



No. 116

N° 116

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 24 March 2014**

**Lundi 24 mars 2014**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Monday 24 March 2014

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Lundi 24 mars 2014

*The House met at 1030.*

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

*Prayers.*

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's my pleasure today to introduce in this assembly my daughter's first babysitter, who has now gone on to become a University of Guelph student. She's from Ottawa West–Nepean. Alanna Fernet is here today. I chose to embarrass her.

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** It's my pleasure to introduce the member from York Centre, who turned 83 on Saturday. Congratulations and happy birthday to Monte Kwinter.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It's my pleasure today to welcome a constituent of mine from Windsor: Kelly Timm, who is in the gallery today. She is the proud mother of my legislative assistant, Denny Timm, who has joined her for question period this morning.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Mazel to my colleague Monte Kwinter on his birthday.

Welcome to CJPAC senior fellow Samuel Mosonyi, CJPAC representatives, the University of Guelph Political Science Society, and all the university students who are here today from Guelph to see question period and participate in the CJPAC political engagement revolving tables lunch. Welcome.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like to introduce to you today, in the members' gallery, Kathy Inch, Lynda Murphy, Cynthia Stagg and Kailin Ambrose. They're all here from the Ontario Hairstylists Association. Welcome, girls.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd like to introduce my EA, Margo Duncan, who's sitting up here today. It was her 65th birthday yesterday. I also informed her that she can't retire till she's 67.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I'd like all members of the Legislature to welcome the heart and soul of my Thunder Bay–Superior North constituency office: Crystal Caputo, who is here today with her husband, Frank Caputo. Welcome, Crystal and Frank.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Maitland Hudak to this world, who was born yesterday morning. To the Hudak family, I wish Deb, Tim and Miller all the best, as well, in welcoming Maitland.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to congratulate our page captain today, Callista Laffrenier. Her proud parents are

here, Karen and Ken, and her sister Caralynn. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Page Isabella O'Brien, who's from my riding, has a family friend, Mark William, who is visiting from Sydney, Australia, and has come in today to watch her in action. I'd like to welcome him.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce my son Josh. He's number two of four kids. Josh, stand up and wave.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Josh, you'd better do what your mother tells you. Sorry; I couldn't resist.

The Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As was noted, we have quite a group from the University of Guelph here today. The event is co-hosted by the University of Guelph Political Science Society and the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee at the University of Guelph, and it just happens to include a number of members of the University of Guelph Young Liberals: Frank Tersigni, Andrew Quinn, Andrew Gurpat, Musa Mansuar, Steven Inglis and Duncan Tilford. Hi, guys.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to introduce the family members of the page captain today, Megan Barkey. She attends McCaskill's Mills Public School in Cannington. We have family members Dave Barkey, Angelie Barkey—mom and dad—and we have grandparents Dorothy and Edwin Barkey, and I think sister Meredith is here, too. Give us a wave over there. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It gives me great pleasure to ask everyone in this House to join me in welcoming a great friend of mine, Jasmeet Singh Raina, who is also known as Jus Reign, one of the most successful YouTubers in Canada—one of the most popular videos, with millions and millions of views. He's here today, so please give him a round of applause. He's a sensational South Asian, a Sikh Canadian who is doing great work in social media.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted to welcome Paul Geukers today to the Legislature. He was a successful bidder in an auction in support of London Health Sciences Centre. Welcome, Paul.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Visiting here for page Divya Dey, on behalf of the member from Etobicoke Centre, are mother Dia Dey and grandmother Indira Dutta. Welcome and thank you for joining us at Queen's Park.

We have with us today in the Speaker's gallery 23 teachers from across the province participating in our inaugural Legislative Assembly of Ontario Teachers' Forum, where workshops are held for teachers to provide more background on how the Legislature works to their

students. Please welcome, with me, our teachers. Thank you very much for our first forum.

I welcome everyone to Queen's Park.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My questions are for the Acting Premier. Over the weekend, we heard from a Liberal Party that is dangerously out of touch with reality. Your Premier claimed to offer "safe hands." Well, those safe hands have delivered one million Ontarians into unemployment.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Yes, you can clap for that.

Those safe hands signed a cabinet document to pay \$1.1 billion to cancel the gas plants, and she's clearly using those safe hands to cover her eyes if she can't see the damage the Liberals have done to the province of Ontario. That's why we put forward a motion calling for the Liberals to table a budget by March 31.

1040

Will you support our motion, or will you continue your budget shell game, which we exposed last week?

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Statements only if I ask for them, please.

Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I really do want to start by welcoming Maitland Hutton Hudak to the world. We're very proud to welcome this newest Ontarian. Congratulations to Tim and Deb.

I'm afraid, Speaker, that what we're witness to here is just another gimmick. I guess we're becoming used to seeing this kind of gimmick from the PCs, especially given that every single budget that they introduced was delivered in May or June. The Leader of the Opposition sat and applauded each one of those budgets, even the one that was not delivered here in the Legislature.

We will be coming forward with a budget shortly. It will be an aspirational plan. It will also be a realistic and practical plan—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That will do.

Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, it's a plan that will create security and opportunity for Ontarians. We're not about slashing and burning on the backs of the middle class.

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

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Yes, we heard last week what "aspirational" means: You aspire to have a great budget; you just don't know how to get there. Is that your idea of governing?

Your minister stands here telling us you've created 400,000 jobs, yet your own documents show us, "There are fewer jobs relative to our population—and more unemployed."

These are the facts you don't want us to see. You get caught, and your plan is to distract from the fact that you have no plan for the 600,000 men and women who woke up this morning without a job. This is the latest example of the Liberals putting their priorities ahead of the needs of the people of Ontario.

It's obvious you don't have a real jobs plan, so use ours. If you choose not to act at all, stand up and face a confidence vote.

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland–Quinte West will come to order.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Get out of the way, Vic.

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

Minister.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I have been able to glean from the jobs plan of the party opposite is their plan to cut jobs, to slash jobs, to fire nurses, to fire educational workers. That is their plan. It's not about creating jobs; it's about slashing and cutting.

I can tell you that the radical ideas proposed by the party opposite will hurt our hospitals. It will cut home care to our seniors. It would be on the backs of the middle class, Speaker. That's their position. It is definitely not our position.

Our position is about building our future. It's about supporting the wonderful people we have in Ontario. I'm proud of our plan, and I'm afraid of theirs.

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

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, you can aspire all you want. I'll pass that message on to the 40 nurses you fired in North Bay already.

Last week, I exposed the \$4.5-billion gap in your budget. Your Premier tried to explain it away by pointing to a potential \$5-billion revenue shortfall in last fall's economic statement. But that gap was from new spending, and I'm not talking about last fall. I'm talking about what you knew and what you said half a year earlier.

In March, you were told by the Ministry of Finance that you were "not on track to meet the 2012 budget deficit targets." Then you went out one month later and told the bond-rating agencies, "The government is on track to meet the budget deficit targets outlined in the 2012 budget."

Why did you tell everybody one thing last March when you knew the complete opposite to be true?

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

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite took six months to read something that we already put out in the public realm. He is only now citing

information that is in fact, as he has just stated, very old. Of course, it's important and prudent for any Minister of Finance or any government to react and recalibrate their spending appropriately to the conditions that are facing them, and that's exactly what we've done.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex will withdraw.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'll withdraw.

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

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We've taken the steps necessary to control and be disciplined in our spending. We're the only government that actually cut spending year over year. Ontario is the lowest-cost government in Canada because of the steps and initiatives that we've taken.

Members opposite are only playing slogans and gimmicks, and they are politics of division. They're creating fear and they are hurting the recovery of this province by the antics that they play. We won't stand for that. The people of Ontario deserve better. That is why we're taking the steps that we are to protect their interests.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games. These games have a higher turnover than your Liberal caucus. This Pan Am Friday, we learned you fired two more TO2015 executives, but you replaced them with a McGuinty staffer renowned for scandal-hopping and six-figure salaries. Neala Barton shows up in gas plants, Premier Redford scandals and now Pan Am.

You're in trouble, Minister. You're in big trouble. Tell us how much the soft landings for your disgraced executives have cost, plus Neala Barton's homecoming? How much will it all cost Ontario taxpayers?

*Interjections.*

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

The minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan American Games.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you for the question. A new day, a new attack on the Pan Am Games by the member opposite.

TO2015 is working in coordination with the federal government and 15 municipalities to deliver the best games ever for the Pan and Parapan American Games. Part of TO2015's mandate is to ensure an efficient and effective delivery of the games. That includes staffing, streamlining and organizational changes as deemed appropriate.

Staffing decisions are made by the CEO of TO2015. The organizing committee is shifting from the planning stage into the operational stage in the leadup to the games. Recent changes in the management structure were made by the CEO to reflect this new phase.

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

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Let's be clear, Minister: This is not an attack on the Pan Am Games; it's an indictment of your mismanagement of the Pan Am Games. The minister should start handing out medals to executives who actually make it to the end of the games. It's the taxpayers who have to pay for the endless TO2015 personnel mistakes. We pay for the sunshine list salaries. We pay for the teas, pets and parking. We pay their showing-up-for-work bonuses. We pay for their golden parachutes when they're fired, and now we pay for Neala Barton's Liberal Party loyalty.

Minister, this is shamefully unethical at best. Will you step down and take responsibility for once?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you again for the question. The member opposite's allegations have no credibility. Allow me to give you some examples, Speaker. He told the public he did not know—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, come to order.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** —that the total of the village wasn't in the \$1.4-billion budget. The Toronto Star and the Toronto Sun reported in 2009 that the village cost is outside the TO2015 budget.

Speaker, he says he's a human resources expert, but he has not heard of a completion incentive program. He claims security is going to cost \$1 billion, which is wrong. He claimed Mr. Troop's severance was going to be over \$1 million, which is wrong again. He publicly claimed that our PASO reception in October was five times the actual cost.

Speaker, we are planning the best games ever—

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

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Minister, just so you know, people are watching, so it's about time you started giving some real answers here. At this rate, sadly, you'll be the only one left standing at the end of this. In the end, not even your new communications VP will save you.

Just so you know, Minister, you hired the only person in Canada who was press secretary to McGuinty and Redford the night they resigned. She's also credited for creating a tanning bed issue to detract from the gas plant scandal. Taxpayers should not be paying Liberals a premium for spinning scrutiny away from the Pan Am Games mismanagement. Pan Am is not in safe hands, Minister; neither are you, Neala Barton, by the way.

**1050**

Minister, since you won't resign, do you think you should be the next one fired for the blatant patronage appointment of Neala Barton?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you very much again for the question. What people are watching every day is the constant attack of the Pan Am Games by the member opposite.

TO2015 has a mandate to ensure an efficient and effective delivery of the games that includes staffing, streamlining and organizational changes—

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Michael Chan:** This was a decision made by the CEO of TO2015. The member opposite—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, come to order.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** —continually play politics is an awful shame. The member opposite does not want these games. The member opposite constantly—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Cambridge, come to order.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** —the Pan Am Games. All he's interested in doing is tearing down the games. This is his contribution to the games: to continually badmouth them and embarrass our province to the rest of the world. Shame on you.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Acting Premier. After months of insisting that she was the new leader of a different government, the Premier confirmed this weekend that her backroom advisers have talked her into something different. She's no longer going to promise change; she's going to offer Ontario another dose of Dalton McGuinty and proudly defend the Liberal status quo. For people worried about jobs, that means more of the same approach that's left us with unemployment that is above the national average. Does the Acting Premier really think that this is good enough?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I can tell you that our Premier is demonstrating change every single day. And I do have to say, in reference to our gathering this past weekend: It was an extraordinarily positive, upbeat event. People from across the province are delighted to be supporting such a strong leader.

She has laid out very carefully our six-point plan to create jobs, to have a strong economy. She makes a very clear point that having a strong economy is essential to having a fair society, and that's exactly why she is continuing to plow forward on the issues that the member opposite used to raise.

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin the next part of my question, I also want to congratulate, on behalf of New Democrats, Tim Hudak and Deb Hutton on the birth of their child.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much.

Now that the Premier has rediscovered her inner McGuinty, she's spinning the same numbers as he did, and they're just about as convincing.

Here are the facts that keep Ontario families nervous: 300,000 manufacturing jobs lost over the last decade; the highest hydro and auto insurance rates in Canada; and an unemployment rate that's still above the national average.

Does the Premier really think it's okay to simply praise the McGuinty record and say, "Steady as she goes"?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, Speaker, I have to say that it's pretty clear that the NDP is a party without a plan. There is no plan. There is no plan for pension security, there is no plan for the minimum wage, and the plan they're putting forward when it comes to the job creator tax credit is simply an unrealistic, impractical plan that would not have the impact that they claim.

I think our plan is clear. It's practical, it's achievable and it's exactly what the province needs right now.

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

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The Premier talks about the steady hands she shared with Dalton McGuinty. Let's talk about over a decade of Liberal rule and what those hands have brought us. Those Liberal hands signed million-dollar bonus cheques at hydro; those Liberal hands gave a thumbs-up to a billion-dollar payout to move a gas plant and to drive up hydro; those Liberal hands waved goodbye to 300,000 manufacturing jobs over the last decade; and those Liberal hands gave big breaks to auto insurance companies while leaving drivers with skyrocketing bills.

People are hoping for a little better. Why is the Premier suddenly so determined to become Dalton McGuinty 2.0?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, we've created almost 450,000 full-time jobs since the bottom of the recession.

But I have to disagree with the Minister of Health on this, because the NDP does have a jobs plan, and it's to get \$2 billion—that's what finance estimates this will cost—for their job creator tax credit, which has been discredited by the Obama administration, by Democrats and Republicans alike. In the United States, they've found that 92% of the jobs created through this scheme would have been created anyway, and it has been found that it would be subject to abuse, and difficult to administer. So they have a plan. Unfortunately, it's a plan that's going to cost—you haven't costed it out, so I'm going to cost it out for you—\$2 billion annually, and it's not going to work. You are going to give money to businesses that are already, quite frankly, creating jobs in the province.

#### HEALTH CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Today,

the minister was commenting on the possible merger of the hospitals in the Scarborough area. In the Toronto Star, she admitted that hospitals and our entire health care system are facing pressure to make cuts.

She also admitted: “We can’t provide the home care we want for seniors,” and that plans for more housing for people with mental health problems will also be delayed. Can the minister explain what she meant by that?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What I can tell you is that our action plan for health care is being implemented across the province. It is resulting in better value for money in our health care system and, most importantly, it’s resulting in more people getting the right care at the right time and in the right place.

When it comes to hospital mergers, we are not forcing hospitals to merge, but it’s certainly clear that there are some advantages—if hospital boards decide that that’s the direction they want to go—to merge, to integrate services, to provide higher quality of care in their community. The hospital boards are exploring this. We’re there to support them if indeed they decide to move forward with it.

But my goal remains clear: We must do better when it comes to mental health. We must do better when it comes to improving access to home care. We’ve still got work to do, and we’re nicely on that path.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** When Ontarians hear that their Minister of Health is searching every corner of our health care system to find savings, they want to know that their front-line health services that they depend on will be protected. And when the minister makes comments about not being able to provide home care or mental health, the concern turns to fear.

In the coming weeks, will Ontarians be learning about promises that the government made but will now be broken?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It’s unfortunate that the member opposite is taking this quote out of context. What I said was, because the federal government has cut their funding to the province, that will create real pressures for us here in Ontario. We are committed to continuing our progress on mental health and on care at home, but if the federal government does not accept its responsibility and withdraws funding from Ontario, that creates real problems for us. So I would ask the member opposite to join us in our fight with Ottawa. Perhaps she could speak to her federal colleagues to raise this issue, and to stand up for Ontario.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ontarians understand better than anyone that in tough economic times every health care dollar must be spent carefully and wisely. That is why the government’s choice to encourage such things as private schemes in health care, cuts to nursing services or their refusal to cap CEO salaries makes no sense to them.

Will the minister come clean with Ontarians about whether her comments are actually warning signs of the budget to come?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Let me underline that we are implementing our action plan for health care. It means more care for people in their own homes. It means better supports for people facing mental health challenges. Could we move more quickly with federal support? Absolutely. Am I signalling any cutbacks? No, I am not. You can rest assured.

I want to also underline that 20,500 more nurses are working today than 10 years ago. Let me repeat that: 20,500 more nurses are working now than 10 years ago, 4,000 more this year than last year. We are shifting. We are not cutting.

1100

## GREEN POWER GENERATION

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Acting Premier. It’s an accepted fact in Ontario today that the Green Energy Act has been an abysmal failure. But don’t take my word for it. Take the 81 municipalities that have declared themselves not willing hosts; or the Auditor General, who said that for every job the Green Energy Act creates, four are lost; or the energy minister himself, who said that he spent \$20 billion to produce 1.1% of power.

But the final nail in the coffin comes today as we do not meet our WTO obligations for international law because of your government’s domestic content rules and your generous subsidies. We will not meet international law obligations today, Speaker, even though they have known about it for four years. They have been told to correct it in the last year.

We want to know on this side—enough is enough—will the minister cut our losses with this Green Energy Act and finally repeal it?

*Interjections.*

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

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We have already taken the preliminary steps to ensure that Ontario is in compliance with the WTO ruling. If passed, Bill 153 would complete that process and would save Ontario ratepayers \$1.9 billion.

I think it’s important that we take a look at what the PC energy plan is. It’s a very, very frightening plan: \$35 billion would go back to ratepayers under this plan. It would add a massive cost to energy bills—\$35 billion—cost Ontario jobs and drive away potential investment. They want to cancel \$20-billion worth of unconnected clean energy projects, putting ratepayers on the hook for cancellation costs. That’s \$20 billion. Another \$15 billion they want to spend on new nuclear that we don’t need and that will send rates sky high. I think they need to look again.

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I appreciate that the Acting Premier isn’t abreast of the file that she’s carrying today on behalf of the energy minister, but I’m wondering: Does

she want to create a trade war in Ontario that is going to create more job losses in our province and come at a significant disadvantage to Ontario commodities?

I also wonder if the Deputy Premier is excited about damaging Canada's international reputation with the World Trade Organization. As I stated, the government has known for four years that they were breaking international law. They have known for a year now that they had to redress this and they had to become compliant by March 24, 2014, which is today. So if the compelling evidence of job losses, municipal unrest and their plan just not working doesn't influence them to do the right thing and cut the Green Energy Act loose, then perhaps complying with international law will do that.

I'll ask again: Will the Liberals do the right thing? Will they break with the Green Energy Act? Will they repeat it—

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

*Interjections.*

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

Deputy Premier?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I believe the member opposite already knows, but I need to remind her, that the domestic requirements in the FIT program were always intended to be temporary while our Ontario industry was established. Now I'm very pleased that Ontario's clean energy manufacturing sector is best in class. We're able to compete on a global level, and I'm seeing that happening in my own community in London.

She should also know, if she doesn't already, that at least 85% of Ontario's domestic clean energy jobs will not be impacted by the reduction of domestic content rules. What these changes do is, they continue our government's commitment to clean, affordable energy, in stark contrast to the PC plan. I'll quote the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. He had this to say last January: "We've been clear that we will not be going ahead with however many projects are left.... clearly there will be a cost associated with that...."

"I guess we're not going to know the entire extent"—unless—"we form government...."

Speaker, it's reckless. It's ridiculous.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** To the Acting Premier: On this side of the House, we've been clear on the sort of changes that we need to see. We can start by fixing the mess in our electricity system.

US jurisdictions are literally taking our electricity at a third of the cost that we pay to generate it and using the subsidy to lure our manufacturing to the United States. To add insult to injury, municipalities in upstate New York are now targeting business in Ontario with a promise of lower electricity rates.

Why is the Acting Premier defending the same McGuinty Liberal status quo that's driving up electricity prices and driving business out of Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Just as an aside, Speaker, last year our exporting of electricity actually reduced costs to consumers by \$300 million. The NDP wants to put us out of that business; that is a reckless approach.

We are, though, very concerned about hydro costs for small businesses. This is a serious issue and it's one we're taking seriously and appropriately. We are saving businesses money on hydro bills.

As of 2013, under the industrial electricity incentive, eligible companies qualify for electricity rates that are among the lowest in North America. In exchange for creating new jobs and bringing new investment to the province, the industrial conservation initiative is helping large consumers save on costs by incenting them to shift their electricity consumption to off-peak hours. Speaker, it's working.

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

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I could go on.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Ontarians paid \$1 billion for that \$300 million worth of electricity we sold.

Families and businesses across Ontario have been saying that skyrocketing hydro bills are making it harder than ever to meet their budget and making it harder for Ontario businesses to grow.

We've put forward a practical solution. Manitoba and Quebec sell their electricity into the same US markets as we do for 50% more. That's because they cut out the middle man and sign long-term contracts that get the best export price.

The Acting Premier and her energy minister are defending a status quo that is sending discount power to the United States while our bills are expected to go up another 40%. Does the Acting Premier see a problem with this, or does she think things are perfectly fine?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, of course our concern for people who are paying high energy prices is real, because their problems are real, and that's why we've taken action to reduce the price.

The NDP has one plank and one plank only that I've been able to find on their energy plan, and that's \$100 off. The National Post said that that proposal "veers straight into crazy talk." It shows that the NDP does not have a realistic plan. When it comes to exports, the National Post says, "Those who claim that Ontario subsidizes electricity exports fail to understand both basic economics and how the Ontario electricity sector actually works."

We agree that this is a challenge for people. We know that; we hear that; we feel it. We have a plan to address it. The NDP simply does not.

## BLOOD DONATION

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Ontarians all remember the tainted blood scandals of the 1980s. About 30,000 Canadians were infected with HIV- and hepatitis C-tainted blood and blood products. Thousands also died.

Since then, maintaining the integrity of our blood system has been of utmost importance to all Canadians. That system is built around voluntary donations, and yet a private, for-profit company is setting up clinics in Ontario where people will be paid for donating blood plasma.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can she please inform the House of what she's doing to address this threat to our blood system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thanks to the member from Scarborough–Agincourt for this important, very timely question. I know many Ontarians are deeply concerned that a private, for-profit company plans to pay blood plasma donors and sell that plasma to an international market.

I wrote to the federal Minister of Health a year ago to express those concerns, and unfortunately, Health Canada has been unwilling to take leadership on this issue, so our government is. As a first step, we've enacted regulatory changes that would prohibit any licensed lab or specimen collection centre from paying for blood or plasma donations.

1110

Last week, I introduced legislation that would, if passed, go a step further by making it an offence to offer to pay donors for blood or for individuals to accept payment. This is an important piece of legislation, Speaker. I understand the members on both sides support it. I really am calling on both parties to commit to passing this legislation as soon as possible.

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

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Thank you to the minister. I'm pleased to hear that our government is addressing this serious health issue. However, media reports indicate that one of the clinics opened up last week and has been accepting donors. Not only does this action undermine Ontarians' confidence in the integrity of our national blood and blood product system, it also poses a real health risk to the system.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can she please also inform the House how she plans to stop this clinic from paying donors for blood plasma?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I have been very clear with the operators of this clinic from day one that what they proposed is unacceptable and that they would require a licence to operate in Ontario. I did not, I would not, I will not approve a licence for any lab or clinic that would undermine our voluntary blood donor system. The operators opened their clinic anyway.

Last week, we sent in observers to monitor the clinic's activities. Based on what they found, we have investigated an inspection of the facility. If the company chooses to undertake activities governed by the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act without a licence, I will take every action necessary to ensure they comply with the law. To ensure that paid donations do not undermine our voluntary donation system, we must pass Bill 178 as quickly as possible. Again, I'm calling on all members: Please do not hold up this bill.

## ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question this morning is to the Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier, you will know that London and area have been hard hit with recent plant closings announced at Heinz, Kellogg's, Worthington Cylinders and Wescast Industries. In fact, a recent Ivey School of Business report says that London has lost one third of its manufacturing jobs in the last eight years.

However, despite the ongoing job losses, we also know that London police wage hikes have outpaced inflation by 32% over the past decade and two thirds of London's professional firefighters are now making more than \$100,000 per year.

Deputy Premier, with literally thousands and thousands of jobs being lost in the city of London, why do you think these pay increases for police and firefighters are sustainable for taxpayers who pay the bills?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I really want to speak to the economic situation in southwestern Ontario that the member opposite referred to, and I tell you, I have had the great pleasure of attending events where new investors are coming to southwestern Ontario, hiring people who otherwise would not have had that opportunity. This is happening through the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund which, shockingly, the member opposite voted against. These are investments that are making a difference.

I will refer the supplementary, Speaker, but I do want an answer from the member opposite: Why didn't you support your own community? Why didn't you support businesses in your own riding to create the jobs we so desperately need?

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

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Mr. Speaker, that was quite an answer, but back to the Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier, only about half of the working-age population in the city of London even has a full-time job, yet London's police and fire departments continue to add more and more employees to the list of those earning over \$100,000 per year. London's sunshine list shows 239 London professional firefighters are now making over \$100,000 per year. That's more than double the number a year ago.

This is unsustainable. There are hundreds of public sector employees in the city of London who are now making over \$100,000 per year, including 107 different city hall managers, 192 police officers and 239 firefighters.

Deputy Premier, with so many London residents currently out of work, will your government answer our PC call and immediately implement an across-the-board two-year public sector wage freeze and fix Ontario's broken arbitration system?

*Interjections.*

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

Deputy Premier?

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

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I don't know what the member opposite is referring to, but we on this side of the House are grateful for the work that our first responders do every single day. We are thankful to our police officers. We are thankful to our firefighters. We are thankful to our paramedics and to every single public servant who continues to serve our hard-working Ontarians.

Speaker, this is coming from a party that wants to fire teachers, that wants to fire nurses in the future, just like they have done in the past, under the government of Mike Harris. We reject and refuse that proposition.

We also reject the proposition of right-to-work-for-less types of policies that are going to drive wages down and that are going to result in a loss of benefits for hard-working Ontarians and a loss of jobs. That is not the direction we want to go in Ontario, and we refuse that notion.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan American Games.

Speaker, the first casualty of Pan Am TO2015 was Ian Troop, CEO, who got an extraordinary severance. Now we have the firing of two more TO2015 executives, presumably with yet another set of fat-cat severances. These recent firings expose the dangerous instability at TO2015.

With such extraordinary instability at the helm of the TO2015 Parapan Games, how can Ontarians have the assurance that we will be ready and on budget for the games?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Speaker, all the capital costs and also the capital for the Pan Am Games are on budget, under budget—and on time.

I just want to make sure the member opposite knows this is a change in the management team at TO2015. The decision was made by the CEO, Mr. Rafi. The organizing committee's mandate is to ensure an effective and efficient games delivery. I am confident in Mr. Rafi's decisions to streamline the organization as he sees fit.

To date, the committee has been able to bring in all capital projects on budget. They are all going to be completed well before the games next year. Their performance so far has been great.

I look forward to more updates on the games' progress.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I hear they want to aspire, but with answers like that, you might expire.

Ontarians are quite concerned about the one degree of separation between the board, the cabinet minister and the new CEO of TO2015. Now the appointment of Neala Barton, yet another well-known, connected Liberal insider, is drawing a lot more concern. Couple these disturbing connections with their possible sweetheart severance deals, with the serious concerns about rising security costs and the lack of transportation plans, and it's no wonder Ontarians are worried.

Speaker, will this minister finally clear up the murky mess that bubbles to the surface almost weekly at TO2015, or will this chaos continue?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** The member opposite talked about the management of the games. Let's talk about the management of the games, Speaker. The management of the organizing committee has most recently found savings of \$49 million. The operating budget now decreased from \$1.441 billion to \$1.392 billion. The management of the games is effective and cost-saving.

I am confident that Mr. Rafi's decision is for the good of TO2015 and the games.

Again, all the members opposite are interested in is tearing down the games in any way possible. They do not want the games to come to Toronto. They do not want the games to come to Ontario. They do not want our athletes to live their dream to compete in the games. They can continue to badmouth the games, but we are preparing for the best games ever.

#### DISTRACTED DRIVING

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Recently, I introduced Bill 116, the Manoranjana Kanagasabapathy Act. This was legislation dedicated in honour of a resident who was killed by a distracted driver.

In recent years, our government introduced distracted driving laws to keep drivers safe. However, distracted driving is still a major issue on our roads.

**1120**

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to see the Minister of Transportation introduce stricter laws last week with Bill 173. Through you to the Minister: Can you please explain the enhancement to distracted driving laws that you introduced in Bill 173?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As a matter of fact, the bill that was introduced last week was really the work of the member for Scarborough—Rouge River. I'll talk about this a little later. It was one of four private members' bills that found expression in this. I want to thank him for his leadership and his concern for public safety, because all Ontarians are benefiting from this legislation, which we hope will see passage in the House soon.

This law will allow justices to increase fines. We're setting a minimum of \$300 to a maximum of \$1,000, as the member asked for. He also lobbied very heavily that demerit points should be increased. As of matter of fact, the MPP for Scarborough—Rouge River suggested that three demerit points, as with impaired driving, should also be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm happy to report to him that his effort has been successful and those will be the actions taken by the government.

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

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. I know for a fact that most Ontarians are

supportive of the measures to make roads safer for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike. Yet we still see way too many drivers taking risks and still using hand-held devices while driving.

I'd like the minister to speak to what other changes are included in Bill 173 that will aim to keep drivers, cyclists and pedestrians safe, and also why we should all work together to get this piece of legislation passed as soon as possible.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Well, the reasons are pretty significant. Distracted driving now exceeds drunken driving as the leading cause of accidents in Ontario. Just this past year, we have seen 78 deaths from distracted driving. That compares with 57 deaths from impaired driving and 44 deaths from speeding—almost twice as many as from speeding. This has become the biggest serious killer of people on our roads.

But we need passage of this bill. We tried to do it. The other measures actually reflect the work of other members. I want to just again thank the member for Simcoe North, who did the “move and pull over” to end fatalities and make the roads safer; the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka on shoulders and cycling; and the member for Parkdale–High Park for the one-metre rule. I think this is our bill as a House and I hope it will pass—

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

#### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for Minister of Transportation as well. Minister, during the break you visited my riding and met with a delegation in the county of Renfrew to discuss the four-laning of Highway 17 through to Renfrew. The implication you made coming out of that meeting was that somehow this project is being held up because of a lack of support from opposition and from myself as the local representative.

Minister, I've been committed to this project since you were still the mayor of Winnipeg. Successive transportation ministers have complimented me on my advocacy. In fact, you did so yourself last fall in a meeting with county officials and myself.

Minister, I say it's a priority. You say it's a priority. Why don't you exercise the power that you have, stop passing the buck and ensure that this is in the next five-year transportation plan? Will you do it?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** In fact, I did commend the member for his advocacy when I was in his constituency. What I said was this: The first phase of this project, which just opened in November 2012 all the way to Arnprior, has shown our commitment. I know the member advocated for it as well. That was \$75 million that this government committed to twinning that highway.

What I was asking was whether the member would join myself and other members along the 17 or the 400 highways, because the federal government's commitment for the entire province of Ontario next year—not just for

highways but for schools, water and everything—is only \$73 million, Mr. Speaker. As you know, our government's investment in the 417 was \$75 million. That's \$2 million more from this government for that one project that the government of Canada will spend in this entire province next year. I was looking for his leadership in getting Ms. Gallant and others to get the federal government to match, so we can complete this project sooner.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Minister, you always seem to have someone else to blame. One minute it's us, the opposition; the next minute, it's the federal government. As far as the federal government is concerned, that would be helpful. However, you don't seem to need their help in implementing a pension plan that is going to take tens of billions of dollars out of our economy each and every year. As far as the opposition is concerned, you seem to think that we're the ones—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Finance, come to order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —that control the decision on whether this moves forward or not. You didn't—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Finance.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —consult us with your eHealth scandal—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In case he didn't hear me while he was yelling, the Minister of Finance will come to order.

Finish, please.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You didn't consult us with your eHealth scandal. You didn't consult us when you implemented the HST. You didn't consult us about the \$1-billion power plant cancellation project.

If you want my commitment, it has been there for 10 years. Here it is once again: I'm absolutely, totally committed to this. Are you? Because as Mr. Firestone says, this is where the rubber meets the road.

*Interjections.*

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

Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** What I was trying to invite was a partnership with the member of the opposition to try and get Ms. Gallant to the table—his federal member.

I'm going to say this very slowly so I'm understood. This government, the government of Kathleen Wynne, has spent \$75 million already twinning that highway to Arnprior. We are working to fund it all the way to Renfrew and eventually to Pembroke. We spend \$3 billion a year on highways. We're not making excuses. When the member opposite was in government, their entire budget for everything was \$1.4 billion. Our entire budget for everything is \$14 billion.

Next year, the federal government will only spend \$73 million for water, sewers, schools, roads and highways.

That will not even extend the highway to Renfrew. We need them to be serious partners; they are not.

#### ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism. Minister, last week I raised a very distressing issue in the Legislature. The biggest jazz festival in the entire province learned that it did not qualify for a Celebrate Ontario grant for this year, 2014. Lido Chilleli of the Beaches Jazz Festival said that without this money—which they have received, by the way, for the last seven years—drastic musical cuts will have to be made. Both the Premier and the Minister of Economic Development assured me that they would look into this wrong-headed decision. My question to you, Minister: Will the minister do the right thing and reverse the devastating cut to the Beaches Jazz Festival funding?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you for the question. The member knows that last week I actually walked across the floor and told him that I have outreached to the organization regarding this particular funding. The program Celebrate Ontario is a competitive program, and the funding is exhausted, but we do have other programs in my ministry. That's what we are prepared to talk to the organization about, so that we can come up with ways and means to help them. I have advised the member opposite. I'm surprised that he brought up the question today.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I brought the question up because if they don't know what funding they have by the end of this month, they're going to have to cancel three of the four stages. That's why I'm asking today.

The Beaches Jazz Festival is open and accessible to everyone. It is free to the public. It supports young and emerging musical talent, and it is world-renowned.

OVO Fest, which is taking place in Toronto on August 3 and 4, reportedly sold \$9 million worth of tickets in 48 hours, but your ministry gave them \$300,000. Even the tiny Markham Jazz Festival in your own riding is receiving the grant. Music festivals across the province are getting help from Celebrate Ontario, but the biggest, the best and free of charge, a showcase for new talent, is receiving nothing from Ontario. Will this minister reverse this direction, support the Beaches Jazz Festival and do it today before the event is cancelled?

1130

**Interjection:** There are a lot of festivals across the province.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** You're right. Thank you very much for the question. I just heard my honourable colleague say there are a lot of festivals and events happening every year in Ontario, and our Celebrate Ontario program is a highly competitive program. This year we received 441 applications requesting more than \$34 million in funding. As you know, Speaker, the funding available is about \$20 million.

Of the 229 successful applicants, 129—more than half—were in both opposition and third party ridings. To say the program plays favourites is simply ridiculous. It's time for the member opposite to stop playing politics with Ontario's wonderful festivals and events; he insults all the applicants and the organizations.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. As a member from Ottawa, I understand the importance of mining, not just for the north but for the entire province. In 2013, the value of mineral production in Ontario was \$9.8 billion, up from \$6.3 billion in 2009. This industry has an economic impact on the entire province. That is an increase of over 50%—I think 57%—in only four years.

I'm proud of our government's success in helping to foster this important industry. For instance, Ontario is among the top 10 mineral investment jurisdictions in the world. As a result, 24 new mines have opened here over the last 10 years; that's more than anywhere else in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Northern Development and Mines please educate this House on any new Ontario mine openings?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I thank the member for the question. He's certainly right; the mining industry has enormous benefits for the entire province, certainly not just northern Ontario. When a new mine opens, it has an immensely positive impact on the regional economy, and every community surrounding it shares in those benefits.

That's why, certainly, Premier Wynne and I were so pleased to be up in Greater Sudbury on February 21 at the official opening of the Totten mine, Vale's first new mine in the Sudbury basin in over 40 years. We were joined by a number of other members of the Legislature as well because it's such a huge event. The project itself created over 500 construction jobs, and now is employing over 200 area residents. This is a great story and really a positive piece of news.

It's worth talking about the safety record as well, may I say, of this mine. During construction it was exemplary, achieving over one million person hours without a lost-time injury. Just a great project, Mr. Speaker—

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

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I would like to thank the minister for that update, and he is right: Totten's employment and safety record is impressive. I'm very pleased to hear about both the economic benefit and the safety record of this new Vale mine.

I note that this government and the minister are also concerned with community engagement and environmental effects of the mining industry. That is why our government has modernized our legislation so that First Nations consultation is one of the first steps in the mining sequence.

Since the beginning of the Abandoned Mines Rehabilitation Program, Ontario has undertaken rehabilitation of 80 mines, demonstrating our commitment to environmental stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How are community engagement and environmental protections ensured in the operations of the new mines in Ontario?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Again, I thank the member for Ottawa–Orléans for the question. It really is an example of how the mining industry has changed so immensely. That mine is demonstrating leadership in both community engagement and environmental stewardship. They've utilized some of the best technology automation and environmental management in the mining industry. Totten mine is one of the most environmentally friendly mines in the province.

I want to congratulate Vale, obviously, but also Chief Paul Eshkakogan, I believe is how you pronounce it, from the Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nations for signing an impact benefit agreement. This is, again, proactive and a beneficial type of community engagement very much supporting the approach taken by our government when we modernized the Mining Act. First Nations and aboriginal consultation is one of the first steps in the mining sequence. This is a tremendous project with great economic and social benefits, and one we should all be very proud of.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question today is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, today we have in the member's gallery a young hairstylist by the name of Kailin Ambrose. Kailin finished her hairstylist apprenticeship and she has a loyal group of customers who believe she is an excellent hairstylist. Repeatedly, she has tried unsuccessfully to pass the written exam. She has tried the exam six times and has spent over \$800, without success. She is now classified as a journey person candidate.

On April 8, the first anniversary of your boondoggle Ontario College of Trades, her time is up. She either passes the exam or, according to a letter signed by your five directors—and I have a copy right here—she no longer can practise hairdressing. In other words, she's out of work.

There are another 4,300 apprenticeship candidates like Kailin, according to the Ontario College of Trades website. Minister, are you prepared to see this tragedy happen to so many people just because they have trouble passing a written exam? Minister, let's bring some common sense to this place. Tell Kailin that she can continue working and building a career for herself—

*Interjections.*

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

Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, through you to the hairstylists who are here today: Welcome to Queen's Park. Thank you for being here. I'm delighted you're here, because it gives me an opportunity, through the Speaker, to address this issue with you and compare our approach to the approach opposite.

We believe in you as skilled tradespeople who are more than capable of making decisions for yourselves. The decisions governing your sector ought not to be made by politicians, like they want to do, but be made by the sector itself, by tradespeople in a forum of self-government.

We believe that hairdressers, hairstylists and all tradespeople deserve to be protected. They've gone to school. They've gone through apprenticeships. They deserve to have their jobs protected from the underground economy, which is what the College of Trades does.

That party over there does not believe in that. We'll continue to stand up for skilled tradespeople in this—

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

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Isn't that some answer? Isn't that pathetic? With Kailin today are other hairstylists and business people who have started the Ontario Hairstylists Association. They have also started the Cut the Salon Tax campaign. Every hair salon in Ontario is going to hear about Cut the Salon Tax. You can be sure that's going to happen, because they're going to get to you through this Ontario College of Trades.

The one thing we've got going for us is that we're not puppets here on this side of the House for Pat Dillon and the Working Families Coalition, like that crew over there. We can't take this any longer. The people of Ontario deserve better than people like that representing them on cabinet. I will never be a puppet for a Pat Dillon type of person. You are. Explain yourself, why you're not a Pat Dillon puppet.

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** What we're going to do is continue to work with tradespeople across this province to ensure that they can have their own voice, so decisions that impact their trades are not made in smoky back-rooms—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. The member from Simcoe North asked the question, and I think you want to hear the answer. If you don't want to hear the answer—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I don't want anyone speaking while I'm speaking.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Oakville, I don't need your support.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Halton, come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The difference between us and them is that we believe skilled tradespeople in this province—

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** You're bought and paid for.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member from Simcoe North will withdraw.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Absolutely not. I will never withdraw for a comment like that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe North will withdraw.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe North is named.

*Mr. Dunlop was escorted from the chamber.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. While there was noise, the member from Simcoe North was named.

You have 10 seconds.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to stand up for tradespeople across this province. We're going to continue to ensure that those hard-working people go through apprenticeships and that they're going to be protected from the underground economy. We're going to stand up for consumers. We believe that they can govern themselves—

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

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Cameron Laflamme is a young man with autism who lives in Hamilton with his parents, Marilyn and Serge. He attends an excellent high school program that meets his needs and allows his parents to work. But at the end of June, Cameron will be aged out of school. He could attend a day program, but his family barely receives one third of the cost of this program.

The family doesn't need a spot on the Passport funding wait-list; they need increased support. Will the minister commit to providing Cameron with the support he needs before the end of the school year?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** As the member opposite surely knows, I am not in a position, personally or legally, to get into answering specific questions about specific cases. I would suggest to the member opposite that if she would like to sit down with me and talk about her situation, or with my parliamentary assistant—I don't know if this is the same situation you were talking about—we'd be delighted to have that conversation and to see not only what might be provided, but also to bring the member up to speed in terms of how she accesses services on behalf of her constituents.

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

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Back to the minister: No, Minister, it's not the same case. It's a different case, as there is a different case happening every day.

Better supports for persons with disabilities and their families are desperately needed. Waiting lists are not the answer. No one can put their life on hold while they're waiting for a decision from this ministry. Every young

person will be aged out of school. Developmental services knows exactly when this is going to happen, and they should be prepared. Yet this transition continues to occur and throws families into turmoil.

Speaker, to the minister: Instead of properly supporting persons with developmental disabilities as their needs change, why does this government choose to leave Ontario families in the lurch and force them to fight for more support?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I don't disagree with much of what the member opposite has said. We all have a responsibility in this place to put in place supports for those in our developmental services sector and their families who are having challenges.

The member opposite did speak with me in passing about a specific case last week, which I assured her we would work on. She hasn't spoken to me about this, unfortunately, until just now. If she would like to do that, I would be pleased to offer whatever help I can.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1142 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I ask all the members of the House to join me in welcoming my special guest today, Ms. Jeeti Singh, who is a businesswoman and a philanthropist from the city of Mississauga. Please join me in welcoming her.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, it's my pleasure and privilege to introduce some very special people. I would like, on behalf of our page Zohaib Aslam, to introduce his mom, Naila Qazi. Now this is especially important, because they are from Mississauga and Mrs. Qazi has had a daughter, Sherry, who has also served here as page. So let's definitely welcome the mother of not one, but two pages.

And while I have the floor, it is also my pleasure to reintroduce one of our legislative interns, Matthew Lo from Ohio, who has come back to once again to watch the genteel behaviour here on the floor of the Ontario Legislature.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** One of the most common problems I hear about from my constituents is their difficulty in finding a family physician. Last week in the Legislature, the Minister of Health stated that "We now have 5,000 more doctors working in Ontario than just a decade ago," and that "doctors are going where they're needed...." Well, Speaker, that's not the reality of what we see in Perth-Wellington. Many times I have spoken

up for my constituents who do not have a family doctor. I have written letters to the Minister of Health, I have raised it in the House and I have met with local doctors, health care professionals and recruiters.

In response to these concerns the minister has painted a rosy picture, listing various programs and ratios of practising physicians to residents. For those who are without a family doctor and have been waiting on the government's Health Care Connect list for over a year, the minister's response is of little consolation. Constituents who have been forced to wait in the emergency room to have prescriptions filled or to speak with a physician about a routine issue have told me that there are simply not enough doctors accepting patients to meet our local demand. I wrote to the minister last week, pushing her to come through for my constituents without a family doctor. I look forward to her prompt reply.

#### EVENTS IN TECUMSEH

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Festivals and Events Ontario came up with a new award. It's called Best Festival City. I'm so proud that the town of Tecumseh has won the inaugural recognition for communities with fewer than 200,000 people. Our Tecumseh Corn Festival and our BIA Art of Eating festival put us to the top of the list. The award salutes the many hours of time that our volunteers put in to provide a quality festival experience for residents and visitors.

I wish to salute the countless volunteers and their organizing committees. These community champions include Deputy Mayor Cheryl Hardcastle, Councillor Joe Bachetti and BIA Chair Susan Tope. The award recognizes the "best in community leadership and festival and event partnerships". Congratulations to each and every member of town council, and indeed every town employee, who played a role in making these events the great success that they've come to be. And it wouldn't be possible without the support of a motivated business community.

Way to go, Tecumseh, on this best festival award, and to the larger population winner, the city of Ottawa, kudos on your accomplishments as well.

I was presented, on Friday, with two great pieces of photography by a young Tecumseh teenager, Jesse Hebert. Jesse was the winner of Kevin O'Leary's Future Dragon Fund contest for his photographic skills. I'm very proud to showcase his work here at Queen's Park and back home in my constituency office.

Thank you, Jesse, and thank you, Speaker, for allowing me the time to brag about the great things going on in the town of Tecumseh.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** My absolute pleasure.

#### GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to recognize today as Greek Independence Day. Greek independence was

declared March 25, 1821. Commemoration of this date is important for its historical significance. It's also a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Greece's political and cultural contributions to the world. After all, this is the country that gave us democracy and the Olympic Games.

It is also a perfect time to celebrate significant contributions that Greek Canadians have made to Ontario. Ontario has a vibrant Greek community. For example, yesterday there was a great parade on Toronto's Danforth. I was proud to walk alongside Toronto Councillor Mary Fragedakis, Trustee Sam Sotiropoulos, Consul General of Greece Dimitris Azemopoulos, His Eminence Metropolitan Archbishop Sotirios of Toronto, and Andonis Artemakis, president of the Greek Community of Toronto.

Yesterday's parade also brought back many wonderful childhood memories for me. My family immigrated to Canada, and we settled in Toronto-Danforth. As a newcomer to Canada, I remember being fascinated by the Greek cultures on the Danforth, a street with so much cultural and economic significance for our province. It was fun to visit many shops, especially eating my first souvlaki.

I've always felt that cultural diversity is what makes Ontario such a great place to live, play and work.

As we celebrate Greece's proud history, we also celebrate what makes Ontario so great. Zito É Ellas; Zito to Ontario; Zito O Kanadas.

#### KEMPTVILLE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** I rise today to address the concerns which many of my constituents have voiced over the impending closure of Kemptville campus. For decades, young people from my riding of Northumberland-Quinte West have travelled in droves to Kemptville and have brought that expertise back to the family farm. From my own experience working with these graduates, their education was second to none. Despite this, the McGuinty-Wynne government seems to think it's okay to allow Kemptville campus to simply fade into our memories. It's yet another example of the mismanagement of the agricultural file by a part-time minister and further proof that just like her predecessor, Premier Wynne and her cabinet just don't understand rural Ontario.

Just last week, my office received letter after letter from the Kemptville College Alumni board, including board president Ron Burgess, pleading with us to impose a two-year moratorium on this closure so local communities can make a solution. These alumni understand better than anyone the value and importance of maintaining this campus, and they're coming to the PC Party for help because they know we understand rural Ontario.

I stand in the House today to implore the Minister of Agriculture to listen to the Kemptville College Alumni board and the thousands of rural Ontarians across this province who know that we cannot allow this campus to close. If she is not willing to put in full-time hours on the

agricultural file, she should step down as minister and appoint someone who will, because the people of Northumberland–Quinte West and rural Ontario deserve better.

#### MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCTION

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My favourite time of the year is upon us, and it's not hockey playoff season; it's actually maple syrup season. The sap that flows from sugar maples only does so for about six weeks a year.

I want to highlight a local producer: Doug Thompson of Thompson's Maple Products on St. Joseph Island. Thompson and his partners have come up a wireless system that lets producers monitor their lines so they know exactly when and where a leak has sprung. Working closely with Algoma Business Computers, together they formed a company, Tap Track Technologies, and have designed a system to help producers avoid these problems. Thompson was presented with a Leaders in Innovation Award for new technologies.

The first two weeks of April, St. Joseph Island will be hosting their 47th Annual Maple Syrup Festival. The Royal Canadian Legion in Richards Landing will be serving an all-you-can-eat pancake and sausage breakfast. Don't miss it.

I want to encourage everyone to make the trip. Many local businesses and artists will be participating, and it's a great place to pick up local crafts and local baked goods. The children's library will also be hosting a fundraiser, and there will be plenty of used books for sale. So just stop in and grab a look.

In Algoma–Manitoulin, from St. Joseph across the North Shore to Manitoulin, many family farms open their sugar bushes and host adventures for their families to come out and enjoy the area and the many delicious maple syrup treats. Come on out and pan your plates and maybe you will find this gold nugget.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I saw nothing.

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#### GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** As always, it's always a pleasure for me to rise and update the House regarding some interesting and important events that are happening or taking place in my riding, particularly when they mean there are more examples, like there were this morning, of our government making very important and meaningful investments in my community of Vaughan.

This morning, I was very happy to stand alongside my mayor, Maurizio Bevilacqua, and two members of our council, Sandra Racco and also Marilyn Iafrate, to announce that our government has decided to add significant service to the Barrie GO line.

Specifically, starting on April 5, GO Transit will extend one of the morning and one of the afternoon trains on the Barrie line from 10 to 12 cars. This will add an

impressive 320 more seats per trip. In addition to that, as of June 28, there will also be two new weekday morning trains on the Barrie line from Maple to Union Station. In addition, we are reintroducing the weekend service during the summer months on this line, and we are also adding additional bus routes along the Barrie corridor as well.

Many, many residents in my community rely very much on the Barrie GO line, and I know that they'll be delighted that this government continues to invest significantly in crucial public transit infrastructure, to the tune of more than \$9 billion worth of investments in GO since 2003.

It is, as always, a pleasure for me to update the House on the things that are taking place in my wonderful community of Vaughan.

#### DISASTER RELIEF

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Last spring, my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock was one of the areas in Ontario that were hit the hardest by flooding. This resulted in a state of emergency being declared in parts of the city of Kawartha Lakes and Minden Hills. In particular, the Burnt River, Black River and Gull River were affected, and particularly the town of Minden was the most impacted.

It was heartbreaking to tour the areas and to see the number of residents whose homes and businesses and contents were damaged.

Despite these hardships, neighbours banded together in the weeks and months following the flood to assist one another with the cleanup and to rebuild their communities. In order to receive money from the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program, the communities affected were forced to fundraise. This is something that the people of Toronto did not have to do in the days following the ice storm this winter. Many small communities took on this challenge, hosting bake sales, BBQs, concerts, toonie miles, golf tournaments—whatever it took to raise money. Minden Hills raised a phenomenal \$708,000.

But in the wake of this disaster, I filed a motion that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing undertake a review of the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program to determine how it could better meet the needs of individuals, businesses and small municipalities who were impacted by disaster situations in Ontario.

Local municipalities have reworked their emergency plans and developed better communications plans.

The federal government, in its most recent budget, recognized the importance of developing a national standard of overland flood insurance. This would help correct the bizarre requirement that victims must fundraise before they are eligible to receive disaster assistance as, in Ontario—this is the only province that has this precondition.

I know we have had a rough winter, and I just hope that the floods don't come again.

## GREENBELT

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** We pride ourselves on our people's great capacity to develop areas which provide housing for our families and which drive our economic engine. However, Oakville residents agree that the pace of development must be controlled so that we never lose the great endowment that we have in the greenbelt area in the Golden Horseshoe.

When our party formed government, we recognized the great gift of nature that we had right on our doorstep, and we took action in securing nearly two million acres of green space that we now know as the greenbelt. This was done in spite of opposition by Tim Hudak and the Conservatives, who voted against the greenbelt twice, potentially robbing future generations of the farmlands, the wetlands and the forests that our province has to offer.

Today I stand with the people of the town of Oakville to ask our government to add the area around Fourteen Mile Creek in Oakville. I also ask that the provincially owned lands not be sold to the private sector but be preserved in public ownership instead.

My constituents recognize the value of green space in the region. They have identified these areas as very important for future Ontarians as a place to stand and grow. They know that, based on any analysis that could be brought forward, these lands would make a wonderful addition to the greenbelt, and I support them in that regard.

## ONTARIO FARMERS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to congratulate my constituents Charles Stevens, who was elected chair of the Ontario Apple Growers, as well as Cathy McKay, who was elected vice-chair. Charles, along with his wife, Judi, and daughter, Courtney, owns and operates Wilmot Orchards near Newcastle. They have over 80 acres of apples as well as a pick-your-own blueberry operation and the Appleberries Café.

The Stevens family has a long and distinguished history of leadership and innovation in the Durham agricultural industry. Long-time residents would certainly realize that Charles's father and mother, Bob and Jean Stevens, were owners and operators of Glen Rae Dairy.

Ontario Apple Growers' vice-chair, Cathy McKay, owns and operates a farm and orchard near Port Perry with her husband, Marvin. Their Nature's Bounty pick-your-own farm has 20 different varieties of apples on approximately 14,000 trees. The McKays also raise decorative corn, squash and pumpkins, plus a herd of 40 sheep on their farm in the Oak Ridges moraine.

Mr. Speaker, Charles Stevens and Cathy McKay are representatives of the many leaders from the agriculture and agri-business sector who live and grow in Durham region. I urge all members to support local farms and local produce as we look forward to the 2014 growing season. Let's raise a cheer for those who are growing the food that we eat.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. I would offer another gentle reminder that we always use either the member's title or their riding when making references to elected members in the House. I would thank you and urge you to cooperate with that request.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PUBLIC SECTOR AND MPP  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
AND TRANSPARENCY ACT, 2014LOI DE 2014 SUR  
LA RESPONSABILISATION  
ET LA TRANSPARENCE DU SECTEUR  
PUBLIC ET DES DÉPUTÉS

Mr. Milloy moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 179, An Act to promote public sector and MPP accountability and transparency by enacting the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014 and amending various Acts / Projet de loi 179, Loi visant à promouvoir la responsabilisation et la transparence du secteur public et des députés par l'édiction de la Loi de 2014 sur la rémunération des cadres du secteur parapublic et la modification de diverses lois.

**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?

**Hon. John Milloy:** During ministerial statements, Mr. Speaker.

## MOTIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the Select Committee on Developmental Services.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I move that, notwithstanding the order of the House dated October 3, 2013, the Select Committee on Developmental Services shall present its final report no later than June 5, 2014.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy moves that, notwithstanding the order of the House dated October 3, 2013, the Select Committee on Developmental Services shall present—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let me try that again. Mr. Milloy moves that, notwithstanding the order of the House dated October 3, 2013, the Select Committee on Developmental Services shall present its final report no later than June 5, 2014. Agreed? Agreed. The motion carries.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion without notice. Agreed? Agreed.

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**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I move that the following change be made to the membership of the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills: Ms. Fife replaces Mr. Vanthof.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Agreed? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

**Hon. John Milloy:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 2 and 5 be waived.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's a pleasure to rise today to speak about a piece of legislation that was just introduced several moments ago.

Since day one, our government has made openness and transparency a priority. As part of our Open Government plan, we're taking further action to strengthen political accountability and make the business of government more transparent.

The proposed Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014, would, if passed, build on the Premier's commitment to lead the most open and transparent government in the country. The proposed bill, if passed, would further strengthen political accountability, open up the business of government and increase third-party oversight.

From legislating the public disclosure of expenses of our elected members to directly controlling executive pay in the broader public sector, to further strengthening our record-keeping obligations, to enhancing accountability in classified agencies and increasing oversight in broader public sector organizations, our government is serious about our commitment to open government.

I'm proud to stand in the House today to introduce a package of far-reaching measures that would, if passed, set a high standard for accountability and transparency in Ontario.

The proposed measures in this bill target three key areas: political accountability, oversight in the broader public sector, and transparency in classified agencies and the broader public sector.

The proposed legislation, if passed, would build on a number of measures our government has already taken, including the introduction of the Public Sector Expenses Review Act in 2009, which gives the Integrity Commissioner authority to review expense claims of Ontario's 17 largest classified agencies and four hydro organizations, and the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, introduced in 2010, which sets out accountability measures for many broader public sector organizations.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario has a strong accountability framework in place for its elected members and public servants, and today we propose to set the bar higher. The proposed Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014, would, if passed, make it mandatory for cabinet ministers, parliamentary assistants, opposition leaders and their staff to post their expense information online.

Currently, expense reporting is done on a voluntary basis. The Premier, our cabinet and staff have been complying with that spirit of transparency since April 1, 2010. By making this a legislative requirement, we would ensure the opposition would finally follow our lead.

This legislation, if passed, would require the Speaker to post online information respecting payments to all MPPs for expenses concerning out-of-riding travel, related hotel expenses, meals and hospitality expenses.

I would like to take this opportunity, if I may, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge the member from Ottawa South, who is here beside me today, who has been championing transparency with respect to member expenses since he arrived at Queen's Park last summer, and whose private member's bill served as a blueprint for the measures that we're introducing today.

I have also written to my counterparts in the opposition to seek their support in posting online the annual disclosure of MPP expenses, which is compiled and prepared by the Legislative Assembly.

Government MPPs are leading by example by voluntarily posting those expenses online on their individual websites. I strongly encourage my colleagues in the opposition to follow our lead. I think we can all agree, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Ontario deserve clear and easy access to the expenses of their elected representatives.

Our government takes our record-keeping obligations seriously. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has credited our government for implementing important record-keeping reforms and staff training. To date, we have acted on all of her non-legislative recommendations. We're taking further action in this legislation, which would, if passed, implement three key legislative amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, known as FIPPA, and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, known as MFIPPA.

The proposed bill would require all institutions subject to FIPPA and MFIPPA to securely retain records, prohibit the wilful destruction of records with the intent to deny access, and introduce a fine of up to \$5,000 for the wilful destruction of records. The proposed bill would also empower the Integrity Commissioner to selectively review the expenses of executives in designated public bodies.

If passed, this legislation would be accompanied by changes to regulations made under the Public Sector Expense Review Act, 2009, so that all 197 classified agencies would be subject to the act. This would mean that the Integrity Commissioner would have the expanded scope to conduct expense reviews on all 197 classified agencies on a selected basis, in contrast to the current 17 classified agencies. The four hydro entities would continue to be covered.

Mr. Speaker, lobbying is an essential part of democracy, and we understand the important role that transparency plays in letting the people of Ontario know who is communicating with their government and for what purpose. We know that strengthening accountability in lobbying would help improve the information provided to the public, lobbyists and government.

If passed, this proposed bill would strengthen the Lobbyists Registration Act by providing the Integrity Commissioner with investigative powers, including the ability to prohibit individuals from lobbying for up to two years in the event of non-compliance. Enforcement provisions would include stiffer fines of up to \$100,000.

It's important to have a variety of expert perspectives and oversight, and our government is committed to strengthening that. If passed, the proposed bill would extend the Ontario Ombudsman's role to include municipalities, school boards and universities. For municipalities, the Ontario Ombudsman would also be permitted to investigate requests from individuals regarding meetings of the municipalities that were closed to the public after an investigation has been conducted by a municipally appointed meeting investigator.

We are also proposing to appoint a new patient ombudsman to help people resolve complaints against public hospitals, long-term-care homes, and community care access centres. The patient ombudsman would have powers to investigate and make public reports like the Ontario Ombudsman, but would be dedicated to the health sector.

Furthermore, we are proposing to give the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth new investigative

powers similar to those of the Ontario Ombudsman. The advocate would be able to investigate matters relating to children and youth involved in the child protection system, while putting the best interests of children and youth first.

Finally, the 2013 fall economic statement committed to controlling compensation for senior executives in the broader public sector, and today we are making good on that promise. Our government has the right plan to control executive compensation in the broader public sector. This legislation, if passed, would authorize the government to directly control the compensation of senior executives in the BPS by establishing compensation frameworks.

The provisions in this bill would give the government the right to access all compensation-related information, like contracts, so we can set compensation frameworks, including hard caps.

The proposed legislation also includes important enforcement and compliance measures. For instance, any elements of compensation in the new contracts that are found to be in excess of the framework would be deemed ineligible. Heads of organizations would be required to submit attestations confirming they are in compliance with the compensation frameworks.

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Our government would also have the ability to audit any of these organizations to ensure that they are in compliance with these frameworks. Furthermore, employers would be required to repay any amount in excess of the amounts set out in the compensation framework while minimizing the impact on its services to the public.

Offence provisions have been created to address wilful noncompliance with attestation or audit requirements with fines on conviction of up to \$5,000.

I'm very proud of the bill I'm presenting today, because it supports practices that would make our government even more accountable and transparent. These extensive accountability measures represent great strides. These measures, if passed, would help make Ontario one of the most accountable and transparent governments in the country. I urge all my colleagues in the House to support this very important legislation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** I did have the opportunity to sit in the boardroom and review this matter just a few minutes ago. I guess a couple of things are troubling. One, there appears to be a lot of duplication of work that's already in place. I note we're going to have an ombudsman who's going to review the city ombudsman. At the city of Toronto, the ombudsman's office got to be a very expensive matter. If you look at the history, a resident has a complaint and they usually take it to staff. If they can't get it resolved at staff, they go to their elected official. That fine; that's what they've got them for. If they can't solve it with the elected official, they sometimes go to the mayor in the end. And if they can't solve it there, we now have an ombudsman in the city of

Toronto who is supposed to handle these problems. Now, if you can't solve it there, you can come up to the province's Ombudsman and they'll take a whack at it for you. I just wonder, how many levels of service and bureaucracy are we going to create to handle this job?

I really have concern over the duplication, and I certainly have concern over the cost. I asked what the cost of all this would be, and there was no answer. There was absolutely no answer. No one could give you even a ballpark figure of what this is going to cost. But I know the way bureaucracy works. Once you start it, you can't stop it, and the expense just goes up and up and up.

That's the problem with what has confronted this government for 10 years that they have not been able to handle. They haven't been able to control the costs. That's why our debt has doubled, and that's why our deficit is now close to \$12 billion. That's why, I think, 9% of our revenue costs go towards paying our debt. It's because the people running the government haven't learned to control their own expenditures. This is just another example of it. I'm concerned that we're just going to be putting more taxpayers' dollars that we can't afford into something else. I think all that definitely has to be looked at.

As far as this government and openness and transparency, heaven knows—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** I heard laughter in the room, I guess, when that was mentioned. But the very reason for all this before us is the fact that, in the past, they haven't been open and transparent. As a matter of fact, there's a police investigation under way right now to find out what in the world they have done. The auditor had to get into the gas plant cancellation matter to see if he could figure out just what it cost us, because they weren't open and transparent enough to tell us. It dragged on for over a year, maybe even two years. So if we need openness and transparency, it's because the government can't control themselves. They can't be open and transparent. Now they are trying to appear like they are by putting in these tougher controls to make it look like that's what they really care about. But the best way to show what they really care about was by their actions, and by their own actions, they haven't been open and transparent. I'm not sure whether they're going to follow the new rules or not. I guess the biggest concern I really have is who is going to have the oversight of this government.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm happy to have this opportunity to respond to the minister and to this bill. We only have five minutes today, but we will get an opportunity, I imagine, hopefully soon, to do a full hour, because we need so much time to talk about these things, as you might imagine.

I do have a different point of view, one that is radically different from the one presented by the Tories on this bill. But I do want to say that I am happy that the Liberals keep on taking many of our ideas while they attack them. It is a fascinating thing that I've got to deal with on a daily basis, because you constantly have ministers and

the Premier attacking the NDP, and then you see our ideas reflected in your bills. And you wonder, "What's going on here?" I've got to tell you, I get tired every now and then. I get tired of bringing the ideas out to you as you whack us each and every time on the very things you put in your bills. It's exhausting; I just wanted to tell you that.

So the first point is—and I won't be able to speak to all these items, because we just don't have enough time—the broader public sector executive compensation act. It's interesting. The New Democrats, as you know, Minister, have been trying to cap salaries of the big fat cats in the civil service in a way that would control the costs, because I've got to tell you, if we can't find a civil servant who is willing to take 425,000 bucks as opposed to a million bucks, I say, "Send them out the door." That's what I say. Yet I can't find one Liberal who will publicly say the same thing. You've got an interesting thing here about the broader public sector executive compensation act, but what it does is, you're going to compile information from sector to sector, ministry to ministry, organization to organization. You're going to take a whole lot of time to compile all this information, and at the end of that—assuming there's an end, because there must be, presumably after the election—then you will put forth some regulations that will deal with the issue of broader public sector executive compensation. God bless. It sounds good that you put it on as the first item of debate, and we'll have more time later on.

The other idea is having to do with Ombudsman oversight. You know, Minister, that this little guy here has been pushing for Ombudsman oversight over so many areas that he should be over, and you guys have been saying, "No, we don't need it. We have oversight. We don't need the poor, tired Ombudsman to have this power over these other bodies, because we have adequate oversight." Do you remember that? Do you remember that?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm very sorry to have to interrupt the member for Trinity–Spadina, but the cacophony in the House means I have to. I would ask the House to come to order, and I'll return to the member for Trinity–Spadina. I'll give you a few extra seconds.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you, Speaker, for stopping the clock.

You'll recall that each and every time—for the last eight years, I've been putting forth bills. Our leader, when she was but an ordinary MPP, had bills on Ombudsman oversight. My colleague Madame Gélinas has brought forth bills on this very same thing.

Today we have the minister saying, "Okay, we're going to do some of that for you." But why does it take eight years? Why do we have to get beaten up for eight years until you finally say okay?

We have Ombudsman oversight over the university sector, over school boards—something that I've been pushing for a long, long time—and over the municipal governments, and that's all good.

On the other hand, there's absolutely no mention that Fiona Crean, the ombudsman for the city of Toronto, has been doing a great job and that perhaps we might want to look at giving her a little more power to be able to do an even better job—there's no recognition that she's been doing that. We should recognize that Toronto, as the only city that has one, might consider some special attention. We'll talk about that at another time.

The other issues that are not addressed by the Ombudsman are the following: amendments to the "excellent care" act, where they're going to have a separate ombudsperson. Do we really need that? It's like saying that the bankers need an ombudsman who comes out of the banking industry, which we have at the federal level. We're going to have an ombudsperson who is going to dedicate his or her time just to health care, when our Ombudsman could do a brilliant job of having that oversight, and we're passing that on.

I'll have more time at the next opportunity.

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## PETITIONS

### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** I have a petition here, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the University of Guelph's Kemptville and Alfred campuses are two of Ontario's outstanding post-secondary agricultural schools; and

"Whereas these campuses have delivered specialized and high-quality programs to generations of students from agricultural communities across eastern Ontario and the future success of the region's agri-food industry depends on continuing this strong partnership; and

"Whereas regional campuses like those in Kemptville and Alfred ensure the agri-food industry has access to the knowledge, research and innovation that are critical for Ontario to remain competitive in this rapidly changing sector;

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

"That Premier Wynne in her dual capacity as Minister of Agriculture and Food act immediately to reverse the University of Guelph's short-sighted and unacceptable decision to close its Kemptville and Alfred campuses."

I could not agree more with this petition and I'm willing to affix my name to it.

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas northern Ontario will suffer a huge loss of service as a result of government cuts to ServiceOntario counters;

"Whereas these cuts will have a negative impact on local businesses and local economies;

"Whereas northerners will now face challenges in accessing their birth certificates, health cards and licences;

"Whereas northern Ontario should not unfairly bear the brunt of decisions to slash operating budgets;

"Whereas, regardless of address, all Ontarians should be treated equally by their government;

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

"Review the decision to cut access to ServiceOntario for northerners, and provide northern Ontarians equal access to these services."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Calvin to bring it down to the Clerks.

### USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas virtually all Legislatures in Canada have fully embraced digital technologies;

"Whereas digital communications are now essential for members of Parliament to conduct their business, correspond with constituents, respond to stakeholders, stay in touch with staff, store data and information securely, keep ahead of the news cycle, and to remain current;

"Whereas progressive record keeping relies on cloud technology, remote access, real-time updates, multiple-point data entry, and broadband, wireless and satellite technologies;

"Whereas there is more to full exploitation of technology than having email;

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been considering the value, utility and usage of digital devices within the legislative precinct and within the chamber of Parliament itself for several months;

"Whereas this consideration of digital empowerment of members continues to be unresolved, on hold, under consideration and the subject of repeated temporizing correspondence between decision-makers and interested parties;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully request all various decision-makers of the assembly and government to fully embrace digital technologies, empower members, acquire the optimal devices, maximize the many technology offerings and orchestrate a much-needed modernization of the conduct of parliamentary business for the eventual benefit of the people of Ontario ...

"In agreement whereof," Speaker, I'm certainly supportive, will affix my signature, as I'm sure the opposition will, and send it to you via page Zohaib.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** "Whereas current OHIP legislation and policies prevent Ontario post-stroke patients

between the ages of 20 and 64 from receiving additional one-on-one OHIP-funded physiotherapy; and

“Whereas these post-stroke patients deserve to be rehabilitated to their greatest ability possible to maybe return to work and become provincial income taxpayers again and productive citizens;

“Whereas current OHIP policies prevent Ontarians under age 65 and over the age of 20 from receiving additional OHIP-funded physiotherapy and rehabilitation after their initial stroke treatment; and

“Whereas these OHIP policies are discriminatory in nature, forcing university/college students and other Ontarians to wait until age 65 to receive more OHIP-funded physiotherapy;

“Whereas the lack of post-stroke physiotherapy offered to Ontarians between the ages of 20 and 64 is forcing these people to prematurely cash in their RRSPs and/or sell their” homes to raise money to fund therapy;

“Now therefore we, the undersigned, hereby respectfully petition the Ontario Legislature to introduce and pass amending legislation and new regulations to provide OHIP-funded post-stroke physiotherapy and treatment for all qualified post-stroke patients, thereby eliminating the discriminatory nature of current treatment practices.”

I’m pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from Sheila David, the office manager at the MS Centre for Hope in Sudbury, and Brenda Salo from the Beaver Lake Club. It reads as follows:

“Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

“Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

“Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas-price regulation; and

“Whereas jurisdictions with gas-price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition.”

There is, right now, a difference of 11 cents a litre between two communities 70 kilometres apart in Nickel Belt.

I support this petition and will ask Mustfah to bring it to the Clerk.

#### CYSTIC FIBROSIS

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

“Whereas cystic fibrosis is a multi-system genetic disease primarily affecting the lungs and digestive system;

“Whereas one in every 3,600 children born in Canada has cystic fibrosis, making it the most common fatal genetic disease affecting Canadian children and young adults;

“Whereas there is no cure for cystic fibrosis, but the drug Kalydeco is the first medication that has shown success in targeting the underlying genetic cause of cystic fibrosis for patients with the specific G551D mutation;

“Whereas this drug helps improve the function of the defective protein, leading to better lung function, weight gain, and lower sweat chloride levels and access to Kalydeco could lead to a healthier, longer life;

“Whereas Kalydeco has been approved by Health Canada, but the approximately \$300,000 annual cost makes it an unaffordable treatment option for the overwhelming majority of Ontario families;

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

“That the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care take immediate action to expedite listing Kalydeco on the province’s drug formulary so this treatment is available to Ontario families.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

#### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I have another stack of petitions here—actually, 502 names—from across the province.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, is not allowed to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints against children’s aid societies; and

“Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not allowing their Ombudsman to investigate complaints against children’s aid societies; and

“Whereas people who feel they have been wronged by the actions of children’s aid societies are left feeling helpless with nowhere else to turn for help to correct systemic issues;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate children’s aid societies.”

I couldn’t agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I’m going to sign my name to it and give it to page Jane to bring to the Clerk.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** “Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn’s, Alzheimer’s, arthritic diabetes, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, is increasingly endemic in Can-

ada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe; and

“Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the May 30, 2000, edition of their professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario Health Insurance Plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process of establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives at 45% to 95% of the time;

**1350**

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health to direct the Ontario public health system and OHIP to include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis, to do everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians.”

This is long overdue, Speaker, and I affix my signature along with these other ones.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. John Vanthof:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas a motion was introduced at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads ‘that in the opinion of the House, the operation of off-road vehicles on highways under regulation 316/03 be changed to include side-by-side off-road vehicles, four-seat side-by-side vehicles, and two-up vehicles in order for them to be driven on highways under the same conditions as other off-road/all-terrain vehicles’;

“Whereas this motion was passed on November 7, 2013, to amend the Highway Traffic Act 316/03;

“Whereas the economic benefits will have positive impacts on ATV clubs, ATV manufacturers, dealers and rental shops, and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;

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

“We call on the Ministry of Transportation to implement this regulation immediately.”

I wholeheartedly agree and pass it down to Simon.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I support it and will send it with page Calvin, from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, to the Clerks’ desk.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from all over the northeast, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government” brought PET scanning into publicly insured health services “available to cancer and cardiac patients...; and

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

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

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through” Health Sciences North “thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario.”

We’ve waited a long time, Mr. Speaker. I will ask Milana to bring it to the Clerk.

#### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the University of Guelph’s Kemptville and Alfred campuses are two of Ontario’s outstanding post-secondary agricultural schools; and

“Whereas these campuses have delivered specialized and high-quality programs to generations of students from agricultural communities across eastern Ontario and the future success of the region’s agri-food industry depends on continuing this strong partnership; and

“Whereas regional campuses like those in Kemptville and Alfred ensure the agri-food industry has access to the knowledge, research and innovation that are critical for Ontario to remain competitive in this rapidly changing sector;

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

“That Premier Wynne in her dual capacity as Minister of Agriculture and Food act immediately to reverse the

University of Guelph's short-sighted and unacceptable decision to close its Kemptville and Alfred campuses."

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Jane.

### FIREFIGHTERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that at comes from firefighters in and around the city of Greater Sudbury.

"Whereas firefighters are routinely exposed to burning chemicals and other toxins in the course of protecting the lives and property of fellow citizens; and

"Whereas even with the best respiratory practices and protective equipment, exposures will continue to occur due to absorption through the skin once a firefighter has become soaked during fire suppression activities; and

"Whereas epidemiological, medical and scientific studies conclusively demonstrate an increased rate of diseases such as cancer in firefighters versus the general population;"

They petition "the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Amend the regulations of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA), 1997 to include cancer of the lungs, breasts, testicles, prostate, skin and multiple myeloma in presumptive legislation for occupational diseases related to firefighting."

I fully support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask Kathryn to bring it to the Clerk.

### SENIOR CITIZENS' HOUSING

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I have petitions here that are signed by hundreds of seniors and their families throughout York region. It reads as follows, and I do hope the Minister of Health is listening:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has changed its policy on how seniors living in supportive housing are served; and

"Whereas, due to this new policy of the Ontario government, seven senior homes in York region will be closing their on-site alternative community living programs on April 1, 2014, leaving 200 long-time residents living in these homes without the on-site continuous care they have been receiving from dedicated workers that have served them for years; and

"Whereas the on-site proactive and responsive care will now be replaced by a hub-and-spoke reactive care model relying on seniors themselves initiating calls for help that will have a response time of 15 minutes, at least, because the caregiver is not on-site but in a mobile unit and because this is unacceptable for seniors and residents who have for years relied on on-site staff to assist them with medical equipment, medical assistance, personal and other unanticipated needs; and

"Whereas the closure of the on-site care service will lead to inadequate care to meet the true needs of the seniors and residents and will result in undue hardship on residents and their families; and

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: That the Ontario government reverse its decision that is leading to the closure of the alternative community living programs in seven seniors' and retirement homes in York region and that the government stop the transfer of on-site continuous and proactive care to a reactive call with 15 minutes' delay for care that will lower the quality of life for seniors and residents in the seven affected homes."

I'm pleased to affix my signature in support of this petition, and I do trust that the Minister of Health is taking note.

### OPPOSITION DAY

#### JOB CREATION

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I move that, in the opinion of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Ontario families need to see a long-term plan for more full-time jobs;

And that if the Liberal government has not tabled a budget or implemented the million jobs plan by the end of this fiscal year, the House leaders of the three recognized parties should schedule a debate and vote on the motion of want of confidence number 2, appearing on the March 19, 2014, Orders and Notices paper, standing in the name of Jim Wilson, MPP, Simcoe-Grey, following routine proceedings on Wednesday, April 2, 2014. This is addressed to the Premier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Wilson has moved opposition day motion number 3. I recognize the member for Simcoe-Grey for the leadoff in this debate.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** This is certainly an attempt by our party to, first of all, ask the government, particularly Premier Wynne, who has no mandate directly from the people of Ontario—only from the Liberal Party of Ontario—if she feels she has the confidence of this House and therefore the confidence of the people of Ontario through this House, to put that to the test. She has been Premier for a little over a year and she has not been put to the test by this Legislature.

It is our parliamentary tradition that governments must hold the confidence of the Legislature at all times. We've had a long time since that has been put to the test. In fact, it was in the 2011 general election time that that would have been put to the test of the general public. Again, it has been over a year since Premier Wynne has been Premier of the province. We're looking for the NDP to support us.

We need a jobs plan. So this motion today says that if you don't put your budget forward—which we assume will hopefully be, finally after 11 years, a jobs plan for this province—by the end of this fiscal year, which is March 31, just coming up, then adopt the leader of the PC Party's job plan, the million jobs bill that has been put forward by Mr. Hudak. Steal those ideas—five really good, solid points in that plan. We welcome the govern-

ment to borrow and implement what's needed for bringing jobs back to the province.

**1400**

So we have a want-of-confidence motion that I have filed, the second one that we've filed since the 2011 election, calling on the government to implement Mr. Hudak's jobs plan or bring forward a plan of their own. But there is a time frame here. You already, together with the NDP, were propped up just a few weeks ago, just before we went to the March break—by the NDP, when they propped you up in the supply motion, which means you've paid all the bills for the year coming, so you don't actually have to bring forward a budget. A nice parliamentary trick, but I bet the people back home, because they read the paper and see the media every day, think that you actually have to bring forward a budget. You don't. You've got the bills paid because you were propped up, once again, just before the March break, by the NDP.

Now today, we hope that the NDP won't, once again, prop up this corrupt Liberal government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I have to ask the member for Simcoe–Grey to withdraw his unparliamentary remark.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Yes, I will withdraw, Mr. Speaker, because I respect your ruling, but—okay, this wayward Liberal government. How many billion-dollar job scandals does one have to put up with and still expect to stay in government? The NDP seem to think that buying seats in the last election is morally right and fiscally responsible, for over a billion dollars—\$1.1 billion according to the provincial auditor. We say enough is enough, and we've been saying that since the 2011 election. Enough is enough. And we're going to continue to say it. Not alone—eHealth, Ornge, where lives were at stake. Day after day, you're just bad managers.

Last week, we were even finding out that you can't even do a cover-up properly, when it came to trying to redact or black-out certain documents provided to one of the legislative committees here by the Ministry of Finance. You couldn't even do that right. Then you got caught and you tried to smear the honourable member from Nipissing, our colleague, and tried to change the channel, as you do every day here in the Legislature and out there on the road with your press releases and that.

You have been embroiled in the worst scandals in Canadian history. If the gas plant scandal in monetary value is greater than the scandal that started the country, really, the railway scandals we had under Macdonald and company—the fact of the matter is, those scandals in today's dollars pale in comparison to the waste that you've had.

The young Vanstone girl in my riding—

**Interjection:** Madi.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Madi. I know in your riding, Mr. Speaker, and in many ridings across the province—actually, I was telling the Rotary Club in Wasaga Beach recently, “If you think billion-dollar scandals don't affect your lives, look at what's happening in the Ministry of

Health right now.” They don't have the money for young children, for the drug Kalydeco, in this case, and other drugs that have been brought up here.

More and more often, with frequency now, cases are appearing where ministries don't have the money for the basic programs, and that's what's happening. This does affect your lives. Stop telling me when I see you, “I don't care about politics.” This does affect your lives, and the scandals are coming home to roost. It's time that you, as voters in the province of Ontario, had your opportunity to go back to the polls and bring full judgment on this government.

We say enough is enough. Maybe we're not right. Maybe we're missing something, but I don't think so. I think, if you were honest and morally upright, you would go to the polls—and first you would seek, through a want-of-confidence motion, the confidence of this House. If you don't get that, you should go do the polls and do the right thing and live up to parliamentary democracy, which so many people died for and defended in this country.

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

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me to speak on this opposition day motion. I'm sure you will not be surprised to hear that I will be speaking against this motion, for a variety of reasons.

Let me just first start with a very basic review or reminder of how our representative parliamentary Westminster model of democracy works. It's really, perhaps “irritating” is the word when you hear misdescription of our system. I'll tell you why it irritates me: It's because part of our job as members of provincial Parliament is to be role models and educate our young people in how our system works. In fact, we are called upon quite regularly, all of us members, to go and speak to grade 5 and grade 10 civics classes. If we don't understand our system well, I fear, what are we really educating them on our systems when we as individuals go to classrooms to talk about our system of democracy?

Speaker, last time I checked, in a Westminster model of democracy, Premiers are not elected. This is not the United States of America. We don't elect a President and a Vice-President. That's not on the ballot. What we elect are local representatives to represent our local constituencies. I have the great privilege to represent the constituency of Ottawa Centre, and every member has a constituency that is assigned to them, because they chose to run and a majority of people who voted in that community—or not a majority; they got the most votes within that community, and that's why they represent them. Then it is the collective in this House that decides who is going to be the leader of the government.

We speak on behalf of our individual communities and we hold confidence votes in the House through various mechanisms. If the leader of the majority of the group, the Premier in this instance, gets the most votes of this House, then she has absolute legitimate authority in our system to form government. So in the case of our current

Premier, the member from Don Valley West—because that's the riding she represents—after she became the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party and came to the Premier's seat, she presented a speech from the throne. Speaker, as I know you know, the speech from the throne is a confidence vote; it's a confidence motion. At that time, if a majority of the members in this House would have not voted in support of that speech from the throne, that Premier would not have had the confidence of the members. But guess what, Speaker? A majority of the members in the House voted in support of that confidence motion. Therefore, this Premier, the MPP from Don Valley West, has full legitimacy to be the Premier and the leader of the government.

That is how our system works. There is no direct mandate. Those notions are incorrect. I fear, again, there are pages in this chamber who are listening to this debate and we are teaching them something incorrect and improper. We should refrain from doing so. I understand politics, but please do not distort our system of democracy.

I want to add further that the Premier not only has received a vote of confidence through the passage of the speech from the throne in February 2013 when she sought the confidence of the majority of the members of the House, which she received, but since then she put forward a budget motion that passed in this House. She put forward a budget bill that passed through first reading, a confidence motion; second reading, a confidence motion; committee, a confidence motion; third reading, a confidence motion. By my count, including the speech from the throne, she has been voted five times in this House on a confidence motion. Actually, then there were the supply votes, which were also a confidence motion. So I think there have been about seven or eight instances where a majority of the members of this House have said to the government and the member from Don Valley West, as the leader of the government, that they have confidence in her abilities to represent the government: point final. That is how our system works.

I can guarantee you, Speaker, one more thing: that in the next election, again, we will not be voting for a Premier. There will be no such thing on the ballot, saying "Premier," with three or four or five names next to it. Our system does not work that way.

1410

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Please, please, do us all a favour. We're intelligent people here. Do not misrepresent our system. If you want to live and work in the United States of America, I welcome you to go run in a district there and be part of that system. Our system is very different. Do our future generations a favour. Do these pages a favour. Let's tell them accurately and properly how our system works.

I got that off my chest, Speaker. It's been bugging me for some time. I think I've heard the member from Beaches East–York talk about this, too, quite eloquently, agreeing that we need to make sure we don't improperly

portray our system, because I think there is a higher onus on us as elected representatives to relay the right information.

I just want to talk about a couple more things. I think that's very important in my opposition to this particular motion. One, there is no defined time frame. Again, it goes back to convention because our system so much is based on convention. There is no defined time frame as to when a budget needs to come. We've passed the supply motion so the government has the capacity to pay its civil servants. Of course, there are time limitations to that. I believe we've got six months.

Governments at different times in different periods have brought in budgets at a different time frame. There is no rule out there that says the budget has to be presented by March 31, by fiscal end. That again is a construct the opposition is trying to create. They're trying to give this impression somehow that that type of rule exists.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Yes. I think a case in point, Speaker, is when the opposition party—the Progressive Conservatives were in government. Let's just look at their record. It's only fair that we look at their record as to when they brought in their own budgets because if this particular rule applied—I can tell you that they presented about eight budgets when they were in government. They were offside on every single one of them. Right? For example, the first PC 1996 budget: May 7; 1997, May 6; 1998, May 5; 1999, May 4; 2000, May 2; 2001, May 9; 2002, June 17; 2003, their very last budget, May 22.

If there is a March 31 rule, which I would like to hear one of the speakers point out to me—maybe I'm a lawyer so I like technicalities, some legalese—then they were offside on every single one of them. So one more cogent reason I would argue not to vote for this particular motion is because the motion is without any merit.

The last point I will make is around job creation. Collectively, as a province, every single Ontarian in this great province of ours has been working extremely hard to come out of the great recession. That great recession of 2008–09 came without warning and as a surprise not just to Ontario and Ontarians but to Canada and Canadians and around the world. Collectively, all the governments around the world put their bright minds together to make sure they responded to that great recession, which was the biggest recession since the Great Depression. I'm not the one describing it that way. Economists and political scientists have defined that recession in the same manner.

We all worked hard together to stimulate the economy. In fact, every government in Canada borrowed money to invest back in our communities to stimulate the economy, to save jobs, and our government—and I'm very proud to say that—did the same.

Since then, we've also been working very hard to make sure the economy continues to grow and we recover the jobs that were lost. Speaker, numbers don't lie. The numbers are—and these are Statistics Canada numbers. Again, don't believe my numbers. I'm not

making up the numbers. These are the numbers from Statistics Canada, which is one of the most renowned statistics agencies around the world. They tell us that Ontario, since the depth of the recession, which was June 2009, has created 446,000 jobs up to now. That's all the jobs that were lost in the recession and more. That's the real number.

By the way, the federal Conservative government—which I just raise from the point of view of giving more merit to my argument because I know the party opposite that brought the motion likes to think what the federal Conservatives have done is right. They quote the million jobs that they have created since the depth of the recession, using exactly the same data from Statistics Canada. When the federal Conservative government talks about the million jobs they have created since the depth of the recession across Canada, 446,000 of that million took place right here in Ontario.

We are definitely doing something right in growing our economy. More needs to be done. We need to continue to take a steady course in that direction. We don't have the time or have the luxury to engage in radical or risky ideas. That's why I think the course that our government has taken, the six-point economic plan that our Premier has put forward, has produced results and will continue to do so. That's why I will be voting against this particular motion.

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

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thanks very much, Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I'm proud to speak about this very important motion that was brought forward by our party's House leader, Mr. Wilson, the member for Simcoe–Grey. It's an important motion because it really speaks to the urgency of the jobs and the fiscal crisis that Ontario is facing today.

Here we are, in the midst of that crisis, where we have 300,000 people who have lost good-paying jobs in the manufacturing sector, and where we have a government that has doubled the province's debt in 10 years and whose latest budget had an \$11.7-billion hole in it. Instead of coming forward as a government with a plan to make things better, this government, I suggest, has done nothing. In fact, they've made things worse in the province.

Just last week our finance critic, the member for Nipissing, revealed the government has known for over a year that its fiscal plan is off the rails. He has proven that the Premier and her cabinet have knowingly hidden from the public the fact that there's a shortfall of \$4.5 billion in their fiscal projections.

When you have that kind of problem as a government, you've really got two choices; you've got two things you can do. You can take the high road. You can make the honourable choice by coming clean with the members of the Legislature and the public and then present a plan on how you're going to fix it.

The other option is to take the path that I suggest the Wynne government is following, and that is to hide the

truth away and pretend that it's business as usual. Worse, when you get called out and exposed, like you did last week with the member for Nipissing, you then launch a shameful personal attack on the member, as opposition critic, for doing a job and holding this out-of-control government to account.

The way that episode unfolded last week, I think it gives Ontarians a bit of insight into the depths this government is willing to go to, to save their skin.

When you look at this motion, for those watching at home—we in our party have taken a look at the situation in Ontario, where we have too many people out of work. We've got a growing debt and a deficit that's jeopardizing the services that Ontarians really want most. The two services that I think are most put in jeopardy by this government's ways are health and education.

But instead of an action for a government that is responsible for creating this mess, we see that they really have no plan. In fact, we're hearing in some circles that we're not going to hear from this government, in the form of their budget, for a month. You've heard from my House leader today, talking about the supply motion, that there is some fear that there won't be a budget tabled at all this spring.

I think what is happening is that we're spinning our wheels while our competitors around Canada, North America and the world are eating our lunch.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation we're facing in Ontario, we have tabled this motion for the government to introduce their budget by March 31 and implement the only jobs plan that is on the order paper right now in the province of Ontario. It's Tim Hudak's million jobs plan. We need that plan to get our economy kick-started. We've said this before: If you don't have your own plan, take ours, but actually act like a government, table your budget and deal with the consequences.

This is what we're trying to deal with this afternoon. I appreciate the work that my House leader has done to table it today. We think it's the accountability that employers demand, for us to deal with this very, very critical issue.

**1420**

I expect the opposition, the third party—we haven't heard from them yet this afternoon. They passed on their rotation, but I hope that they'll support our motion. It's our job—both opposition parties—to hold the government to account and to ensure that there are consequences when they fail to do their job. Our motion is designed to do those things.

Speaker, I have to digress a bit and talk about the Liberal convention that took place on the weekend. You know when the Liberal Party gets together, they're going to lay it on a bit thick, and you have to really take what they are saying with a grain of salt. But after I heard what I heard, you could use all the salt that would melt all the ice and snow across Ontario with some of the rhetoric that I heard at this convention. It showed me that the government is so completely out of touch with reality in this province.

I think this motion serves to put the opposition on a frame to really send this government and put it on its heels.

I can't believe what I heard when I heard the Premier use the words "safe hands." Come on; safe hands? Let's not forget these so-called safe hands have their fingerprints on every scandal that this tainted government has, this track record of scandalous behaviour and mismanagement that cost Ontarians billions and caused this government to lose all credibility with the hard-working people of the province of Ontario. We're all too familiar with the list: eHealth, Ornge, the Green Energy Act, the growing Pan Am Games spending debacle and, of course, the granddaddy of them all, the gas plant scandal.

You also have to remember that, as a senior cabinet—  
*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I apologize for interrupting the member for Leeds–Grenville, but there is a conversation going on across the floor, right in front of me, and it's making it difficult for me to hear the member for Leeds–Grenville. I do need to hear him. I'll return to him now. He has the floor.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thank you.

The Premier was the senior cabinet minister. She was the Liberal campaign co-chair. She's now the Premier. She has had those unsafe hands on the wheel that is basically driving Ontarians over the fiscal cliff. I'd say the only safe thing that we can do, as an opposition, is to get those hands off the wheel and to put the wheel in motion so that we can stop the damage that has been done by this government already.

The other thing she said, and again, I couldn't believe it—she used the words "laser focus on helping working families." I don't know. I think that they're going to have to readjust that laser, because I don't think it's helping. It's actually hurting. Some will say it's attacking families across the province.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Maybe she was talking about the Working Families Coalition.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** She possibly could, the member for Nepean–Carlton.

If this government is really on the side of hard-working families, I'd hate to see what a government that wasn't on the side of families, launched by Premier Wynne, would be.

I think we have said it on this side many times: We've got 600,000 people who are out of work now. We need to change the path that Ontario is on right now. I have outlined some of the concerns that I've had. I really believe that this government needs to change its focus. Companies like Kellogg's, Heinz and Caterpillar have all announced they're leaving the province. They are not stopping in terms of manufacturing products, Speaker; they're just making a conscious decision not to operate here in the province.

Earlier, I mentioned health and education—I think part of what I'm concerned about is agriculture in my riding. I stood up last week in favour of the tradition of agricultural education in Ontario. I'm speaking, of course,

about the government's refusal to grant a two-year moratorium on the closure of Kemptville and Alfred agricultural colleges. While the decision, as the government has said, may have been announced by the University of Guelph, it's unfolding that the support of this Premier, in her capacity as a part-time Minister of Agriculture—they are allowing this to happen. They're allowing this erosion. She's allowing this erosion as the part-time Minister of Agriculture. I think it's tragic, where you make these statements about the agri-food industry, about how you want them to create 120,000 new jobs, which is a challenge to achieve, and then you're making a decision and allowing a decision to take place where agriculture education can't take place close to home.

I'm confident that with the support I've received for my moratorium—my call for a moratorium has been supported by a number of counties, by the Catholic District School Board and a number of farm groups out there and over 7,000 people who have either signed my petition online or on paper. To be clear, I think that the group, locally, is doing a wonderful job. We're working together. I know that the member from Nepean–Carleton and I were on a conference call with Algonquin. We had a great meeting with Algonquin. I was at the quarterly meeting at St. Lawrence College on Friday. There are some partners that are coming forward—very, very preliminary—and I really do think that a two-year moratorium would be the best way for us to protect our assets at both the colleges and to be able to give us time to put a path forward. But again, this is the problem with this government. They hide behind others and they're not allowing the local community to make a decision.

The good news is that in a minority Parliament the opposition does hold the cards. Our Ontario PC caucus and the NDP have an opportunity to work together this afternoon to put this government on notice that the clock is ticking. Our caucus is prepared to do that. We'll find out today if the leader of the third party and her caucus are finally ready to play that card so that we can see if they're willing to push the government when it comes to playing that card: whether they're going to play it or whether they're going to fold. I look forward to hearing from them today, and I look forward to other opposition members speaking in favour of this motion.

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I always like to rise after the member from Leeds–Grenville because he gives me so much ammunition. I like to rise because he's asking whether we'll play our cards or fold them. I think he thinks he's Kenny Rogers; I hope he can sing. But I want to tell you that this is not the issue to do that. If I have ever seen such a misguided motion before this House, I have seen it today. If I have ever seen anything that is so unworkable, I have seen it today.

Here is a motion that is asking that this House, in seven days, takes matters into its own hands if the Minister of Finance does not deliver a budget. How, possibly, could the Minister of Finance deliver a budget in seven

days that he hasn't announced? This Minister of Finance, for all of his faults—and I'm sure he has some; even the Liberals might admit that—is holding consultations until the 28th of March. It's published. There are people who are lined up to talk about what they want to see in this budget. How can he possibly, at that point, produce a budget by the 31st of March?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Unless he's not listening.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Unless, of course, as my colleague so rightly points out, he's not listening to the people who are lining up this week. The reality is that this motion is doomed to fail from the outset because it is illogical for anyone to say that the Minister of Finance has to produce a budget by the 31st of March, or else—and here's the kicker. What is the "or else"? The "or else" is that the three party House leaders agree to set down a debate on a Conservative motion on April 2. My goodness. The three party House leaders have to be in agreement. There has to be unanimity. You've already heard that the Liberals are not going to agree to this. Therefore, there is virtually no possibility whatsoever, even should the motion pass today, that the House leader for the Liberal Party is going to stand up, in his wisdom, and state: "I want a debate to bring down my government because this motion passed." It is simply not going to happen. This is probably one of the most irrelevant motions I have ever seen in this House.

1430

The members of the Conservative Party, whom sometimes I love dearly, are asking me to support something. They've asked me to support this. I have to tell you: Probably the greatest philosopher of all time, Socrates—and in my own right I even think he was better than both Aristotle and Plato—coined only a couple of phrases that have been written down and that have passed to eternity. My favourite one from Socrates is, "Sir, I would gladly be persuaded by you, but not against my better judgment." That's what this is all about today: How can I be persuaded when my judgment tells me that this motion is so irreparably wrong, and that it has virtually no chance of success and is just an opportunity for the Tories to heap scorn not only on the government, but increasingly on the NDP. I can only ask, why is that happening? It has to happen because they are afraid. They are nervous. They are wondering what we're going to do, and they're wondering how much people are starting to listen to our message.

Let's go over what this motion continues to say. This motion continues to talk about the Tories' million jobs plan. Oh, my goodness, the million jobs plan. This morning, I opened up the paper. I like to look for new words and new phrases. I am indebted to Carol Goar. I don't know how many of you read her column, but she used a word in that column which I have not seen or read for, I don't know, maybe decades. The word is "tautology."

I had to stop and think about what tautological thought was. You know what it is? It's a great word. It's people talking endless reams of knowledge, or lack of knowledge, over and over and over again, hoping that this

thing that makes no sense will suddenly make sense to people. That's what tautology is.

Every year they come up with new words in the dictionary. The newest one this year is a "selfie." You know, when you take a picture of yourself? They're including the new words in the dictionary. "Selfie" has made the English dictionary for this year. I think that next year "tautology" might be a great one, but they're not going to put down that word, because that word is as old as Shakespeare. What they're going to write down is "million jobs plan." They're going to say, "Because this is a thing that has been repeated over and over and over, ad nauseam, and that really means nothing at all." It has been repeated to the point that some members of that party even think it's true.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I'm glad the Liberals are laughing, because I turn my attention now to them.

I listened in this House in incredulity, absolutely, as the then-finance minister, Dwight Duncan, stood up probably a dozen times, in his own tautological universe, and talked about the HST and the 600,000 jobs it was going to create. Remember that, all of you, the 600,000 jobs that Ontario was going to get as soon as we put in the HST? You know something? I'm still counting; I'm still waiting. It was a number pulled out of thin air, out of the ethereal stuff beyond us. Dwight Duncan kept talking about that, and once in a while, the then Premier would pipe in about 600,000 jobs. They kept talking and talking and talking about it, until even they believed it. Today, some of them will tell you they created the 600,000 jobs. What a load of rubbish. What a total load of rubbish that was, these numbers pulled out of a hat.

Then I listened more to the Liberals. Remember when they came in with the green plan: "We're going to create 50,000 jobs immediately with our new green plan." How many of those 50,000 jobs have actually materialized? And even if there were a few—and I would admit there were a few—how many jobs were lost because of the green plan? That's the important thing, because the auditor has told us that for every job that was created in the green plan, four jobs were lost as a result of it.

I listen to these—600,000, 50,000, 100 million; whatever number they make up—with a huge, huge grain of salt.

The government also talked about their glorious plans to cut taxes—business, corporate taxes—and how many jobs they were going to create. I sat in this House and I listened, first of all, to Greg Sorbara, and then I listened to Dwight Duncan, and now I listen to Charles Sousa—excuse me; he's the Minister of Finance. The past ones, I can talk about them with their names.

I listen to them, and they all talk about cutting corporate tax cuts, as the Conservatives do too, and how many jobs this is going to create. Well, I'll tell you, it doesn't create any jobs at all, and the government members know it and my Conservative colleagues know it too.

Even Jim Flaherty, the finance minister for Canada, who this week announced his retirement, he knows it too. He said that all that has happened—we all know that all

that has happened with those tax cuts is they have gone to line the pockets of the corporate profits. They're sitting on hundreds of billions of dollars of money that we have let them get away with, and they're not creating the jobs and the infrastructure that we need in this country. There is the whole thing; I don't know.

Anyway, we have a duty in this country to look after the people of the middle class, because they make up the overwhelming majority of people and the overwhelming majority of the taxpayers who pay the freight. When you go out into your constituencies, as I was last week on Friday—I went out and I had a man come to me, totally desperate. He's 62 years of age. He is desperately looking for a job. He is not ready to retire. In fact, he can't retire. He doesn't have a pension. He can get CPP several years early, but he knows that if he takes that, it's going to cut back on what he would get, had he ordinarily retired at 65 or 67 or 70 years of age. He's desperately looking for work, and he cannot find work, due in part to his age and in part to a slight disability as a result of an industrial accident. He cannot find work.

He was asking me if there was anything I could do. It was very difficult to tell that poor man that there was very little that I, as an MPP, could do to help him find a job. Within the public service of Ontario, there are tests and there are interviews. Politicians should not and do not get involved in the hiring of people at any level of the government. I told him, "Please don't give up. Please continue to try." He promised me that he would.

But it is the reality of many middle-class people, who suddenly, for the first time in their lives, find that they no longer have a job in this province, that they have to come in to see people like me in the overwhelming hope that something can be found.

I talked a little bit to that man about his life. He was having a hard time with the rent. He was having an even harder time with electricity payments, a huge problem with electricity payments. He was worried that those were going to continue to rise. He was worried about a great many things.

People are worried about the electricity. They're worried about home heating. They're worried about a thousand things that ordinary people need to do every day. They need to put food on the table. They have expenses that have to be paid.

They wonder what this government is doing about all of that. They wonder why the employment rate is so stubborn in Ontario, in spite of the 600,000 jobs that would be created or the 50,000 jobs in green energy. How come the unemployment rate in Ontario has been stubbornly above the national average for the past five or six years? It never once got below the national average. It's pretty sad.

They wonder why it is that big companies in this province are walking away, and not only the Heinzes, not only the Kelloggses. Even the others that traditionally have come looking for some kind of support from the Ontario government give up, pack their tents and leave, as Cliffs did in the Ring of Fire, or as I'm afraid Chrysler may do in Windsor and Brampton.

We have lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. As Bruce Springsteen once mightily said, "The jobs are gone, boy, and they ain't coming back." That's as a result of what this government has done in its finances, in its electricity policy and in everything else that they have tried to put together in the last 10 years. I'm hoping that those jobs will come back, but they will only come back if we change the channel.

I listened today to the Minister of Economic Development. Oh, my goodness, he stands up and says a whole lot of stuff that I don't think there's much—how can I put it? It's ethereal. It does not have very much substance. Maybe that's the kindest way I can put it.

**1440**

He talks about the NDP's plan. He said that it has been thrown aside by Obama—news to me; it seems to me very much part of the Democratic plan in the United States—and he says that his economic gurus say it's going to cost \$2 billion. I don't know. I really have some problems with what he's saying, and I'm going to deal with those at the end.

So let's get back to the Conservatives for a minute. They're saying that, you know, they are going to create a million jobs. They haven't told us how those million jobs are going to be created, except that they're promising even more corporate tax cuts. They want it to go from 11.5% down to 10%. We're already the lowest corporate tax policy state or province in the whole of North America. As a result of that policy, we have lined many, many pockets, and as a result of that policy, we find ourselves with a debt at \$11 billion, with no real chance of it going anywhere.

Stop and think, everybody in this place. I know the Conservatives have talked about this. Stop and think, please, Liberals opposite me: Had the corporate taxes remained where they were when McGuinty first assumed office as Premier of this province—they were around 15% at that point—we would have no deficit. Think about that just for a second. Let that sink in. We would have no deficit, none whatsoever, because the taxes between the 11.5% where it is now and 15% would have been the equivalent of some \$10 billion.

I'm asking people, especially my colleagues opposite me in the Liberal Party, is this the Ontario that you see? Is this the Ontario that you covet? Is this the Ontario that you want to go forward to? Or, to use the Premier's own words, is this that to which you aspire, having the wealthiest people and the corporations pay the smallest taxes in all of North America, not putting the money back into the economy, and seeing the middle class and the poor, those on ODSP and fixed income, our pensioners, struggle? Because that's the reality if you continue down that path.

Now, if you look at what the Conservatives are saying, the Conservatives are saying that they want to reduce that from 11.5% down to 10%. That's their answer. That's the answer that is in this motion. I would suggest to you that what this is going to do is put all of us in penury.

They've also talked about their economic plan, the Conservatives, part of their 100,000 jobs, million jobs,

whatever number it is. They've also talked about a wage freeze. They want to impose a wage freeze on all public employees. It's a tough one. It's a tough one. I know if you're a public employee, you are not likely to think very much of this. I know I was a public employee myself many years ago when I worked for the federal government in the Department of Immigration. I remember when they froze our wages. I remember the bitterness of the people and I remember the concerted action that followed that wage freeze for months, where people did less work than normal. They did it, and I'll tell you, they did it on purpose, and I'll tell you that the government soon came to realize that that was not the solution.

I wonder, for my colleagues from the Conservative Party, if you're so intent on freezing the wages of those people who earn \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year, as most public employees do, then why have you been so silent on the freezing or the lowering of wages of your good friends the CEOs who make \$600,000, \$700,000, \$800,000 or \$1.5 million a year? We in the NDP think that if there is to be anything done in the public employment sector, it needs to start at the top. As a matter of fact, that may be sufficient in and of itself, because there is nobody in this province, I would put to you, Mr. Speaker, who is worth more than twice as much as the Premier of Ontario makes—nobody at all. I don't care whether they work in economic development or in hydro or anywhere else. If a salary of \$500,000 is not good enough for them, then I'm sure there are other people who are equally as capable who would be willing to do it in their stead.

I turn to another one of the Conservatives' economic plans that is part of this million jobs scheme, and that is to kill the College of Trades. With the greatest of respect, although the College of Trades has problems and I wonder whether it is too all-encompassing or all-embracing to take in people such as the hairdressers who were here today, surely, there is some merit to the College of Trades. The merit lies in, first of all, the safety aspect, where people who are registered and know their rights and are organized will have far better safety outcomes in the future than those who are not.

Secondly, we need to get control of the underground economy, and the College of Trades is but one of the tools to do that. Literally every year, billions of dollars are siphoned out of the Ontario economy and out of the taxes available to the Ontario government—and take enormous taxes from those who do pay them because they have to make up the difference, the people who pay taxes and who belong to factories or unions or who are legitimate in claiming the monies that they've earned: The underground economy hurts all of that. If the College of Trades only does one thing, and if it regulates so that we know who is earning that kind of living and we are able to better monitor how much money they're earning, that would be a good thing.

Back to the Liberals again—I have to keep going back and forth. I watched the Premier a little bit in awe on the television this weekend, a little bit in awe sometimes in

the Legislature, in how she defines the Conservatives and the NDP as being “risky.” Risky. I have never felt that I was risky. I think I'm a mainstream kind of guy.

Do you know what I think is risky: a government that is willing to risk \$1.1 billion to elect four or five people in Mississauga. What I think is risky is a government that will not keep tabs on Ornge and all the shenanigans that went on around there. What I think is risky is a government that will waste nearly \$1 billion on eHealth and hardly show any results. What I think is risky is this government. That's what I think is risky. You have to look after the pennies; the dollars will look after themselves.

This government has not been willing to show the leadership, to show ministerial responsibility in 100 places in the years I have been here. I don't think the NDP is risky. Sometimes I don't even think the Conservatives are risky. But if you wanted me to define “risky,” I would say that risky would be ensuring that another Liberal government came to be, because this province, quite simply, cannot afford the kind of boondoggles we have become accustomed to, day in, day out, and month in, month out.

Even in my own little riding of Beaches–East York, the sadness in my community about their beloved jazz festival, the sadness of it, that the government sees fit, because they can, to simply take away the money where half a million people come together for 12 days and enjoy themselves. The cost per person who actually went there last year was about eight cents. Eight cents: That's how much was being paid.

Here is a government—and I asked another question today and I got the same kind of answer I got from the minister as I got from the Premier and the Minister of Economic Development: “Oh, you know, you know, you know, and you shouldn't be asking these questions.” Well, we need to ask these questions, because we live in this province too and the people in my riding contribute taxes too. The people have a question to ask: “How is this government spending the money?”

I remember, a few years back, I had to stand in this very place and I talked for weeks about how the government was spending money in a thing that became known as Collegiate, because Michael Colle was the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in those days, where money was being handed out to all kinds of groups and ethnic communities with no real tag to it. We didn't know what the money was for. We didn't know how it was going to be spent.

#### 1450

Money was given away to one group, I remember, in particular. A cricket club in Toronto that didn't even ask for it got a \$1-million grant. I know that in my own riding people got grants for \$750,000 and they hadn't filled out more than a piece of paper.

I have to suggest that the same kind of thing is happening today, but in reverse. In my own riding, I feel compelled to talk about what is happening to the Beaches jazz festival and I'm sure is happening in a hundred other places around this province. It's all well and good to

make sure that money shows up in those places where I'm sure some members of the government are happy to see it spent, but in those places where it doesn't happen, we have questions to ask.

Coming back to the Premier saying that the NDP is risky, we put forward a plan—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** What? Your plan is to agree with whatever they say.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No, no. My plan is not to agree with whatever they say. Your plan is to agree with whatever they say. I have to take some umbrage with what my colleague in the Conservative Party had to say. They want to cut the corporate taxes even more than Liberals, with the same vain hope that something will happen—and it will not.

We, on the other hand, have a plan that is diametrically opposed to that. Our plan is going to ensure that people who create jobs get the money for it.

I heard the Minister of Economic Development say today that our plan was going to bankrupt the province. I never thought I would hear such hooley from a single person in this Legislature as what he spoke today.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Hooley?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Hooley. Yes. I am compelled not to use words that I think would be more appropriate, but hooley will work.

Our plan says one thing: It says that we will give industry, small business especially, \$500,000 for each job that they create. The Liberals say that's going to cost \$2 billion. But I will tell you—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Michael, \$5,000. Correct your record; it's \$5,000.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's \$5,000; that's what I said. I just said that.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You said \$500,000.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Excuse me; \$5,000.

Let's do the math: \$5,000 a job to actually reach \$2 billion in expenditure will produce 400,000 jobs—400,000 jobs before \$2 billion is spent. Now, if you spend \$2 billion and you create 400,000 jobs, don't you think that some of the money will come back? Don't you think that the province will be better off? This is what I don't understand when he's talking about how it's going to bankrupt us.

But let's just talk a little bit more about this. Spending \$2 billion now will not cost even \$2 billion because, as we have so carefully pointed out, the government spends \$2 billion on a whole bunch of fragmented services today. As Mr. Drummond has carefully pointed out, if that was consolidated into a single plan—and we think our plan is a good one—that would save a quarter of a billion dollars in and of itself. If we spent \$2 billion and saved \$250 million and created 400,000 jobs, it would certainly be a plan that you could see in black and white and, I would think, that people out there in the small business community would welcome.

There are some safeguards to our plan. No company can claim more than 10% of the actual salary, so to get \$5,000, they would have to pay \$50,000 in wages. There

are a lot of places that hire people for less than \$50,000. So \$5,000 is the max; nobody could get more than \$5,000 for a single job. In fact, many of them would be lucky to get \$2,500 or \$3,000 for the average industrial wage in this province.

The second thing we're talking about is a maximum of \$100,000 per company, so nobody could go out and hire more than 20 new hires at \$50,000 each and get that kind of money. It simply wouldn't happen. If they hired more than that, they wouldn't be eligible.

We also have set it to sunset in 2015-16, which is only two years from now, and we would see those net new jobs come on board and the economy start to move. I don't think that's reckless. I don't think it's risky. I don't think what the Premier has said is true, and I certainly know what the Minister of Economic Development said today was totally and completely misguided.

Mr. Speaker, we have the opposition's resolution. We have what they are trying to do here today. It's a sad little motion. It's a motion with no real substance. It is a motion of tautology. It is a motion that is stretching the limits of the statement that they will create a million jobs. It simply will not. It cannot.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What was that word you used again, Michael?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** "Tautology." Look it up.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Could you spell it out for Norm?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No; Norm knows how to spell.

In reality, it is doomed to failure because the seven-day time frame cannot be met, and as I have stated at the beginning, the three party House leaders will not agree, even should the motion pass here today.

Reluctantly, I cannot support this—reluctantly. There has to be another avenue, and in my view that avenue will come on that magic day sometime in May, when the Minister of Finance stands in his place, when we hear what he has to say. If the budget is going to be anything like what I heard from the Premier this past weekend, we may find ourselves no longer in this House but on the streets.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for your rapt attention.

To all of those here, I am imploring my friends not to support this motion but to save your energy for budget day.

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

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'm pleased to join the debate this afternoon on the opposition day motion. Like the previous speaker, the member from Beaches—East York, I will not be supporting this motion. Unlike the speaker, however, I'm glad the motion is here. I think the sort of debate we have in this House—I think this is the way to do it; that each party puts its best foot forward and says, "This is what we would do. This is how we would approach this issue." What we have before us is the best foot forward from the opposition party.

It reads:

“That, in the opinion of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Ontario families need to see a long-term plan for more full-time jobs;

“And that if the Liberal government has not tabled a budget or implemented the million jobs plan by the end of this fiscal year, the House leaders of the three recognized parties should schedule a debate and vote on the motion of want of confidence number 2 appearing on the March 19, 2014, Orders and Notices paper, standing in the name of Jim Wilson, MPP, Simcoe–Grey, following routine proceedings on Wednesday, April 2, 2014. Addressed to the Premier.”

What I find in the province of Ontario, Speaker, and in my own community is that most people know that the province of Ontario has a budget, and they know that that budget is presented on an annual basis and is voted upon. Outside of that, I'm not sure if the average person on the street understands the process that moves along as that budget is formed.

Certainly, there will be some members in the House who are on the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs—and I have chaired that committee for a number of years. We travel around the province of Ontario and solicit opinions from people as to what they'd like to see in the budget and, conversely, what they wouldn't like to see in the budget; what they think has worked and what we need more of; what hasn't worked and perhaps they see it's time to not fund those types of things.

Speaker, this year the committee determined it was going to travel to some non-traditional places. Ordinarily, it goes to Windsor, to London, to Toronto, to Ottawa. This year, we thought we'd go to some places we don't often visit. We went to Sarnia. The member for Sarnia was there and was a part of the proceedings.

**1500**

We heard from people in his riding. We went to Oakville. As Chair of the committee, I think this was the first time that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs was able to meet in Oakville, and I think the people in my riding were quite happy about that. We didn't want to leave people out from the centre of the universe here in Toronto, so we did do a day in Toronto. We went to Peterborough. Now, I don't think you can go to northwestern Ontario without going to Thunder Bay, so we did go to Thunder Bay. The finance critic from the Conservative Party asked if we would go to North Bay, and we gladly obliged. Then we went to Kingston, and, at one point, to satisfy the wishes of Ms. Fife, we went to Kitchener.

So I think we got a pretty good cross-section of what the people of Ontario were thinking about the current fiscal situation, what they think we should be doing more of as a government and what perhaps we should be doing less of or changing.

If I translate that into some of the things people like seeing in my own riding of Oakville, we've got Ford, where we've entered into an agreement. To give some credit to the federal government for a change, they were

part of that. We managed to secure 3,000 jobs at the Oakville assembly plant at Ford.

The GO train: If you take a GO train from Union Station out to Oakville, certainly, or Burlington or Hamilton, it used to run about hourly. Now they're running every 30 minutes all day long; rush hour, anywhere from seven to eight minutes. I think we can do better than that, but certainly it was a huge step forward to see us bringing forward trains that are running 30 minutes a day—every 30 minutes each and every day.

The new hospital we have now has cost over \$2 billion. It's a huge investment; it's a major investment. People in town are very, very pleased to see it. During construction, it's going to have about 1,200 jobs on-site.

And anybody who has ridden along the QEW will know that we've got HOV lanes on the QEW, and they were obviously a part of the bridge widenings and some of the other major infrastructure.

The reason I bring these up is that these are all projects that in my own riding people were very, very glad to see. They've been asking for them for some years. They are very expensive projects. I think we could go through each of the ridings of each of the members in this House and find projects that people in town are really asking for.

My point in saying all this, Speaker, is that they all originate in a budget. What happens is, a decision is made by all three parties, a decision is made by one party in a majority government, and we decide what we're able to do during that year, what we're able to accomplish with the financial resources that we have available to us. So you have a process in place. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs has done its work. It has been out to the community. It has come back with the best possible advice from the people of the province of Ontario. Each of the parties issued a dissenting opinion as to what they thought should be done, having heard from the people around the province and all the communities that I outlined, and that report has been presented to the House. The finance minister now has the benefit of that report, and that has come directly from stakeholders and from very ordinary people who just decided they were going to take a few minutes out of their life and speak to their government and tell them what they thought should be included in the budget.

Now, at the same time the Minister of Finance has been out doing the same types of consultations around the province, talking to people that obviously have an interest in the financial issues that surround the government of the province of Ontario, knowing, as I think we all know, we've been through some really tough times, 2008-09, probably the largest financial events in my lifetime and probably the largest negative financial events in my lifetime.

Jurisdictions around the world, Ontario included, responded in a variety of ways. What we tried to do here in the province of Ontario was to make sure that we were going to implement a financial process that was manageable but, at the same time we were going to continue to

invest in the services and in the people of the province of Ontario as well. We were trying to strike a balance between those, Speaker.

We knew that we might have to run a deficit—in fact, we did have to run a deficit—in order to accomplish those things, but we wanted to ensure that that deficit was money well spent, that it was invested in people, that it was invested in people or in companies in a way that was going to have a payback at some time in the future. We're starting to see that, and I think we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. The government is on the road out of a deficit. Gradually, the deficit has been brought down, and we're still looking at 2017-18 as a time to bring us out of the deficit. As a result of that, and as an example to the rest of the people in the province of Ontario, MPPs in the House have agreed in the past to a wage freeze and have been asked in the future to agree to a wage freeze that would go all the way till the time that the budget is balanced in 2019, and I'm very supportive of that. I think it sets the tone for the rest of the province, that if we all work together and moderate our expectations as far as the income we may be receiving from the public sector, we can work through this together.

I'm quite happy to see this here, Speaker, because the opposition motion speaks to a different way of doing it, and it's not a way that I think is a way that should be accepted by this House, because it appears to have been written or organized in a very hurried manner. I don't think it really thinks through the process that has been employed by all three parties when they've had the privilege of forming government in the province of Ontario, and it's not one that I think speaks highly of the process that should be employed.

The motion, as you will know, is saying that if a budget is not in place by April 2, all sorts of bad things will follow and the million-dollar—what is it called?—the million jobs plan gets implemented automatically or something. There are not many people on this side of the House who put any confidence in the million jobs plan. What we see when we look at the figures that accompany that plan are cutbacks, layoffs and really not taking the province in the direction that it was supposed to go.

Obviously when somebody asks you to do something, you go back and look at what has happened in the past, what has happened in this jurisdiction in presenting a budget. What is the tradition of that? The Progressive Conservative Party, from 1996 to 2003, introduced—I guess this would be eight budgets: May 6; May 7, one year; May 5, another year; May 4, another year. There's a pattern there. I think what they were trying to do was introduce it during the first week of May—May 2, May 9. Then it went to June 17. The famous one we all remember with the hidden deficit that we didn't find out until the Auditor General was able to probe a little bit deeper was on May 22, 2003. That's where we changed the rules, Speaker. We said, "We're not going to have that again. Before a budget is ever presented in this House again, we're going to have the auditor take a look at the books of the government and do it in a very open

way so we're all dealing with what are really the real numbers."

I'm not supportive of this motion at all, Speaker. It looks like a bit of a gimmick. I don't fault the opposition parties for bringing it forward. It's their job. I think they're capable of better, to be honest with you, Speaker—some good, sound financial advice in here; maybe some way that we could have changed the budget. Some things that should be included in the budget in a responsible way certainly would have been seen by me as being a very progressive way of looking at things, and an inclusive way. People in a minority government are expected to work together in a collegial way, and I think people around the province of Ontario expect us to do that.

What we're seeing is a plan being developed by this side, perhaps in conjunction with the other side, to bring in a plan that brings all of the input we receive from the people of Ontario that are represented by all three parties in this House into something that we can all support. That's unlikely to happen; I understand, Speaker, but I think that's something we should be aiming for. That's something that I think the process should dictate that we work towards.

That being said, Speaker, I'm very proud that we're running the leanest government in Canada. I hope that continues as we move on into the future. As much as the opposition parties would like to change that and have us run perhaps not the leanest government in Canada, I don't think that's what the people of Ontario want. I will not be supporting that motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Before I ask for further debate, I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot for private members' public business such that Mr. Fraser assumes ballot item number 8, Mr. Qaadri assumes ballot item number 77, Mr. Delaney assumes ballot item number 7 and Mr. Crack assumes ballot item number 12. Thank you.

**1510**

Further debate.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's my pleasure to rise in debate today to support my colleague Mr. Jim Wilson from Simcoe-Grey on the opposition day motion in his name, to lay out a long-term fiscal plan for more jobs in this province. I think that that really is the heart of this particular piece of legislation before us today.

You know, I listened with great interest to all colleagues of all political parties. Obviously, I am in steadfast agreement with my colleague from Leeds-Grenville as well as Simcoe-Grey. I did hear from my esteemed colleagues in the other two political parties, but I think with respect to their opinion, they are missing the point. We're simply suggesting on this side of the assembly, in the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus, that it is imperative that we put forward a fiscal plan to regain those some 330,000 lost jobs in order to also attract a million more. That is really what this is about. This is about looking at the state of our economy in Ontario

today, understanding that we have a significant debt and deficit, which is impacting the way we deliver services in the province, and talking about making sure, in a minority parliament, that we have the plan to move forward.

In fact, it's also an opportunity for us in the opposition to hold this government to account for missed targets. But let us not forget that it is this Liberal government that did make the commitment in the beginning to table budgets in the month of March, and I think that's quite significant.

Before I actually start talking about the fiscal plan put forward by my party and the lack of one put forward by the Liberals, I would like to congratulate my colleague and leader, PC leader Tim Hudak, on the birth of his little girl Maitland and I'd like to congratulate his wife, Debbie Hutton, for making sure that she's—

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Who is she? Is she the one who was with Mike Harris?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** You know something, Minister? I can't believe you would heckle the leader of the official opposition and his wife on the birth of a child. I have never seen anything more graceless or classless in my life, and I will speak directly to you on that point, because, again, I thought you were better than that.

However, it seems that this is the point of this Liberal government. They have chosen to take politics into the gutter at every opportunity, including not only their attitude in this assembly but also their attitude towards the economy.

We've talked for quite some time in this assembly about the gas plants that were cancelled to save a number of Liberal seats. It cost this province \$1.1 billion. Then we find out just last week that they have withheld documents from the province, that they have a \$4.5-billion hole in their budget. They went to the credit rating agencies and did not provide that information to them, and when it was finally disclosed by my colleague Mr. Vic Fedeli of North Bay—when he disclosed the fact that they said one thing to the credit rating agencies, despite knowing the actual truth, they decided they wanted to censor him. I could not believe that, that a government clinging to power, based on their fiscal record, would try to censor an opposition MPP for doing his job.

Mr. Fedeli has, I think, done a remarkable job in uncovering a number of Liberal scandals. I'm one of the beneficiaries of his great work at the gas plants, because I assumed the role as energy critic for the Ontario Progressive Conservatives. I know first-hand the work that he did to uncover that \$1.1-billion scandal that resulted in five Liberals in the GTA being re-elected, that assisted them in keeping their majority; and now he's uncovered this, a \$4.5-billion hole in their budget.

All we're simply suggesting is, instead of this back-of-a-napkin, rapid-fire-type planning, changing priorities by the day, we actually have some long-term financial objectives in the province of Ontario, something that considers the price of hydro for people and how it's impacting them to live in their home, or how it's impacting manufacturers to keep their jobs. My colleague from

Leeds–Grenville is here; he'll tell you that upstate New York is rapidly, vastly and aggressively trying to take businesses out of his community in Brockville and move them five minutes over a bridge, to the other side of the St. Lawrence River, in order to set up shop there, because of the high price of hydro in Ontario. It's significant.

In fact, yesterday, I had an opportunity to be in Manotick, in Osgoode, in Greely and in Bells Corners to host round tables. It was incredible, hearing from them throughout the pre-budget consultations. Here were their issues. The first issue, of course, was hydro, as I've said. The second issue was taxation. The third issue was the concern over the debt and the deficit, and I pointed out that the third-largest spending priority in Ontario today is servicing the debt and the deficit.

Our debt and deficit are higher in Ontario than in every other province combined in this nation. That, to me, says we have massive and very challenging problems, and that we need a long-term financial plan, particularly for the end of this fiscal year.

That, to me, also says that people in the province are talking about it. They're expecting that their government will take their concerns seriously, that they will put forward a plan that addresses their needs. But that's not happening here, Speaker. That's the opposite of what is happening.

This is a government, as I said, that wants to cling to power. They would do anything in order to stay in power. In fact, they're negotiating right now with the New Democrats for another coalition for the next year, in order for this NDP to continue to prop up the Liberal government. We read about it in the Sun, and we read about it in the Star.

There is an irrefutable fact here, Speaker, that this is a Liberal government that is beholden to both unions and the New Democrats. What shocks me is that the NDP will never stand up and defend the people who would like to see a change in government or at least a chance to have their say on Kathleen Wynne, who, as they said to me yesterday in Osgoode, is the unelected one. They continually said that to me during those points in time. I—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Mississauga–Streetsville has a point of order.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, much as I am enjoying the words of my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, I would point out to the Speaker that it is the practice in the House that members are referred to by their office or by their riding and not by their name.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I appreciate the reminder, and you're quite correct. It is preferable, and we encourage members, to speak of other members in the third person, either by their ministerial title or by their riding name.

I'll return to the member from Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I certainly appreciate the numerous points of order the member opposite brings forward on a daily basis. I know he's well versed in what the standing orders are.

That said, I would like to speak for a few minutes on the Premier of Ontario, or as they call her in Nepean–Carleton, the unelected one.

They had a convention this past weekend, and during that convention, they had a slogan called “What is leadership” or “What leadership is.” It was quite enjoyable to talk about what leadership is not: gas plants, eHealth, Ornge, hiding a \$4.5-billion hole in your budget, those types of things.

What I thought was actually the most appalling form of leadership I think I’ve seen in this nation was when the sitting Premier of Ontario, who is not elected, decided to attack a political leader who was, while he was standing in probably the most tense forum in his life, defending people who were murdered for protesting for democracy. I’m talking about Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who went to Ukraine, stood in the middle of a bowl that is not much unlike this, where snipers had killed 75 pro-democracy protesters.

Kathleen Wynne—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I withdraw. The Premier of Ontario—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Premier Wynne.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Premier Wynne took the opportunity to not only lowball her position, but took the time to attack a Prime Minister who has done, in my opinion, what no other world leader has.

I can tell you something: My husband happened to be in Ukraine with the Prime Minister this past weekend—

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** A point of order, please.

1520

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** A point of order. The member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, standing order 23(b) directs the member to direct his or her speech to matters subject to the question under discussion, which the member’s remarks do not. Standing orders 23(h) and (i) ask the member not to make allegations against another member, which she has, and not to impute false or un-avowed motives to another member, which she has.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I appreciate the advice, but at the same time, the member from Nepean–Carleton has the floor, and we have allowed some latitude in this debate as members from all sides have made their points. But I would ask and remind all members that, in order for the debate to be relevant, the points that they’re making have to come back to the question at hand and the subject of the motion.

The member for Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The debate on this is actually confidence in this government. How could anyone in this province have any confidence in the Premier when she doesn’t command respect, given the way she behaves as a leader—or the a lack thereof of a leader? I must say—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I have to point out that this is not a confidence motion that we’re debating right now. It is an opposition day motion. I return to the member-for Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Speaker, come on. It says right here “and vote on the motion”—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the member for Nepean–Carleton to come to order. She has the floor.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** We’re talking about “not tabled a budget or implemented the ... jobs plan by the end of the fiscal year, the House leaders of the three recognized parties should schedule a debate and vote on the motion of want of confidence....”

There’s a number of reasons we put this forward to talk about the jobs plan and the lack of confidence that this Premier has in the province. I’m simply suggesting that her behaviour this weekend instilled, I think in many people, the fact that she’s unwilling and unable to lead, not only on the jobs crisis in Ontario, but on almost any moral high ground that we have in the province of Ontario. I know that’s uncomfortable for some in this chamber, and that is why they would prefer to put forward points of order and try to stop me from speaking, but I can tell you something: I found her behaviour absolutely 100% appalling. I will stand in my place and I will defend my remarks because I watched what was happening a world away, and her behaviour here on the domestic front was disgraceful.

That is not even the first time this week that she has enacted something internationally that has embarrassed our nation. I think of my question today in question period on the World Trade Organization and how their Green Energy Act has knowingly broken international law. That is this province of Ontario.

Speaker, I will cede my time to my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I had only 10 minutes to speak, and because of the constant interruptions by the government—who weren’t happy only to only muzzle Vic Fedeli; they’ve tried to muzzle me here today too.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It’s once again an honour to be able to stand in this House on behalf of the people of Timiskaming–Cochrane. One of my constituents is right here, Ken Laffrenier. He doesn’t maybe trust what I say, so he’s definitely going to—but anyway.

Levity aside, I think this is an important motion. I think all motions brought forward to the House are important motions and should be treated as such. So I’d like to go through it. “That in the opinion of Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Ontario families need to see a long-term plan for more full-time jobs.” That speaks for itself. Who wouldn’t want more long-term, full-time jobs?

I’d like to digress for a moment: This weekend we had the Liberal convention, and the Premier is now telling us that we need a government with a steady hand to maintain our economy. We went from the transit Premier to the jobs Premier to the education Premier, and now we’re at the Premier of the steady hand. The same steady hand of the government of the last 10 years, the same

steady hand that, two years almost to the day, announced the divestment of ONTC without consulting anyone, without talking to anyone in northern Ontario—that steady hand. The steady hand that we found later, when the Auditor General's report came out, hadn't even looked at the numbers to see if they were going to save any money when they made that divestment. So that is the steady hand we're talking about on the government side.

But let's go back to this motion. If the Liberal government has not tabled a budget, and looking forward, it's by March 31—I take this motion seriously, so I look at how many other budgets have been tabled by March 31, specifically by Her Majesty's loyal opposition. In short-term memory: basically none. So I'm thinking that maybe we'll read a bit further to see if this motion has some substance. If they don't table a budget, they should implement the million jobs plan. So I thought, let's look at the million jobs plan.

I'm trying to take this motion seriously. I'm one of these risky, radical, dairy farmer types, the type that takes all these huge risks. I take a lot of risks when I plant my crop, but we're not known as a risky type of people.

The one I'd like to look at is, in the million jobs plan from the opposition, the schedule under the Electricity Act, 1998, if this was implemented: "The schedule repeals provisions dealing with the feed-in tariff program. If there is a contract to procure energy from a large-scale renewable energy source under the feed-in tariff program, but the renewable energy source has not been connected to the ... grid, the connection cannot be made until the minister under the act consults with the relevant municipality and authorizes the connection." This is how they are going to save money on electricity: basically by saying that if there is a solar farm or a wind turbine farm that's built but not yet connected, they can cancel the contract. The only jobs that's going to create is for lawyers. I thought these guys were at the hearings when we had the gas plant scandal. They're talking about creating the gas plant scandal over and over and over again, like Groundhog Day. Really, these people—I'm amazed. They are so busy talking about the Million Jobs Act that they haven't actually read what they're actually trying to do. Cancelling contracts once they're signed is not going to save the province any money.

So then I look at the risky—the risky—NDP plan, where we're going to merge—

**Interjection:** With the Liberals.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** No. We're going to merge our utility companies. We're going to merge—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Something for the people at home: When you're doing a good job, people heckle because they don't want to hear you.

When you merge utility companies, like Hydro One and OPG, "Oh, that won't save much." Yes, it will, because then—and one of the members from the Conservatives likes hydro power, and so do I. He also likes storing electricity with water. It's a really good concept.

If we merge those two companies, we could do that with our own dams.

I've got a dam in my riding, the Lower Notch power dam—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** A hydro dam, the Lower Notch power dam. They would be a perfect site for this. The reason they can't do it is because they're two separate companies, both owned by the public. I asked them, "Why can't we, when hydro is cheap and we're subsidizing power to other jurisdictions, take that water and pump it back up into your reservoir?" His answer shocked me, Speaker; it shocked me. He says, "Because we can't pay the transportation charges and the debt retirement charge. We can't afford to pay the bills." Those two companies belong to the people of Ontario. If we made that one company, we could do things like that—things that make practical sense.

The other two parties are worried that we're risky because we're actually putting forward things that make practical sense. The government spends a lot of time saying how the NDP has no plans, and then—the plans like the Financial Accountability Office, the plan to help youth get experience in their first job. They end up stealing those ones, and then they turn around, "You have no plan." So now they expect us to keep coming up with new ones to keep them going. Well, you know what? It's time they come up with their own ideas, and when they actually come out with a budget, then we will give it the yes or the no. That's the place we are.

1530

But this motion, after I looked at the first two parts of it, basically, that the budget had to be by March 31, when it's never been done before by them; and a part of the Million Jobs Act, which was supposed to save money on electrical costs by giving the minister the ability to cancel contracts for projects that were already built. After I did a bit of research on those, I cannot in good conscience vote for this motion.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, this is a motion that asks the House why it has not implemented a private member's bill that was defeated in this House. Under the rules in the Ontario Legislature, you cannot reintroduce a bill. They can't reintroduce a bill through the front door, so this is, in fact, the back door: trying to reintroduce a bill that failed in the House through an opposition day motion.

Let's start with that. The province is not going to consider a poorly drafted, uncosted, reckless and destructive bill that was presented in this House already; it was debated, it was voted on and it was defeated. In a minority parliament, the private member's bill by the MPP from Niagara West—Glanbrook that would kill hundreds of thousands of jobs was rightly and decisively defeated by a majority of the members in this Legislature.

Out in Ontario, if you're watching this in your kitchen as you're preparing dinner or you're channel surfing as

you pass your afternoon at home, you're probably wondering, "Why is the opposition asking the Ontario Legislature to adopt a bill that has already been before this House and been defeated?" Let's talk about that.

Maybe you followed the implacable hostility to the debate in the United States on their move for more fairness in health care insurance. The US extreme right lost that fight. Common sense would say that they ought to have accepted the judgment of both houses of congress and of the US public, but the US Tea Party Republicans kept on refighting their lost battles, just like Ontario Conservatives want to refight the 2011 election and reintroduce this lost bill. US Tea Party Republicans have tried 50 times to repeal US-style health care. Ontario Conservatives keep trying to fight battles that they have repeatedly lost.

Speaker, I didn't think I'd have a second chance to speak to this already defeated measure that the Ontario PC Party has resurrected through this opposition day motion. I say this with the greatest of respect to my colleagues in the PC caucus. On Wednesday, I'm going to need them to block shots and to back-check in front of me—I'm going to get in a commercial here—when the Ontario Legiskaters play the Ontario Dental Association's hockey team, the Ontario Dentonators.

Listen carefully, Conservatives; we're actually trying to be helpful here. Let me then start with a piece of timeless rural wisdom—and I urge them to adopt it. It goes like this: When the horse has died, dismount. Speaker, their failed private member's bill, to which they refer in this motion, is just such a dead horse. To my esteemed colleagues in the PC caucus: The bill has been defeated. It doesn't work. It is a dead issue.

As Monty Python would say, it is an expired parrot. Let's quote it exactly: "'E's passed on! This parrot is no more! He has ceased to be! 'E's expired and gone to meet 'is maker! 'E's a stiff! Bereft of life, 'e rests in peace! If you hadn't nailed 'im to the perch 'e'd be pushing up the daisies! 'Is metabolic processes are now 'istory! 'E's off the twig! 'E's kicked the bucket, 'e's shuffled off 'is mortal coil, run down the curtain and joined the bleedin' choir invisible! This is an ex-parrot!"

The bill has lost. The horse is dead. Please dismount. Don't keep introducing this dead parrot act. I say this with respect to my friends opposite.

If Mr. and Mrs. Ontario grasp this subtle point—that the Ontario neo-conservative party has asked the House to adopt a defeated bill and that this motion is likely not going anyplace in this House—now you can safely switch off the television or change channels.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate the Minister of Finance coming over to see me just a moment ago. I thought maybe I'd get a date for the budget out of him. No such luck, but he is softening on the issue. He did say, "Sometime before October."

I hear the Minister of Finance continually talking about how this is going to be an aspirational budget, and

the Premier talking about the aspirational budget that's coming up. It's an aspirational government. I'm so tired of hearing about the aspirations of that government. In fact, the place is getting filled with a lot of aspired air.

Speaker, I say to the member from Mississauga—Streetsville that he must have a greater goal when he leaves this place—and we all leave this place. Whether it is voluntarily or involuntarily, or whether they carry us out of here, we leave. This is not forever. He must have a greater wish than to go on the record as the man who raised the most points of order. He's got to have something more here. I'm hoping that someday he'll find his true reason for being here. The fact that he loves to do that—maybe he will avoid interrupting me for my last few minutes here, speaking on this motion today, on behalf of the PC Party.

This motion is to compel the government to adopt a budget before March 31. It is not a stretch. In fact, I want to talk about the government's own record here—a government of which Premier Kathleen Wynne was a senior member.

Starting in 2006, then-Premier Dalton McGuinty and the finance minister made a commitment. They said, "We have come to conclude over the past couple of years that one of the highest priorities for us, as a government, is to ensure confidence from non-government agencies and other governments in the province that the fiscal plan is adopted in a timely fashion."

They made a commitment at that time that every budget thereafter would be tabled before March 31. I'll give you the dates: March 23, 2006; March 22, 2007; March 25, 2008; March 26, 2009; March 25, 2010; March 29, 2011; March 27, 2012—and then, last year, an aberration. I understand that, because they chose a new leader—who has never been elected Premier—who was only sworn in in February.

In fairness to Kathleen Wynne and Charles Sousa, they didn't table a budget prior to the fiscal year. In fact, they did not table it until May 2. While we may be able to justify that last year because of the change in premiership, the change in leadership of the Liberal Party, there is not a single justification for not continuing to uphold the commitment they made in 2006 this year.

Here's the rub, Speaker, as they say: They got caught. Our finance critic, Vic Fedeli, would make one hell of a forensic detective; I can tell you that. He uncovered deliberate falsehoods from this government. They lied to the people of Ontario—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the member to withdraw his unparliamentary comments.

**1540**

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I withdraw, Speaker. Thank you.

They made statements on the record that the budget going forward would be balanced and that they were on track to balance the budget in 2017-18, and that they would be on track in the interim period. Well, we find out that there is a \$4.5-billion gap. Vic Fedeli dug that all up in documents they secured through the estimates committee.

Now, here's what happened. If you get caught, what you should do is you should say, "You know what? Okay. These are the facts, and we're going to do better." But, no. What does this government do? They don't admit that they gave numbers that weren't the right numbers—I'll say it that way, and I think I can, Speaker—they table a point of privilege motion against the member for Nipissing. So instead of admitting that they've done something wrong, they try to cover it up further—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** First of all, the point of privilege is currently under consideration by the Speaker. I'm obligated to inform the House that it would be better if we weren't talking about it.

Secondly, the word "cover-up" has been declared out of order on a number of occasions. I would ask the member to withdraw that word.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I do withdraw the word "cover-up." Thank you very much. I withdraw.

So they had the opportunity to say, "Okay, you caught us. We're going to clear the air"—I say to the member from Etobicoke—"We're going to clear the air." But, no. They further try to muddy the waters, hoping that the people won't catch on.

That's part of the reason, because they are so deep in it right now. They are so deep that there is no way on God's green earth that they were going to table a budget before March, because they are hoping against hope that somehow they will be able to just keep this under wraps, maybe even until a deal can be worked out with the third party, to get them through this budgetary cycle. Then maybe there will be no election, and, in the fall, they're hoping people will just have forgotten about it.

I want to pass my congratulations on to Tim Hudak and Deb Hutton on the birth of Maitland. That's a wonderful thing. There's nothing more important than family. But Maitland was born yesterday with a \$20,000 debt, thanks to the Ontario Liberal government, which has doubled our debt in their term of office. I can assure you that the reason they don't want to bring this forth, this budget, is because we know the debt is going up more under this government.

Hospitals, schools, our municipal partners—they need to know what your fiscal condition is. You're hiding it from them. You're not laying it out here. You have a responsibility to do so.

I want to talk about other governments. The government of Canada on February 11 tabled their budget; Alberta, March 6; BC, February 18; Manitoba, March 6; Saskatchewan, March 19; Quebec, February 20; Northwest Territories, February 6; New Brunswick, February 4; Newfoundland and Labrador, it will be tabled on the 27th; and Yukon, it will be tabled tomorrow. What is the problem in Ontario? What have you got to hide? That's the question everyone is asking you.

You made a commitment in 2006. Your Premier was part of that government. Many of you were part of that government. You folks sitting in the front bench were part of that government. What has happened to you?

What has happened to the commitment you made to the people to give the fiscal picture of this province before the end of the fiscal year? It's a responsibility you accepted. You made it your promise.

There are people out there who depend on knowing what is going on in Ontario. The financial markets want to know. The financial markets reacted last week to the fact that you've got a \$4.5-billion fiscal gap that you didn't tell anybody about, even though your own officials told you. Do you not think you have a responsibility to disclose that to the people, to disclose that to businesses, to disclose that to the banks? We live in a financially—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Intertwined.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —intertwined economy. You can't separate one part from the other. When the banks don't know what you are up to, it's a problem for all of us. You people should be ashamed. If you don't have a budget by the 31st of March—I will be voting for this motion.

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

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I will not speak for very, very long this afternoon. I'm sure that folks are eager to dispense, to vote on this particular matter. I don't think it will come as a surprise to my colleagues on the other side of the House who have provided tremendous rhetorical flourish this afternoon as they have spoken about this particular motion—I don't think it will come as a surprise to them to learn that, like my colleagues on this side, I will not be supporting this particular motion.

It's interesting, as I've now been here in my seat for this entire afternoon session, I think, and I have heard virtually every speaker who has stood in their place to discuss this motion. What's interesting to me is that when I hear members of the governing caucus talk about what this really means, I hear a great degree of substance and thoughtfulness going into their comments, as I'm used to hearing. I even hear certain things coming from members of the NDP caucus that could also be similarly described as thoughtful. I don't necessarily agree with everything that I've heard from members of the NDP caucus, but I can understand the perspective they are taking.

What's interesting for me is to listen to members from the caucus from which this particular motion emanates. When I hear them talk—members of the Conservative caucus, that is—it strikes me that their approach on this, like so many other things that they undertake here in this Legislature, revolves around this notion that what they are doing here, what they are here to do on behalf of their constituents, is to actually play a bit of a game. It seems to me that they fundamentally misunderstand what their responsibility is, as individual members but also as a caucus itself, the caucus representing Her Majesty's loyal opposition, as we call it.

I think that's unfortunate. I think, as the member from Oakville said in his very eloquent remarks this afternoon, if the members of the official opposition caucus spent a bit more time rolling up their sleeves and working constructively with every other member, every other caucus, the province would probably be in a stronger position.

But it's not a game when a long-standing party, the Conservative Party here in Ontario, which has quite a tradition, comes forward with proposals that will ultimately mean that core public services that we all rely on, that all of our constituents rely on—if their plan were ever to be adopted, it would result in very, very reckless cuts to those particular services, be they health-care-related, be they education-related, or generally speaking for the economy.

When I think about what it takes to make sure you have a modern province and that you have an economy that continues to rebound and regain steam, I think it's really important to recognize and remember that it's crucial to invest in people, to invest in modern infrastructure and to do what you can as a government to make sure that the business climate is both innovative and dynamic. That's what we undertake to do on this side of the House, and it would be remarkably more helpful for the people of Ontario if members of the official opposition spent less time playing games and more time working constructively towards those kinds of outcomes.

I can think of a number of signature public investments in infrastructure renewal that have taken place in my own community of Vaughan, some very recently. Earlier today, I was at a GO station in my community, in the lovely part of my community known commonly as Maple, and I was echoing an announcement made by the Minister of Transportation last week where he talked about increased service along something known as the Barrie line: more seats on those trains available for commuters in my community, more trains available for morning commutes, in particular, for people who rely on that core crucial public service, that public infrastructure. I know that many, many people in my community will be delighted to know that we continue to invest in GO Transit, \$9 billion since 2003 that we as a government have invested in GO service. That is one example.

Of course, many will know—they have heard me ask questions of the Minister of Health over my 18 months or so in this Legislature about the importance of the Vaughan hospital. Just last week or the week before, Infrastructure Ontario released the request for qualifications, which is, as many know, the first step in the procurement for that Vaughan hospital, something that is extremely crucial for the entire community, not just for Vaughan but residents right across southwest York region.

Back on May 16, Premier Wynne, the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing joined me in my community because, as many will know, in budget 2013 the government of Ontario made a commitment and approved the seven-or-so-kilometre extension to Highway 427. That's an extension to that important highway that will help us leverage tens of thousands of new jobs in that part of York region, that part of the greater Toronto area.

I point to these examples—and there are many, many more, not only from my community, like the Spadina subway extension that's currently being built—and trains will be operating on that line in 2016 because of an \$870-

million provincial investment in York region. I can think of the BRT service that we've invested tens of millions of dollars in as a government to make sure that commuters can move more seamlessly across major routes like Highway 7. There are dozens and dozens and dozens, if not hundreds, of examples like this.

When I look at a motion like the particular one that we're debating today, it reminds me that if members of the official opposition, as I said at the outset, spent a little bit more time working with us constructively, we could take this approach to governing and this approach to building a stronger province and together we could actually make it even more successful. I think it's really unfortunate that here we are again in this place, debating a motion that, as the member from Mississauga–Streetsville said, is very similar to one that has been before us in this House before. It demonstrates, yet again, that there seems to be an unfortunate fascination on the part of the official opposition to play these sorts of games, to stand in their respective places and, unfortunately, be interrupted repeatedly by the Speaker because of the unfortunate tenor of their remarks. They stand up very dramatically—perhaps for the cameras at home; perhaps for some other reasons; I'm not quite sure—instead of doing what they can to constructively lend their voices to helping us and helping members of the NDP caucus build a stronger province. It's unfortunate, but I will say now, after 18 or so months in this Legislature as the member of provincial Parliament for Vaughan, that while it is disappointing, while it continues to be disappointing for me and people in my community to see this performance, it is not surprising.

With that, I will close by saying yet again that I do plan to vote against this motion, and I would ask that even those members of the official opposition take a moment to ponder exactly what they are hoping to do here this afternoon and try their best to work constructively with every other caucus in this place on the importance of moving this province forward. I call on every member from every caucus to vote against this particular motion, Speaker, and I thank you for the time this afternoon.

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

Mr. Wilson has moved opposition day motion number 3. 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 nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1553 to 1603.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would all members please take their seats. Mr. Wilson has moved opposition day number 3. All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Arnott, Ted	Klees, Frank	O'Toole, John
Bailey, Robert	Leone, Rob	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	MacLaren, Jack	Pettapiece, Randy
Chudleigh, Ted	MacLeod, Lisa	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Smith, Todd
Elliott, Christine	McDonnell, Jim	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	McKenna, Jane	Walker, Bill
Harris, Michael	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Hillier, Randy	Miller, Norm	Yakubski, John
Holyday, Douglas C.	Milligan, Rob E.	Yurek, Jeff
Jackson, Rod	Munro, Julia	
Jones, Sylvia	Nicholls, Rick	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Fraser, John	Murray, Glen R.
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Piruzza, Teresa
Cansfield, Donna H.	Jaczek, Helena	Prue, Michael
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Mangat, Amrit	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Mauro, Bill	Vanthof, John
Del Duca, Steven	McMeekin, Ted	Wong, Soo
Delaney, Bob	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dhillon, Vic	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 34; the nays are 47.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negatived.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**VOLUNTARY BLOOD  
DONATIONS ACT, 2014  
LOI DE 2014 SUR LE DON  
DE SANG VOLONTAIRE**

Ms. Matthews moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 178, An Act to ensure that blood and blood constituents are donated freely / Projet de loi 178, Loi visant à assurer la gratuité du don de sang et de composants sanguins.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you, Speaker. I rise today to speak further to Bill 178.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. If there are to be conversations, I'd ask you to remove them from the House. We are in the middle of debate, and I can't see the minister. I do want to see the minister.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I was saying, I rise today to speak further to Bill 178, our proposed Voluntary Blood Donations Act, 2014. I would like to thank some people who were here earlier today who have been instrumental in making this happen. Miin Alikhan and Jillian Paul from the ministry and Joshua Tepper and Michelle Rossi from Health Quality Ontario were here earlier today, and I thank them for their contribution to this piece of work.

Members will recall that I introduced this legislation last Thursday. We all recognize that it is designed to address an urgent situation, so I will be limiting my remarks today. I urge the opposition critics to do the same so that this bill can be voted on and sent to committee as quickly as possible.

Many of us in the chamber recall the tainted blood scandal of the 1980s. About 30,000 Canadians were infected with HIV and hepatitis C from tainted blood and blood products. Thousands died as a result. The scandal led to a commission of inquiry led by Justice Horace Krever, whose 1997 report recommended measures to ensure that donors of blood and plasma not be paid except in rare circumstances. The Krever commission also urged that Canada's blood system be unified and administered by a single integrated national blood service. This led to the creation of Canadian Blood Services. Since then, Ontarians and Canadians have been able to take comfort in knowing that we have a safe, centralized, well-managed and voluntary blood donation system with strong quality assurance and oversight measures in place.

**1610**

However, in 2012, Canadian Plasma Resources, a private for-profit company, applied to Health Canada for a licence to open plasma collection sites in Ontario that would pay people for their plasma for sale on the international market.

I have heard from many health care organizations and individual Ontarians, including tainted-blood victims, who are strongly opposed to private for-profit clinics that would pay donors for their blood or plasma. That's why, in March 2013, I wrote to the federal Minister of Health, because I shared those serious concerns about preserving and protecting the integrity of our national blood system.

Unfortunately, Health Canada has been unwilling to take leadership on this issue. Their view is that it's up to provincial and territorial governments to determine whether a company may provide payment to donors for plasma. So our government is stepping up and taking leadership where the federal government has refused to. I've made it clear, even before the introduction of this legislation, that the Ontario government stands firmly against any business model that would undermine our voluntary blood donation system.

Despite our opposition, the company opened a clinic in downtown Toronto on March 18. The company's CEO has suggested publicly that what they're doing is analogous to the Trillium Gift of Life Network: paying donors for organ transplants.

Let me clear: our Trillium Gift of Life Network does not pay donors for their organs. Trillium's mandate is to save and enhance the lives of Ontarians needing organ or tissue transplants. To help fulfill that mandate, TGLN manages financial assistance programs for eligible patients and donors who are registered with a hospital transplant program. These programs provide reimbursement for specific expenses incurred by transplant donors and recipients, such as transportation, meals and relocation expenses, not for their organs. For anyone to suggest that paying people for plasma is similar to providing expenses for people who are waiting for an organ or donating an organ is simply over the top.

In contrast, these for-profit clinics would compensate donors for plasma that would likely be sold for a hefty profit on the international market to manufacture plasma products for pharmaceutical use. It would not—and I repeat, not—increase the availability or supply of plasma protein products in Ontario.

The CEO of Canadian Plasma Resources has also claimed that they are not paying people for plasma but rather paying people for their time. Again, let me be clear: Our proposed Voluntary Blood Donations Act, 2014, if passed, would prohibit payment or compensation of any kind to blood and plasma donors. If passed, the act would create prohibitions against, either directly or indirectly, providing payment to any individual in return for giving blood or blood constituents, such as plasma. It would prohibit offering to provide payment to any individual in return for giving blood, and it would create a prohibition against accepting payment in return for the giving of blood.

The act would also provide for inspection and enforcement powers. It would amend the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act to authorize regulations clarifying that the activity of blood and plasma collection must be licensed under that act. It would amend the same act to give the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care the authority to consider the principles set out in the bill we're debating when deciding whether it is in the public interest to issue a licence to a lab or a specimen collection centre.

It would amend the Trillium Gift of Life Network Act, or TGLNA, to clarify that the legality of paying for blood or blood constituents in Ontario would be governed by the proposed legislation and not by TGLNA.

The proposed legislation, if passed, would exempt Canadian Blood Services and its donors to allow Canadian Blood Services to pay donors in rare circumstances. This is in line with the Krever commission.

Speaker, we're proposing these legislative changes because of a regulatory gap at the national level. Federal legislation does not prohibit the remuneration of blood donors, and Health Canada has indicated, as I have said, that it leaves regulation of this matter up to the provinces. Therefore, as a first step, we've already amended regulations to strengthen licensing requirements for laboratories and specimen collection centres, to prohibit paying donors for their blood or blood constituents, including

reimbursement of expenses or other forms of compensation. The proposed legislation would go one vital step further to protect the integrity of our public, voluntary blood donor system.

We're taking these steps to protect the blood system in Ontario, but I want to be clear in my steadfast commitment to our national blood system. I know that Ontarians share my full confidence in the ability of Canadian Blood Services to safely and successfully manage the blood and blood products supply in Ontario and across the country.

Our system works well. Blood plasma can be used as a direct transfusion to treat patients who are bleeding severely or need plasma to help their blood clot. The demand for plasma used in transfusions has been decreasing in Canada, and we're completely self-sufficient in this area. Plasma can also be used to manufacture life-saving drugs called plasma protein products, which are used in a wide variety of circumstances. For example, they can be used to treat fluid loss in burn patients, immune disorders and severe infections, and bleeding disorders such as hemophilia.

Canada does not have the manufacturing capabilities for the large-scale production of plasma protein products, and the Krever commission recommended against Canadian Blood Services owning these production facilities because of the large capital costs involved. Canadian Blood Services manages the supply of plasma protein products in Canada. It does not purchase plasma directly from donors, nor does it purchase raw plasma that is sourced from paid donors. Quite simply, there is no need for a parallel, private, for-profit blood system in Canada. Prohibiting payment for blood or plasma in this province would not negatively impact or reduce the supply or availability of these products for Ontarians. There is no benefit to Ontarians; only a great risk that our current voluntary system could be compromised.

Speaker, our position is very clear. We stand firmly against paid plasma collection. Whether it's paying donors for their time, whether they get cash or gift cards or tax receipts for charitable donations—here in Ontario, if this legislation is passed, any form of remuneration offered or accepted will be prohibited. We are determined to protect the integrity of our voluntary blood donation system. We will not allow any private, for-profit company to undermine the hard-won confidence that our national blood service has rightfully earned.

We have a long history of voluntary donations. They are integral to our universally accessible, publicly funded health care system. Blood is the stuff of life. I urge everyone who is able to donate their blood to do so and save lives. I'm confident that as members we can stand united in our common value of volunteerism to maintain our blood supply.

I wrote to my provincial and territorial counterparts, sharing with them the measures we are taking here in Ontario, and urging them to take a consistent pan-Canadian view to prohibit paid plasma collection anywhere in the country.

I similarly urge all of the members of this House to pass this legislation swiftly. Let's work together to get

this to committee and then bring it forward for third reading as quickly as possible.

I know the member from Nickel Belt is committed to passing this important proposed legislation. I understand the official opposition has also indicated support. I call on both parties to bring this bill to a vote as quickly as possible.

I urge all members to preserve the integrity of our voluntary donation system by supporting our proposed legislative changes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Mr. Speaker, I'm a little concerned about why it took so long for this to come to discussion in the Legislature, seeing as the federal government made these announcements at least a year ago, by my understanding—I don't know.

1620

I'm thinking today about the leader of the PCs and his wife, who just had a baby, and I'm recalling my fourth delivery when it was already available to pay for the storage of the stem cells from the umbilical cord for private use for our family. There are instances where people are able to pay to store products for their own personal use. They can store their eggs. They can pay for a mother to have a surrogate pregnancy; cover her expenses—not to pay for her time, not to pay her a salary, but to cover her expenses.

It is possible that there are some expenses incurred by donating blood, if people have to go to a clinic. It's not something that somebody comes to your house to do. I think that, as Canadians, we all voluntarily want to give blood. I would almost say that we need to have—not just on blood supplies, but we need to look at all aspects of health care from stem cells to blood donations to organ donations, and certainly in our province, there was some criticism that the federal government was passing this on to the province. I believe that oftentimes the provincial leadership is concerned that the federal government is overstepping its bounds and not allowing the province to decide its own fate on these things. The people of Ontario want to be involved in these decisions, and I think we should welcome their involvement.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I actually have both a question and a comment. My comment is that my colleague the member from Nickel Belt has raised this issue that the government has acted in a way that has created some uncertainty in our system. They knew very well that this was an issue, but they moved so slowly. My question is: Given the fact that there is another organization that has taken steps, has hired staff, has set up infrastructure, why was this decision made so late in the game? That's my question.

My comment is that we hope that moving forward with decision-making in this province, we act in advance, we act promptly and we don't miss out on opportunities where other people are left expecting a certain climate,

expecting a certain scenario and then they are left out to dry when it changes all of a sudden. I don't think that is a type of policy that is effective in this province. We have to make sure we don't do that as a government, as elected officials. We need to make sure that our steps have foresight so that people can make their decisions in anticipation of what the political climate will be. They can make their decisions knowing what the proposed legislation will be, so that they don't put themselves in a position where they've made significant investments into a particular business model that is no longer relevant. That is something we don't want to do in any sector, whether it's energy, whether it's health care, whether it's education.

I ask the minister, through you, Mr. Speaker: Why didn't we make this decision; why didn't the government come forward with this legislation earlier to have avoided some of the damage that has been created now or some of the difficulties that have arisen now?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I must say, in response to the member from the third party, that I'm not sure why we would blame the Minister of Health when the Minister of Health, in fact, has made it quite clear from the outset of this issue that a private company would require a licence to do what this company has proposed, which is to collect plasma and pay people for it. She has been quite clear that there would be no licence forthcoming. Having ignored the statements of the minister, I'm not sure why this is the minister's fault.

What I would like to say is, going back and commenting on the particular legislation, that I think it's really important for everybody to understand that following the tainted blood scandal, the Krever commission looked at this whole issue very, very carefully, and this legislation is completely consistent with the recommendations of the Krever commission that we have a voluntary blood collection system and, by extension, a voluntary plasma collection system here in Canada, and in Ontario, obviously.

I think it's unfortunate that the federal Minister of Health has declined to have a federal ruling. But given that the federal Minister of Health has declined to have a Canadian rule in this respect, outlawing paying for the collection of plasma or blood, I think it's very important that our Ontario Minister of Health is taking that action in the legislation that has been tabled here today.

I hope this is one of those occasions when all three parties can vote quickly to do what I suspect we're all in agreement on and which is totally consistent with the Krever commission as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My situation in this case is that it should always be safety first with anything that's going forward. I have friends and family who have received blood transfusions, and I certainly want to make sure that that's the priority of anyone going forward.

I'd like to commend those people. I'm a proud blood donor. I commend the blood donors, the volunteers and certainly Canadian Blood Services, which provides those services out in all of our communities across our great province—and a little shout-out to Jim Moyer from my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, who in the last year was over 250 donations of blood. I think that's just phenomenal that he's out there helping other people in their time of need.

The Minister of Education asked a question of my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton as to why we would be blaming or faulting the Minister of Health. What I would add to that is it's one of those situations, again, of the talk and the rhetoric of partnership and working together. It seems that it has been awfully delayed. Why weren't we consulted? Why weren't we part of the process? Why weren't we given the opportunity to at least be made aware of it?

I have had a couple of circumstances in my own backyard that—again, I'm the last, it seems, to know about issues that are affecting my riding, not just in health care—I'm not pointing directly to the minister in this case, but to other ministers within her cabinet. Certainly, last week was a prime example, where money was given out in my riding, and I'm certainly thankful for that, but I wasn't even made aware of it. I think the courtesy is to bring us in. If you really want partnership, bring us to the table and let us know about that.

I'm very concerned about the delay. I think it has an image issue with regard to other businesses, if they're thinking, "We're coming to Ontario, and we're going to have to wait a year," and then all of a sudden there are roadblocks put up.

I will, with the minister in the House, bring up the Markdale hospital. There has been a delay of over 10 years. I have been here for two and a half years. I keep waiting for the yes. Minister, I know you're working diligently on it, and I can't wait for the Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound folks to hear you say, "Yes, we in fact will give you money to build that very needed hospital that I committed to 10 years ago in this very House."

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to my colleague from Whitby–Oshawa, Christine Elliott, bringing a good, sound thought process to this. I look forward to hearing what she has to say on the topic and know that you will find it interesting as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Health has two minutes to reply.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I would like to thank the members from Thornhill, Bramalea–Gore–Malton, Guelph and Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for their contribution.

I must say I find it very concerning that the member from Thornhill would equate paying for plasma to paying to have your eggs stored. That is a completely different conversation. I look forward to making sure everybody understands exactly what it is we're talking about.

I think it's important to note that, yes, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is celebrating donors.

Absolutely, that's what we need to do more of. Thank you for that contribution.

I know that this is an issue that has been raised—and we have had conversations with all parties—of why we are doing this now. We told the company—and I think it's important you understand that the company has known for many, many, many months—that they need a licence to operate in Ontario. They have found what they believe is a loophole. We are closing that loophole, if indeed it exists. But no one should be feeling sorry for that company. They have known for a long time that I would not approve a licence for a paid plasma centre. The company deserves no sympathy from anyone in this House. They have known; they went ahead anyway. We're going to make sure that we protect voluntary donation here.

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

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm very pleased to stand as the PC health critic today to speak to Bill 178, An Act to ensure that blood and blood constituents are donated freely, or by its short title, the Voluntary Blood Donations Act.

**1630**

Bill 178 was only tabled last week by the Minister of Health, so we've not yet had the opportunity to present this act to our caucus. However, I have had the opportunity to meet with some of the affected stakeholders and wish to offer some preliminary comments.

It has been noted that this is an issue that has been outstanding for well over a year. An application for a licence to collect plasma from paid donors was submitted by Canadian Plasma Resources to Health Canada in November 2012. They are currently preparing to open three locations: two in downtown Toronto and one in Hamilton. I understand that in excess of \$7 million has already been invested into this business, 25 employees have been hired and testing of the system has commenced.

The minister knew this was happening and has indicated that we shouldn't have any sympathy for the company. Perhaps that's true, but the fact of the matter is that no action was taken by the minister. Now that we're faced with the distinct possibility that a licence will be granted by Health Canada within the next two to three months, we're now faced with somewhat of an emergency—certainly a very urgent situation—and the need to make a decision in haste rather than having the important public policy discussion that an issue of this magnitude deserves.

There are important considerations respecting paid plasma donation that need to be raised, and I hope that sufficient time will be allowed, once Bill 178 reaches committee, to allow for all affected stakeholders and members of the public to be heard. In the meantime, I appreciate the opportunity to raise a number of these considerations during the hour of time allotted to me.

Bill 178 would prohibit payments to individuals for their blood and plasma, including reimbursement of ex-

penses or other forms of compensation, except for exceptional circumstances deemed necessary by Canadian Blood Services. It would also prohibit individuals from accepting payment for blood and plasma in Ontario. The legislation would also require that all laboratories and specimen collection centres be licensed under the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act.

To understand Bill 178 and what it aims to accomplish, it's important to understand, first of all, what we're actually talking about and what plasma is. Plasma is the pale yellow-coloured liquid that makes up about 55% of total blood volume. Plasma can be obtained from either a regular whole-blood donation or through a process called plasmapheresis where the blood is returned to the donor. Through this procedure, blood is collected through the machine where the plasma is separated out and the remainder of the blood cells—red cells, white cells and platelets—are returned to the donor.

It is so valuable for so many purposes that it's sometimes referred to as "liquid gold." Plasma can be used as a direct transfusion to treat patients who are bleeding severely or need plasma to help their blood clot. Plasma can also be used to manufacture plasma protein products. One of these products, known as IVIG, shows early promise of success with Alzheimer's disease, so demand for it is expected to soar in the next few years. Once blood is collected, fractionation occurs, which is the processing of source plasma into a range of specialized proteins for therapeutic use. Fractionated products would include albumin, which is used for volume replacement during surgery or following massive bleeding, and immunoglobulins for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases and immune disorders.

It's important to note that Bill 178 does not deal with transfusions when speaking about compensating donors for plasma. The current issue is whether the company can collect plasma from paid donors to sell to companies that use the plasma for pharmaceutical purposes.

It has been the case in Canada for many years that we do not collect enough plasma to be self-sufficient. We are self-sufficient when it comes to fresh plasma used for transfusions. However, we buy the rest of our plasma from the United States, where, in many cases, they purchase plasma from donors.

In April 2013, Health Canada held a round table in Toronto on the whole issue of payment for plasma. During the April 10, 2013, round table, a presentation was made by Canadian Blood Services. I would like to read an excerpt of the report issued by Health Canada—the preliminary report. The presentation was made by Dr. Graham Sher, CEO of Canadian Blood Services, who stated "that the Canadian Blood Services currently purchases bulk pharmaceutical products from the US and Europe that are made from plasma (e.g. plasma protein products such as albumin and IVIG) on behalf of the provincial and territorial governments for use in Canadian hospitals. These products are made from several plasma sources, including volunteer donors in Canada and the US, and paid donors in the US. He emphasized

that, internationally, the use of paid plasma creating plasma protein products has been a common practice within the pharmaceutical industry for decades, and that the majority of the world's supply of plasma products comes from paid donors sourced by the plasma industry." Later, Dr. Sher stated that "between 600,000 and 700,000 litres of plasma for fractionation per year would be required for Canada to become self-sufficient and meet today's demand, and that collection of this amount of plasma with a volunteer model is not operationally or economically feasible."

So it is clear that Canada's need for plasma products significantly exceeds our current capacity to produce plasma for further manufacturing into plasma protein products. Approximately 70% of plasma products used in Canada for these products are currently made from US-sourced plasma largely collected from paid donors.

Canadian Plasma Resources, the company in question, proposes to address this issue, but of course there isn't a simple or straightforward answer. In order to conduct a proper review, I believe it's necessary to look back at the history of blood collection services in Canada, and the report of the Krever commission on this subject. The minister referenced this in her comments as well.

Blood collection was, for many years in Canada, the responsibility of the Canadian Red Cross. From the 1940s to the 1990s, the Red Cross was responsible for the Canadian blood supply through voluntary donations. The sole exception was the Cangene facility in Winnipeg, which compensated donors for a rare type of blood, Rh-negative, which produces antibodies for a life-saving immune globulin medication. That is certainly an exception to the general rule, by far.

In the early 1980s, 2,000 Canadians were infected with HIV by tainted blood products. As many as 30,000 more were infected with hepatitis C. It's estimated that nearly 8,000 of those who received bad blood are expected to die as a result. How could this have happened? Well, facing a blood shortage and weighing the pros and cons, Health Canada and the Canadian Red Cross turned to the international market to purchase blood products for Canadians. Some of these blood products were purchased from blood brokers, whose supplies came from high-risk populations such as Arkansas prisons, LA's skid row, the San Francisco area, and Russian funeral homes.

Remember that the 1980s were the height of the AIDS epidemic in North America, and this imported blood was being inadequately screened before entering our system. Moreover, the Red Cross was slow to introduce donor screening methods domestically.

In 1993, following intense pressure by the victims of tainted blood, the Privy Council issued an order calling for a royal commission of inquiry on the blood system in Canada, which was headed by Justice Horace Krever. Better known as the Krever inquiry, this commission was set up to investigate the claim that the system of government, private and non-governmental organizations responsible for supplying blood and blood products to the health care system in Canada, had allowed tainted blood

to be used. After months of hearings and four years of investigations, Justice Krever released his landmark report of 1,200 pages in 1997.

Justice Krever emphasized in his report that the blame for this nationwide public health catastrophe did not simply lie with the Red Cross. Fundamentally, he found that the relationship between the Red Cross and the federal and provincial governments was dysfunctional, and that Canada lacked a cohesive national blood policy. This lack of policy resulted in a series of disastrous decisions. These included the importing of plasma collected from high-risk populations, not using a test that may have caught as many as 90% of the hepatitis C cases, delaying the purchase of safer heat-treated blood products for haemophiliacs out of a desire to use up all of the contaminated blood products, and a failure to track down those who might have been infected.

As a result of the Krever report, the control of the blood program was taken away from the Canadian Red Cross, and a new federal agency, Canadian Blood Services, was established to operate at arm's-length from the government. Although the federal government was quick to offer compensation to Canadians infected with HIV, with the first package being offered in 1989, it took much longer and several legal battles before all Canadians infected with hepatitis C were compensated. The total payout was in the billions of dollars.

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The recommendations of the Krever report ultimately overhauled the blood system in Canada, making it safer and better, but at the end of the day, nothing makes up for the fact that so many Canadians had to be infected in order for us to realize drastic changes were necessary in our blood system.

What came out of this inquiry and this devastating scandal was a key recommendation of the Krever report: Blood donors should not be paid for their services except in rare circumstances, which brings us directly to the issue at hand here in Ontario and to our discussions about Bill 178, An Act to ensure that blood and blood constituents are donated freely.

Following the Krever inquiry, Justice Krever outlined the basic principles of the Canadian blood supply system. Those five basic principles are, first, that blood is a public resource. This value must guide the blood supply system, as voluntary donors are doing it for the benefit of other persons in Canada and not for any other motivations. For this reason, profits should not be made from donated blood, and the operator of the blood system should act as a trustee of this valuable public resource.

I, too, would like to add—the thousands of people in Canada who donate freely of their blood. We've heard of some of those donors from my colleague the member from—

**Interjection:** Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** —Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. Thank you for that.

I'd also like to say that in my own riding, we've had a great history of voluntary blood donations, and people

have given at record levels. Certainly in my own family, my mother was a volunteer for many, many years at the voluntary blood clinics, so we know how important they are and how much we value the donations that are given voluntarily by Canadians.

The second principle is that donors of blood and plasma should not be paid for their donations except in rare circumstances. It was Justice Krever's argument that unpaid donations of blood and plasma are safer than blood and plasma donations from paid donors. This principle is in line with the World Health Organization recommendation that blood components and blood products be made from donations from unpaid donors.

The motivation behind this recommendation is the belief that well-informed, altruistic donors will not donate if there is a possibility their donations will do harm rather than good, since they have no motivation besides goodwill for donating in the first place. On the other hand, there is concern that people who receive money in exchange for donations might still donate even if they think they should not. So it's only in rare circumstances that individuals should be compensated for the collection of blood products.

The third principle is that whole blood, plasma and platelets must be collected in sufficient quantities in Canada to meet domestic needs for blood components and blood products. Currently, Canadian donations meet the need for blood components, but we are not self-sufficient for blood products. Most of the shortage in blood products is made up for by plasma collected from people in other countries, who are paid.

But the Krever report suggests that self-sufficiency in blood products is also a desirable goal. This is because the plasma obtained from Canadians will be safer, in relative terms. Canada has lower rates of infectious diseases than many other countries, including parts of the US, and Canadians have access to covered health care services. When plasma is collected domestically, it is overseen and regulated by the health protection branch, so we have domestic control over both the quality of donor screening and the collection and processing of plasma. The other advantage of being self-sufficient in blood products is that the supply will not be affected by shortages on the global market.

The fourth principle is that Canadians should have free and universal access to blood components and blood products. This, of course, is in keeping with the principles governing health care in Canada, including universality and accessibility. This goal is not difficult to achieve for blood products and components used in hospitals, because all drugs used in hospitals are covered. But more importantly, this principle emphasizes that blood components and products used outside of hospitals should continue to be distributed free of charge, as in the past.

The fifth and final principle is that the safety of the blood supply system is paramount. The number one goal of the blood system must be to supply safe therapies to people who need them, and this principle must come above all other principles and policies.

To prevent another tainted blood scandal, we must ensure that we only accept the best possible blood. To ensure the safety of recipients, donors undergo an extensive screening process. As a result of the Krever commission, Canadian Blood Services was established to replace the Canadian Red Cross blood program and the Canadian Blood Agency, as I mentioned earlier. It took over the responsibility in 1998 to manage the blood and blood products supply for Canadians in all of the provinces and territories outside of Quebec, which is served by Héma-Québec.

While Canadian Blood Services is not a governmental agency, it is a national not-for-profit organization that receives funding from the provincial and federal governments and is regulated by Health Canada. The main service they offer is whole-blood collection, but they oversee a variety of other services, which vary between provinces but generally include plasma collection, platelet collection and stem cell and bone marrow collection and matching.

Whole blood is made up of red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets and plasma. Some of what is donated is kept as whole blood and used for transfusions, and some is processed to separate out red blood cells and plasma. These donations also undergo a process where white blood cells are removed, since it is white blood cells that often carry viruses and bacteria that can be harmful to the recipient.

People can also donate plasma, which is the part of the blood that transports water and nutrients to all the cells in the body. It contains many antibodies that help fight infections and is used to make life-saving products such as some cancer treatments. The donor's blood is processed so that only plasma is extracted and the rest of the blood returns to the donor. Plasma can then either be transfused to a recipient or processed into other blood products such as pharmaceutical drugs to treat Canadians with immune deficiencies.

In much the same way as with plasma donation, donors can also donate platelets. But Canadian Blood Services did not get enough supplies for the blood system from Canadian donors alone. Although they do collect enough domestically for Canadian transfusions, Canadian Blood Services uses the international market to fill their demand for manufactured blood products. More specifically and related to the issue we're discussing today, they currently only collect 30% of the plasma needed to manufacture the drugs for Canadians with immune deficiencies. The other 70% of the plasma made for these drugs comes in part from paid donors in the United States.

Much of the discussion and outcome of the Krever commission is about Canada's voluntary blood supply. Canadian Blood Services, with the help of staff and many volunteers, is able to get volunteers to donate their time and blood for a good cause. With their "It's in you to give" campaign, they are able to hold countless donation clinics across the province and Canada.

It should also be noted that payment by a private company for plasma donations has never and will never

have any impact on Canada's voluntary system for collecting blood for transfusions. Only Canadian Blood Services and Héma-Québec collect blood and plasma for transfusion. Private companies in Canada do not collect blood or plasma for transfusion. It still remains completely voluntary, and that is not going to change with Bill 178.

On February 25, 2013, Canadian Blood Services announced that they had no plans to purchase plasma from Canadian Plasma Resources. Canadian Blood Services stated:

"All plasma that Canadian Blood Services collects in Canada is used in Canada and all plasma for transfusion comes from volunteer Canadian donors.

"On behalf of Canadian hospitals, we bulk-buy pharmaceutical products from the US and Europe that are made from plasma (plasma protein products such as albumin and IVIG). These products are made from a few plasma sources: (a) volunteer donors in Canada, (b) volunteer donors in the US, and (c) paid donors in the US.

"This is not new and has been a common practice for decades. It is safe, it reduces health care costs, and is acceptable to patient groups who use these products and recognize this practice ensures security of supply....

"Canada, the United States and Europe have strict standards in collecting plasma and manufacturing it into pharmaceutical products. That means all donors must meet specific criteria to be eligible, and their donations are thoroughly tested. In addition, manufacturers use technology that wipes out viruses as an added safeguard for patients. Most of the products we buy are sold worldwide and are subject to regulation and licensing in multiple countries, including Canada.

"We are confident that there are enough Canadians who want to give blood, plasma and platelets for altruistic reasons, rather than for payment or incentives to meet the needs of our voluntary system.

"Canadian Blood Services has no plans to purchase plasma from the new Toronto operation."

**1650**

Mr. Speaker, Canadian Blood Services have done a fantastic job of ensuring that donations collected have been safe. All of the 850,000 units of blood collected annually are tested for transmittable diseases, and there is a rigorous process for screening donors. Canadian Blood Services has an extensive questionnaire that aims to ensure safe collection from donors. Questions are asked about travel, relationship history, locations lived, medications and vaccines given, medical history and extensive other points of information. Moreover, they monitor closely the infectious disease rate and donations and do "horizon scans" for potential emerging pathogens that may pose a new risk to the blood system in the future.

Now, I would like to say just a few points about what others have said about Bill 178, in hopes of ensuring that we have a balanced discussion on this subject.

I have had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the subject company, Canadian Plasma Resources, and they have outlined their concern, obviously, over

the proposed legislation. They have stated that they believe they can safely collect plasma in Ontario that would not affect our voluntary blood donation system. This organization has said that they will be compensating donors for their time with either a gift card or a donation to a select charity. They have stated that this will solely be for the donor's time and not a payment for plasma. Moreover, no compensation would be made until at least two donations of plasma have been tested to be safe.

We've also heard from the Canadian Hemophilia Society. The Canadian Hemophilia Society's blood safety and supply committee has approved a policy on paid plasma donations. The CHS has cited that "80% of the Canadian and world supplies of plasma derived-products are manufactured from the plasma of paid donors," mainly from the United States. The Canadian Hemophilia Society took the following position:

"(1) Plasma-derived products in adequate supply from both paid and non-paid sources are essential to the health of thousands of Canadians and, indeed, hundreds of thousands of people around the world;

"(2) Plasma-derived products manufactured following standard operating procedures and good manufacturing practices are of equally high quality from both paid and non-paid donors;

"(3) The collection of source plasma from paid donors in a properly regulated environment is not a patient safety issue;

"(4) CBS"—Canadian Blood Services—"and Héma-Québec should make all reasonable efforts to increase the quantity of Canadian plasma for fractionation from non-paid donors and the number and quantity of plasma-derived products made from this plasma;

"(5) In the absence of any realistic strategy to significantly increase the Canadian contribution to the world supply from non-paid donations, and when Canada relies almost entirely on paid donors from the US for life-saving plasma-derived products, it is not defensible to reject paid donor practices on ethical grounds;

"(6) Any endeavour to collect plasma for plasma-derived products from paid donors in Canada must respect the highest regulatory standards. Health Canada should make these standards known to Canadians and report to Canadians on a regular basis the results of their collection site inspections, including transfusion-transmissible infection rates among donors. CHS will monitor and endeavour to hold the regulator to account;

"(7) Any endeavour to collect plasma for plasma-derived products from paid donors must not affect the ability of Canadian Blood Services or Héma-Québec to collect whole blood, platelets and plasma from non-paid donors to meet the needs for fresh blood components. Canadian Blood Services and Héma-Québec should report to Canadians on a regular basis the impact of paid plasma collections on their ability to meet the needs of Canadian patients;

"(8) The health of donors should not be compromised by their donations, paid or non-paid. Donors should not be exploited by any individual or organization. Measures

and initiatives taken to encourage blood and plasma donations should not overwhelm the capacity of the donor to make an informed decision about whether to donate;" and, finally

"(9) Patients whose continued health is dependent on the use of blood components or plasma-derived products have a right, through their representative organizations, to be consulted on any issue which may have an impact on the safety, efficacy or supply of the treatment they receive. Health authorities should ensure that robust mechanisms are in place to ensure that this happens."

The use of plasma for those living with hemophilia is life-saving in many cases. Hemophilia patients require factor replacement therapy, where plasma is injected to allow the blood to clot. People living with hemophilia are one of the biggest users, of course, of plasma in Canada.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, it's quite obvious that this is a complex issue and one that requires careful thought and consideration. We need to send this bill to committee, where we can hear from Canadian Plasma Resources, Canadian Blood Services, the Canadian Hemophilia Society and public groups and individuals who are affected by blood services or require use of plasma products.

Others have come to the same conclusion. The extensive Health Canada round table held last April revealed that compensating donors for plasma is not an easy decision. It is something that we need to have a debate about in Ontario and hear all the facts from relevant groups.

The conclusion of the Health Canada round table stated that "Several participants pointed to Justice Krever's recommendation that Canada maintain an open and transparent blood system and consult with the public before changing the volunteer system. Because it was felt this is a public policy issue that impacts all Canadians, there was a recommendation for a cross-country public consultation on the matter. Patients that use plasma products were identified as a key stakeholder group that must be consulted on this issue, as they are the ones that are familiar with safety issues and most concerned with security of supply."

The report then went on to state, "This is not an easy discussion. Many stakeholders are passionate about this issue for various reasons. Everyone shares a common goal of wanting to ensure an ongoing safe system in Canada."

There is much at stake here, Mr. Speaker. The safety and sufficiency of our blood supply is important to all of us, and I trust that we will have an opportunity to hear all of the facts before making a decision.

But I have to stress—and I have been listening to what the Minister of Health has indicated—that this does not need to take a long time. We certainly do not intend to impede the progress of this bill. We are very aware of the time constraints relating to the possible licensing of this company by Health Canada, and we want to make sure that we deal with this in a timely fashion. But it is important for so many people that we get this matter straight.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important issue today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Well, Speaker, I never thought I would be standing in the Legislature and debating whether or not we would be paying for a blood resource that's very precious to humanity and life.

I thank the member from Whitby–Oshawa for the information she provided and the history on this issue.

I think one of the things we do have to ask ourselves is, why the delay in this? I know the minister wrote a letter to the federal government in March 2013. I wish you would have acted sooner. I know you want to rush the bill through, and I know the reasons why; they're very serious reasons. But I hope that if this bill gets rushed through, it will actually have an impact on what we're trying to accomplish here and that this private business, Canadian Plasma Resources, won't fall through the cracks.

I'm at a loss for words in this regard. This is a topic, really, that truly upsets me, to be honest with you. When you're talking about health care, public health care and life, it's something that we have to really take seriously in this House.

So I only hope we haven't acted too late on this and that this business doesn't slip through the cracks and set a standard that Canadians don't want to follow, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I do want to say thank you very much to the opposition critic for her remarks. It's clear that she has given this a lot of thought. It was a thoughtful speech. She thoroughly reviewed our too-recent history when it comes to dangers associated with blood supply in this province.

I want to say thank you to the member opposite for acknowledging that this is something that we do want to deal with quickly and respond to this particular situation that we're dealing with now. Again, thank you.

1700

I think you taught us a lot about the history of blood, what plasma is and what the Krever commission did recommend. I'm pleased that I think I heard, through all of that, that you are supportive of protecting the voluntary donation system, and I look forward to taking this to the next step, by getting this bill passed as quickly as we can.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's always a pleasure to sit and listen to our member from Whitby–Oshawa, our health critic and deputy leader, Christine Elliott. As the Minister of Health just said, it was a very thoughtful, informative presentation. I certainly learned a lot through that debate. As Christine has said, it's a very complex issue. There needs to be balance in our decision, at the end of the day. There needs to be a timely review of this.

Obviously, there is a very big debate between "paid" and "volunteer," and again I commend all of those people

who step up. As the slogan goes, "It's in you to give," so those people who do, in fact, step up and give blood for the benefit of others, that's a wonderful thing.

I think what she really emphasized was the need to consult with stakeholders, particularly those who are going to benefit or have a definite need for a blood transfusion. I think it's absolutely critical that those people are involved in any of these types of discussions.

A number of people have raised the same issue, the concern that most people are expressing today in the House: the delay. A letter was written by the minister over a year ago. Today, really, is the first time many of us have heard about it or had the opportunity. In our case, we haven't been able to caucus it, and I think it's very important that all of our caucus members have the ability to bring their stories and their thought processes forward. That certainly helps me to inform how I look at any issue that's on the docket. It would have been nice to have had that time. It would have been nice to be able to do some research before today. I think it's one of those things that, certainly from the minister's perspective—again, she always talks about partnership and collaboration with the opposition and the third party, and I think we all should be and are all willing to do that when we've had ample time to truly do our due diligence on behalf of the people who have sent us here, our constituents.

The health and safety of people is absolutely paramount—I say that every time I'm in the House; to ensure the safety of those people I represent is absolutely my priority. I will do the same due diligence here. I would certainly like to know more about this topic and look forward to more debate, getting it through and coming up with a good decision on behalf of the people of this great province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I also have to say that I want to applaud the member from Whitby–Oshawa for her very thorough analysis and presentation of this issue and of this bill.

I want to begin by highlighting some of the important issues that were raised. I think that the concept of the security of supply—that safety is of the utmost importance. I can share a personal story of a very near and dear friend of mine; her mother received a blood transfusion just prior to the birth of her daughter. Her daughter is my good friend, and she contracted hepatitis C as a result. We know many difficult stories like that have happened in our province. The notion of a voluntary system and the notion of having a mechanism in place, the idea of encouraging, as part of our civic duty, to give back to our community by donating blood—those are very valuable notions and very valuable ideas, and I think the member touched upon those very thoroughly.

She particularly gave emphasis to the history of what we've gone through, and it's important, in respect to the availability of plasma or plasma-related resources, that we look at what has happened in our past so that we can prevent that from happening in our future, looking at

some of the serious mistakes that have been made, some of the mechanisms that were not present that could have insulated us from some of the serious and very heart-breaking stories and devastating results of not having a secure blood supply.

I particularly think it's important to notice that the member from Whitby–Oshawa raised this issue: There is a question of our serenity as Ontarians and Canadians when we are relying on outside sources for blood, particularly when those sources that we rely upon are paid. It raises a question about where our moral compass and moral standing are to make these types of decisions. I think we need to have a broad picture and a thorough analysis of where we go from here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Whitby–Oshawa has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I would like to thank the member from London–Fanshawe for her comments, as well as the Minister of Health, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

The member from London–Fanshawe—I really appreciated her comments and her genuine concern about this issue, because it is important to so many people, and we've gone through such a tragedy in Canada. We need to learn from our mistakes and be very careful as we go forward and as we make any decisions relating to our blood supply.

I thank the minister for her understanding in realizing that we want to be part of the solution here, not part of the problem. This is an issue that is time-sensitive, and we want to proceed with it as quickly as possible while still having a thorough review of the situation.

The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound also talked about the safety and security of the blood supply. That is something that we need to strengthen and, hopefully, look toward becoming more self-sufficient on with respect to plasma production and collection in the future.

Then the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton talked about the importance of understanding the history, where we've come from and where we're going—so that should be our guide going forward—and the principle that so many Ontarians and Canadians hold dear, that giving blood is one of the things that make us Canadian, that people want to give altruistically. We've got a very proud history of that. We certainly don't want that to be compromised in any way.

I think we really need to understand, if we start paying donors for plasma donations, what effect that's going to have on our voluntary blood donation system. I look forward to getting this matter into committee as quickly as possible so that we can come out with a bill that is soundly reasoned and is ready to go to protect our blood supply as much as can be done.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I guess it's my turn to add a few words to this debate. I sincerely wish that I was not

having this debate at this time. This is March 24, 2014, and we have known really since 2012 that this company, Canadian Plasma Resources, had intentions of opening up a private for-profit clinic in downtown Toronto. Actually, back in November of 2012, they were talking about three paid-for-donation plasma clinics in Ontario, two in Toronto and one in Hamilton.

Since November of 2012, the Ministry of Health has had so many opportunities to act, but none of those opportunities were acted upon. Time went by. Days turned into weeks that turned into months that turned into years. Now here we are in Ontario; we can walk 10 minutes, and we will be in downtown Toronto at 82 Adelaide, at a paid-for-donation plasma clinic, fully open with all of the bells and whistles as to what you need to do that kind of work.

How did this happen? Why are we in this situation? How can I rewind the time and tell the minister that back in 2012 was the time to act, not in March 2014. But of course, none of us can travel in time. Not even you, Speaker, in that big chair. None of us can do that. We have to take it from where we are now.

We have all known since 2012 that a commercial company called Canadian Plasma Resources applied to Health Canada for a licence to open two plasma collection sites in downtown Toronto, and at the time there was talk of a third one in Hamilton. Right there, back in 2012, Canadian Plasma Resources was really upfront in indicating that they would pay their donors. At the time, in 2012, they told us about a \$20 payment for donation. This amount has now been upped to \$25 per donation. But it doesn't change the basic fact that they were upfront in telling us what they were going to do.

**1710**

First, they went to Health Canada. Health Canada decided to consult on this issue. They held a round-table discussion on April 10, 2013, right here in Toronto, with about 30 people. It was an invitation-only type of consultation, which in my books never really sits that well, but we'll pass on this. The consultation took place in Toronto. Thirty people who had been invited attended. Representatives from the Ministry of Health were there. Patient advocate groups were there. Health organizations, individual advocates, and Health Canada, of course, were there. Canadian Blood Services was there. Héma-Québec was there. They talked about this issue, that we had been approached by a commercial company to start collecting plasma in Toronto for a commercial venture.

Health Canada produced a summary report. The summary report has been available on their website since July 26 of last year. On July 26, 2013, Health Canada posted the report, as well as some backgrounders as to what this was all about. They opened it up for comments, and pretty much anybody and everybody who wanted to comment on their report was free to do so. The whole thing was wrapped up by August of last year.

You have to remember that the Ministry of Health has quite a few resources to follow this file, but so did I. I followed this file because I knew the damage it could do

to our health care system if that was allowed to happen. Anybody who followed the file would have been able to see the conclusions from Health Canada. Let me read it: "There is no federal legislation that prohibits an establishment that collects blood or plasma from compensating donors. Compensation of donors falls within the authority of the" provincial or territorial "governments." If that's not a call to act, Mr. Speaker, how much clearer can we spit this out than what Health Canada had put on their website?

They made it clear: "Don't wait on us. We think"—as in, Health Canada thinks—"that there is nothing the Canadian government has to do." If a commercial entity decides that they want to pay their donor, that's fine with them. "If the province doesn't think so, then do your work, province, because Health Canada has spoken." They spoke clearly, concisely and were easily understood. They saw nothing wrong with compensation for donors, and they said clearly that this falls within the authority of the provincial government, i.e., this Ministry of Health sitting right here, for which I'm the critic.

The minister has known from the get-go that the federal government was not going to prevent a clinic from opening and that it was quite fine with them to allow donors to be paid for their plasma. So I'm always a little bit surprised when I hear the Minister of Health blaming their federal counterpart.

Do I agree with what Health Canada has said? Absolutely not. I disagree 100% with the position of Health Canada, but that doesn't mean that their position was not clear. Their position was really clear. They said that it is okay to have a commercial entity pay for donors. "If you don't want this in your province, then, province, you will have to act."

Quebec didn't wait till there was somebody knocking on the door, saying, "By the way, I'm opening up a paid-donor plasma clinic down the road from your Legislature and I intend to open quite a few more of those."

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Franchise.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Yes, franchise them out; exactly. They acted. And years ago, they made it clear, before it was even thought of, that they were going to uphold the principle that we had learned when the Krever commission was in full swing.

I know that a lot of people will remember. A lot of people have lost family members. A lot of people still live with family members or friends who were infected by the tainted blood scandal that hit us. That's why we had the Krever commission, and that's why we looked at what can we do so that it never happens again?

Governments of all provinces and territories and the federal government stood together behind Justice Krever and made a promise to those families, they made a promise to those victims and they made a promise to the survivors, that this would never happen again, that we had learned from what had happened, that we had learned from this tragedy that affected 30,000 Canadians, and that we were going to move forward in a way that would make sure that our blood system was going to be secure.

What were those five principles? They were quite reasonable. The first one was that blood is a public resource; we all need it to live.

The second was that donors should not be paid. Could it be any clearer? They certainly don't speak like politicians, those people, do they? When they say something, they mean exactly what they say. Principle number two: To make sure that the Canadian blood supply stays safe, donors should not be paid. That was enough to get the government of Quebec to act and pass legislation that made it quite clear that in their province, you are not allowed to pay. In our province, that was not enough for our government to act.

Principle number three: Sufficient blood should be collected so that importations from other countries are unnecessary. This is an issue that has been brought forward a number of times during this debate, the fact that Ontario imports some medications and different therapeutic agents that are made from plasma from other countries.

I want to make a parallel to the Trillium Gift of Life. When the Trillium Gift of Life wanted more donors to participate, when they wanted to increase the amount of people that were ready to put their name on the registry, they changed what they were doing. Everybody will remember the young Hélène Campbell, who, by tweeting about organ donation, was able to exponentially increase the number of people who had added their name to the registry. I am really proud to say that in my riding, over 50% of the people in Nickel Belt have their name on the registry. I'm really proud of this.

So why am I bringing this up when we're talking about blood supply? When was the last time you heard Canadian Blood Services telling us that we needed more people to come and donate plasma? I bet you none of you have heard.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** We do.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** We do.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** If we do need to have—

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I hear that all the time in Guelph.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** If you need to make sure that we have enough plasma so that we don't import from other countries, there is a lot that can be done yet. Some of the members have said that they've heard a radio commercial inviting people to donate blood. That is true. I've heard that too. But have we ever heard of an alarm saying, "We are in dire shortage of plasma? Please, Ontarians, roll up your sleeves now because we don't have enough"?

If those play on—they haven't played on the radio station that I listen to, and they haven't come on my Twitter account or my Facebook or anything of the above.

**1720**

The idea that I'm putting forward is that if we really needed more, I think we would be able to bring more voluntary donors right here in Ontario. If we were to be in a situation such that we were about to be short of plasma, then let the good people of Ontario know. I guarantee you, they will roll up their sleeves.

I don't usually take myself as an example, but I will in this case. I was a plasma donor for many, many years. Every week on Wednesday, I would go to what was called the Red Cross, at the time, in Sudbury. You're allowed to give plasma every week. Basically, the same people would be there. I worked downtown at the time, so I would just walk over. The Red Cross was located downtown. After a while, you get to know everybody who donates plasma.

By the way, it's something that takes close to an hour. The needle is one mega needle, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Don't discourage people.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I don't want to scare people away, but because they need to give you back your red blood cells, the needle is quite big in order for all of this to go through. For a lot of people, including myself—I don't really care. I have a few marks on my arms. I've never been an IV drug user or anything like this, but I could pass for one if you only looked at my arms, because there are a few needle marks there.

The point I'm making is that there are people who are willing to roll up their sleeves. I know them, because I sat with dozens and dozens of them many, many times, through the local Red Cross. Then they closed the plasma program in Sudbury. It got moved to Thunder Bay, and none of us ever donated plasma again.

If I had the opportunity to do this in my community, I would be more than happy to do it again, and I know a lot of people who would be just as willing as they were when the program was existing in Sudbury. It is feasible to have enough plasma through voluntary donations. I know people; we all know people. It is feasible.

The third key principle of the Canadian blood supply by Justice Krever was, "Sufficient blood should be collected so that importation from other countries is unnecessary." If that's really needed, I think it is feasible. I am sure that it is feasible.

The fourth principle is, "Access to blood and blood products should be free and universal." I think this is something that we have been able to continue to do in this country and in this province, and I hope we continue.

Then, "Safety of the blood supply system is paramount."

Those are pretty basic principles that Justice Krever put forward. At the time, every government stood behind those five principles and committed to those victims that it would never happen again, that we had learned from what had happened with the tainted blood scandal and that we would protect the people of our provinces, our territories and our country.

As I said, Quebec went ahead and made changes. They passed a law that made it clear that paid-for donations would never be allowed in their province. But Ontario did nothing of the sort. After we've been warned since 2012 that this for-profit company was going to come and set up shop in our province, we're acting now.

Everybody knows what "now" means. "Now" means that we already have a clinic that is fully open. "Now" means that on 82 Adelaide St. in Toronto right now,

Canadian Plasma—I always forget their name—has already set up shop. They have signed the lease in the location. They are located in a part of Toronto where there are quite a few shelters and halfway houses and parks, and I'm questioning, why this location? But that's the location that they chose.

We are told that they spent \$6 million in leasehold improvements to make their rental place a nice place to do this kind of work. They have invested in the furnishing of everything that is there to make sure that they can do this. They have a website that is equal to none—I wish the government website was as friendly as theirs is.

I certainly don't want to be perceived that I am supporting what they have done. No, I am opposed to what they are doing. But the fact remains that this for-profit company has warned the government since 2012 that they were going to do this. They have kept myself, and I'm sure the critic for the PCs, as well as the minister, informed, blow by blow, step by step, as to what was going on. They went out and advertised for the recruitment of their staff for everybody to see. They recruited 30 people who now have found jobs with this company and who are now being trained to be the workers who will be collecting the blood. They have put out exactly how payments will be made to people who decide to be paid for their plasma donations.

At the end of the day, what I'm saying is that during all of that, I have tried to be in contact with the minister. I have tried to be in contact with the ministry. I have put a question on the order paper regarding this. Let me find it. I did get an answer to the question on the order paper because, you know, Mr. Speaker, when we put a question on the order paper, they have to answer us. As soon as I find it, I will let you know what it said—well, I can't find it right now, but I did that back in May 2013. The minister answered back.

I wrote to her and so did many other people. I asked questions in the House. At every step of the way, I sort of got always the same thing, the "feel good," as to, they are opposed to it in the biggest way possible, that they value the voluntary donation system—and all of this I have no problem believing. I believe it and I support it, but it was very short on the action side, as to: What are we going to do to actively prevent this from happening? What are we going to do to make sure that Ontario is bulletproof when it comes to making sure that our donation system becomes voluntary? None of that was forthcoming.

It didn't matter if I asked a question in the House, if I tabled a question on the order paper, if myself, the Canadian Hemophilia Society and many others wrote to the minister, the answers were always the same, that they were fundamentally opposed to paid-for plasma donation, that they supported and that they agreed with the recommendations of the Krever commission and all of this, but nothing was forthcoming till after they were actually open—a disappointment. I feel like I, and all of us, have been let down.

But it doesn't matter what it does to me, Mr. Speaker. It matters what it does to our health care system, because

at the core of our health care system, what I call one of the pillars of our health care system, is trust. Once there is no trust, there is no health care that can happen.

1730

I'm old. I was there when the first tainted-blood scandal happened. Back then, if you would have told us that the virus from a monkey was about to be transferred to a human being and called HIV and infect 30,000 people, you would have been the laughingstock of anywhere you said that. But it did happen, and 30,000 people did get infected.

I would tell you, Speaker, that it doesn't matter how many tests we do on the blood and blood products that we collect right now, there is no way that we can guarantee that we know of every pathogen that will ever be blood carried—blood-borne pathogens, they're called. There are always new things that happen that we don't know about.

So what do you do? Well, you use the safety principle, and you put in place the recommendations the Krever commission had given us. When you put that into place, you make your blood system as safe as you can, and that includes not paying donors, being the number two principle that the Krever commission has given us.

So what does it mean when you go at one of the fundamental pillars of our health care system? That means that for people who provide care—you're not talking about their plan of care anymore; you're trying to defend the system.

Do you know how hard it was, Mr. Speaker, to get somebody to sign a consent for a blood transfusion when all of this was going on? Next to impossible, although the plan of care was very clear that in order to recuperate, in order to heal, in order to live, you needed a blood transfusion.

While the Krever inquiry was going on, let me tell you that health care providers spent a tonne of time trying to defend the system, because people were scared. People rejected this. People did not want to be the next victim who was going to get infected by tainted blood, by blood that carried diseases rather than life, for good reason. It had happened to 30,000 of them. Chances are, they knew a neighbour, a friend or even a family member who had been infected by a blood transfusion, and they didn't want that to happen to them. They didn't want that to happen to their spouses or to their children.

So what does that mean for the health care system? That means that it doesn't matter if your plan of care is very robust and this is the type of surgery that goes very well and the chances of full recovery are really good; if it includes that you need a blood product, if it includes that you need a blood transfusion or plasma, it becomes really tough. It becomes really tough. Something that should have been done in five minutes becomes a week-long argument with your client, patient or recipient, because they don't want anything to do with it.

So what is the risk of having a paid-for plasma clinic? The risk is that you undermine the trust in the health care system. The risk is that what should be a best practice,

step one, two, three in the treatment, all of a sudden becomes a big argument with your client, with your patient, who doesn't want anything to do with it.

Is it based in reality? Is it based in fact or fiction? It makes no difference. Their perception is their reality, and this is what they make their decision based on. It doesn't matter that you explain to them, "Oh, no, no. The plasma that was collected through the paid system has gone to the States for their forensics." It makes no difference to them. What makes a difference to them is that they now have a doubt. They now have an issue of trust. They now do not trust the system. Then patient care is compromised, not because the actual plasma or blood products that you were going to give them are compromised, not based on fact, but based on their perception. Their perception is their reality, and this is what they use to make decisions, and their decision is that they would rather be safe than sorry. Their decision is, "That part of my treatment, dear doctor—I don't want anything to do with it."

It's the same thing with the nurse who goes; the same thing with the social workers who will go; and the same thing with the entire interdisciplinary team that will go into that patient's room and try to explain to them, "You are really putting yourself at risk by refusing." But it doesn't matter, because the damage is done; because the trust has been eroded; because one of the pillars of our health care system has been cut down.

This is what this does: It introduces what I call the human element. The human element is that we are all human. We all make our decisions based on what is real to us, and we are fully in our rights to do this. We are the ones who know ourselves the best. We are the ones who should make decisions for our own care. We are the ones who have to give final consent. If you don't give consent, it's not going to happen. So you see, Speaker, how something as crucial as the trust in our health care system was on the chopping line.

Since 2012, we knew that Canadian Plasma Resources had intentions of eroding the trust in our health care system. We have 22,000 people working for the Ministry of Health, and what we got is a bill that comes after the doors to this private company are already open; a bill that comes after the \$6 million has already been spent; a bill that comes after a website, and after the recruitment of staff and recruitment of donors—because at the end of the day, this is what this is all about—have already been done.

Why? Isn't the most fundamental responsibility of our Minister of Health to protect our health care system? Since November 2012, our health care system has been under threat. What has our Minister of Health done? From where I'm sitting, it looks like nothing. It looks like the Minister of Health waited and waited and waited, and was outdone by this little company.

Really? Some 22,000 civil servants, who know more about health care than all of us will ever know, couldn't see any further than that? Or if they did—and I tend to think that they do, because they know our health care system pretty well—they could not motivate the Minister

of Health to act quicker, to bring a statement in the House that simply said, “We will not pay for blood product donation—stop; full end; nothing else”?

Instead, I have in front of me Bill 178. Bill 178 is so “reactioner”—I’m not sure if that’s a word.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Reactionary.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Reactionary. Thank you. Bill 178 is so reactionary.

Right now, you have this for-profit company, Canadian Plasma Resources, that tells us, “Oh, no, we are allowed to open, and we’re allowed to operate, because we don’t fall under the bill, under the laws that exist.” So the minister goes and changes the laws that exist, after they’re already open, and then wants to rush this through the House. Really? This is the best we can do?

Not only does she do this, but the bill itself seems to have a few loopholes in it that I’m not comfortable with at all. Not only did we wait until after, I would say, the horse is out of the barn—we already have a for-profit plasma collection site in Toronto—but we come out with this bill that has pieces in it that leave me puzzled.

**1740**

They say things like, “The purpose of this act is to provide for recognition of the following principles....” We all know that there are five principles—we’ve all followed Krever—but she only names three. The other two, I guess—I don’t know—they’ll come up later in another bill. Who knows?

The first one: “Within Ontario’s health care system, blood donations are viewed as a public resource.” I can’t argue with that.

Second, “Blood donors should not be paid, except in exceptional circumstances.” This is where I always get a little bit uncomfortable, Mr. Speaker, because when we see “except in exceptional circumstances,” and those are not defined clearly, and you have people who have already spent \$6 million doing leasehold improvements to open a site—I’m thinking those people probably have deep pockets—I’m just going out on a limb here—and they can hire a whole bunch of lawyers for whom “except in exceptional circumstances” will be defined in ways that you and I wouldn’t have thought of.

“Exceptional circumstances” kind of means something—it leads me to believe, anyway, that it would not happen very often. But you put those words into the hands of high-paid lawyers, and all of a sudden they open up a breach into this act that a herd of elephants could drive through.

I have the pleasure to sit with Jagmeet Singh. Sorry, I’m supposed to call him by his riding.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Bramalea–Gore–Malton. The MPP for Bramalea–Gore–Malton. He is a lawyer, and it is amazing, sometimes, when he goes on to define something. How do you dream this up? Well, that’s because the meaning of the word within the law, versus what you and I think it means, is sometimes a world apart. So I’m always a little bit wary.

Then there is this other exemption in the bill that makes me maybe not more uncomfortable but equally

uncomfortable, Speaker, if that makes any sense to you. It’s that there will be an exemption for Canadian Blood Services. In theory, that looks pretty good, except that I’d like to put Canadian Blood Services on record.

Oh, by the way, I found my order question, my paper. That was written question number 172, submitted on May 1, 2013, to which the minister was nice enough to respond to me.

As I said, in her response, she says all the right things, like that they’re really opposed to this. But she also confirmed something that I already knew about Canadian Blood Services, and I will quote the answer from the minister: “Canadian Blood Services has indicated that it is not affiliated with any organizations that pay Canadian donors for plasma donations, nor do they have plans to purchase any of their raw plasma.

“However”—and this is where it gets interesting—“Canadian Blood Services has indicated that as part of operating a safe blood system, they need to ensure security of supply. Canadian Blood Services states that the prohibition on paying donors for plasma would deny patients access to plasma products, both in Canada and around the globe.”

I’m not a lawyer, but when I read this it makes me uncomfortable that Canadian Blood Services states that a prohibition on paying donors for plasma would deny patients access to plasma products, both here in Canada and around the globe. It feels to me that this means that Canadian Blood Services is sort of open to that idea, yet our bill makes an exception for them.

So here we are passing an act to ensure that blood and blood constituents are donated freely, but we use things like “blood donors should not be paid except in exceptional circumstances,” which, as I said, if you ask the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton to drive a truck through this, he can talk your ears off for at least a day as to what “exceptional circumstances” may mean. I should be more kind to my fellow NDP member. He can be very eloquent as to explaining to you what “exceptional circumstances” may mean.

Second, it exempts from the bill the Canadian Blood Services, which is on record as saying that it sees the prohibition as denying patient access to plasma products. This is worrisome to me. Why, after waiting all this time, do we have a bill in front of us that is still wishy-washy—more than wishy-washy—that still has places where you open the door to things that are not as clear as to what the intent of the bill is.

I have other little issues with the bill. I haven’t had my briefing on it yet, so maybe once I’m briefed on it I will understand it better. I try to read all of the bills that come to my portfolio. I’m getting a little bit better at it, but those things are still really hard to read, Mr. Speaker. They use language in there that, my God, it doesn’t matter if I read the French one or the English one, they are still hard to understand. From what I understand, before I have access to a briefing, there seems to be a portion of the bill that gives the minister access to personal health information. I want to know why we put

those powers in that bill. There may be a very good reason why they are there, but by just reading the bill, I don't know, so I'm a bit worried.

The other thing that worries me is that it is unclear whether the changes that are being proposed to the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act will have any broader implication other than what we're trying to do: to prevent a paid-plasma clinic from opening. This is what happens when a bill is in reaction to something that has already happened: You're only focused on that.

Do I want to hold this up? Absolutely not. I wanted it done in 2012, and the NDP is not going to hold this up now. At the same time, I see a bill that comes in front of us that opens doors to things that make me extremely uncomfortable. I don't understand why not—the time frame for this—I mean, the bill was introduced on Thursday. We got the actual copy to read it—I never actually got it until Monday when I came back. I tried to read it and understand; I haven't had time to be briefed. Maybe if I had had a briefing by the Ministry of Health and the lawyers and all of this, all of my fears would have been put aside and people could have explained to me, “Oh, no, no, no. You read this wrong. Here's how you're supposed to read this,” but none of this has happened, and here I am doing my lead on an issue that is very near and dear to me and to a lot of people who want the people of Ontario to continue to trust that our health care system will be there in their time of need, to trust that we have an excellent health care system that will help you get healthy again and that won't give you diseases that will make you sick or even kill you, like we have seen before.

**1750**

A few people have talked about how our voluntary system works well. I can tell you that there are three volunteers in the member from London West's riding who have made over a thousand donations. People are generous, and people are rolling up their sleeves for the right reasons.

There are a lot of Ontarians out there who would be willing to give plasma, if it was something that was available in their community—but right now it is not. I can speak for my community of Sudbury, where we used to have plasma collection and we don't anymore.

Is it time to make changes? Is it time to make sure that the full principles that the Krever inquiry has given us are actually put into place? I would say so. That would mean that Ontario would become self-sufficient.

I am convinced that the good people of Ontario have it in them. If we let them know that we need them, they will come to the rescue, and they will roll up their sleeves, even if they're very big needles, and they will make plasma donations.

The call and urgency for this has not been broadly known. Nobody knew that we were not self-sufficient. The minister and the critic for the PCs had made it clear that when it comes to actual plasma, we are self-sufficient. It's really on the manufactured side of plasma, whether it be medications, drugs or other things that we

rely on—basically, the States have the manufacturing side of those products. So make that clear.

Let's give us a goal that 100% of the plasma that is used by Ontarians—whether it be through a manufactured product or through direct plasma itself—comes from Ontarians. I think this is a challenge that Ontarians would rise to if we make it known and if we make it feasible and accessible for people to donate. Why is it that those companies are willing to invest millions of dollars to do this? There are people in Ontario who are willing to give. Let's give them the opportunity to give to the not-for-profit voluntary sector rather than the for-profit paid-donation sector. Let's close those new private ventures in our province, the quicker the better. Let's follow the lead of Quebec, who shut the door tight.

Is Bill 178 the way to shut the door tight? I hope so, Mr. Speaker, but I still have doubts. I have doubts that we are reacting to what this particular company, Canadian Plasma Resources, has put forward as the reason why they're allowed to operate—and that as soon as we close this loophole, they will have found another loophole as to why they are allowed to continue to operate. I don't want this to happen.

Ça me fait extrêmement plaisir de parler cet après-midi au sujet du projet de loi 178. Le projet de loi 178 s'appelle la Loi visant à assurer la gratuité du don de sang et de composants sanguins. Le projet de loi vise à s'assurer que le nouveau site d'une compagnie qui s'appelle Canadian Plasma Resources, qui a ouvert ici à Toronto sur la rue Adelaide, soit fermé au plus vite.

Le site qui vient d'ouvrir est une compagnie privée qui paie les donateurs. Donc, tous ceux qui se rendent là pour faire un don de plasma auront droit soit à une carte-cadeau ou un don fait à leur nom d'une valeur de 25 \$. Si on regarde ça, le plasma, les donateurs peuvent en faire un don à toutes les semaines. Donc, si tu regardes ça, pour quelqu'un qui y va régulièrement, ça veut dire près de 100 \$ par semaine, soit de cartes-cadeaux ou de dons faits en notre nom.

Le problème avec ce genre de choses-là, c'est que ça mine la confiance dans notre système de santé. On a vécu au travers du sang contaminé lorsqu'on a eu l'épidémie de VIH et de SIDA, ainsi que d'hépatite C, et on a vu l'effet que ça a eu sur notre système de santé. L'effet que ça a eu, c'est que les gens avaient perdu confiance dans notre système de collection de sang et refusaient cette partie-là du traitement. Donc, plutôt que d'avoir un plan de soins qui dit : « chirurgie, suivi de transfusion sanguine, etc. », les gens disaient « oui » à la chirurgie, « oui » aux soins et aux médicaments, mais « non » à la transfusion sanguine. Pourquoi? Bien, parce qu'ils avaient vu de leurs parents, de leurs amis et de leur famille recevoir du sang contaminé et eux-mêmes sont tombés sérieusement malades ou les gens qu'ils connaissaient ont été infectés du SIDA, du VIH ou de l'hépatite. Plusieurs de ces 30 000 personnes-là sont mortes. D'autres vivent encore avec des maladies chroniques sérieuses à cause qu'ils ont reçu du sang contaminé.

Donc, l'idée c'est vraiment de garantir la sécurité du système pour que lorsqu'on dit aux gens : « Bien, dans

ton plan de traitement, on doit te faire une transfusion, » qu'il n'y ait aucun doute dans leur esprit que le système sanguin est sécuritaire en Ontario, que tout a été fait pour le garder en sécurité et qu'il n'y ait pas ce doute-là, parce qu'une fois que tu introduis la notion du doute dans la qualité des soins, cela a des répercussions à n'en plus finir.

Ça fait depuis 2012 que Canadian Plasma Resources a dit au ministère de la Santé qu'ils avaient l'intention d'ouvrir une clinique privée, à profit, qui paierait pour les dons. Malheureusement, la ministre de la Santé a attendu après que la clinique soit ouverte avant de décider de nous présenter un projet de loi. Le projet de loi lui-même est réactionnaire. Il réagit aux raisons que la compagnie nous a données pour avoir le droit de travailler en Ontario. Ils disent qu'ils ont le droit de faire ça parce qu'ils ne sont pas couverts par la loi. La ministre de la Santé met des changements dans la loi pour s'assurer qu'ils n'auront pas le droit, mais j'ai des doutes.

Je me doute que ça, c'est la raison qu'ils nous ont donnée en ce moment, mais qu'est-ce qui peut nous convaincre qu'il n'y aura pas une autre raison la prochaine fois? Et là, on va se retrouver avec un autre projet de loi qu'on doit passer à toute vitesse.

Un projet de loi, ça ne se passe pas à toute vitesse, surtout un projet de loi qui a quand même des choses dedans qui sont un peu problématiques. Quand on dit des choses comme « Les donneurs de sang ne devraient pas

recevoir de paiement, sauf circonstances exceptionnelles », bien, c'est quoi les circonstances exceptionnelles? Pour moi et vous, monsieur le Président, ça veut probablement dire très peu de choses, mais pour un avocat bien payé, des « circonstances exceptionnelles » ça peut vouloir dire beaucoup, beaucoup de choses, beaucoup plus que ce qu'on pense. Donc, le projet de loi lui-même, j'ai des questions.

Je dois avouer par contre que je n'ai pas eu encore de brefage sur le projet de loi. Parfois, après le brefage, je suis capable de mieux comprendre les projets de loi. Ce n'est quand même pas facile à lire ces affaires-là, que ce soit en français ou en anglais. Peut-être qu'une fois qu'on me les aura expliquées, mes craintes vont s'atténuer, mais en ce moment, il y a des choses qui m'inquiètent dans le projet de loi et j'aimerais avoir le temps de le regarder en détail.

Vous voulez vous lever? You're looking to stand up, it looks like. Ça veut dire que je m'assoie? That means I sit down? OK. Je peux faire ça.

**Le Président suppléant (M. Ted Arnott):** Merci beaucoup.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

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Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
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Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
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<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
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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
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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	
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<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
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<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
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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	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<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>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<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
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

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
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**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
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**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
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**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
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**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely  
Teresa J. Armstrong, Steven Del Duca  
Bob Delaney, Frank Klees  
Jack MacLaren, Phil McNeely  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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 permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Donna H. Cansfield, Dipika Damerla  
Catherine Fife, John Fraser  
Monte Kwinter, Jane McKenna  
Rick Nicholls, Peter Tabuns  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**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 / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Developmental Services / Comité spécial des 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  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



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