.

My question is simple: Is the minister going to allow this dispute to escalate to the point where Windsor patients lose access to vital cancer surgery?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I can say is that I am absolutely committed that Windsor-area patients receive the highest possible quality cancer care.

Speaker, I rely on the advice of experts, including experts at Cancer Care Ontario, to ensure that all Ontario patients, including those in Windsor, get the highest-quality care. They are doing a great job. In fact, Ontario cancer patients have among the best survival rates in the world.

As part of their work, Cancer Care Ontario has implemented the thoracic surgical oncology standards that are evidence-based. Within those standards, CCO has set out that hospitals need to meet a minimum volume of surgeries in order to be designated a thoracic centre. That minimum requirement is 150 in 2012-13. There were 49 thoracic surgeries performed.

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

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The question is about access to care in our communities in Windsor. Apparently, the minister's version of the map of Ontario really does end in London.

I understand that the dispute between Cancer Care Ontario and Windsor hospitals has been occurring for the better part of six months, and yet the minister has really done nothing.

Windsor hospitals are also concerned that the loss of thoracic surgeries will have a long list of detrimental effects and impacts on their patients. Now patients fear the loss of all cancer surgeries in the region, and they're

wondering who is going to stand and protect their access to health care.

Can the minister explain how she's going to solve this problem so that cancer services in Windsor are preserved?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I can assure the member opposite, and the member from Windsor West, that Windsor patients will continue to receive cancer care in Windsor.

As a result of Cancer Care Ontario's work, the 30-day, post-op mortality rate for the removal of a lung has been cut in half. Let me repeat that: The mortality rate has been cut in half, thanks to Cancer Care Ontario's focus on improving quality of care.

I have been working very hard with the member from Windsor West on this issue. We continue to work to ensure that Windsor-area patients continue to receive the highest-quality care.

1130

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a question this morning for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. In my role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, I've engaged in a number of important discussions with municipal partners across the province.

In particular, at the AMO conference last August, I joined with the Minister of Northern Development and Mines as well as a number of other ministers from our government for a meeting with the Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors. At this meeting, the northern mayors shared with our government key priorities on how we can advance the growth plan for northern Ontario.

Will the Minister of Northern Development and Mines please provide the House with an update on how our government is working to address those priorities that were outlined by the northern mayors?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to address this question today. I want to let the members of the Legislature know that yesterday we reached out to the Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors and a number of other northern municipal leaders to share the very exciting news that the province will be hosting a northern leaders' forum on December 6, 2013, in the beautiful northern community of Timmins. This forum is going to be bringing together municipal, aboriginal and community leaders, as well as a number of our government ministers, to work to identify opportunities to advance the objectives of the northern Ontario growth plan.

We understand how important it is to work with our partners to build on the competitive advantages of northern Ontario. It's part of our government's plan to support a dynamic and innovative business climate that attracts investment and continues to create jobs. We're very excited about the northern leaders' forum.

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

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you, Minister. This forum is a key priority that the northern mayors were advocating for, something I know they are going to be very pleased to hear is taking place in the next few weeks. Under the leadership of our Premier, regional collaboration between municipalities has been welcomed and encouraged to ensure that we benefit the people of Ontario in the greatest possible manner.

It's also great to hear the Minister of Northern Development and Mines speaking positively about advancing the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario through initiatives such as the recent program changes and this northern leaders' forum.

Will the minister now please share with the House how the northern leaders' forum is going to help advance the actual implementation of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Certainly one of the requests at the meeting we had with AMO was to have a northern leaders' forum such as I'm announcing today. I'm very pleased that our government is able to fulfill the requests of the NOLUM mayors.

Our government has always placed an extremely high priority on working with our partners across the north, and that has only been more emphasized under Premier Wynne's leadership.

Our government first released the growth plan as a blueprint for job creation and economic development over the next 25 years throughout the north. Since its release a couple of years ago, we have seen communities, organizations, businesses and aboriginal groups achieve some amazing things that have unequivocally shown to me and proven my belief in the strength and the resilience that we all share as northerners.

This forum is going to provide a great opportunity for our government and our northern partners to renew momentum and drive forward the next phase of the growth plan.

## SNOWMOBILING

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. Minister, snowmobile clubs in my riding and across Ontario have come to us in distress. They've been told by Hydro One, on the orders of your ministry, that effective January 1, 2014, they will no longer have access to the use of hydro corridors unless the local municipalities enter into agreements to not only fund 50% of the total cost of taxes on the land, but also ensure that all trails are moved 15 metres away from any tower, that fencing and gates are installed, and that the areas are monitored year-round.

Minister, there are a few problems with this. The Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs tells us it's impossible to move the trails 15 metres away from any tower. Second, they question why they should have to maintain the trails year-round when they are multi-use trails—other people use these trails outside of snowmobile season. Third, how much is this going to cost and impact the industry?

Minister, these are valid concerns. Can you please explain why local clubs and municipalities are being asked to maintain and pay the taxes on lands that are owned by the province of Ontario, or is this yet another Liberal tax grab?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member for the question. I always greatly appreciate when members are raising issues on behalf of important constituencies. This is the first I've heard of this, to be very honest with you. It concerns me greatly. I will certainly look into it. There could be an issue between hydro and safety issues. I can't speculate in detail on what the issue would be. I take the member's concern as sincere, and I will commit to working with him to resolve this issue.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Again to the Minister: Minister, the use of hydro corridors is paramount, as you know, to the snowmobile trail system. These new requirements will impact snowmobile clubs across the province and may needlessly lead to the dissolution of an industry that's presently thriving.

To give the minister an idea of the impact of this new regulation, the cost estimate done in my riding by the township of Springwater found that their share of the cost of the taxes on a mere three kilometres of trail to be \$3,700 per year. Remember, there are thousands of kilometres of trail using hydro corridors, and this is only for three kilometres. They will also be responsible for the fencing and maintenance.

Snowmobile clubs can't afford this, obviously, and municipalities can't afford it. This issue affects thousands of snowmobile clubs, thousands of dealers, thousands of restaurants, hotels, gas stations and thousands of jobs in rural Ontario.

Is your government prepared to create another complete disarray in a thriving industry like the snowmobile industry in Ontario just like you did in the horse racing industry, or will you act now to ensure this doesn't happen?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, my tone to the member was very constructive and positive, so if we could just park the rhetoric for a moment.

We're working very closely with snowmobile clubs right now to look at integrating our fee systems with Minnesota, Manitoba and others. We've had a number of concerns raised by snowmobile clubs. As you know, we have a very good agreement that's up for renewal with them, where they maintain trails and we fund them and we collect a fee.

I'm quite surprised, Mr. Speaker, given the level of contact we have with these clubs, that they have not raised this issue with me. I am very glad they've raised the issue with the member opposite.

I have a great respect for the member and will look forward to working with him to resolve it. I certainly share the concern, if those facts are as he says they are, and I have no reason to disbelieve him. I am not satisfied with them. I will work with him to correct the situation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question. The member from—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Parkdale—High Park.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Parkdale–High Park.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Housing. Some 165,723 people languish on affordable housing wait-lists in Toronto alone—an abysmal new record. The city of Toronto, as well as many other municipalities across Ontario, including London and Thunder Bay, express support for my inclusionary zoning bill. Even Hazel is supportive. The Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario, representing planning directors, commissioners, and senior officials of municipal governments, also all supported my bill.

Inclusionary zoning would provide up to 12,000 new units a year in affordable housing and address the crisis that is plaguing Ontario without one tax dollar being spent.

My inclusionary zoning bill has been introduced four—count them—times and was referred to committee, but the Liberal government has refused to bring it forward or to act on it. How many more families have to be on the waiting lists for this government to act?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I thank the member for the question. Certainly, we realize that this is a very serious issue. Since 2003, we've invested \$3 billion, the largest affordable housing program ever in the province's history.

I want to thank the member for her advocacy on this file. I know that she has the private member's bill on inclusionary zoning.

We believe that municipalities are in the best position to understand local needs. That's why we gave municipalities some of the tools they need to look at affordable housing options. I know Toronto has been looking at some options in the last week. We're happy to work with them, and I'm happy to work with the member, ongoing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize to the member from Parkdale–High Park. I have these brain things happen from time to time.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1139 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### KIMM FLETCHER

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Yesterday, Kimm Fletcher, a mother of two who has been diagnosed with brain cancer, came to the Legislature to plead with the Minister of Health to allow OHIP coverage for the drug Avastin, which could extend her life by a year and even longer. Kimm won the hearts of everyone here as we rose in our places to give her a warm and prolonged standing ovation. The minister, however, would only consent to review the findings of her drug evaluation committee, without providing any immediate help.

Today, on behalf of the Parliament of Ontario, I want to tell Kimm that she is not alone. I want to tell her husband, Scott, and her children, Keidon and Martie, that they are not alone, because the people of Ontario are with them in love and support.

But Kimm needs our help right now. For further information on how you can make a donation so that Kimm can get the Avastin that she needs so desperately, please go to [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com) or to [tedchudleigh.com](http://tedchudleigh.com) for a complete address. Let's show Kimm how much we truly do stand with her at this time of her greatest need.

On behalf of Kimm and her family, I thank you.

#### SOCIAL INNOVATION SHARED SPACE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Environmental challenges, persistently high levels of unemployment and the growing gap between the rich and the poor underscore the need for new approaches to economic and social development. In particular, the social economy—or businesses with a social purpose—is now recognized as a vital component of a dynamic economic development strategy. It provides jobs for youth and marginalized people and also addresses human, environmental and community needs.

Today, I rise as MPP for London West to share with this House a social economy initiative in my community that has the potential to be a game-changer for London. London's Social Innovation Shared Space initiative is being led by Pillar Nonprofit Network, in collaboration with Emerging Leaders, the London Arts Council and the London Heritage Council. It will bring together a range of social enterprises and social entrepreneurs under one roof, enabling start-ups and more established organizations to share facilities, equipment and services that might otherwise be too costly. More importantly, it will generate synergies and spark the creative exchange of ideas between like-minded individuals and organizations.

Letters of intent from prospective tenants are being accepted until November 15, with a move-in date as early as next year.

At a time when cynicism toward government is at its peak, the social economy demonstrates the importance of active and engaged citizenship, and I am proud to support this exciting initiative in my community.

#### DENTURISTS

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise today to acknowledge October as Denturist Awareness Month. Denturists are an integral part of our oral health care team, particularly for a growing population of older Ontarians.

Our government is committed to ensuring older Ontarians get the right care in the right place at the right time. Ontario's Seniors Strategy, led by Dr. Samir Sinha, is a vital part of this commitment. We are working to implement many of Dr. Sinha's recommendations so older Ontarians can stay healthy and continue to lead active lives.

Good oral health is essential to overall well-being at any age, and as the Ontario population grows older, our

denturists are playing an essential role in promoting and ensuring proper oral care. That's why denturists and the Denturist Association of Ontario are such key partners as we move forward with the Ontario Seniors Strategy.

I believe the executive members of the Denturist Association of Ontario are joining us today in the House. I'd like to thank them, and denturists across Ontario, for the hard work they do every day to return smiles to so many Ontario seniors.

I'd like to thank them again for all the work they do and welcome them to Queen's Park.

#### COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM AWARDS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We used to call Pembroke the prettiest little city in Canada. With the recent win at the Communities in Bloom competition, we're going to have to raise that bar. Pembroke's now the prettiest little city in the world.

Last Saturday, they received the top prize in the Communities in Bloom, International Challenge, medium division. Pembroke beat out Trail and Castlegar in British Columbia, Città di Savigliano in Italy and Sidmouth in England.

The city of Pembroke has been competing in Communities in Bloom since 1999 and is a previous provincial and national competition winner. With this most recent title, they are now on top of the world.

The city received the award at a ceremony held in Ottawa at the Government Conference Centre.

Added to the awards this year was a special award for the Renaissance Square project at Algonquin College's Pembroke campus.

I've had the pleasure in the last 10 years to see firsthand the effort put forth by the Communities in Bloom committee, the city of Pembroke and their department of economic development, tourism and recreation, to make their community the best that it can be.

Each year, volunteer judges visit all the communities, narrow it down to the finalists and make their decision. I've also had the opportunity to meet and chat with those judges on a number of occasions, and I commend them for their commitment to Communities in Bloom.

On behalf of this Legislature, I would like to congratulate the city of Pembroke, the local Communities in Bloom committee and their chairperson, Mary Ethier, as well as the Pembroke Horticultural Society which does such a tremendous job in maintaining the flowerbeds across the city, and, of course, the businesses and residents whose commitment has made this possible.

I know they will work just as hard in the future to ensure that Pembroke continues to be one of the nicest places to visit in all the world.

#### HALLOWEEN

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It behooves me to stand here today on this All Hallows' Eve, replete with my tie, to

talk about this day. It has its roots in the Celtic Samhain, which was a fall festival, but one of the things that it was best known for: That was the night on which the ghosts and the dead walked free upon the earth, the day before All Saints' Day.

From those faraway roots, it has changed quite a bit. For many years, Halloween was looked upon by many people as a pagan festival, and they frowned upon the ritual of the whole night. But I will tell you that, increasingly, it is being embraced as a fun time, a night of frivolity, children and their parents getting out to meet their neighbours, decorated houses, candies, treats and all of these things.

But I wanted to pay special attention to some young people who won't be able to participate tonight, and those are our pages. They come from all over Ontario and some of them, sadly, will not be able to get home tonight, but I know that their instructor-coordinator, Erin Tedford, and the assistant, Paula Carreiro, will do everything in their power to make sure that they have fun here today. I hope the pages here learn a great deal, that even when you're hard at work in a place like this, you can still have fun. So if they come around to see the members, please be very generous.

To all out there, please have a safe and happy Halloween.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You mean free chocolates?

Members' statements? The member from Oak Ridges–Markham.

#### COLTEN AND LUKE RYBUCK

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I rise to honour Colten and Luke Rybuck, two courageous young men from Oak Ridges in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, who risked their lives to help save a stranger's.

In the early hours of the morning of September 17, Colten and Luke were on their way home when they heard a smoke alarm. After following the noise, the brothers encountered a home with smoke pouring out of it and heard the shouts of someone trapped inside.

They took decisive action. Colten used his cellphone to call 911 while Luke kicked in the front door. The brothers entered the home, but had to abandon their rescue efforts for their own safety. They waited outside for emergency responders to arrive.

The Richmond Hill Fire Department has praised Colten and Luke for their quick thinking and believes that their actions helped save the homeowner's life.

On Tuesday night, these fine young men were honoured as heroes at the sixth annual Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services Awards. They were recognized for doing all the right things to help and knowing when to step back, when the risks to their own well-being were too great.

**1310**

Colten and Luke's actions speak volumes about their individual strength of character and the courage they both possess. Well done, Colten and Luke.

## ALLAN STANLEY

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the life of Allan Stanley, a Canadian hockey legend.

After playing minor hockey in his hometown of Timmins, Allan had a long and accomplished hockey career that spanned 21 years, totalling 1,244 NHL games. The defenceman played in the NHL with the New York Rangers, the Chicago Blackhawks, the Boston Bruins and, most notably, the Toronto Maple Leafs.

As part of an NHL-best defence corps with Tim Horton, Allan won four Stanley Cups with the Maple Leafs and played his last game in the 1967 cup final. As I am sure some of you remember, in the final moments of a 2-to-1 Toronto lead, he would take on the Montreal captain, Jean Béliveau, by delivering a big bodycheck that sent the puck away from Béliveau and resulted in the Leafs scoring an empty-net goal to win their most recent Stanley Cup.

Fourteen years later, in 1981, Allan was honoured for his world-class hockey career by being selected to the Hockey Hall of Fame.

After his hockey career was over, Allan and his wife, Barbara, bought and operated the Bee Hive Hockey School complex near Bobcaygeon for over 20 years, until his retirement. In 2005, he was inducted into the Lindsay and District Sports Hall of Fame, commemorating the impact that Allan had on the local sporting community. His Hall of Fame expertise certainly was an influence on anyone who was looking to become a better hockey player.

I wanted to thank Allan and his wife for their dedication to their community. We certainly enjoyed having them in our riding for those many, many years.

## SHERIDAN COLLEGE

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I had the pleasure of touring the faculty of animation, art and design at Sheridan College in Oakville with our Premier on September 20. Having such a great institution in Oakville allows many of our young people to have the opportunity to pursue career-focused education or to build themselves an exciting and rewarding career in the skilled trades.

All of our greatest Premiers have always made public education their highest priority. They have understood the link between a quality education and a long-term job.

Many, many Sheridan graduates have worked on Hollywood films, but not many were involved in the largest-grossing film of all time. Roja Huchez, an animation graduate, has that honour. He worked on Avatar at Weta Digital in New Zealand, where he worked as a creature modeller. He modelled all the horses and the main chief and chief's wife characters, as well as some general characters. Then he went on to specialize in the facial modelling team, giving the chief and the general characters and creatures their facial expressions and the ability to speak and have emotion that showed so vividly

in the film. He now specializes in creature modelling, creating digital doubles and creating facial emotions for characters in a lot of feature films and commercials that we're all familiar with.

Speaker, with grads like Roja, I'm so humbled to have Sheridan College in my riding of Oakville doing such a wonderful job for the young people of our community.

## WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I rise today to bring to the government's attention a resolution recently passed by the Town of the Blue Mountains. The resolution states, "Now therefore council of the corporation of the Town of the Blue Mountains hereby requests that the province of Ontario immediately enact Bill 2, Restoring Planning Powers to Municipalities Act, 2013."

Bill 2 is the legislation I introduced last February to ensure that local municipalities have final say on where wind turbines and solar farms can be located, or if they will even be allowed if the local people don't want them.

The Liberals' Green Energy Act is a matter of great concern in my riding and in communities across the province, as it removes local authority and control over the installation of massive renewable energy projects in rural communities.

This particular resolution was passed by the Blue Mountains and responds to a 72-foot-tall wind turbine being built in a small residential subdivision, a mere 35 feet from the neighbouring property line. To place that into perspective for the Minister of Energy, who doesn't seem to have a clue about these things, that's the approximate distance between me and you in this legislative chamber.

The wind turbine is being built despite vast opposition of neighbours and the town, because this government wants to tout a self-serving green energy agenda to produce energy we don't need and at prices we cannot afford. This is wrong.

I ask the Premier to listen to the people of Ontario and immediately restore local controls over renewable energy projects so that decisions over this project and ones like it are left up to the people who actually live there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their comments.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

## LINCOLN ALEXANDER DAY ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LE JOUR  
DE LINCOLN ALEXANDER

Mr. Arnott moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 125, An Act to proclaim Lincoln Alexander Day /  
Projet de loi 125, Loi proclamant le Jour de Lincoln Alexander.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I wish to begin by acknowledging the member for Scarborough–Rouge River and the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, who are co-sponsoring this bill today. I express my appreciation to them for their willingness to work together across the party lines and the party divide to do something important in this Legislature.

I also want to welcome to the Legislature today Marni Beal-Alexander. We also have Erika Alexander, Rosemary Sadlier and Joyce Alexander here today. We're very pleased to have them join us at the first reading of this bill, a bill that I hope will be supported by all members of the House.

As we know, Lincoln MacCauley Alexander was one of the most outstanding and accomplished Ontarians of our time. He was born on January 21, 1922. Rising above the prejudice of the era, he embraced the opportunity of public education. He developed his talents and reached his full potential through disciplined study and the strength of his character. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. Home again after the war, he graduated from McMaster University and Osgoode Hall Law School and qualified as a lawyer.

Responding to the call of public service, he was elected to the House of Commons in 1968, representing Hamilton West. In 1979, he was appointed Minister of Labour, making history as the government of Canada's first black cabinet minister. Later, he served as chair of the Workers' Compensation Board of Ontario, now known as the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board; as Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the representative of Her Majesty the Queen; and as chancellor of the University of Guelph, among many other community contributions.

He passed away a year ago this month, on October 19, 2012, at the age of 90. His life was an example of service, determination and humility. Always fighting for equal rights for all races in our society and doing so without malice, he changed attitudes and contributed greatly to the inclusiveness and the tolerance of Canada today.

I would urge all members to support this bill when it comes for second reading later on in the month of November, proclaiming January 21—his birthday—as Lincoln Alexander Day in the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would be remiss if I didn't mention the special affiliate to the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, as being a Hamiltonian, as Lincoln was—his dear Hamilton.

## PETITIONS

### DARLINGTON NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for petitions—and the member from Durham was up on the snap of a finger.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thanks very much. It's an honour to have some role here today in the Legislature, on Halloween day.

The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas approximately 20% of Ontario's electricity is produced at the Darlington generating station" in my riding of Durham;

"Whereas in addition to refurbishing the four existing reactors at the Darlington the building of new capacity is important for the future of Ontario's manufacturing sector and for jobs and investment in our Ontario;

**1320**

"Whereas a study by the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters in 2012 concluded the building of a new two-reactor plant at Darlington would directly employ more than 10,000 people and would support employment for an additional 10,000 others in Canada for approximately a five-year period;

"Whereas Ontario's Ministry of Energy says Ontario Power Generation has already spent an estimated \$180 million in preparation proceeding with the two new Darlington reactors;

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

"That Ontario's elected MPPs and the provincial government reaffirm their commitment to the complete refurbishment of all four units at the Darlington generating station and that the Ontario government reinstate the original plan for the completion of two new reactors at the Darlington generating station."

I'm pleased to sign and support it and give it to Helen, one of the pages.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the cost of living in northwestern Ontario is significantly higher than other regions of the province due to the high cost of necessities such as hydro, home heating fuel, gasoline and auto insurance; and

"Whereas an increase in the price of any of these essential goods will make it even more difficult for people living in northwestern Ontario to pay their bills and put food on the table;

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

"To reject any proposed increase to the harmonized sales tax, gas tax or any other fees or taxes in the northwest; and instead investigate other means such as increasing corporate tax compliance or eliminating corporate tax loopholes in order to fund transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area."

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Benjamin to deliver to the table.

## WASTE REDUCTION

**Mr. John Fraser:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas protecting the environment should be everyone’s responsibility, including manufacturing and material producing companies; and

“Whereas it is important to require producers to be financially and environmentally responsible for recycling the goods and packaging they sell in Ontario, and to divert these wastes from landfill to recycling to drive innovation, generate new jobs, and new Ontario-made products; and

“Whereas new approaches are needed that reflect ideas and recommendations from the recycling sector that are designed to improve current recycling systems, to increase recycling and diversion rates, and better protect our environment;

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

“That members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, 2013, introduced on June 6, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Environment.”

I’m affixing my signature to this and giving it to page Louis.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I continue to get petitions from the Rail Trail community north of Port Elgin, and today it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has indicated it will be making improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton in 2014; and

“Whereas the ministry has not acknowledged the repeated requests from the community and others to undertake safety enhancements to the portion of the highway where it intersects with the Saugeen Rail Trail crossing; and

“Whereas this trail is a vital part of an interconnected active transportation route providing significant recreational and economic benefit to the town of Saugeen Shores, the county of Bruce and beyond;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario to require the MTO to include, as part of the design for the improvements to Highway 21 between Port Elgin and Southampton, measures that will enhance the safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and all others that use the Rail Trail crossing; and to consult and collaborate with the town of Saugeen Shores and other groups in determining cost-effective measures that will maintain the function of the highway while aligning with the active transportation needs of all interested parties who use the Saugeen Rail Trail.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature, and I’ll send it to the desk with Ben.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “Petition to Raise the Minimum Wage.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s minimum wage has been frozen at \$10.25 an hour since 2010, and some workers earn even less due to current exemptions in the Employment Standards Act; and

“Whereas full-time minimum wage workers are living at nearly 20% below the poverty line as measured by the Ontario government’s low-income measure; and

“Whereas minimum wage should, as a matter of principle, bring people working 35 hours per week above the poverty line; and

“Whereas an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$14 per hour would bring workers’ wages 10% above the” low-income measure “poverty line; and

“Whereas raising the minimum wage will benefit workers, local businesses and the economy by putting money in workers’ pockets to spend in their local community;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately increase the minimum wage to \$14 per hour for all workers and thereafter increase it annually by no less than the cost of living.”

I affix my signature. I’m going to give it to Louis to be delivered to the table.

#### WASTE REDUCTION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I’ve got a petition from some residents in the province of Ontario. It reads as follows:

“Whereas protecting the environment should be everyone’s responsibility, including manufacturing and material producing companies; and

“Whereas it is important to require producers to be financially and environmentally responsible for recycling the goods and packaging they sell in Ontario, and to divert these wastes from landfill to recycling to drive innovation, generate new jobs, and new Ontario-made products; and

“Whereas new approaches are needed that reflect ideas and recommendations from the recycling sector that are designed to improve current recycling systems, to increase recycling and diversion rates, and better protect our environment;

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

“That members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 91, the Waste Reduction Act, 2013, introduced on June 6, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Environment.”

I agree with this, Speaker, and will be sending it down to the table with Victoria.

#### YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I have a petition here that deals with youth mental health in our schools and communities, and I want to thank the Callows—Bob and Olga

Callow, James Callow and Samantha—Debbie Gust and Liz Virc for their initiative on this petition. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas youth mental health in the province of Ontario is rising at an alarming rate. According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 70% of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Research shows that early identification leads to improved outcomes;

“Whereas, pursuant to the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, studies suggest 15% to 21% of children and youth, approximately 467,000 to 654,000 children and youth in Ontario, have at least one mental health disorder. The consequences can affect children and youth now and into adulthood, their families/caregivers, schools, communities, employers and the province as a whole;

“Whereas the 2010 Ontario report by the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions ... made specific recommendations that would address the growing mental health and addiction crisis among youth in the province, but no further concrete steps have been taken;

“Whereas waiting lists for help are at a crisis level and our schools do not have the resources to deal with the growing incidents of bullying, addiction, anxiety, depression and suicide. Education and awareness is critical to remove the stigma;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to prioritize funding and resources for our schools and communities to help our youth with mental health and addiction illnesses and the resulting consequences.”

Speaker, I'm pleased to affix my signature to the petition in support of this cause and to give it to page Kate to deliver to the table.

#### ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** “Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board is a provincial agency composed of unelected members unaccountable to Ontarians; and

“Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board has the power to unilaterally alter local development decisions made by municipalities and their communities; and

“Whereas the city of Toronto is the largest city in Ontario; and

“Whereas the city of Toronto has a planning department composed of professional planners, an extensive legal department and 44 full-time city councillors directly elected by its citizens; and

“Whereas Toronto's city council voted overwhelmingly in February 2012 to request an exemption from the Ontario Municipal Board's jurisdiction;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize the ability of the city of Toronto to handle its own urban planning and development; and

“Further, that the Ontario Municipal Board no longer have jurisdiction over the city of Toronto.”

I strongly agree with this, and I'll be signing it.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas small businesses not only employ thousands of Ontarians with well-paying jobs, they also play a vital role strengthening Ontario's economy; and

“Whereas providing tax relief to small and local businesses strengthens the economy and creates a business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs; and

“Whereas the government has taken several other initiatives to making Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America;

**1330**

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

“That the members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 105, Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, introduced on September 24, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Finance.”

I fully support the petition. I affix my signature and give it to Nicholas.

#### SHALE BEACH

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

“Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

“Whereas the closure will impact fisherman, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

“Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

“Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

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

“That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come.”

Mr. Speaker, I want to sign that petition; I agree with it.

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is recognized as one of the leading primary care providers in northwestern Ontario, providing essential services to those living in not only Ignace, but across northwestern Ontario; and

“Whereas a 2010 rent increase by the government of Ontario has threatened the long-term viability of the health centre’s operations; and

“Whereas the rent being charged to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is much higher than rent being charged to similar operations in other communities and far surpasses ‘market rent’ for a small community in northwestern Ontario;

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

“To immediately rectify the situation and ensure the long-term viability of the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre by either reducing rent, transferring ownership of the building to the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, or through capital funds to build a new facility that better suits the community’s needs.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Nicholas to deliver.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** “Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Whereas small businesses not only employ thousands of Ontarians with well-paying jobs, they also play a vital role strengthening Ontario’s economy; and

“Whereas providing tax relief to small and local businesses strengthens the economy and creates a business climate that attracts investment and helps create jobs; and

“Whereas the government has taken several other initiatives to making Ontario the most attractive place to do business in North America;

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

“That the members of the Legislative Assembly pass Bill 105, Supporting Small Businesses Act, 2013, introduced on September 24, 2013, by the Ontario Minister of Finance.”

I have signed this petition and I send it forward with Anal.

#### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m privileged to present a petition on behalf of my constituents, but also the member from Simcoe–Grey, Mr. Wilson, our illustrious House leader. It reads as follows:

“Whereas we, the residents of Clearview township and neighbouring townships, oppose the wpd Canada Fairview wind project on Fairgrounds Road and all wind energy projects in Clearview township; and

“Whereas we support the petition of mayors and councillors from 80 municipalities, farm organizations, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, which petition requested that the province place an immediate moratorium on all wind projects until an independent and comprehensive health study has determined that turbine noise is safe to human health, amongst other things; and

“Whereas wpd Canada’s Fairview wind project violates the OLS airspace and usability of registered aerodromes in Clearview, including Collingwood Regional Airport and Stayner field, and wpd Canada’s draft renewable energy approvals reports do not recognize these impacts or the jurisdiction of the government of Canada; and

“Whereas wpd Canada is seeking final approval from the province for the Fairview wind project prior to completion of the federal Health Canada study and prior to federal actions to protect aviation safety;

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

“That the government of Ontario agree and accept that until the federal health study is completed and federal aeronautical zoning is in place, that it will immediately take whatever action is necessary to give full effect to a moratorium on all wind turbine development in Ontario, including all projects for which final approvals have not been given.”

This applies to my riding as well. I’m pleased to sign and support it and hand it to page Ian.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Just a few minutes ago, Copeland Public School, from my riding, was here, and one of the students happens to be my daughter Taj. She was here with her mom, who volunteers at the school.

#### MURRAY CARDIFF

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I would just like to share with the House that a notable Ontarian and an amazing member of Parliament, who served my riding of Huron in the House of Commons very well for a number of years through the 1980s, passed away today. Murray Cardiff was a gentleman and a guy who led with his heart. I’d like to share my sincere condolences with Betty, Jeff, Joan and their families.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

MANORANJANA  
KANAGASABAPATHY ACT  
(HAND-HELD DEVICES PENALTY), 2013

LOI MANORANJANA  
KANAGASABAPATHY DE 2013  
(PEINE POUR CONDUITE  
AVEC APPAREIL PORTATIF)

Mr. Balkissoon moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 116, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalty for the use of hand-held devices while driving / Projet de loi 116, Loi modifiant le Code

de la route pour augmenter la peine imposée en cas d'utilisation d'un appareil portatif lors de la conduite.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation. I recognize the member for Scarborough–Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Bill 116 is An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalty for the use of hand-held devices while operating a motor vehicle.

Speaker, I'd like to just take this opportunity to give a shout-out to my colleague from Durham, Mr. John O'Toole, because when I arrived in this Legislature, I remember him complaining about wireless devices and drivers using them. Maybe John was a little bit ahead of his time, but we're doing the right thing, hopefully, today.

The title of this bill is the Manoranjana Kanagasabapathy Act, named after a 52-year-old grandmother, mother, wife, sister, co-worker and friend of many, who was tragically killed in an accident involving a truck that crashed into a TTC bus on Steeles Avenue and Middlefield Road on Tuesday, August 13, 2013. She was boarding the TTC bus when the driver of a cube truck travelling in the opposite direction lost control, crossed over into oncoming traffic and crashed into the front of the bus. Manoranjana was getting on the bus when it was hit by the truck, resulting in her being pinned between the truck and the TTC bus. She had no chance of survival and died at the scene of the accident.

In addition, there were 12 others injured in the accident, including three people who were taken to Sunnybrook Hospital's trauma centre. Eyewitnesses at the scene say they believe the driver of the cube truck was talking on a cellphone at the time the accident occurred.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce her family and friends, who are here with us today. In the east gallery, we have Kandiah Kanagarajah, Sathiyasivam Kanagasabapathy, Theepan Thavarajah, Sathiyasoruby Kanagasabapathy, Kanjana Ganeshan, Kandiah Panchalingam, Krishna Ravikantharaja, Harrison Lanfrank, Ruth Tonon, Robert Toth and George Toth.

Also joining us are community stakeholders who are supportive of this bill: Mr. Elliott Silverstein from the Canadian Automobile Association; and Mr. Doug DeRabbie and Matt Hiraishi from the Insurance Bureau of Canada. I just want to recognize my two staff: my executive assistant, Anna Paoletta, and my legislative intern, who did all the work on this bill, Ms. Vanessa Dupuis.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Sure, give them a hand.

Mr. Speaker, Manoranjana, known as Ranjana by family and friends, was on her way to work at the TD Canada Trust bank headquarters after praying at a nearby Hindu temple when this tragic accident occurred. The irony of this whole story is that Ranjana escaped with her family and her mother from the daily bombings of her village in Sri Lanka about 20 years ago, only to meet

with this avoidable tragic accident here in her new homeland.

**1340**

The Pranavam Benevolent Services for Youth attest to the fact that Ranjana was a devout believer in God. She supported the local Hindu temples and also helped raise funds to educate needy students in Canada and Sri Lanka. Ranjana was not only involved in the community; she was the mother of two children: a son, and a daughter who had just recently given birth to Ranjana's first granddaughter. She was a devoted mother and sister, a woman of faith, as well as the primary caregiver for her elderly mother. She is described by relatives as a unifying force in their family, always planning events and get-togethers and helping out wherever she could. With these testaments from family and friends, it saddens me to know that a careless driver, distracted by the use of a cellphone, took the life of such a selfless, caring and innocent individual.

I had the opportunity to attend the memorial service of Ranjana and met her family and friends, who expressed concern about what our government can do to improve public safety as it relates to distracted drivers. The family is pleased and supportive of Bill 116 as a proposed legislative amendment to the existing Highway Traffic Act. Bill 116 aims to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalty for the use of hand-held devices while driving from the current set fine of \$155. This act would increase the penalty for this offence to a fine of not less than \$300 and not more than \$700, as well as assessing three demerit points for each offence. This is the major changes of this bill: assessing three demerit points for each offence.

A CAA member survey indicates that 85% or more respondents feel that sending text messages or emails, reading text messages or emails and/or using an app on a smart phone is unsafe while driving a vehicle. Based on recent CAA time trials, replying to a text message takes an average of 33.6 seconds. If you're driving on a residential road, this means you may have missed 85 parked cars, 36 houses or possibly five intersections. The consequences of what you may have missed and what could have occurred are far greater than any fine or assessment of demerit points for that offence. As legislators, we need to acknowledge that distracted driving is a preventable offence and that we must take proactive measures to improve community safety for our citizens.

Cam Woolley, former OPP officer and current CP24 traffic and safety issues analyst, reported that police forces say that distracted driving has now overtaken impaired driving as the number one cause of serious injury and fatal crashes. Distracted driving is now being cited by the policing community as being more dangerous than driving impaired, whereas the legislative consequences and penalties are not comparable to those of impaired driving.

Of CAA members surveyed, 99% responded that they either completely or somewhat agree that texting and driving is dangerous. Ontarians are justified in their



concerns about cellphone use while driving, since it is proven that drivers who text are 23 times more likely to be in an accident and talking on the phone increases the risk of an accident by up to four times. Despite these terrifying statistics demonstrating the greater likelihood of an accident from distracted driving, 72% of Ontario teens admit to texting or talking while behind the wheel of a vehicle.

Speaker, the current law is not sufficient, and we need to do more for public safety. There have been 235,000 charges laid in the last three years, which does not account for those who do not get caught. In 2010, there were 7,733 collisions on OPP-patrolled roads where the driver was deemed to be inattentive or distracted, resulting in 35 deaths, 1,040 injuries and considerable property damage.

OPP Constable Rob Charpentier expressed his support for this bill in a letter. He has personally issued approximately 90 tickets this year for illegal use of hand-held devices and supports demerit points to be included for this offence as a result of “the potential danger it poses relative to some other offences that do carry demerit points.”

Staff Sergeant Dave Rydzik of the Toronto Police Service, 42 division, in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River, confirmed: “Toronto Police–Traffic Services has found that when demerit points were added to the seat belt law, there was a dramatic rise in compliance rates over time to where we are today, which is an incredible 95 per cent.”

This demonstrates that with the introduction of demerit points to seat belt legislation, there was a noticeable increase in compliance. This bill, Bill 116, can produce the same effect for distracted driving.

Ontario is only one of a few provinces in Canada where distracted driving offences are not assessed demerit points. There is strong support for this bill from various stakeholders: members of the public, who sent e-mails to my office and also called in on radio interviews I did earlier this month; the Canadian Automobile Association, which provided many of the statistics mentioned; and the Insurance Bureau of Canada, whose vice-president states that imposing demerit points will improve drivers’ behaviour with respect to the use of hand-held devices while driving.

The current legislation, which fines distracted drivers \$155 for an offence, has not produced the desired safety on our roads. We have all witnessed, despite the current legislation and the ban on the use of hand-held devices while driving, someone talking or texting while driving or sitting at a stoplight.

Ranjana is only one of many victims killed or seriously injured by a distracted driver using wireless electronic devices. She is one too many. We must act now to make our roads safer for all Ontarians and implement this bill in an effort to prevent these tragedies from happening again in the future.

We, as representatives of the citizens of Ontario, need to support the adoption of Bill 116 into law, in an effort

to encourage safety and focused driving that will help save innocent lives. We must act now and support Bill 116 to increase the penalty for these offences to a fine not less than \$300 and not more than \$700 and, most importantly, assess three demerit points for each offence.

In closing, I ask all members of the Legislature to support this bill with increased penalties, especially adding demerit points for the illegal use of hand-held devices, in an effort to help save the lives of the innocent people who are being killed or injured by distracted drivers.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me, and I just want to thank the family for being here with us and our stakeholders. Thanks very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much to my friend the member from Scarborough–Rouge River for bringing forward this important piece of legislation, which I will be supporting, and proudly supporting. To the family of Manoranjana Kanagasabapathy, I thank you for your courage in bringing your story to the floor of this assembly.

Earlier this summer, one of my constituents, Rick Levesque, reached out to me. He started a petition—a province-wide campaign—to bring demerit points into the scenario if someone is caught texting or using their phone and driving, because he found, as we all have, that distracted driving legislation has not gone far enough and is abused. I promised him that I would bring this to the floor of the assembly, which I did. The first week we were back, I brought forward his petition, and I spoke with the minister, and since, I have spoken with Mr. Balkissoon.

**1350**

It obviously was our intent when we first brought forward legislation in this House on distracted driving—and I know my colleague Mr. O’Toole from Durham was an early champion on this, and I’m very proud to sit beside him in this assembly. But I think what we perhaps did early on is we didn’t have the appropriate oversight mechanism or perhaps we were short-sighted with respect to adding demerit points when it does come to distracted driving. I think it was a good point that was brought up then, and it is in this bill.

One thing I have seen is the amount of support that this initiative has brought to bear from a variety of people. The city of Ottawa is now putting forward a motion. The chief of police in Ottawa and the police association in Ottawa have also said that this is needed.

I’m pleased to see that the IBC is here, the Insurance Bureau of Canada. Doug DeRabbie and Matt Hiraishi are here today to support this legislation, as is my friend Elliott Silverstein from the CAA. I would be remiss not to mention that the Trillium auto dealers and Frank Notte have also expressed their support for adding demerit points.

If folks think the public isn’t supportive, I can tell you that the online polls I’ve seen and the call-in shows,

particularly CFRA in Ottawa, my local radio station, have been overwhelmingly supportive.

So you know something, Speaker? I think today we have an opportunity to support this legislation in honour of someone who passed too young from distracted driving, and we can do it together. I'm very proud to be here. I would also like to let the family know that on Tuesday, November 5, myself, Mr. Balkissoon and our transportation critic, Jeff Yurek, will be hosting a press conference to pursue this matter further, to talk about the urgency of this, because things have changed over the years. As I said, I think we understand that there was oversight in the original law.

I want to say thank you once again for the opportunity to debate this, and stand on the record to say I support it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** On behalf of New Democrats, I want to express our sympathy and condolences to the Kanagasabapathy family. It's never easy when you lose a family member and it doesn't matter the circumstances, but it happens to be this circumstance that caused that death.

I think this is a good bill. The member from Scarborough-Rouge River has got it right, and I think he's going to receive the support of everyone, which hopefully will bring forth a bill in a timely fashion to deal with this particular problem.

There was a time when I resisted the use of a cellular phone, resisted and did not use it, deliberately, because I felt it would be a serious intrusion in my life, that it would become an extension of my work, that it would bring my work wherever I was, whether it was here or outside of this place or in my home. I didn't want anything to do with that. You can only resist it for so long until you become taken by it, overwhelmed by it. It's almost sad and depressing to see members of this Legislature, our children and everybody else we know who are addicted to these phones and have them attached to their bodies every single moment of their lives. It's depressing. Eventually there will be chips in our brains, and who knows what else will happen with technology?

This is something that has taken over our lives. Once it takes over your life, you believe you are now entitled to the use of it in whatever form. So now that you are in your own car, you feel empowered and entitled to use that apparatus because you think you can, because you think that you are godly-like, because you think you're better than most, because you think you can text and dial a phone better than most and that nothing will ever happen because you are so much more capable than everybody else.

It's all a lie. So this bill is timely, because we have to deal with the problems that it has brought.

Similarly with seat belts, a long, long time ago—boy, did I resist the use of seat belts, for a variety of reasons, most of which was that it ruined my jackets and my shirts and my ties. But also because I felt entitled to say, in my own car, "I don't want to do this and I don't need to do

it." Until you get caught by the police—and that's your first lesson, because you've got to pay a penalty and there are demerit points. Then you start reluctantly saying, "Damn, I have to obey the law." It's a shame that you have to be caught before you do the right thing.

There is a sense of this entitlement and a sense of intrusion by the law into a private space that is ultimately incorrect, because what we're doing does endanger people's lives. We have to restrain that sense of entitlement, that sense of freedom the people feel they need to have in a way that—without a fine and without demerit points, people will continue to do whatever they think is right even though it brings about potential dangers.

So it's a good bill. Member from Scarborough-Rouge River, I'm convinced your government will soon take it over as their bill, possibly make some additions or changes, and I would be one happy member to support it when it does happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? The member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll be sharing my time with the members from Scarborough-Agincourt and Mississauga East-Cooksville.

I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough-Rouge River for bringing forward this very important piece of legislation. I know he feels very passionately about it.

I'm very pleased to speak today in support of Bill 116, the Manoranjana Kanagasabapathy Act, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalty for using hand-held devices while driving.

Like so many people, my father taught me to drive when I was a teenager. While I've long since passed my driving exam and taught my teenagers how to drive, at the age of 54, my dad still gives me driving tips. One thing he always says to me repeatedly is, "A green light is not a guarantee of immortality." What he means is that you need to be aware of all those things that are happening around you when you're in a car. That's what this bill is about.

While we have legislation to curb distracted driving, it is clear we need to do more. Whether driving on the 401 in Toronto, the Queensway in Ottawa, or a street in my riding, I'm troubled by the number of drivers who are either on a cellphone or looking down at their smartphone on their lap. We all recognize and are concerned by the distracted driver.

A recent study noted that if you're driving at 55 miles per hour and you take your eyes off the road, the average person will drive the length of a football field. So think of that: driving with your head down for the length of a football field. It's not only dangerous for you, but it's dangerous to people around you. Mr. Speaker, we see today the consequence that that can have on a family.

This bill is being put forward to further protect us and our family from distracted drivers. Bill 116 will increase the penalty for driving a vehicle while using a hand-held device to a maximum of \$700, and also apply three demerit points.

A number of my constituents have contacted me and asked me to support this legislation. I'd like to take a minute to read you the comments of one constituent, Ms. Indra Thind. She writes:

"I would like to bring your attention to the issue of distracted drivers.

"Whether I drive or am out for a walk, which is every day, I have seen someone texting or talking on a cell-phone every time.

"I have also had to take sudden, evasive actions because someone was talking on a cellphone and didn't notice me while I was walking across a crosswalk.

"Clearly, this is a very serious threat to public safety.

"I put this down to the fact that these people fear no consequences simply because the likelihood of being caught is slim to none.

"Coupled with that, the fines are very light even in the unlikely event someone is caught.

"I think that demerits must become an added consequence for distracted driving."

I'd like to thank her for her comments.

Additionally, I have a letter from Mayor Watson, the mayor of Ottawa. Mayor Watson recently wrote to the Premier asking her to make changes to the Highway Traffic Act. This letter was sent after city council passed Councillor Tierney's motion seeking an amendment to the Ontario Highway Traffic Act to include demerit points for those caught driving while using a cellphone.

Demerit points and increased fines provide a consequence that will underline the seriousness of the offence and the risk to public safety.

#### 1400

Driving is something that many of us do every day and have been doing for years. Eventually, we view it as routine, and we forget about the physics. We forget that we are driving a one-tonne piece of steel and plastic and whatever, all while navigating roads and responding to other drivers and obstacles around us.

As witnessed every day in the province, the dangers of distracted driving are real. According to the OPP, distracted driving is cited as a causal factor in 30% to 50% of traffic collisions but is probably much more, due to under-reporting.

We often forget that driving is a tremendous responsibility, Mr. Speaker. As I said, by raising the fines and the penalties, we will further reduce the risk to people from distracted drivers. It does more than just raise awareness; it provides a consequence.

This bill will further protect our families and our friends. Today, on behalf of the residents of Ottawa South, I encourage all the members of this Legislature to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm pleased today to rise and offer my thoughts on Bill 116, the Hand-Held Devices Penalty Act. I'd like to commend my colleague from Scarborough-Rouge River for taking on this important issue and bringing this legislation to the floor. Road safety is a

vital and noble endeavour, and this bill institutes one more measure that will help minimize risks on the road and ultimately save lives.

To begin, I want to acknowledge that driving is a fairly universal activity. There are over nine million licensed drivers in the province. When we get behind the wheel, we accept that there are certain risks associated with driving. Poor weather conditions, the driving habits of others, and substandard road conditions all pose risks to our safety. We accept these risks in return for the convenience of driving. However, to minimize these risks, it's important, when we get behind the wheel and for the entire time that we're driving, that our full attention is on the task.

Unfortunately, the proliferation of cellphones in the past 15 years has provided a tempting distraction for the time we spend behind the wheel. Texting and driving increases the probability of getting in an accident by 23 times—that's right, 23 times. In fact, using hand-held devices while behind the wheel has become the primary public road safety concern in Canada, surpassing drunk driving for the first time.

Actually, comparing distracted driving to drunk driving highlights some interesting parallels. A couple of generations ago, drinking and driving was commonplace. There was a culture of acceptance surrounding this practice. However, we all know that alcohol impairs judgment and increases the risk of accidents. At the time, legislation to deter this practice was enacted, and a number of groups like MADD sprung up to educate people on the dangers of drinking and driving. Now our young people, as a general group, are aware of the dangers of drinking and driving and make smart decisions when faced with those options.

So now this is what we must do: We must change the cultural attitude towards distracted driving. Right now, with the current fine of \$155, many people who do get caught consider that as a cost of doing business. That's why this bill takes an important step forward. Demerit points are a more effective deterrent—a deterrent that, as people become more aware of it and new drivers grow up with it, will permeate throughout our system and direct the collective attitude towards distracted driving.

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, who have partnered with Southland Insurance and the Ontario Brain Injury Association to establish the Drive Only.... Never Text campaign.

I'd also like to acknowledge the Insurance Bureau of Canada, CAA, TADA, and the family that's here today, who lost a loved one. Thank you for bringing your story forward. We hope this legislation will help prevent further problems in our society.

I look forward to working together with the family, the whole Legislature and the groups I mentioned earlier. Together, we can end texting and driving.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I would like to join my colleagues across the House and thank the member for

Scarborough–Rouge River for bringing forward this important bill, and thank interested parties on both sides, as well as the affected family of one of these tragic incidents, for coming today.

The Ontario NDP supports this bill as a means of increasing safety on our roads. There were 51,770 drivers who were charged with distracted driving in Ontario this past year. That's a staggering number of people who have been charged with distracted driving in just one year, despite the legislation that we have in place that's supposed to curtail this kind of behaviour. According to the Ontario Provincial Police, 65 people have been killed this year in distracted driving-related collisions, and, as mentioned by the previous speaker, that is, of course, ahead of the fatalities related to impaired driving.

We all know that distracted driving and using one's cellphone, whether talking on the phone or trying to sneak in a quick text here or there while driving, is very dangerous, and it has some real consequences. It has some very high costs, and those costs are both human and economic.

In terms of the human costs, CAA says that drivers engaged in text messaging are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash or a near crash. According to the government of Canada, the economic losses caused by traffic collision-related health care costs and lost productivity are at least \$10 billion, or 1% of Canada's GDP. I think the part that is most frustrating for so many people—and my colleague from Trinity–Spadina did a great job talking about what goes through people's minds and what may possibly lead them to engage in this kind of risky behaviour: because people think they're in control, they're capable, they're in their own space. All these things are going through people's minds. They're in a rush, they're really busy, they've got a lot of work commitments and obligations, but it really is needless.

There are always other options. There's the option to pull over on the side of the road. More and more, with this new technology, the technology that puts us into these situations where we may feel like we've got our cellphones kind of attached to our ears or attached to our hands—there are Bluetooth devices, and these are becoming more and more common. You see a lot of people walking around with them. We also have more and more smartphones, like the BlackBerry, which is made right here in Ontario, that have dictation possibilities. Also, there's a lot more Bluetooth integration in cars. I know my vehicle has that, and it's great because it will actually read me my text messages—even the emoticons and everything. So, really, there's no reason not to do these other things. Of course, the easiest thing to do is just to pull over on the side of the road.

Given the fact that there were over 51,000, almost 52,000, drivers charged with distracted driving last year, I think that's a pretty clear indication that our current penalties are not working. So I, for one, welcome this increase in penalty, both financially and also in terms of the thing that can always hit people the hardest, which is those demerit points, which are at a premium.

I am happy to support this, and I thank the member for bringing it forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise today to support my colleague and my neighbour from Scarborough–Rouge River for bringing this very important legislation to the House. I also want to thank him for his leadership, for listening to his community and actively serving our community so well in Scarborough–Rouge River.

Today, Bill 116 is before us because, folks, this would not have been an issue 10 years ago. Ironically, yesterday our House unanimously supported the Minister of Consumer Services on the wireless act. Isn't it ironic that yesterday we were here, collectively as a House, protecting consumers using wireless devices across Ontario, and today we now have a private member's bill to try to address the safety of the wireless devices we're using?

The member from Rouge River spoke so eloquently about the distraction and the consequences, but more importantly we need to be very mindful of what our role here is as a member of this Parliament.

We heard the member from Rouge River very eloquently talking about the OPP and the many lives that have been lost. But the more important piece here is that the proposed Bill 116, if passed, is about saving lives, saving families from the tragedy we just heard this afternoon. But more importantly, it's also a deterrent for many young people who have been distracted by using these electronic devices while driving. Something has to be changed.

The member opposite from Elgin–Middlesex–London spoke earlier with respect to distraction. We need to change attitude. We need to change people's mindset about these electronic devices because we know that one family losing a loved one is one too many.

As of August this year, 47 out of 177 fatalities on OPP-patrolled roads were caused by distracted drivers. The minister responsible for seniors just mentioned to me that 65,000 Ontarians have been caught with an electronic device, but how many more have not been caught and have what we call near-miss accidents, right? This is really important data we have to deal with.

**1410**

Everyone is talking about this, our concern about electronic devices while driving, but more importantly, we now have an opportunity as members of this provincial Parliament to address the safety of every Ontarian, because nobody in this House wants to go through what we just heard this afternoon. It is our responsibility. We're collectively responsible to do the right thing, not only supporting the member from Scarborough–Rouge River. If the Minister of Transportation can come up with further strengthening of the bill, the Highway Traffic Act, it's the right thing to do.

Thank you very much for this opportunity. I look forward to more conversation about Bill 116.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also extend my congratulations to the member from Scarborough–Rouge River, Mr. Balkissoon, and thank him for the interest here, as well as thanking the family who have lent their tragedy to encouraging people to support the bill.

I would say that I have a long history in this file. Seventeen years ago I introduced a bill prohibiting the use of handheld devices, cellphones. At that time, it was mostly speaking to people on the phone. Now texting is an even worse problem because you're looking at the keyboard and the keys and not at the road.

I think the remarks made here today helped to educate the public and, I would say more importantly—the young people in Ontario are probably the biggest offenders. I look at it every day. I commute a lot, and I find that driver distraction is increasing. Even with the cars themselves, the on-board digital dashboard today certainly needs to improve. It needs to be completely voice-interactive to really resolve this issue. So I do support the bill and I know our caucus is in support as well.

I recall that at the time that I was working on this, Dr. Donald Redelmeier and Dr. Robert Tibshirani actually issued a report in 1997 which tied the relationship, in a study, to driver distraction and the probability of accident. We know now from studies that you're 23 times more likely to be involved in an accident if you're texting or talking on a cellphone. So I think there's clear evidence here that by doing the right thing here, all of us can make this the law and potentially save lives. That was the case 16 or 17 years ago. I introduced the bill at least six times before it finally got included in one of the current government's bills. I think it was in 2009 that the thing actually got implemented. At that time—even this year, I think it's 52,000; 17,000 tickets have been laid in Toronto.

The thing is now, with the vehicles, you can't tell because of tinted windows and such. How do they enforce this? The police need to have an education program. In fact, there are methodologies now to actually disconnect the phones remotely. I think they could time them out and not allow it to happen unless the car is in park, where you can't interact with the on-board navigation unless the car is in park, unless, of course, you have an attached device which isn't tied in to the technology of the car.

So there's a lot that can be done by the vehicle manufacturers, but again, I want to commend the member from Scarborough–Rouge River. We all need to be part of the education of the public here. I certainly lend my voice and will be supporting the bill. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 116. I want to congratulate the originator of the bill, Mr. Balkissoon, the member for Scarborough–Rouge River. This is good legislation. It makes me proud to stand here today and sense that there's tripartite consensus and, I think, unani-

mous consensus that this is a piece of law that we should move forward with.

I also want to offer my condolences to the family. I can't imagine the pain and the heartache that you've suffered, coming out of a tragedy like this. We see it so often, where the greatest tribute to one of our friends or family members is to inform people about their story. I think you should be also very proud of yourselves for being strong enough to share this issue and voice your concerns with your community and your elected representatives to make this happen. It's a wonderful tribute to your loved one, and one that, again, I'm very proud to stand and support. It's not very often in this House that we see unanimous consent, and this is really the best work we can do in here.

I'm really thrilled to hear some of the great comments, particularly from the member from Durham, who touched on the technological aspects. The prevalence of technology in cellphones and smartphones in our vehicles is what we are talking about today. It isn't simply text messages, and it isn't simply telephone calls; it's everything. We do everything on these phones these days. We do our banking, we use it as our guide, our map, we make reservations to restaurants, and they happen almost without thought.

The message, in terms of the increased fines and penalties, is the message we need to send, similar to the days when not wearing your seat belt was accepted practice. That changed. Drinking and driving, as has been expressed here, is no longer acceptable. Thankfully, I'm of a generation when it was not something you did. Our friends understood—my generation understood—that you just didn't get into a vehicle with someone who had been drinking. That has changed over time, and this is the start of this in Ontario. Again, my hope is that, not only through the increased fines, we send a signal to the general public that it's a behaviour that's unacceptable while driving a vehicle.

But it sends a signal to manufacturers that they have to give us a safer product. Again, the ability of Bluetooth technology to connect with our cellphones—that connectivity—is an enabling mechanism; it's an enabling piece of technology. They have to give us a better piece of technology. Maybe, with increased public awareness, that public demand on manufacturers saying, "Give us something safer; give us something that still helps us, that we can interact with"—voice technology, as the member from Durham has talked about.

I talk to my phone. It's one of my best friends. It tells me where I'm going and when to wake up in the morning and my agenda. We have a relationship, me and Siri.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Whoa.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Well, it's a functional relationship, but it's one we certainly all know about now. We're all glued to our phones every day. They help guide us in our jobs. It's one that we can ensure that the technology that's built into our vehicles is safe and also ensures that we still get service.

I want to commend the member again for this piece of legislation. It's good public policy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I rise today to speak to this very worthy bill, introduced by my colleague, MPP Balkissoon. I'd like to begin by welcoming the family of Manoranjana Kanagasabapathy, whom I met earlier when MPP Balkissoon first introduced the bill. Welcome.

I would also like to welcome my good friend Doug DeRabbie and Matt Hiraishi, from the Insurance Bureau of Canada, as well as Elliott Silverstein, from the CAA. Thank you so much for coming. Your coming here means a lot to us.

Speaker, there's nothing we can do to bring back Manoranjana—or Ranjana, as she was called by the family—but we can do something to ensure that her death was not in vain, and that is what this bill is about. What this bill does is give teeth to a law.

It's against the law to speak on the phone or text or use a cellphone in any form or fashion while we drive. But the challenge is that there isn't enough of a penalty for doing so. So what we find is that too many people still use a cellphone while they're driving. What this will do—increasing the penalty from \$150 to \$300 to \$700 and, more importantly, adding three demerit points if caught doing so—is give teeth to the law.

Through this new act, should this bill pass, I want the family to know that Ranjana will live forever.

Speaker, we have evidence that when we add teeth to a law in this fashion, it works. Other speakers have given us the example of the seat belt. That's a great example. When it was first introduced, not a lot of people would wear the seat belt. Today, I think it's almost 100% compliance. That is what we are trying to do here today. That is what this bill is about.

1420

Often people talk about—for instance, they say Ranjana's death was an accident. I'm going to disagree. I don't have the facts, and I don't want to focus on a particular case, because I don't know all of the details. But the fact is, if somebody takes a light and drops it, a lit match, on dry leaves and they catch fire, that's not an accident; that is negligence. In the same way, we know that if you're going to use the cellphone and drive, it is going to increase the probability of an accident by 23 times. So when we do that, we don't cause accidents; what we are doing is negligence.

That is why I am so supportive of adding more punitive measures, because, really, we all know we ought not to be texting or speaking on the phone while we drive, but we still do it. When something goes wrong, to call it an accident—in my view, that was gross negligence, because we knew that by doing that, there was a high probability, 23 more times, that we could end up in an accident.

That is why I think the member for Scarborough—Rouge River for bringing this very important bill forward. As soon as I heard that he was going to do it, I did go the day that he had his press conference, because I think this is a very important bill. I have a 15-year-old

daughter. She is already talking to me about getting her driver's licence. I can tell you, this child, like many children who are 15, uses the cellphone constantly. She's constantly texting. As a mother, I'm going to feel much, much safer to know that if she were to text and drive—as in when she gets to drive, and I'm going to delay that for as long as I can—there will be penalties.

You know, this is what being an MPP is all about. This is the crux of what we do: legislating to make the province a better place. This really is the core of our job. On a day like this, it is very satisfying, very fulfilling, to be an MPP, to make this a province a better place to live in, particularly when all MPPs, all sides of the House, agree and support this very, very worthy bill. Well done. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to be able to rise today in support of the member for Scarborough—Rouge River's bill, Bill 116.

To the family, I would offer the recognition of your courage to come forward. My wish for you today is that you will find some comfort in today's proceedings. One life is one too many.

There are a number of things that people have chosen to speak about in this bill, and I've chosen a couple. One of them is the issue around enforcement. I think this is probably one of the reasons why people are willing to take the risk, because it's unlikely that it will be enforced. You're zipping along the road or you come to a traffic light and you see the number of people who are distracted by their cellphones or other technology like that. So if people get away with something and they didn't cause an accident, it feels like it's a risk that you want to take.

Part of that, too, comes from the fact that thousands of people every day, certainly in the greater Toronto area, sit on all the various highways coming into the city, and sit and sit. It's that boredom, that notion that you're going to be sitting there for a few more minutes, you're not moving, that I think contributes to the number of people willing to take the risk.

That's where I think a private member's bill such as the one we have before us today and the consequent promotion that I think will accompany this bill, the recognition of CAA and the Insurance Bureau, the more people that come together to recognize the fact that there are just too many people—well, I would say one is too many—who are willing to take the risk. They know that enforcement is difficult. They get bored or frustrated sitting in their cars.

The importance here is that people, as a result of this bill, should not feel there's a chance that, even though the fines are greater, they're willing to take the risk. The risk is not appropriate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We now return to the member for Scarborough—Rouge River for his two-minute reply.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I really want to thank my colleagues from Nepean—Carleton, Trinity—Spadina, Ottawa

South, Elgin–Middlesex–London, Kenora–Rainy River, Scarborough–Agincourt, Durham, Essex, Mississauga East–Cooksville and York–Simcoe for all their comments and showing great support for this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to read a piece of a letter I received from the deputy commissioner of the OPP for Traffic Safety and Operational Support: “I have read your private member’s Bill 116 ... and do support some changes to the current distracted driving regulations. As you know, the Ontario Provincial Police, along with all Canadian police agencies, have targeted what we have identified as the big four causes of fatal motor vehicle collisions. These are impaired driving, distracted driving, non-use of seat belts and aggressive driving.”

He also says, “We work on a constant basis with the Ministry of Transportation and lobby to get regular changes to the Highway Traffic Act... The issue of demerit points attached to a distracted driving charge is only one of these.”

I just want to say thank you to the deputy commissioner for getting in touch with my office.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Ottawa South reminded me of something, because he talked about his dad teaching him to drive. I remember when my three children went for their driver’s licence, and I did advise them that a vehicle can kill and therefore you have to learn to handle it with care because it is as dangerous as any weapon that is available. I think we need to adopt the same thing for a cellphone. It is something you are attached to, something you need, but it can kill. It is a dangerous weapon, so you have to be responsible when you use it in a vehicle.

I just want to reply to my colleague from Durham, because he did say that there’s technology available today to disable the device while it’s moving, and that’s absolutely true. The problem that somebody posed to me on a talk show is, “What happens if I’m a passenger? I’m not driving, so I should be allowed to use my device.” That’s the challenge we, as legislators, will face as this goes forward, because we will have to differentiate between a driver and a passenger, and it’s most difficult.

One of my colleagues—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. I’m sorry, but the time has ended for your private member’s bill.

HAWKINS GIGNAC ACT  
(CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY), 2013  
LOI HAWKINS GIGNAC DE 2013  
(PROTECTION CONTRE  
LE MONOXYDE DE CARBONE)

Mr. Hardeman moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 to provide safety requirements related to the presence of unsafe levels of carbon monoxide on premises / Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la

Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l’incendie pour prévoir des exigences en matière de protection contre la présence, dans des lieux, de niveaux dangereux de monoxyde de carbone.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I’m pleased to rise to once again speak to the Hawkins Gignac Act. This bill would save lives and prevent tragedies by requiring carbon monoxide detectors in Ontario homes.

**1430**

First, I want to recognize and thank those who are in the gallery today to support this issue. Matt Hiraishi and Doug DeRabbie are here from the Insurance Bureau of Canada. The Insurance Bureau of Canada has been very helpful in getting the message this far. We also have the 1st Ingersoll Girl Guides, who are here to help raise awareness for the act. Also, John Gignac, founder of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO Education, is here in attendance.

The Hawkins-Gignac Foundation works to increase awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide and helps purchase and distribute detectors to fire departments across the country. I’ve worked closely with John over the past five years and would like to thank him for his support of this bill and for all his efforts to raise awareness on the issue. Thank you, John.

John created a foundation after his niece Laurie Hawkins and her young family were poisoned by carbon monoxide after the exhaust of their gas fireplace was blocked, filling their home with poisonous gas. Sadly, our community lost Laurie and Richard Hawkins and their two children, 14-year-old Cassandra and 12-year-old Jordan, in this tragedy. This tragic event may have been prevented if they had had a functioning carbon monoxide detector.

Laurie, a community relations officer with the OPP, was a valued member of our community, particularly through her role with local schools, teaching the VIP program—values, influences and peers. Laurie’s profound impact on the children was recognized when the Thames Valley District School Board named a new school in Ingersoll in her memory.

Richard Hawkins was an accomplished hockey player and continued to show his passion for the game as a coach for the local hockey team. He was both a dedicated father and an active member of the community.

Cassandra was a grade 9 student. She was a member of the justice league and enjoyed figure skating and swimming.

Jordan, just 12, was working as a local paper boy. He played hockey and loved all outdoor activities, including fishing and camping.

For weeks prior to the family falling ill, they thought they had come down with the flu. That is what makes carbon monoxide so dangerous, Mr. Speaker. It is colourless, odourless and has no taste. As a result, the carbon monoxide’s early symptoms were nearly impos-

sible to detect. The symptoms can include headaches, fatigue and dizziness, all similar to the flu. The family had no idea they were suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning.

The gas can be produced by any fuel-burning appliance. These are potential sources present in most homes: water heaters, furnaces, gas stoves, space heaters, and even our garages where we warm up our cars in the winter. Without a carbon monoxide detector, there is no way of knowing if you are at risk.

Sadly, these tragedies are still occurring. Two months ago, an elderly couple in Burk's Falls was found unconscious in their home due to carbon monoxide poisoning and were rushed to the hospital. Luckily the woman was saved, but the man perished. The couple did not have a CO detector in their home.

Due to the countless tragedies like this one, I once again stand before this Legislature to ask for support for the Hawkins Gignac Act. I first introduced this bill in 2008, shortly after the tragic loss of the Hawkins family. The bill passed second reading and was referred to the committee, but prorogation stopped the bill from proceeding further. In fact, I reintroduced the Hawkins Gignac Act three more times, only to see it die on the order paper because of prorogation each time.

Since the initial introduction of the Hawkins Gignac Act in 2008, I have worked closely with many different people and organizations about the need for carbon monoxide detectors, and I want to thank everyone who shared their thoughts and suggestions on the bill. All this work has led to today. Today, I ask for support to ensure that the Hawkins Gignac Act passes not only second reading, but through the committee and third reading as well.

This bill is long overdue, Mr. Speaker. Currently, the law surrounding carbon monoxide detectors is almost non-existent. CO alarms are only required in homes built after August 2001. This provision does not allow for continued enforcement by fire departments or even require that a detector be functioning properly after initial inspection. The Hawkins Gignac Act will allow the government to replicate existing laws governing smoke alarms for carbon monoxide detectors.

I believe detectors are essential in all homes with fuel-burning appliances or attached garages. CO detectors are a simple solution to a devastating problem.

In 2009, Dr. Andrew McCallum, the chief coroner of Ontario at the time, recommended that carbon monoxide detectors be made mandatory on every level of all homes. Carbon monoxide detectors save lives. The Ontario fire marshal agrees. During Fire Prevention Week earlier this month, the Ontario fire marshal spoke to the importance of CO detectors: "Carbon monoxide alarms are critical life safety devices. They detect the presence of smoke and deadly gas and provide those precious seconds for occupants to escape. Everyone needs to have one in their home." The detectors themselves range in price but are available for \$20 to \$25, a small price to pay to save a life.

The people of Ontario have embraced the 1997 law requiring smoke detectors on every level of their homes. I truly hope that the people recognize the need for similar provision for carbon monoxide detectors. While there have been many preventable CO-related tragedies since the first introduction of this bill in 2008, I have also received many letters from a number of people whose lives were saved by carbon monoxide detectors.

In fact, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has even brought to my attention the added benefit of this bill for Ontario firefighters and medical personnel. Imagine that a 911 call comes in because someone is unconscious. When the emergency personnel arrive, they have no reason to suspect carbon monoxide poisoning without the alarm from a functioning CO detector. What seems like purely a safety issue for the homeowner can easily put Ontario's first responders in harm's way. A carbon monoxide detector may not only save the life of the homeowner, but it could also protect our emergency personnel.

Thankfully, many municipalities in the province, including South West Oxford and Ingersoll in my riding of Oxford, have passed local bylaws requiring carbon monoxide detectors in homes with fuel-burning appliances or an attached garage. These municipal bylaws have resulted in countless stories from families who have been saved because of the installation of a carbon monoxide alarm.

Just last month, a downtown Hamilton triplex was evacuated after high levels of carbon monoxide were detected. Luckily, no one was injured. Without the CO detector in place, the results could have been tragic.

The municipalities are taking a step in the right direction, but a handful of municipalities are not enough. Do we only want Ontario families to have protection from carbon monoxide if they live in certain towns? Even with the efforts of these municipalities, over 250 Ontarians have perished from carbon monoxide poisoning in the last 15 years, excluding suicides. I commend these municipalities for their work, but it is apparent that those bylaws don't replace a provincial law. All Ontario families should be protected against the dangers of carbon monoxide.

But each of these municipal bylaws places different requirements on landlords and homeowners. The different rules in different municipalities create unnecessary red tape and confusion. Our goal should be to create one law that's easy to understand and to comply with. The easier it is to protect Ontarians, the better.

This is why we need to move forward with the Hawkins Gignac Act. Despite the increasing awareness stemming from these tragedies and from the work of groups like the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation and the Insurance Bureau of Canada, this issue is not going away.

I mentioned the Girl Guides earlier. This past March, a Girl Guides troop from Ingersoll, who are in the gallery today, experienced their own carbon monoxide scare. While camping for the weekend in a cabin near Princeton, Ontario, the group evacuated the cabin after the



carbon monoxide alarm went off. It turns out that the stove had a faulty pilot light, causing carbon monoxide to seep into the cabin. Luckily, no one was hurt.

Troop leader Amy Boddy was so moved by the experience that she wrote to me saying, "We tested the CO detector when we arrived at the cabin, but without it having been there, I'm confident we would not have survived the weekend." I am happy that they are all safe and want to thank them for attending today.

The potential for more of these tragedies continues to rise as Ontarians become more concerned with the environment and rising energy prices. Because of these reasons, creating an airtight home is becoming more common. Replacing drafty windows may reduce heating costs, but it can also increase the levels of carbon monoxide in the home. Again, since carbon monoxide can't be detected without a functioning alarm, it is clear that these tragedies will continue to occur without the passage of the proper legislation.

In fact, the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs has written that, "Hundreds of Canadians are hospitalized every year from carbon monoxide poisoning, many of whom are permanently disabled. Everyone is at risk—88% of all homes have something that poses a carbon monoxide threat."

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It's apparent that carbon monoxide is an urgent issue that needs to be dealt with. The solution was described well by the leading injury prevention association in Canada, Parachute, when they wrote, "Every Ontario family deserves to be safe in their home. Carbon monoxide alarms are an easy solution and can prevent tragic outcomes."

The worst part of the tragedy caused by carbon monoxide exposure is that these tragedies are preventable. I'm pleased to say that, over the past five years, Ontarians have become more aware of the need for carbon monoxide detectors in their homes and have installed detectors in many cases. But there are still far too many people at risk. I want to encourage everyone who is listening today, here and at home, not to wait for the legislation to pass but to make sure that they and their loved ones have carbon monoxide detectors in their homes as soon as possible.

Working together, this Legislature can prevent more unnecessary carbon-monoxide-related tragedies. With your support for the Hawkins Gignac Act, we can raise awareness of the issue, move this bill forward to committee and help ensure its passage to protect Ontario families from the dangers of carbon monoxide.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to bring the bill forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I would like to start by thanking the member for Oxford for taking this initiative, not just this time but also the three previous times that he has brought this bill forward to the House. New Democrats have been proud to support his bill, will be

supporting his bill today, and have done so each and every time that he has brought this bill forward in its previous incarnations.

Carbon monoxide poisoning is the number one cause of accidental deaths in North America. These deaths could be avoided by ensuring that all homes are equipped with carbon monoxide functioning alarms, provided that they have, of course, a carbon monoxide source. The bill would require a carbon monoxide detector to be put in all homes with a fuel-burning appliance such as a furnace or a gas stove, or even homes that have an attached garage.

I think we've generally agreed how important it is to have carbon monoxide detectors in our homes, but I wanted to talk about what we've currently got in Ontario right now. Right now in Ontario, every city has the legislative authority over carbon monoxide detectors, and many do have bylaws that mandate their use. Some examples across our province are Sudbury, Thunder Bay, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie. However, it is a patchwork system, and provincial action should be taken to ensure that there is some uniformity right across the province.

I know that in a large part of my riding of Kenora-Rainy River, we have a lot of unincorporated areas, so even if theoretically all the municipalities in my riding were to adopt a bylaw, that still leaves many people, including myself, who would not be covered by this kind of a system. So it's important to have a blanket across the province. As I said, it's important for consistency, it's important for uniformity and also, more importantly, it raises the profile of this issue. It makes it front and centre in people's minds, because it makes it the law of the land.

So this is a very simple, yet a very important, bill and I am pleased to support it. I know that my fellow New Democrats are also pleased to support it, and I want to leave a little bit of time on the clock for them to participate in this debate.

I again want to thank the member from Oxford for bringing this bill forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I rise today with great pleasure to support the bill put forward by the member from Oxford. He is to be applauded for his bill. There's little doubt that it should be passed. This legislation would ultimately save lives; I agree with him. I spoke in favour of this bill last spring, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to do it again at second reading debate. I know this bill comes from a desire to raise awareness, because that's what private members' bills do, but also I know it comes from a caring for his community of Oxford and for people across Ontario. So I appreciate that he's doing it.

I think it's also important that it's an attempt to avoid tragedies that can be prevented. I can understand that. For those of you who may have been in this Legislature long enough to remember, when I first arrived back in 2003, I put forward three private member's bills in my efforts to bring forward an issue I cared about, and that was with regards to fire safety.

Over time, I have become familiar with the issues that we face every day when we enter our homes and how they can be unsafe. So I'm very pleased that my colleague the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services announced last May that our government was moving ahead to make automatic sprinklers mandatory in residences for seniors with disabilities and other vulnerable residents of Ontario. That announcement built on our government's work to protect residents of this province.

In my former role as minister responsible for seniors, I helped implement the retirement homes regulation act. That act regulated the care of our seniors in retirement homes for the first time in our province's history. Among other things, the act now requires retirement homes to train all staff in fire prevention and safety, to post an explanation of the measures taken and to provide information to residents about nighttime staffing levels and whether the home has sprinklers in each resident's room.

In my own Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we have developed tough building code and fire code standards. In fact, carbon monoxide detectors were first included in the Ontario building code back in 1993, because we recognized that carbon monoxide poisoning had become the number one cause of accidental poisoning in North America. In 2001, the building code was amended to require carbon monoxide detectors in all suites of residential occupancy where there is a source of carbon monoxide, such as a gas furnace or a gas appliance. The requirement covers both houses and multiple-unit residential buildings.

Across Ontario, a number of municipalities have passed bylaws based on the advice of their fire professionals. I do want to take a moment to thank our fire professionals. They work very, very hard on an ongoing basis, not just when we bring a piece of fire legislation here or carbon monoxide legislation. They have a regular day that they come to the Legislature and talk to us and educate us, so I appreciate the time that they do come to this Legislature and to our constituency offices to help us understand these issues.

Again, a number of municipalities have passed bylaws based on this advice, requiring carbon monoxide detectors in dwellings, often using the authority to pass property standard bylaws set out in the Building Code Act, 1992. These municipalities include my own, Brampton. Cities like Mississauga, Toronto and Oshawa have shown that leadership.

However, I acknowledge that a community-by-community approach is not the ideal way to address this issue, and we heard that from the speaker previous to my speaking. For years now, the Ontario fire service has been championing public safety. They have asked that all residents be protected by carbon monoxide alarms.

Many fire departments have enacted local bylaws that prescribe CO alarms in all residential buildings in which occupants are at risk of exposure to the poisonous CO gas. In fact, in my own home municipality of Brampton,

many residents have benefited from the protection of a CO alarm since 1998, when the Brampton fire department saw the need for these alarms and took action. They went to council, they lobbied and they got council to pass a bylaw to protect our residents.

This bill will amend the fire code and includes requirements to install carbon monoxide detectors that mitigate the risk created by the presence of these unsafe levels of carbon monoxide.

Sometimes residents have questions about what kind of alarm to buy. When you go to the store, sometimes you are overwhelmed by the number of choices and what you should install in your home. The fire service has been vocal in telling us that it's important to look for an alarm that conforms to a Canada CSA standard—and that's a 6.19 standard; that's the standard for residential carbon monoxide alarming devices—or the Underwriters Laboratories standard number 2034, the standard for single- and multiple-station carbon monoxide alarms. That's what I tell my residents to look for. By adhering to those standards, a homeowner can take some comfort in knowing that the carbon monoxide alarm has been manufactured in such a manner that it will protect them and their families and provide the maximum amount of protection.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, I'm proud that our government has decided to move forward on important life-saving initiatives. I'm glad to have been at the table. It took a long time to get my private member's bill into government legislation, and I was very pleased and proud that actually we had lots of support. I know the member from Oxford was supportive and gave constructive advice on how to make the legislation better.

I think everybody collectively in this House knows that it's important to avoid tragedies like the one in 2008 that took the lives of the OPP officer and her family in Oxford.

**1450**

We need to work together. We need to work with local governments. We need to work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. We need to work with residential institutions and, of course, until the legislation is passed, we need to work with families on the importance of this issue.

I want to support the bill put forward by the member from Oxford because it's going to save lives. I want to see carbon monoxide detectors in every home in Ontario, so I'm happy to support this legislation and this member's work in his private member's deliberations.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** It is my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 77, the private member's bill from my colleague and friend from Oxford. Two weeks ago, in the community of Waterdown, to the northwest of Burlington, firefighters responded when a family's carbon monoxide detector was triggered. Crews arrived and evacuated a father and daughter from the house, which was showing carbon monoxide readings of 150 parts per

million. They, luckily, did not require medical attention, but it could very easily have been anything but a feel-good story. Continuous exposure to carbon monoxide at those levels can cause serious health issues. If this family didn't have that alarm installed, exposure would have been lethal within hours. Without an alarm, there is an outside chance that you would be aware that something was wrong if you were awake, but if you were asleep, you wouldn't notice a thing; you would just never wake up.

Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless, taste-free gas, and it is poisonous. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headaches, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, shortness of breath and flu-like symptoms.

A variety of situations can lead to elevated CO levels: a gas-fired generator during a power outage, a space heater or hot water heater, a garage where the car idles as you're warming it up for winter, or leaving an unvented gas stove turned on. Whatever the cause, if you lack a carbon monoxide detector, you have no sure way of knowing when your house is filling up with poisonous gas.

The source of the problem at the Waterdown home was the heating system, reportedly an issue with the boiler and chimney. With cold weather on its way and homes sealed tighter than ever these days, the risks are not insignificant. Energy conservation means that we strive to make our homes more airtight and energy-efficient, but it is also increasing the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

That is why a bill like Bill 77 is so important. It would amend the building code to require carbon monoxide alarms in all homes with either a fuel-burning appliance or an attached storage garage. In multi-residential buildings, detectors would be required in suites with a fuel-burning appliance or those adjacent to a garage or service room with a fuel-burning appliance. Currently, the Ontario building code only requires carbon monoxide alarms in homes built after August 6, 2001, which leaves too many families at risk.

In 1997, this House passed similar legislation to Bill 77, requiring the installation and enforcement of smoke alarms in all homes. Earlier this fall, we dealt with similar legislation around radon detection. This is a common-sense measure that will save lives.

The member from Oxford is a principled and patient man. He first introduced this bill in 2008, but it died on the order paper when Premier McGuinty prorogued the House early in 2010. The same happened when it was reintroduced in 2011.

Since 2008, many municipalities have enacted bylaws to require these carbon monoxide alarms, thereby protecting their citizens. But this is an issue that would benefit most from a province-wide approach, and which deserves to be passed into law by this Legislature. I am very happy to support Bill 77.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's a pleasure to stand. The first thing I really need to do is to salute—as we call him in

our caucus—Uncle Ernie. I know I'm supposed to refer only to his riding, but he is Uncle Ernie to us, because he is in fact the uncle of our member from Timiskaming—Cochrane. I just want to applaud his tenacity with this.

This is five years in the making. This is four different times that he has tabled the bill. Shame on us, in a sense, that it has taken this long to get to this point, but it's cause for celebration that it will now become law. That's impressive. I want to also thank those who have come out to support this bill, because it's such an important initiative.

I want to tell a story. Many here know that I'm a United Church minister. I still am; I'm preaching this Sunday at Humbercrest church, if anybody wants to come on down to Baby Point Road. When I first came back to Toronto after being settled "in the country" as a United Church minister, my husband and I rented a house on Triller Avenue in my riding. At that point, honestly, if you had asked me about carbon monoxide or carbon monoxide detectors, I would have drawn a blank. I would have known nothing about it.

One day, we were just going about our business at home, and the alarm starts going off. As far as we knew, it was only a fire detector, but we checked, and there was no fire. The alarm kept going off, and I said, "Well, let's play it safe. Maybe there's something wrong." We called 911. The fire department was there. And here's to the fire departments, by the way: They'll be very happy about this day. The fire department was there in a few minutes, and within a few minutes, the entire street was cordoned off, not just our house. That's how bad it was; that's how high the levels were in the house. I had a very quick lesson. In fact, I'm standing here today because of that carbon monoxide detector, and so is my husband.

By the way, kudos also to first responders, who probably are the first educators as well on this issue in many, many instances, and they shouldn't have to be.

Again, there was an instance where we had a very quick education on the dangers of carbon monoxide and what it can be. We smelled nothing, knew nothing, thought nothing. In fact, it would have been very easy—I'm glad we didn't; it was just luck, truly—to disconnect it, thinking, "Well, there's no fire. This is obviously malfunctioning," and keep on keeping on.

I fear that too often, that's exactly what happens in situations like this. Many people don't know about carbon monoxide. They don't know they need the detectors in their homes. They don't know it can be caused by simple mal-operations of appliances we have in our homes, all of us: heating systems etc.

Many people who are living in rental accommodation, or many people who have just bought a house, don't know whether they have carbon monoxide detectors or not. Usually, when you walk into a house and you see something there, you assume it's a fire detector. Are you really sure it's just a fire detector or a carbon monoxide detector? What do you have?

I hope that anybody watching here today or reading about this, as this bill passes, will at least check out their

own circumstance. If they do that alone, that will save lives, because honestly, there is such a lack of knowledge about this topic out there, and it's so incredibly dangerous. We've seen the effects and we've heard the stories, and I'm one of them, but there are many, many, many others.

Again, it's also not just that the bill targets all residences. I want to make it very clear that this is also regarding tenants. If you live in a tenanted premise, you need to check and you need to make sure that your landlord has installed a carbon monoxide detector. Luckily, we lived in rental premises back then and ours had, but many have not, and many in my riding have not. In fact, many in my riding don't even have fire detectors in their homes despite the fact that that is a law.

I would say, absolutely, we in the New Democratic Party have supported this bill every single time. I think it's actually five times it has been introduced. There were four times on the paper, and then there was another time when it was attempted to be brought back. Anyway, it's five years of Uncle Ernie's life that have gone into this bill, and we support it; every single person, we've supported it every time. I'm so glad that finally it's going to see the light of day.

Then the other question is enforcement. We know that that's a difficult topic, the limited time that we have in our first-line responders to do that enforcement work. So let's be self-enforcing, quite frankly. Until this becomes law—and it will take a little while—right away, please, everyone, check your own living quarters. Please, everyone, know what you've got. Know if it's working. Make sure it is. That alone will make Uncle Ernie happy.

I can speak on behalf of Andrea Horwath, our leader, and everyone in the New Democratic Party in Ontario: We congratulate you, Uncle Ernie. We congratulate you on this moment. Finally, it has come. Hopefully, a cake will be cut tonight, and lives will be saved.

1500

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 77. Let me start off by commending the member for Oxford for the hard work he's put into this, obviously, but also for his perseverance in continuing to bring it back time and time again. I think that most members of this House, if not all members of this House, would agree that this is actually an issue whose time has come.

Like other private members' bill initiatives along the way, often the technology or the things we have in place begin to outpace the current regulations. I think that a number of constituencies around the province of Ontario—a number of communities—have taken the lead on this, and I think that what the member from Oxford is saying is that we need province-wide regulation in this regard that finally brings this issue home in a way that is meaningful to the people of Ontario. And people, whether they be in a home that they own, whether they be in rental premises, whether they be in whatever they

call home, will have the confidence and security that if there is a carbon monoxide leak somewhere in the house, they will be warned about it before it has the tragic consequences that led, I understand, to the introduction of Bill 77, which we have before us, that being the tragedy that befell the Hawkins family. Nobody wants to see that happen again, obviously. Nobody wants to see that happen to any family in any community in the province of Ontario or in the country.

Obviously, there are stakeholders who need to be consulted, and have been consulted along the way. Once again, I applaud the member for the work he has put into this in talking to the stakeholders, talking to the regulators, talking to the lawyers who draft the regulations—talking to all those people who would have a hand in ensuring that when this does come forward, it comes forward in a proper form that the regulators agree is the best way to bring it forward, that the stakeholders agree is the best way to introduce it, and that we as politicians have the confidence that what we want—that common lay knowledge we bring to this House—is brought to fruition in a way that is meaningful to the people in the province of Ontario.

I know that simply going home and falling asleep at night should be something that we're all quite confident in: that we know we're going to wake up in the morning; that we know if there's a fire, we've got smoke detectors; if something in the house malfunctions, we've also got carbon monoxide detectors that are going to tell us it's time to get out of there.

We should pay tribute to those people who put their lives on the line on a daily basis to ensure that we have safety in our own communities: the firefighters and first responders—the paramedics and police officers—who show up at premises when these types of things happen. They need to have the confidence that when they're entering a building, they also know what the condition of that building is and what the environment is like in that building. They often describe firefighters—and I'm sure this applies to a number of emergency services—as the people who are running in when you're running out. Certainly, in this regard, when these people are coming in to effect a rescue, they need to have knowledge of exactly what exists in those conditions so they can effect a rescue in the right way.

I think it speaks to the character of the individual who is bringing forward this bill that he has maintained this steady pressure on the House. Having become chief government whip and being able to sit in some of the House leaders' meetings, I now understand even more than I did before that all three parties have a hand in making sure private members' bills go through. So often we point to the government and say, "You've got to get this through," when the reality is that it's an agreement that comes as a result of a negotiation between the three parties.

I would love to see this bill go on to committee. I would like to see it get through committee, either in an improved form or in its current form. If there's a

stakeholder out there who's got some information we haven't covered, let's get that information. Let's improve it if it needs improving; let's move it on if it doesn't need improving.

I'd like to see it come back for third reading, and I'd like to see it become law, because I think the effort that the individual has extended and, as I said earlier, the perseverance he has exhibited in ensuring that this bill is given due consideration, is admirable. It speaks to the way I think our forefathers and foremothers envisioned that this place would work, in a co-operative and a collaborative fashion.

So I'm proud to stand with a member of another party today and tell him that it's an excellent idea—it should move forward—and to thank him for bringing it forward. I think he's also exhibiting the sort of action that people expect of their elected officials, regardless of what party we belong to. Something took place in his community, and he has responded. Out of a very tragic event and circumstance, the member from Oxford is trying to get some societal good out of it so that those people who knew the Hawkinses well would understand that, even though their death was tragic, they haven't died in vain. I'll be proud to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I am proud to stand once again in the Legislature to speak in favour of Bill 77, the Hawkins Gignac Act. I want to congratulate my seatmate, the member from Oxford, and the members of Laurie and Richard's family, who should all be commended for their determination in ensuring that a tragedy like the one that befell their family never, ever happens again.

The deaths of Laurie and Richard and their children hit very close to home in my riding, as they were former residents of North Bay. As mayor of the city of North Bay at the time, our community was determined to do something to ensure we never saw anything like that happen to another family in our community. 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 this Hawkins Gignac Act in my community has and will continue to save lives. Its passage will do likewise for all Ontarians.

The frightening thing about carbon monoxide poisoning is the number of close calls that we do not hear about, the close calls that do not get reported in the media. Let me give you an example. Last January, the North Bay fire department received 17 carbon monoxide alarm calls—17, Speaker, in one month. Of those, four had confirmed levels of carbon monoxide in the home. Fortunately, four potential tragedies were averted.

But as we're all aware, not everyone is that lucky. In September, an 84-year-old man from Burk's Falls died, and his wife was left critically ill from CO poisoning. I'm sure if members of this Legislature checked with their local fire departments, you would get a better sense of

just how frequently these close calls really do come about.

The last time I stood and spoke on this, I relayed the story of Colleen Point, a high school teacher in North Bay. She, her husband and young daughter started to feel nausea and tingling, but only when their CO alarm went off did the family of five get dressed and leave their home. Thankfully, they took their alarm seriously, and their lives were indeed saved.

CO detectors do save lives. It's as simple as that. 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, law or no law, especially in a day like today, when you can easily get a smoke detector and CO alarm combined in one device? Why require one and not the other?

As winter approaches, I want to remind especially northern and rural Ontario residents to please periodically check the exterior vents on your home to make sure they're clear of snow and ice. This is one of the biggest dangers we face in the north when it comes to possible carbon monoxide poisonings, and the importance of this message can't be stressed enough, Speaker.

In closing, I congratulate members of this House for supporting the Hawkins Gignac Act to ensure that it receives third and final reading. We owe Laurie and Richard's family at least that much. Passing this legislation means we, as legislators, will literally save lives, and it's not every day that we in this House can say that. Please join me in supporting the member from Oxford today.

1510

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm happy to support Bill 77, introduced by the member from Oxford. I have to tell him that when we persevere, we finally get it; right? I introduced condo reform four years in a row. You've done the same thing. It usually takes an initiative from a member at least four times until they're heard by governments—not two, not three, but four. Why? I'll never understand it.

I know the member from Oakville makes the point that if we just co-operated a little better, things would get done. But it can get done. If you've got unanimous agreement with all three political parties, the government can take that initiative, thank the member from Oxford, and introduce it as their own bill. That party would be obliged, I would think, to support that bill. The third party that supports it, I think, would be obliged to support it—and we're done. There are ways to get things done if we want it, as opposed to blaming somebody else if it doesn't.

It is equally true that if the Conservative Party and New Democrats agree on some bill by way of debate on a motion here, or a bill, the government still has the power unilaterally to say no, not to proclaim that bill. They have the power to say no.

So yes, it would be nice for parties to agree. And wouldn't it be great if we just could co-operate and eliminate politics altogether and become one party? It would be really nice, but it's just not going to happen. But there are ways to make things happen if we all seem to be in agreement.

The problem identified here—and it was identified by the member from Parkdale–High Park—is that the majority of people simply do not know that carbon monoxide kills you. They just don't know. You have educated people who don't know. You have a whole lot of people in Ontario who have never gotten this information from anybody, alerting them to this serious, lethal problem. Here is a failure of governments not to educate the public around these dangers. It's a failure of the municipal governments, as well, because they, too, have a job in their own communities to alert people to these problems. We can solve lack of knowledge around issues of this sort.

In particular, today we're talking about carbon monoxide as the silent killer, as something that can be defeated if we all do a better job of it—and making it mandatory is going to get to it. This isn't like seat belts or like the cellphones that we were talking about, where some people see this as an infringement of their space and their entitlements. This is a different issue. I don't believe that people would feel bad if they were told, "By the way, carbon monoxide can kill you. Maybe you should have this little device in your home to alert you to the problem, in the event that some exhaust is blocked and, as a result, you and your family might get killed." If people are told that, and if you make it mandatory in particular, I think this will happen.

I congratulate the member for Oxford, and I think this will happen very soon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm really pleased to speak to Bill 77, the Hawkins-Gignac Act, this afternoon. As has been mentioned, my colleague from Oxford has been very determined on this bill, having first introduced it in 2008 and three more times since then. I'm really pleased that he has been so determined. It looks like he's going to have success this time, with support from all parties, so I'm very pleased about that, Mr. Speaker. This bill will make carbon monoxide alarms mandatory in all residences with a fuel-burning appliance or attached garage.

I'm pleased to welcome John Gignac here to the Legislature today. He's the brother of Doug Gignac from Parry Sound—so it does have a connection to my riding—and I did know his brother very well. Welcome, John; it's a pleasure to meet you. Tragically, Douglas Gignac passed away last year. He was a good friend. I had an opportunity to go on a couple of golf trips with him to Myrtle Beach, so I got to know him fairly well—certainly a real connection, obviously, to Parry Sound. Of course, it was their niece Laurie Hawkins and her family,

as mentioned by the member from Oxford, who were tragically killed by carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is impossible to detect. It's an odourless, colourless, tasteless gas. This is why carbon monoxide detectors are essential and why this bill is so important. It can prevent tragedies like the ones that we've been talking about today. From 2000 until 2007, 414 Canadians died from carbon monoxide, almost 90 of them here in Ontario. Hundreds more suffer from the after-effects of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Just this year, I brought up at the recent Parry Sound district association meeting the fact that this bill was again going to be debated. I think it was the fire chief of Parry Sound who said how happy he was that this was going to be moving forward and debated and hopefully passed. He mentioned that there had been recent tragedies in Parry Sound district. One was mentioned by the member from Nipissing. An 11-year-old boy vacationing in Seguin township just earlier this fall and an elderly woman cottaging in Burk's Falls both passed away from carbon monoxide poisoning. In both cases, I believe it was propane coolers operating in confined spaces.

I might point out that we're just about into deer hunting season, and there are lots of people out there in trailers with different devices, so they also need to be wary of carbon monoxide poisoning when they're out hunting.

Polls show that 60% of homes across Canada still do not have carbon monoxide alarms. Tragedies such as the one that happened to the Hawkins-Gignac family can be prevented with a CO alarm. This bill will go a long way towards preventing such tragedies from occurring again and raising public awareness, so I'm very happy to support it. I hope it goes through and passes third reading as well and becomes law, and will, without doubt, go forward to save lives in the province of Ontario. Just like smoke detectors now are the law and do save lives, this will, when it becomes commonplace that all homes have CO detectors—together with the education that goes along with it—make a difference and will save lives in the province of Ontario.

Thank you to the member from Oxford for bringing it forward. I look forward to it becoming the law of the land.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'll now return to the member from Oxford to reply.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I do want to thank all the members of the Legislature who spoke so strongly in favour of this bill. It's obviously reassuring that we have been on the right track for some time now.

I did also want to thank the people who came here today, but particularly the group of Girl Guides who came here. First of all, their coming here is part of their education to see how government in Ontario works, but more importantly, they are an example of the benefits of having a detector. If it wasn't for them having a detector, they may not have been able to be here. I'm just sitting here wishing that more people had done it so a lot of

these tragedies that have happened could have been avoided if we'd had this law 10 years ago. I'm very happy that it got this far.

The member from Oakville spoke about going to committee and getting the public involved and getting the involvement of all the stakeholders to make sure we're doing the right thing. I think in this bill, we have done a very good job of that because we have obviously been doing that consulting now for five years. We have here a list of the organizations, the stakeholders, that one would be talking to: the Ontario fire marshal; the fire chief for the city of Woodstock; the fire chief for the town of Ingersoll; the acting deputy chief for the city of Brampton; the former fire chief of the city of Toronto Fire Services; the Co-operators Group; David Thomson, past president of the Fire Fighters Association of Ontario; the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs; and then, of course, John Gignac, whom we've been working with the whole five years; the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council; the city of Toronto's emergency services; the Insurance Bureau of Canada; Parachute Canada; and Duracell Canada. These are all organizations that we have been consulting with. Every one of them has given us written support for this bill, recognizing that it is that important that we put a carbon monoxide detector in every home in the province of Ontario for the safety of the residents of Ontario.

1520

#### BEAR CONTROL

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, a special committee on bear management should be appointed to examine and inquire into the following matters:

- the lack of prior consultation with affected communities and the related effects of the Harris government decision to cancel the spring bear hunt;

- the cuts to the Ministry of Natural Resources budget under the McGuinty and Wynne governments, especially as they pertain to nuisance bears;

- the extent to which human-bear conflicts are increasing across the province;

- the extent to which damage to crops by bears continues to increase in parts of the province; and

That the committee develop and report on a comprehensive, fully-funded bear management strategy to be implemented by the Ministry of Natural Resources, based on:

- thorough consultation with impacted municipalities and stakeholders;

- an evaluation and determination of the long-term sustainability of the bear population and all cohabiting species, such as moose;

- all management factors, including hunting and trapping, as sustainable management tools; and

That the committee be comprised of one member from each recognized party, plus one member from the government caucus who shall serve as Chair; and

That the committee be authorized to meet in locations in Ontario at the call of the Chair.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Vanthof has moved private member's notice of motion number 49. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

I again recognize the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you very much, Speaker. First of all, I'd like to say that I never thought 10 years ago that I'd be a farmer standing here in the Legislature of Ontario, talking about bears, but here I am.

A person's perspective on black bears has a lot to do with where you live and whether you see one on a TV screen or through a window. Those of us who live in bear country appreciate wildlife, but we realize that nuisance bears have to be managed. We are also often frustrated when practical knowledge gained by years of experience coexisting with bears is ignored.

The year 2007 was a bad year for bears in central Temiskaming. There were bears everywhere: in towns, villages and in every farm field. In one corner of my corn field, we counted 18. When we went to harvest the corn, there was nothing to harvest. Area farmers lost hundreds of thousands of dollars due to bear damage. All summer, the Temiskaming Federation of Agriculture lobbied the Minister of Natural Resources and the ministry to invoke existing legislation that would have allowed farmers to take some measures to protect their livelihood, but to no avail.

In November, the MNR held an invitation-only meeting to discuss the bear issue. As president of the Temiskaming Federation of Agriculture, I recounted the farm experience that we'd had that summer. I was told by an MNR biologist that, "With all due respect, what you have described could not have happened. Bears are territorial, so the numbers that you are describing are simply not possible," to which I replied, "Obviously, you have never been to a northern landfill." Everyone except the biologist laughed. I had a picture of a landfill, and there were 30 bear faces looking out of the trench.

Practical knowledge would suggest that bears are driven by need. They need to build up fat reserves for their hibernation, and if their normal food supply—in that case, wild blueberries; they froze—is compromised, they will overcome their territorial instinct and look for other food sources—in our case, farmers' fields.

There is a need for scientific knowledge on bears, but there's also a very big need for practical discussion from people who live in bear country.

But at least in 2007, the MNR would respond to residential complaints. They would come into a town and trap and move a nuisance bear. Under normal conditions, bears are territorial, and as a result, they are almost everywhere through their territory; so the chance of an encounter is always there. We accept that and feel privileged to have such a close relationship with wildlife, and the vast majority of us take precautions.

Human-bear encounters happen on a fairly regular basis. Most go unreported and are uneventful. But when a

bear becomes predatory, it can be very dangerous. In May, near Cochrane, in my riding, a bear attacked Joe Azougar as he was eating breakfast. It killed his dog, broke into his cabin and attacked him as he was trying to escape. Two people in a passing car saw the attack. They drove the bear off with their vehicle and saved Joe's life. I talked to Joe on Tuesday. He's recovering from his injuries, but the scarring, physically and mentally, will last a lifetime.

After the near-fatal attack in May, the Cochrane district has continued to have a much higher than normal number of bear encounters, thereby greatly increasing the possibility of another dangerous outcome. Bears are stressed there, and unpredictable. The municipality of Cochrane has had much the same reaction from the Ministry of Natural Resources as the Timiskaming federation had a few years earlier, but there's one big difference: Due to budget cuts, the MNR no longer traps bears. They only have a helpful hint line. So now, if someone is threatened by a bear, their options are to phone a friend or call 911. And when the police respond, the municipality foots the bill.

In reality, the MNR does not currently have an effective nuisance bear management program. That was confirmed on October 3 when, in response to my question, the MNR minister responded, "This is an issue that we take very seriously, and we are developing a plan. I look forward to the member's support on the plan that we bring forward." How did it come to this: a ministry charged with the management of wildlife that doesn't have a plan to manage bears or protect people?

Black bears have been and continue to be a politically charged issue in this province, mainly because of the spring bear hunt. The black bear was officially declared a game animal in 1961. Over the years, outfitters built up a substantial part of their business with the spring hunt of male bears. In 1999, the Mike Harris Conservative government cancelled the spring bear hunt without any consultation with the people who depended on it for their livelihoods. Even northerners who had no connection to the spring bear hunt felt betrayed by the total lack of regard for their opinion, and this sense of betrayal is still very raw in northern Ontario.

As I stated previously, last year the Liberal government cancelled the live trapping of nuisance bears. The reason: Live trapping does not work. So they replaced it with—

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Nothing.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** —nothing. There are more helpful telephone tips from call centres, and glossy brochures, but no real solutions.

Now there's a private member's bill brought forward by the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan to bring back the spring bear hunt. It is my sincere hope that this is an attempt to really address the problem and not simply an attempt to gain votes. The people who lost a large part of their livelihoods with the cancellation, and those who have to deal with nuisance bears, deserve that much.

It's for those reasons above that I have introduced this motion, and I'd like to spend a few minutes talking about why we structured this motion and some of the most important things about this: a special committee, with one member from each party plus a government Chair.

It might sound funny, but we are trying to take this issue—because the people and, quite frankly, wildlife have been failed by the political process for the last 20 years. We'd like to take it out of the political process and put it into the legislative process. I truly believe—we truly believe—that the legislators who could be put on this committee could come up with solutions. With the way the committee's structured—one from each party plus one government—one side wouldn't be able to beat up the other side. They would have to come up with solutions.

**1530**

One very, very important part of this committee's work is that it would have to travel to places where people actually interact with bears, for the sake of the people and for the sake of the bears. This committee would have to talk to municipalities, would have to talk to stakeholders to gain their practical knowledge of what is really going on and how to make things better for people in bear country and better for the bears where there are people. It's very, very important.

One of the things that this committee would be charged with is to actually, for the first time, take a real good look at the spring bear hunt. It was cancelled 14 years ago without any consultation. It's time to take a real good look at it and to see if actually the spring bear hunt has an impact on nuisance bears, other than straight numbers. There are people on the ground who say that if we stagger the hunt, it builds up a wariness of humans among the bear population. Having lived with other animals—that's a point that has never really been discussed, and that's something that this committee could and should look at.

The spring bear hunt, as politically charged as it is, has actually never been looked at outside of the political arena, and it is time. To just suggest that we'll put a motion forward, we'll put a bill forward, to bring it back, doesn't make it any more stable than taking it away without consultation. Bringing it back without consultation is pretty well a guarantee that it's never going to come back. Maybe it shouldn't, but we have to look at those issues. I think this committee, travelling across the province, would be the best way to take it out of the political process and put it into the legislative process.

When we went through the bear problem of 2007—one thing a lot of people also don't realize is that you don't get the same place having the same bear problem every year. So somehow, something has to be devised that when someone rings the alarm—wait a second; there's a problem coming here—like, in May, when Joe was attacked, this wasn't just a single one. There is a stressor there, and we have to find out what the stressor is, and there has to be a way to react to that. For the people who haven't lived through a bear invasion—for



lack of a better word—how would you feel if, after 7:30 at night, you couldn't let your dog out because there's a good chance that the dog is going to meet a bear? That doesn't happen all the time. There are certain stressors that create that, and we've never actually looked at how to combat those stressors.

This is a very, very important issue not only for the people who live in bear country—and bear country, as we're seeing in Ontario, is getting bigger and bigger. It used to be just in northern Ontario. It's rural Ontario. Unless we really know what's going on, it's not just dangerous for the people; it's dangerous for the bears.

Before 2007, on my farm, I had a mother bear and two cubs on my back forty. I watched them; they were my pets. They were there for years, the same mother. But after everything was destroyed, a lot of farmers were much less accepting of having any bears on their property. Ignoring the problem does not make it safer for wildlife.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I rise today with great pleasure to speak to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane's motion to start a special committee on bear management.

As the former Minister of Natural Resources, I learned a lot in my former portfolio, so this issue is quite close to my heart. It's an issue I heard about often when I served as the Minister of Natural Resources, and I learned a lot from individuals in northern communities who have been dealing with the black bear issue for generations.

That's why our government listened to their concerns and worked with the Nuisance Bear Review Committee to come up with recommendations on how our government can best help northern communities in managing their interaction with bears, because, at the end of the day, dealing with bears and their interactions with humans is a responsibility that we share with local municipal governments, the province and individuals.

That's why our government created the Bear Wise program. It's a program that tackles this complicated issue by providing information and guidance on how best to deal with those conflicts between bears and humans. As is often the case, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That's why the Bear Wise program provides municipalities guidance on how bylaws can be introduced to reduce the potential of interactions between bears and residents.

I learned when I was at MNR that municipalities and communities across the province of Ontario have been working for many years with us with regard to the Bear Wise program to create plans to deal with problem areas, improve local landfills to try and make them less enticing to bears, as well as working to install bear-resistant containers in landfills, transfer stations and the north's parks and recreation areas. Actually, I can remember travelling to the north and finding that bear-resistant containers, unless I read the instructions, were actually people-resistant containers too.

When the municipality joins with the provincial government to implement a local Bear Wise program, residents will be better protected, while the municipality would reduce the chance of conflict between bears and humans, as well as saving money and time responding to those calls. But providing municipalities the tools to deal with bears will not, in and of itself, stop potentially dangerous interactions with bears. That's why since 2004 our government has spent over \$5 million for more than 600 prevention and awareness projects with our municipal and First Nation partners, as well as with other ministries. This \$5 million doesn't even include the over \$34 million our government has invested to help ensure that Ontarians know about how to prevent human and bear conflicts.

This money has gone to help all Ontarians, whether they're residents of northern Ontario or tourists who visit our north's majestic landscape. That is because many of the interactions between bears and people occur when people are outside the city limits, whether they are snowshoeing in the winter or birdwatching during the summer. And because tourism is vitally important to our northern communities, we've worked with our partners to expand the fall bear hunt. Now the almost three-month-long fall bear hunt provides 700 tourist outfitters in northern communities with the economic benefits from the increased tourism that they provide.

However, tourism and economic opportunities only matter if Ontarians are confident they can stay safe. That is why I would want to remind any individual that if there were a bear that posed an imminent threat or that they were in a life-threatening situation, they should call 911 or the local police. Certainly there is a bear-reporting line, which is 1-866-514-3227, or 1-866-514-BEAR, to report bear problems.

I appreciate the private members' debate that's occurring today, and I appreciate the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane reminding this House about how important bear safety is for many Ontarians, but I'm reluctant to support this particular amendment because I don't believe these concerns can be addressed as well in a committee format. I think we need to deal with these concerns on the ground with northern Ontario, working with municipalities, tourist groups and certainly our law enforcement individuals. I believe it's work that we've done well with our government in the past, and I would support the work that we continue to do.

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

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to rise in this House today to speak to ballot item number 54, which proposes a special committee on bear management.

I'd like first of all to point out, Mr. Speaker, that I was actually preparing to speak to a different order paper motion that was put forward by the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane to do with a northern committee of MPPs. That motion has been resubmitted by the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane. He actually said, at a committee meeting in Seguin township, that if he did resubmit it, he would include Parry Sound–Muskoka.

1540

I'll read from the Huntsville Forester. The headline is "MPP Willing to Include Parry Sound in the North." "While Vanthof closed off the meeting saying he wouldn't retract the motion and start over, he did say that if it dies on the order papers or is defeated, he'd resubmit it and this time include Parry Sound district."

So, Mr. Speaker, he has resubmitted. I'm disappointed to see that the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane did not keep his word.

I would also like to—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member from Timmins.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** The member knows well you can't impugn motive. He has to retract that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'd ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I withdraw.

Mr. Speaker, there were also budget cuts in this motion that were related to cuts to the Ministry of Natural Resources. I would agree that there have been cuts to do with bear management. I think the idea of the OPP being called in when there are nuisance bear issues is ridiculous.

I've also seen the MNR cuts in other areas. Recently, I'm getting all kinds of calls from builders in Parry Sound–Muskoka who are trying to build boathouses and keep people employed. It used to take two weeks to get a permit. It's now taking 12 to 16 weeks.

Bill Ferguson sent me an email:

"I called and talked to an Ariel Zwicker, a Lands and Water Technical Specialist ... of the Ministry of Natural Resources and was told because of the cutbacks it could take 12 weeks to produce a permit.

"Last time I applied ... it took two weeks."

So he's having to lay off all his workers. I just wanted to get that on the record. It's something that's certainly not acceptable.

The riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka has certainly been affected by nuisance bears. Last year, we had Archipelago township passing their own bylaws and creating petitions, wanting to create their own hunt to deal with the huge numbers of bears that have been occurring in the Parry Sound district.

Unfortunately, I don't have as much time as I'd like to talk about all the points that I'd like to get across.

I note that the member from Oshawa, when he was Minister of Natural Resources, actually had a committee that looked into the issue and recommended reinstating a spring bear hunt. I know there was a motion at a recent PC conference. I know that we have made some suggestions in our northern white paper.

I don't think this motion that has been put forward is going to really solve the problem.

In fact, I see that the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters have come out and said:

"The OFAH cannot support the thrust of the motion....

"The committee structure and process that is proposed in the Vanthof motion will, in our view, not produce the desired results, and quite frankly, be largely redundant."

That's from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Mr. Speaker, I agree with them.

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

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I know that some of my other colleagues want to speak to this, so I'm not going to take a lot of time. I just want to say up front that I think what has really frustrated people in Ontario, and specifically northerners, about how this whole spring bear hunt thing has been dealt with is that nobody got a chance to have their say. It was a decision made by the Mike Harris government. It happened. Yes, it was supported by all sides of the House. I understand that. But I think it speaks to the problem of how this Legislature sometimes, even though they think they're doing the right thing, can get it wrong if you don't have a process where you involve the public.

I think what the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane is trying to do, which I support, is to say, "Listen, let's put this item at a special committee"—not a select committee of nine members; a special committee with something that we're entitled to under the rules, with a member from each caucus, chaired by the government, in order to go out and consult with those people affected: outfitters, municipalities, people who may have their own issues in regard to how they feel about this, whoever it might be, so that we can take a look at all of the issues. And there are issues to look at.

We need to take a look at: Are we doing an effective job of managing bears in northern Ontario and across this province, when it comes to the overall population? How many bears are there? I don't think we really know what the bear population actually is. What has been the effect of the cancellation of the spring bear hunt? Has it led to an increase in population of bears? Is it good? Is it bad? We can look at all of those things, and then have a rational discussion with those people who are affected, and then come back and make some recommendations to the government about how this could be fixed. What could be wrong with that? It's a question of us putting the faith in the people of Ontario to come and have presentations at committee. This is not one of those blue-ribbon panels that Ms. Wynne is putting forward, one of 36. This is a committee of the Legislature that has full legislative authority to be able to travel in this province, gather information and make recommendations by way of a report of the committee back to this Legislature. Then this Legislature can decide what to do, but at least be informed on what people have to say.

There is a sense where I come from in my riding of Timmins–James Bay, and I would think it's the same in others, that there's been a lot of problems with how we've dealt with this entire bear issue.

Anecdotally, we see more bears. Why? I don't think it's just a cancellation of the spring bear hunt, to be fair. I think that's maybe part of it. The other part is that there's been changes to how many dumps are open. The MNR

shut down a number cottage dumps, which means that bears that used to feed at the cottage dumps are now feeding in people's backyards and out of their garbage pails. It's a question that there are more people living and encroaching on the bear territory so the bears are more in contact with human beings; the bears are becoming more accustomed to human beings. Why? Because now they're eating our garbage in our backyard.

There is no capacity at this point because of cuts that have been made by the current Liberal government to the Bear Wise program and the management program. Now when you call the MNR and you say, "I have a nuisance bear in my backyard and I am worried for my safety and that of my family," they say, "If that's the case, take out your gun and shoot it." How is that a good thing for us as a society or for the bears? In some cases, we're probably shooting more bears now by way of the police shooting them in municipalities because they're nuisance bears, or individual cottagers themselves or people living in the country having to shoot them for reasons.

I remember not too long ago, my daughter lived on Rea Street in the middle of downtown Timmins. I'm out visiting my daughter and I see police cars running all over the neighbourhood. They shot a bear, like, two blocks away from my daughter's house, in the middle of the city of Timmins. This is not country; this is the middle of the city. It would be like shooting a bear in your neighbourhood where you live. It is a problem.

Just anecdotally, where I live out in Kamiskotia Lake—I have a cottage out there where I spend a lot of time; it's more of a house nowadays—I go out there and I see more bears now. I do the things that I'm supposed to do. I don't put raw garbage inside my garbage. I recycle; I make sure to clean out the recycling stuff. I take the garbage, I put it inside the garage when I'm going to be gone for any period of time so the bears can't get it. You should see the scratch marks on my garage door from the bears trying to get into the garage. Now, I've got a good garage and they're not getting in, but it's a real problem.

So I say to people in this House, support this because it gives us a chance to engage with the public and to say to them, "Listen, at least have your say about how we can deal with this in a rational way." I hope to support Mr. Vanthof's motion.

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

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd like to start my response by thanking the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane for the opportunity to speak to this issue and for his obvious passion.

While I recognize the spirit with which the motion was made, I disagree with the assertion of the member that our government is not doing our job when it comes to bear management, and comments that we're disregarding the concerns of northerners. Our government understands the concerns expressed by individuals in northern communities which have been dealing with the problem of black bears. Our government is committed to addressing the problem of nuisance bears. We have heard the concerns expressed by some communities with higher-

than-average nuisance bear problems and are evaluating our wildlife management practices.

I'd also like to take this time to recognize the member from Thunder Bay-Atikokan for his advocacy on this issue. I know that he's recently put a private member's bill forward himself and he has shown some real leadership on this issue.

I want to reinforce that public safety remains the government's number one priority. Since forming government, the Ontario Liberals have worked hard to create a better bear management program.

In 2003, an independent panel, the Nuisance Bear Review Committee, tabled a report on human-bear conflicts. Many of the recommendations from this report have been incorporated by the MNR in their bear management plan. One of these recommendations was the Bear Wise program.

The Bear Wise program is a multifaceted approach to problem bear management. Through the Bear Wise program, MNR has worked with community leaders to establish local prevention programs. Responsibility for managing human-bear conflicts is shared by the province, the local governments and residents. Mr. Speaker, we have worked collaboratively with the OPP and local police services to ensure public safety, and that communities across Ontario are educated about bear behaviour and how to mitigate human-bear conflicts. Despite some of these claims that we have downloaded responsibility onto police, it has always been the practice for local OPP officers to respond to emergency situations resulting from a bear encounter. If a bear poses an immediate threat to public safety, I'd like to remind the public that they should call 911 or their local police.

#### 1550

The frequency of bear-human conflicts generally increases in the years where there is less natural food available. This can happen for a variety of reasons, from human encroachment on bear territory to poor weather. This causes bears to look for food in areas they would normally avoid and, in some cases, to come into conflict with humans. Bears will lose their natural fear when they get used to finding non-natural sources of food, such as garbage and pet food, near where people live.

In certain cases, bears can become destructive when they try to obtain a non-natural food source. Because of this, one of the most important steps to take in minimizing bear-human conflicts is to remove the items that attract bears in the first place, items such as a garbage can or a dirty barbecue. By keeping properties clean, keeping smells under wrap and never allowing bears access to non-natural foods in the first place, bears are less likely to visit.

The toll-free bear reporting line will continue to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide advice. MNR also provides information and advice through the Bear Wise website on how to bear-proof private property and remove bear attractants. No other jurisdiction in North America has invested as much as Ontario in teaching people how to prevent human-bear conflicts in their communities.

To show our government's commitment to this issue, just take a look at the numbers. Since 2004, MNR has invested over \$34.5 million to ensure that Ontarians are aware of the known and preventable causes of human-bear conflicts, and over \$5 million for more than 600 prevention and awareness projects with municipalities, First Nations and other ministries.

One of the points that was brought up in the past is that the ministry has cancelled the trap-and-relocate program for nuisance bears. The member is correct that the ministry will no longer trap and relocate the average problem bear. However, in exceptional circumstances and at the request of police, the ministry will still intervene and place traps. The reasoning for this is that the trap-and-relocate method has always been our least effective method to manage problem bears. Research has confirmed that many relocated bears will simply return to the areas they were removed from. Therefore, for the vast majority of nuisance bears, the trap-and-relocate effort has proved to be an inefficient use of government resources and taxpayer money.

The MNR is proud to be working collaboratively with the OPP and local police services to protect public safety and educate communities across Ontario about bear behaviour. As I stated before, the MNR will continue to respond to requests from local police and the OPP to deal with emergency situations involving bears.

We have continually reached out to the OPP and chiefs of police throughout Ontario to ensure our excellent working relationship for the safety and protection of all Ontarians. A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the MNR and the OPP to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner in responding to bear-related incidents.

In addition to the Bear Wise Program and our efforts with police, our government has also expanded the fall bear hunt. This expanded hunt continues to provide both recreational and economic benefits to northern communities and approximately 700 tourist outfitters. Hunting opportunities have increased several times during this last decade, and in many areas the fall bear hunt has now been extended by an additional four weeks, to about three months in length. In addition, resident hunters can harvest a second bear in some areas that can support additional harvests.

In closing, public safety remains the number one priority of this government, and we will continue to ensure that black bear management in Ontario remains responsive to ecological, social and economic interests.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak today to the motion put forward by the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

The problem of nuisance bears has been persistent in northern Ontario. In fact, I have several photos on my BlackBerry that I've taken myself, but I have to say, another committee, another panel, another conversation is not going to rid northern Ontario of the black bears.

The black bear population in Ontario is increasing. There have been growing reports of black bears acting

aggressively towards humans and some recent high-profile attacks that you've heard about earlier. But what this motion does is simply kick the can down the road. It proposes a committee of MPPs. It doesn't specify northern MPPs, incidentally, where the problem is more acute, just another panel to study an issue that northerners and wildlife management experts already know the answers to.

In our northern white paper released last month, we directly address the issue of wildlife management in the north. We state, "Give northerners more control over the use and management of their land and wildlife. Northern decisions that primarily affect the north are most appropriately made in the north."

The truth of this matter is that even if the House adopts this motion, nothing will happen. This government has neglected the north for the past decade—ignored the voice—and it will never do anything substantive to deal with this issue.

I can give you proof, Speaker, and let me read this to you. In 2005, my Liberal predecessor, who became a cabinet minister and their House leader, brought a motion before this House on the problem of nuisance bears, to her credit. She stated "that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should do whatever is necessary to protect the citizens of Ontario from nuisance bears." It was unanimously approved in this Legislature. That was eight years ago. What did her Liberal government do with it? Absolutely nothing. Nothing has been done.

In fact, we've taken a step backwards. The MNR last year cancelled its relocation program and no longer sets out traps for problem bears. It's representative of the Liberals' treatment of the north. They've given up and left northerners to fend for themselves.

Recently, at our policy convention, a motion came forward from our northern colleagues that would offer northern municipalities the option of implementing a spring bear hunt, managed through the MNR, similar to the success of the Sunday gun hunting initiative granted to municipalities. Let the municipalities in the affected areas have the right to implement it themselves.

Quite frankly, I think the NDP have been holding hands for so long with the Liberals that they're starting to believe another conversation, another panel, another committee will actually solve the serious problems we have in this province. Stockholm syndrome appears to have set in with that party.

As I've said before in this chamber, the solutions to our problems aren't hard to figure out; they're just hard to do. And it's obvious I've hit a nerve with both parties—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Order. I can't hear the member for Nipissing and he's only about 12 feet away. I'd ask the members to come to order.

I return to the member for Nipissing. I'll give you extra time too.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. It's obvious that I've hit a nerve with both parties on the Stockholm syndrome.

When it comes to bear management in the north, we just need a government to implement it. What is proposed by the NDP is a toothless, non-binding motion they know is just window dressing, to appear to be doing something when in fact it will do nothing. They certainly are learning well from their budget bedfellows across the aisle.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I'm very pleased to stand and speak on the motion—I think the very well-crafted motion—that was put forward by my caucus colleague and seatmate, the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

First of all, I would like to say that I think this is a great idea. I really strongly believe in this concept that he has put forward, because for too long this issue has been politicized. It's really two issues. It's bear management and the safety of Ontarians, and that's rolled in with the spring bear hunt, and the two are getting lost with one another.

Here we see recently that the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan has brought forward a bill to bring back the spring bear hunt, but that does nothing to address the very real and serious safety concerns that Ontarians face, particularly in the north, on a daily basis.

**1600**

I have to say that I disagree vehemently with the comments that were made by the member from Nipissing. Although northerners do encounter bears on a regular basis, we have heard time and time again—and anybody who reads the newspapers in this province will see—that this is not just a northern issue. This is an Ontario issue. As my colleague said, it doesn't matter if you live in northern Ontario, rural Ontario—I would even argue in urban Ontario—it is becoming a problem no matter where you live.

The other perspective I wanted to bring is that of tourism. We live in a time right now, with this government—it started with the McGuinty government, and it has continued with the Wynne government—that they have declared all-out war on our tourism industry. We've seen everything from the closure of the Ontario travel information centres, especially in my riding; a travel app that doesn't work and doesn't have northwestern Ontario content; Travel Manitoba billboards that are dotting our highways; and an MNR that is not appropriately managing fish stocks. So our tourism industry is really taking a hit, and with this hit and all of these decisions that are being made, more and more people are thinking that the solution would be to return to the spring bear hunt.

What the PCs did when they cancelled the spring bear hunt without notice or consultation was essentially pull the rug out from under our tourism operators. I don't believe it's fair to change the rules of the game partway through for people who depend on tourism—this is their livelihood—for people who have already invested everything they've got. They've put their blood, sweat and tears into their business, and it's not the role of government to shut down or prohibit business.

The PCs also talked about their plan to allow the spring bear hunt to be managed by municipalities, but that is an absolutely ludicrous idea. To me, it doesn't make sense that we would just expect—as my colleague from Timmins–James Bay says, what are we supposed to do? Are we supposed to just allow a spring bear hunt on the corner of Main and Second? We're going to have a spring bear hunt in downtown Kenora, Dryden or Sioux Lookout? I mean, I don't see how that's safe for the bears, which may be injured and not killed, and it's certainly not safe for people living in the north. We aren't exactly the Wild West, so it's kind of a strange concept. Really, I think it's just another example of the PCs' affinity for downloading responsibilities and shirking responsibilities onto municipalities, and it's just not workable. And as I said, the spring bear hunt won't do anything to help protect us from rogue bears.

It's become a highly politicized issue, and I really believe that we need to take the politics out of it. One of the best ways to do that is to set up a committee that will listen to all the different perspectives: listen to the scientists, listen to all three political parties and, more importantly, listen to the people on the ground, the people who are interacting with bears and who have that knowledge and that experience.

We can't continue to have situations like we've been having, especially over the past year in Sioux Lookout in my riding. There was a period of time, after cuts were made to the Bear Wise program, when I was getting messages on Facebook and calls in my constituency office at all times of the day. People were really concerned, because bears were wandering into schoolyards right in downtown Sioux Lookout.

Something needs to be done. I mean, we can't have a government that, again, is trying to shirk its responsibility. The fact is that we have bears in Ontario and we need to have a mechanism to safely manage them and keep people safe. It needs to be based on science. We need to have input from experts, and we need to have public input. It's foolish to think we can continue to just ignore the problem and think it's going to manage itself, or to use a toll-free number for people to deal with the problem.

Now, it's really difficult to get statistics, and the main reason it's so difficult to get statistics on bear encounters is because the MNR no longer keeps those statistics. But what we do know, according to the MNR, is that as of August, there have been 669 bear occurrences throughout Ontario just this summer, and in 2012 there were 2,200. Again, that shows there is quite a need for this management.

And with that, I'm not sure if there's anyone else in caucus who would like to—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Keep going.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Okay, all righty.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Yes, I see that. I think—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Oh? Yes, okay. My colleague, I believe, from Algoma-Manitoulin—do you really want 30 seconds?—would like to have a few seconds to chat about this important bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak on this issue. I'm going to take quite a different perspective. I'm going to start off by reading out what the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters released today, where it specifically states that "The OFAH cannot support the thrust of the motion, which appears to be an attempt to avoid discussion and debate of Bill 114, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Amendment Act (Spring Bear Hunt), 2013," and quite frankly I agree with them.

I'm quite surprised that they would all of a sudden show up today, on Monday, and bring forward this resolution because, quite frankly, I believe that their caucus is extremely divided on it and they don't want to be on the record on either side of this issue. So they found a compromise that gives them an out, to not have to deal with this issue.

Let me go on a little bit further, and here's some of the premise by which I make that decision. You see, Mr. Speaker, the member from Timmins-James Bay specifically states, "I've got to say that our caucus—I'm personally not on side with this decision—has always taken the position that the cancellation is something that should be maintained.... However, that is the position of the NDP caucus...." That's from the member from Timmins-James Bay, to go on to specifically state that.

For those of us who have been around long enough, we should know exactly what took place when this issue came forward to this Legislature. I might add: "on bringing an end to the spring bear hunt, we can celebrate that there will be no more cubs killed in that manner." Of course, it was against the law at that time already. "We can stop this. All it takes is us to stand up with the majority of Ontarians. Northerners, southerners, rural, city, everybody agrees in the majority to end the spring bear hunt. We call on all MPPs to call on the minister to do just that." And who was that? It was the member from Beaches-Woodbine, who handed out these to every single member of the Legislature at that particular time. I'll keep it down now.

It was the NDP that took that position at that time, and they were very specific on how they wanted to move forward with that. They didn't want it around.

Now, to go on, in regard to talking about the fact that there weren't any informed individuals, I would quote from the March 1999 editorial out of Ontario Out of Doors, where the associate publisher-editor of Ontario Out of Doors, Burton Myers, specifically states: "Not that we weren't warned"—mind you, in regard to the closing of the spring bear hunt—"myself"—being Burton Myers—"included. Tory MPP Jerry Ouellette had told just about everyone who would listen" to him, and this goes on. Not only that—

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Point of order, member for Hamilton Mountain.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Thank you, Speaker, but I think he's using props, and most of the times that he's speaking of, I don't even know if I was born yet.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The issue of your birth is not a point of order, but the props are. You can't use props.

I'll return to the member for Oshawa.

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** So to go on, I can list the number of dates by which we split up and spoke about this, which included March 5, in Petrolia, where over 1,000 people were in attendance to deal with that very specific issue.

Quite frankly, the member has come forward and found a way to appease those Toronto members—and if anybody thinks the spring bear hunt is helping me in Oshawa, they're sadly mistaken. But the division in their caucus—they have found a way not to deal with this issue like I think it should be dealt with.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but I would recommend that the last thing that the member should do is go on the MNR website and look at the nuisance bear committee report that already exists and does everything that the member asks for. Not only that, but the member must know Royal Poulin, who was the chair of the committee, and professor John Knight, a bear biologist at a college. The world-leading authority, Dr. Martyn Obbard, led the charge on this. Not only that, Glenn Witherspoon, who was a mayor in northern Ontario at the time, dealt with this issue. The report is already there.

If you've got a division, don't play politics in here. Come forward and vote like you should be on the member's bill when it comes forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

1610

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to try and address this as best I can. I came out of the dentist's chair, but this is too much of an important issue for northern Ontario. The member just brought an opportunity—and I hear the passion from the member, and I hear the passion from all over the place. Actually, I was sitting in the chair looking at most of the debate. But that passion needs to convert into actual results, and we have an opportunity here, through the motion the member has, to have a real discussion across this province.

All parties should be participating in this. It's still left to be determined as to who will participate on this, but it's very important for us to all sit down and have that discussion. This is the opportunity; grasp it and let's move on with it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I return to the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane for his two-minute reply.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the member from Parry Sound, the member from

Timmins–James Bay, the member from Ottawa South, the member from Nipissing, the member from Kenora–Rainy River and the member from Oshawa.

The first thing I'd like to say—and I really appreciate it; I think it was a good chance that we actually got to debate this.

I was somewhat shocked that it was referred to that a committee of duly elected legislators is just some useless thing—because an expert panel is a very good thing, but it's different. It's different, and that report should come forward in a committee of legislators.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's two different things. A panel and a committee of legislators are two different things. I'm surprised they don't know that.

For the member from Nipissing, I see that the Tories haven't changed. They were the ones who brought it forward, to cancel the spring bear hunt, and they know better. Once again, they don't have to listen to anybody else because they have all the answers.

To the member from Ottawa South—and I appreciated his comments. But one thing he's missing is that by working together with the OPP, what he's doing—they've downloaded the cost to the municipalities, and that's a point. Working together is fine, but you're downloading the cost of the control of nuisance bears to the municipalities, and that's a point you missed.

What I'm getting from the Tories, from their white paper, is that they want to finish the job and download the management as well, and that's a decision, but be careful what you ask for.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

MANORANJANA  
KANAGASABAPATHY ACT  
(HAND-HELD DEVICES PENALTY), 2013  
LOI MANORANJANA  
KANAGASABAPATHY DE 2013  
(PEINE POUR CONDUITE  
AVEC APPAREIL PORTATIF)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We will deal first with ballot item number 52, standing in the name of Mr. Balkissoon.

Mr. Balkissoon has moved second reading of Bill 116, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the penalty for the use of hand-held devices while driving.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Scarborough–Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I'd like the bill referred to the Legislative Assembly committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

HAWKINS GIGNAC ACT  
(CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY), 2013  
LOI HAWKINS GIGNAC DE 2013  
(PROTECTION CONTRE  
LE MONOXYDE DE CARBONE)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We'll deal with the second one now.

Mr. Hardeman has moved second reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 to provide safety requirements related to the presence of unsafe levels of carbon monoxide on premises.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Oxford.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like it referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Agreed? Agreed.

BEAR CONTROL

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We will now deal with the third item.

Mr. Vanthof has moved private member's notice of motion number 49.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1615 to 1620.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the members to take their seats.

Once again: Mr. Vanthof has moved private member's notice of motion number 49.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing while you are counted by the table.

**Ayes**

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Fraser, John	Prue, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Hunter, Mitzie	Sandals, Liz
Campbell, Sarah	Kwinter, Monte	Sattler, Peggy
Chan, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Schein, Jonah
Colle, Mike	Mantha, Michael	Singh, Jagmeet
Del Duca, Steven	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	McNeely, Phil	Taylor, Monique
DiNovo, Cheri	Miller, Paul	Vanthof, John
Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Murray, Glen R.	
Forster, Cindy	Natyshak, Taras	

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** All those opposed will please rise and remain standing while you are counted by the table staff.

**Nays**

Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	McKenna, Jane
Bradley, James J.	Holyday, Douglas C.	Miller, Norm
Cansfield, Donna H.	Jaczek, Helena	Munro, Julia
Chiarelli, Bob	Jeffrey, Linda	O'Toole, John

Chudleigh, Ted  
Dickson, Joe  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Fedeli, Victor

Klees, Frank  
MacLaren, Jack  
Mangat, Amrit  
McDonnell, Jim

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**

The ayes are 31; the nays are 24.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**SUPPORTING SMALL  
BUSINESSES ACT, 2013**

**LOI DE 2013 VISANT À SOUTENIR  
LES PETITES ENTREPRISES**

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 30, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 105, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act / Projet de loi 105, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'impôt-santé des employeurs.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I am happy to give a few brief comments on Bill 105, the supposed Supporting Small Businesses Act, but I hope to make the case that it's not doing very much for small business.

Much like my colleagues in the PC caucus who have already spoken to this issue, I would like to start by commending the Liberal government on their clever use of propaganda in naming this bill the Supporting Small Businesses Act. Anyone who has followed the policies of Premier Wynne's Liberal government knows that they have been anything but supportive of small businesses, creating just about every tax and regulation imaginable to help reduce small business to no business at all and to reach into the pockets of hard-working, productive businesses across the province.

These increases in red tape, taxes and energy costs have made it nearly impossible for many businesses to turn a profit in Ontario and have led to a decrease in the willingness of corporations and individuals to invest in this great province. When a government makes it so disadvantageous to do business that entrepreneurs who were born, raised and educated in their communities in this province believe that their only option for a profitable future is to leave, you know you have a problem.

It was the PC government who first introduced the health tax exemption in 1996, after David Peterson brought it in years earlier, as a way to provide much-needed relief to small businesses across Ontario by reducing their overall tax burden.

The Liberals have waited nearly a decade since they came into office to address and provide relief to small businesses. For many, this bill is too little, too late,

exemplifying exactly what is wrong with the Liberals' approach to governing.

The bill is merely a trivial step by a Liberal government looking to sweep a larger framework of failed policies under the carpet. It's clear that this government isn't willing to make the tough decisions that are necessary to get our economy back on track.

The bill isn't enough to solve the crippling jobs crisis we are currently facing. It won't recover the 300,000 lost manufacturing jobs, and it won't put the 600,000 Ontarians without jobs back to work.

If you want to know why we have a jobs crisis here in Ontario, look no further than to the increases in red tape, such as the College of Trades; the increases in taxes, such as the WSIB; and the astronomical increases in hydro rates. Essentially, look no further than the Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, it's for this reason and many others that we would like this bill to go to committee; that we agree that 15 hours of debate is enough on this bill on second reading; that we would like amendments in committee that deal with the threshold, in terms of creating a bigger exemption to the employer health tax than what is envisioned in the bill, to give more relief to small businesses. Small and medium-sized businesses with less than 100 employees make up 98% of the employer base in this province.

So we agree; it will go to committee. We hope the government will accept our amendments.

We have, I can say as House leader of the Ontario PCs, no further debate on second reading. We look forward to debating this again after it comes out of committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? Further debate?

Mr. Leal has moved second reading of Bill 105, An Act to amend the Employer Health Tax Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I've received a deferral slip from the chief government whip deferring this vote until Monday, November 4, at the time of deferred votes.

*Second reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Ms. MacCharles has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until Monday at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1629.*



**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, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

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	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	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, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
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
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
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	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre 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	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	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
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
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
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Niagara Falls	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Laura Albanese, Steve Clark  
Mike Colle, Joe Dickson  
Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat  
Taras Natyshak, Jerry J. Ouellette  
Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Steven Del Duca, Victor Fedeli  
Catherine Fife, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Douglas C. Holyday, Mitzie Hunter  
Monte McNaughton, Michael Prue  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Grant Crack, Dipika Damerla  
John Fraser, Michael Harris  
Peggy Sattler, Laurie Scott  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Rick Bartolucci  
Laura Albanese, Rick Bartolucci  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Percy Hatfield  
Mitzie Hunter, Jim McDonell  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely  
Teresa J. Armstrong, Steven Del Duca  
Bob Delaney, Frank Klees  
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
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Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Grant Crack  
Vic Dhillon, Garfield Dunlop  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Todd Smith  
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, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Bill Mauro, Phil McNeely  
Norm Miller, John O'Toole  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla  
John Fraser, Monte Kwinter  
Jane McKenna, Rick Nicholls  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Bas Balkissoon, Ted Chudleigh  
Mike Colle, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Ernie Hardeman  
Rod Jackson, Helena Jaczek  
Paul Miller  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Select Committee on Developmental Services / Comité spécial  
sur les services aux personnes ayant une déficience  
intellectuelle**

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott  
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon  
Cheri DiNovo, Christine Elliott  
Mitzie Hunter, Rod Jackson  
Sylvia Jones, Monique Taylor  
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