



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 15 April 2015

Mercredi 15 avril 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

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

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

Index inquiries

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

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

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

Renseignements sur l'index

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

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 15 April 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 15 avril 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

POOLED REGISTERED PENSION
PLANS ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LES RÉGIMES
DE PENSION AGRÉÉS COLLECTIFS

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 14, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 57, Loi créant un cadre pour les régimes de pension agréés collectifs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Windsor West had the floor, completed, and we're now into questions and comments.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I very much look forward to the opportunity to speak on Bill 57, the pooled retirement pension plans. I think that this particular piece of legislation—and many who are listening out there will probably know these products as PRPPs. This discussion is very important in relation to the discussion around the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, the ORPP. I would argue to you, Speaker, that both of these things, the ORPP and the PRPPs, go hand in hand.

We need to ensure that Ontarians are saving more. I think one of the alarming statistics or data that we continue to see, not only just in relation to Ontarians but Canadians writ large, is that we're not saving enough. We're not putting enough aside as a future nest egg to be able to have a comfortable retirement and maintain our quality of life. So everything and anything the government can do to help assist people save is important. We have the RRSP system, which is voluntary in nature; so is the PRPP system. If this legislation is passed, it will be voluntary in nature.

But that's why the third piece, the ORPP, is extremely important in combination with the CPP, where we create that incentive for people to put some money aside as a safeguard that will allow people, Ontarians in particular, to retire with sufficient income that will ensure that they have a decent quality of life. This, I would argue, Speaker, is in the current framework and is absolutely an im-

portant issue that we need to deal with. I'm really proud that our government is taking a leadership role, not only in Ontario but in Canada, in making sure that we have secure retirement income for Ontarians.

I urge all members to support Bill 57.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Look, everybody deserves to retire with dignity. In this particular instance, Speaker, the expression that we've heard more than once is that we're using a sledgehammer to kill an ant, as some would say, in place of a flyswatter, perhaps. This is going after the 13% who desperately need our help, and I would agree wholeheartedly that we need to do something to help those 13% who need our help. But we're putting out here an overarching bill that will hurt the 87% to help the 13%.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and just about every association from the restaurant association to the construction association talk about how this will hurt business. Ninety-seven per cent of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is against this. The chamber of commerce already told us that Ontario's job market is in crisis. The government's own Ministry of Finance told us, quite clearly, how many thousands of jobs we are going to lose when this bill passes: 18,000 jobs for every \$2 billion taken out of the system. It could be 54,000 jobs.

As I said yesterday in question period, look around. Speaker, we can't afford to lose those 54,000 more jobs. Day after day after day, companies are leaving: 2,700 companies left Ontario last year—2,700 fewer companies here today than last year. We are in crisis and we can least afford to go down this path of an overarching ORPP.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Retirement for all Ontarians, for all Canadians, is an extremely important subject because when you come to the age that you're ready to retire, I think we all worry about, can we afford the cost of living? Part of that is good planning on an individual's part, but also a part of that is having the means to save, to plan for that retirement.

The CPP is a federal program, it's a good program and there were talks about enhancing that. That's probably the most efficient way of handling it to help people retire, not just for Ontarians but throughout Canada, because I'm sure that other people have the same challenges that we're facing here. But that didn't happen. The federal government has declined to enhance the CPP in order to

help everyday, hard-working Ontarians, and therefore other choices have to be made.

We have the RRSPs that people can access on their own, as they need or as they feel they can contribute to. We support the ORPP that the government has presented. We think it's a good initiative because it's a partnership: You've got employees participating and you have employers participating.

But in this case, Speaker, the PRPP—and the name of this bill really doesn't explain what it really is. It's a glorified RRSP. It's driven just by a worker's contribution, and it's not the solution to how people should be saving for their future retirement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? The member from—I always have trouble with this one.

Interjection: Newmarket—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Newmarket—Aurora.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand up and address the issue of Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act. I always like to take it back to some of the original issues, because there is a lot of rhetoric around what should be done and what needs to be done. I agree with members who say that Ontarians need to save more for our retirement. I think virtually everybody agrees with that. I'm concerned about my children and their retirement.

0910

But it's just not enough to say that Ontarians need to save for retirement. Ontarians need new vehicles so that they can save for their retirement, and the pooled registered pension plan is simply one of them. This is a new type of voluntary, tax-assisted, individual retirement savings vehicle administered by a licensed third party. They're really intended to make it easier to save for retirement by providing employees and self-employed individuals with additional savings vehicles that are low-cost—that's really achieved through its simple design and its economies of scale—professionally managed and portable from one workplace to another. In addition, they have a more favourable tax treatment than group Registered Retirement Savings Plans, so there are significant differences between those and traditional retirement savings plans.

PRPPs are intended to be particularly beneficial for small and medium-sized businesses that may not have the capacity to offer a more traditional pension plan, so the government is encouraging investment in voluntary retirement saving tools such as this one.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Windsor West has two minutes.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Yesterday, I had the pleasure of speaking to Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act. I had 20 minutes to share our concerns, on this side of the room, around the pooled registered pension plan. During my time, I also spoke about the plans that are offered through employers—so, those who work 20 or 30 years toward a pension and then we have these com-

panies that pack up and leave, and leave those employees without their retirement benefits.

My concern about these PRPPs is the security. If we have companies where people are working 20 or 30 years toward retirement and there's supposed to be a plan there for them when they retire, and those companies are able to pick up and move over to the States or to Mexico and not honour their commitments to provide a pension for their employees—my thinking is that this plan is very much the same. People who struggle to save for retirement are going to be putting money into this plan and essentially—the member from Newmarket—Aurora pointed out that this is a voluntary plan administered by a licensed third party. Those third parties actually charge exorbitant fees that cut into the savings these people have struggled to put into them for their retirement. So essentially, what they put in could be very different from what's available to them when they retire.

I'd like to address the fact that it's voluntary. I believe they, from the other side, mentioned yesterday that for 60 days it's not voluntary. For 60 days, employees have to pay into this. My concern is: At the end of the 60 days, are people going to remember to opt out? When they do decide to opt out, are they going to get that 60 days' worth of contributions back, or is that money they've now lost and don't have available to put away into a vehicle they would rather have when they retire?

I think these are concerns that need to be addressed from the other side.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: Good morning, Mr. Speaker—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): There seems to be a problem here. Are we okay?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I'm sorry. I've just been told I'm going to be sharing my time with—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I believe the member has already spoken on this, so we'll have to have someone else.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Sorry, the member will sit down. The member has spoken on this.

I recognize the member from Newmarket—Aurora.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to clarify that I'm going to be sharing my time with the member from Kitchener Centre, the minister responsible for seniors and the member from Ottawa—Orléans.

Interjections.

Mr. Chris Ballard: That was fairly easy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'm glad we're all having a wonderful group conversation. I'm having trouble even hearing the speaker.

Please go ahead.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll just reiterate what I said a few minutes ago: that I agree totally with what members before have said. Ontarians do need to save more for retirement. We're certainly not

doing enough of that. But at the same time, Ontarians recognize that they need different, new, less expensive saving vehicles, and pooled registered pension plans will give them that.

I just want to take the discussion back to some of the basics of the bill. Ontario introduced this legislation, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2014, to implement PRPPs in the province by December 8, 2014. As we've said—I want to take it back to some of the basics—PRPPs are a new type of voluntary, tax-assisted individual retirement savings vehicle. They're administered by licensed third-party administrators such as regulated financial institutions, with investments pooled to reduce costs and improve returns.

PRPPs are intended to make it easier to save for retirement by providing employees and self-employed individuals with additional savings vehicles that are low-cost. And they're low-cost because they are simple in design and through economies of scale, with individuals pooling their resources. They're professionally managed and portable from one workplace to another. That's critical, that they're portable from one workplace to another.

In addition, they have a more favourable tax treatment than group Registered Retirement Pension Plans, or RRSPs. PRPPs are intended to be particularly beneficial to small- and medium-sized businesses that may not have the capacity to offer traditional pension plans.

Encouraging investment in voluntary retirement savings tools such as the pooled registered pension plan is an important part of our strategy to make sure that Ontarians are able to save for their retirement, and that they have a variety of different vehicles—low-cost vehicles—in order to save for their retirement.

A bit of history about the PRPPs: After two years of federal-provincial-territorial collaboration in the development and the design of PRPPs, the federal government was the first to introduce a legislative framework for PRPPs, in December 2012. This framework applies to employees in federally regulated sectors such as banking, telecommunications and interprovincial transportation and the three territories. Legislation must be passed, however, in each province before PRPPs can be made available to individuals in provincially regulated sectors and self-employed individuals working in the province.

The federal government continues to advocate for provinces to introduce the necessary provincial PRPP legislation. When we look across the country, where are the other provinces and territories at with regard to implementing this very important legislation? British Columbia has the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act from May 2014; Alberta implemented the same act in May 2013; Saskatchewan has the Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Act, which received royal assent in May 2013; Nova Scotia has a similar act that was implemented in 2014; and in Quebec the Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans Act received royal assent in December 2013. Across British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia the legislation mirrors the federal PRPP Act so that provincial regulations come into effect before the legislation can come into force.

I will leave it there, Mr. Speaker, and turn the floor over to our member from—

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Chris Ballard:—Kitchener Centre. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I thank the member for doing my job there. I appreciate that. The member from Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Always happy to help, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very pleased to join the discussion today on Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act. Last year we informed Ontarians that this government is very much committed to addressing the retirement income crunch that many people are going to be facing in the future. That's why we are introducing this very innovative new strategy that's going to help people save for the future, save for their senior years.

PRPPs are a new type of voluntary, tax-assisted, individual retirement savings vehicle. And the reason why you see our government bringing this forward is to make it easier to save for retirement for employees and also for self-employed people—for that segment of the workforce that we often hear is unprepared for retirement.

This is an additional savings vehicle that is going to be low-cost. It's based on a very simple design model and it will be professionally managed. It's going to be portable, so if a worker moves from one job to another they can take the plan with them; it transfers, it's going to follow them to the next workplace.

The other advantage here is that PRPPs will have a more favourable tax status than group Registered Retirement Savings Plans, or RRSPs. PRPPs are designed to be of particular benefit for small and medium-sized businesses that oftentimes don't have the capacity and the wherewithal to offer a plan to their workers, the traditional type of pension plan you see in larger workplaces. PRPPs would be administered by licensed third-party administrators, such as financial institutions, which are regulated. These, of course, have their investments pooled to reduce costs and that improves returns.

0920

If you will remember, the 2014 budget and the fall economic statement stated that the government intended to move forward with the PRPP plan. The framework at the time, we noted, would be consistent with the model introduced by the federal government. We already see this being adopted in a number of provinces. You've already heard this mentioned by my colleague from Newmarket–Aurora.

On December 8, Ontario introduced legislation to implement PRPPs in this province. If this bill is passed by the Legislature, it would come into play once supporting regulations have been developed. It should be noted that as a voluntary retirement savings vehicle, the preferred approach is that PRPPs would not be considered a “comparable” workplace pension plan. That's in the context of the new Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, or the ORPP. People enrolled in a PRPP would not be exempt from

taking part in the ORPP. In December of this past year, Ontario released a consultation paper that looked at feedback on some key ORPP policy issues, including what constitutes a “comparable” workplace pension plan.

I touched earlier, Mr. Speaker, on the federal model and the framework provided to Canada’s provinces. The background on this is that after two years of federal, provincial and territorial talks, Ottawa did introduce a legislative framework for PRPPs, and that happened in December 2012. This framework also applies to workers in federally regulated sectors—telecommunications, banking and a few other areas, to name a few. It should be noted that legislation must be passed in each province before PRPPs can be made available to employees in provincially regulated sectors. That also applies to self-employed people working in our provinces.

You heard mention of how this is working in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Quebec. I want to mention that here in Ontario our framework is going to stress that it’s voluntary. It will be automatic enrolment. There will be licensing. Contribution rates are going to be looked at. The initial rates and increases to those rates would be set by the administrators. It will be locked in. You’ll see pooling of investments. And it will be low-cost.

This made-in-Ontario model is largely consistent with the approach that is being taken by other provinces. Encouraging people to invest in voluntary retirement savings tools such as the PRPP is a very important part of our strategy to help Ontario workers retire with greater financial security. By taking this action now, we’re going to strengthen retirement for Ontarians and support those who are most at risk of undersaving. Ultimately, it will protect our economy.

I now yield to my colleague from—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Ottawa—Orléans.

Ms. Daiene Vernile:—Ottawa—Orléans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Sorry; the minister responsible for seniors affairs.

Hon. Mario Sergio: Evidently this morning, Speaker, we have—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): There’s a little confusion today.

Hon. Mario Sergio: No, it’s quite all right. Actually, I was going to say—not wanting to do your job—that after me comes the member from Ottawa—Orléans.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this particular piece of legislation. I’m quite in agreement with my colleague the member from Nipissing when he says that seniors, when they reach a particular age, are entitled to live in dignity. I think this is really the core point of this piece of legislation. We all agree that when we reach retirement age we would like to retire and live in dignity. I think this is where we have to separate the two views, if you will.

If we can agree on that, then the next important question should then be, if something has to be done, how are

we going to do it? What is the best way of doing it? We have seen the, if you will, unwillingness of the federal government to make some improvements to the federal pension plan, so we said that unless we get co-operation, we’re going to go on our own and we’re going to do it ourselves. And we are on the way. So if nothing happens until then, Speaker, with respect to co-operation from the federal government, as of 2017, I believe, the plan will start to kick in.

We are kind of late, as a matter of fact, because we are not the only province willing to do this provincial retirement pension plan. I think we already have another five Canadian provinces, including Saskatchewan and Quebec, I believe. Let me read them to you, Speaker, because it’s important. We’re not the only one that is looking to make improvements to the provincial pension plan. British Columbia and Alberta have already done it, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Quebec—they have all passed legislation with respect to provincial pension plans.

I have to say that I don’t have to go very far away from my own riding, because my riding consists very highly of working-class people and has been like that for a heck of a long time. I have the pleasure of serving this House here as the minister responsible for seniors, and that affords me the opportunity to travel throughout Ontario. I have to tell you, Speaker, that the seniors in Hamilton, the seniors in York West, the ones in Kingston and Thunder Bay all want the same thing. If they don’t have that wonderful peace of mind that they’re comfortably enjoying their retirement years, it’s because in past years they didn’t work for a company that afforded them the possibility of a reasonable or good pension plan, or a pension plan at all.

So over tough years they had to raise a family and had to pay the mortgage. They didn’t have a pension plan and they didn’t make enough to put money aside. In other words, today they are living solely on the Canada Pension Plan. And it’s not easy; I don’t have to tell you. Every day utilities go up and taxes go up. House taxes, insurance, water rates, gas, electricity—everything is going up except the pension plan. It does not keep up with the expenses faced by our seniors today.

So when we are saying today that we have to prepare for the next generation, so that they don’t fall into the same situation that we are facing today—I think you and I are just about retirement age, Mr. Speaker. We know how it is. We start to think about it and say, “Will I be able to continue to live with the same standard of living that I’m living with today when I reach the age of 65 and beyond?”—providing that we will stay healthy. If we are not healthy after that time, it’s going to be even worse.

So that the legislation is on the road now, looking for consultation, I think speaks to the fact of, “Let’s work on it.” Let’s see how we can indeed do something so that our seniors of tomorrow will be enjoying the kind of retirement that the seniors of today would like to enjoy.

My time is up and I will have to give it to the member from Ottawa—Orléans.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Member from Ottawa—Orléans.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm very proud to stand up today, along with my colleagues, on Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, not only as someone who is concerned about the ability of Ontarians to save for the future, but as well as a former business owner who has experience and knowledge of this field.

The PRPP is a voluntary, tax-assisted, individual retirement savings vehicle that is administered by licensed third-party administrators, with investments pooled to reduce costs and improve returns.

As many of you know, our government is committed to helping people build up retirement security. Creating the PRPP will allow Ontarians to retire with dignity. We know that Ontarians are not saving enough, and we want to help everyone create retirement savings so that people can enjoy retirement and not worry about their old age income.

0930

The plan I ran on, which the people of the riding of Ottawa–Orléans supported, was a plan that got a resounding majority government elected. This plan was to help Ontarians save for retirement because the Canada Pension Plan is simply not enough anymore.

By establishing a pooling of retirement savings, we will give companies and individuals greater tools to help them save for the future.

While we hope that the federal government raises the CPP, we also have a mandate here in Ontario to care for Ontarians and their retirement savings. Our government will go about this through two vehicles: the ORPP and our pooled registered pension plan. We have consulted with businesses and stakeholders on the PRPP to ensure that we listened to their concerns, and have addressed all the impacts that Bill 57 will have on the business community.

Overwhelmingly, we have heard that the Canada Pension Plan is not enough. We know that we must have a CPP enhancement, but that simply isn't happening on Parliament Hill. That is why this government is bringing in Bill 57.

Workplace pension plans aren't as common as they used to be. There are many Ontarians who will work very hard and find out that they do not have enough to retire and enjoy those later years. Pooled pensions will be one of the tools to make up for the savings gap that has widened in the CPP and RRSPs. By creating a voluntary pension plan for employers and the self-employed, we can help more people save and more seniors retire with the money they need and deserve. We will help Ontarians prepare for their future retirement, something this government strongly believes in doing.

When it comes to knowing about seniors' care, I certainly understand a lot, or a little bit more, given my previous life as the owner of a retirement residence and having worked for 15 years with seniors. From my past experience, I saw first-hand the experiences of seniors and spoke with many families who told me about their worries about their own retirement savings.

After decades of hard work, the last thing a senior wants to do is to re-enter the workforce and continue to

worry about whether they will have enough for their old age. That time should be spent enjoying life with their family, with their grandchildren, and certainly not worrying about their retirement savings. That is why I urge all members of this House to support Bill 57: in order to help the people of this province have the greatest retirement future in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for this time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'm pleased to stand in the House today and speak to Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act.

We on the Progressive Conservative side are obviously opposed to the ORPP because it is being forced upon individuals and corporations. However, we are, in fact, in favour of the pooled registered pension plan, and one of the reasons why we're in favour of it is that it's not mandatory. It is not mandatory at all.

I would like to compliment our member from York–Simcoe, who introduced Bill 50 back in 2013. Of course, it died on the order paper at that point in time.

Again, the PCs have been at the forefront, advocating for such a pension plan. I'm very glad to see that the government is now realizing that, hey, maybe we do have a few good ideas over on this side of the House.

Again, when we take a look at pension plans and we take a look at options for employers and employees, all we have to do is refer to, for example, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce as well as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Unlike the government, many times, whereby they have not consulted adequately, these two organizations have consulted adequately and they have found that many employers, for example, are very much in favour of the PRPP, the pooled registered pension plan. They like it.

One of the other things that I also appreciate about this plan as opposed to the ORPP is that this particular act establishes rules respecting the entitlement of a surviving spouse when the holder of a PRPP dies. These funds are protected from creditors with a few exceptions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Pretty much everybody in Canada, except for the Harper Conservatives, seems to recognize that the best way to ensure the retirement security of Canadians is through the Canada Pension Plan, which is why there is such a push to enhance that plan. The reasons that the Canada Pension Plan is so effective are: because it is mandatory—all Canadians who are in the workplace must contribute; because the employer also contributes to the plan; and because it provides a guarantee of what kind of income Canadians can rely on when they retire. Finally, the Canada Pension Plan is a very efficient model of retirement security. Administration costs are 1% or less, and so this is one of the reasons that the Canada Pension Plan is highly regarded as the best vehicle to ensure that Canadians can retire with dignity and security.

Unfortunately, the PRPPs that have been proposed by the Liberal government have none of these characteristics. They are voluntary, there is no employer contribution, there is no guarantee of what kind of benefit people will receive when they retire—it will all depend on the vagaries of the market—and, finally, it is very inefficient. There are high administration fees that go along with enrolment in these plans, just like RRSPs.

The question is, why do we need this plan? We already know that Ontarians are not utilizing the kind of contribution room they have available to them in RRSPs. PRPPs will benefit only those who can afford to contribute, which is a very small number of people in this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bob Delaney: This particular act, Bill 57, is a measure that allows Ontario to implement a flawed federal proposal. This particular pooled registered pension plan is interesting; it's yet another tool for the wealthy to be able to accumulate things, but it just doesn't work for people in the early stages of their careers or in the middle stages of the careers. What we really need in this country is meaningful reform of the Canada Pension Plan.

The Canada Pension Plan is 50 years old. At the time the Canada Pension Plan came into being, the average age that a man lived was 68; the average age that a woman lived was about 74. Today, men and women are living an extra 15 years. So the reality is that what we really need is a program that's mandatory for both the employer and the employee that allows them to accumulate their savings throughout their working lives. We need a pension plan that's portable, that moves with the employee as he or she changes companies and changes careers. That's not in this pooled registered pension plan.

Yes, it's something we'll do so that Ontarians can offer it, but it's not the thing that we should have. What we should have is a meaningful reform of the Canada Pension Plan. That's the part that Canadians need. That's the tool that Canadians who were born in one province and work in another will need to move from province to province and to be portable.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Vote against it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Member from Lanark.

Mr. Bob Delaney: This thing is very nice, but it's yet another tool that people in the early stages of their careers can't afford, people in the middle stages of their careers spend their time chasing house prices and don't put money into, and people in the later stages of their careers say, "How come I never have anything? Because I didn't put anything in." So I'll vote for it, but we really need an improved CPP.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: The pooled registered pension plan is a very good idea. It was developed by our member from York-Simcoe and it's a well-thought-out plan that everybody in our party agrees with.

0940

We live in a democracy, and in this democracy freedom is the foundation of our government, of our democracy. This pooled registered pension plan provides the freedom to people, workers and employers, to choose to participate in this pension plan or not. And that is a wonderful thing, because not everybody's needs or wants for retirement are the same, nor are their ways to invest in retirement or secure retirement the same.

Some people do have the ability to save for themselves without government, believe it or not, and do quite well. This pension plan would give an employer the freedom to choose to be in or out himself, as well as the employee. So it could happen that an employer who didn't need a pension plan because he's done well in other ways could have it for his employees, and either contribute or not with the employees.

I think that freedom part is an essential part of what we need to respect here. The Ontario registered pension plan, which is the other one that comes from the Liberal government across the way, is mandatory. It requires a 1.9% charge to the employer as well as to the employee. It's a payroll tax. There is no freedom; there is no option. If they raise \$2 billion with this tax, it will cost us 18,000 jobs; that's what we are told by a study. That is not what is going to make Ontario prosperous or get us back on our feet. We need the flexibility and the freedom of a pooled registered pension plan like this one.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister has two minutes.

Hon. Mario Sergio: I want to thank all the members who made a contribution to the debate on second reading of Bill 57. I hope that the constructive arguments will complement the work that the Associate Minister of Finance, Mitzie Hunter, is doing. She is travelling throughout Ontario doing consultations, as of last December 1, on this particular piece of legislation. Minister Hunter has been travelling Ontario presenting the proposal, and she is getting all kinds of information from various stakeholders throughout our province. And that's the way it should be. We want to make sure that we get all the information, that we get everyone involved with respect to the legislation. We hope that when it comes finally to us, it can be presented in a much better form.

Let me say, Speaker, last night I was at a town hall meeting in my area. Two particular questions arose from the people who were in the room. One was about health care for seniors, if you will, and the other one was, how can we live on this measly pension plan that we have today? Somebody else rose and said, "How much would we be getting if we had this particular plan today?" I said, "Probably somewhere in the neighbourhood of doubling the present Canada Pension Plan." "Ah, that would have been much better than what we have today."

Speaker, I think this is the intent of what we are trying to do today: to make life better, retirement better, for our seniors when they reach that particular age. It isn't going to help you or me today, but it's going to help the grandchildren, our children, and we hope that they will save

some extra money so their life at retirement can be much better. This is the intent. I hope that we can support this, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I am happy to rise today to speak on Bill 57, pooled pension plans. My colleague from York–Simcoe introduced Bill 50 in 2013, so I am happy to see that the Liberal government has followed up on a program to support our stakeholders, our businesses, of this great province.

I heard a comment over here talking about Bill 57 and Bill 56, and why they came out at basically the same time. It really makes you wonder, was it Bill 56—the ORPP certainly has lot of contention in this province. A lot of our businesses—you could say all of our business associations have spoken against this. So Bill 57 is introduced—within sessional days of each other. You’ve just got to wonder, was it put out there for confusion or why all of a sudden? On one hand they’re talking about voluntary, on the other hand they talk about mandatory—

Interjection.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Of course, we have a comment from the member from Mississauga–Streetsville. I know we saw him saving last night at a hockey game. He talks about the trouble of saving and how a flawed plan—we wonder really why the Liberal government would be putting out a plan that they think is flawed. I guess it comes down to partisan lines where, sure, the Conservative government in Ottawa has allowed us to voluntarily put a network in place and most of the other provinces have jumped on the bandwagon. Finally, this government is coming through with something that allows people to save on their own. What’s wrong with saving on your own, putting your money where you want it?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Living within your means.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes, living within our means.

In 2012, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter to the then Minister of Finance Dwight Duncan, calling on the government to introduce and implement pooled registered pension plans. Also in 2012, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business also urged the government to move ahead on the PRPPs. The federal government passed legislation some time ago establishing the minimum standards that federal PRPPs would have to meet, as well as the administrators of such a plan. It was up to each province to follow up with their own PRPP-enabling legislation. Quebec has launched its version, the Voluntary Retirement Savings Plan, as well as BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Once again, this Liberal government is playing catch-up.

I believe the key elements of this plan is that they’re pooled, registered and voluntary. I think it’s very important that we have within this country a pension plan that’s portable. I think that’s one thing that this plan certainly allows. Gone are the days when people worked 35 or 40 years for a company. Companies come and go a lot more, especially under this government where we see payroll taxes go through the roof. All we’re seeing, because of

that, are companies moving south, and east and west, where costs are much more in line with the idea of being competitive.

Competitive goes along with voluntary. When people purchase products, people I know—especially when you’ve got a group of people living in rural areas, where farmers are a little bit close to their dollars—they look for a good deal. Fortunately, not that long ago you could find good deals in Ontario-made products. But now our employers are forced to pay exorbitant payroll taxes, something like the highest on the continent. Energy rates are the highest on the continent. If you look at property taxes, the province of Quebec is ahead of us, but the rest of the continent is less.

You can’t constantly expect our businesses—it’s like a candy dish. If you need more money, go to our businesses, because they’ll never leave. Well, they are leaving. We once had a great manufacturing base in Ontario. Actually, it was so good that it led our country. Now we’re sitting here with a manufacturing industry that’s just devastated, that’s gone, and this government is still trying to live as if they’re still there. But when the jobs left, the tax income left as well.

Back to this plan: The pooling allows for lower unit costs and easy access. Registering puts the money in your name. That is acknowledged as such under the law. The voluntary part allows businesses and employees to opt in and out, depending on the circumstances. When we talk about employees opting in but the businesses not—there are many people employed in this province, certainly many people we see in business, making well into the six-digit incomes. They may not have a pension plan, but they are expected to save on their own, and I think they’re very capable of doing so.

We look at some of the plans. Our RRSPs are very well participated in. Yes, there is room. But we also have other plans that are available, like the tax-free savings account. There are people who put money in there versus the RRSP because it makes more sense for them tax-wise. Because there’s room, that people have not accessed RRSPs—it may be because they’re using other plans or it may be that they decided to spend their money elsewhere and possibly purchase a car or a house. A house is considered a great savings plan. Our tax laws have been set up so that when you’re retiring, you downsize and you take that money from your residence. It allows you to put that into your retirement.

The voluntary part that allows businesses and employees to opt in and out is very different from what we see with Bill 56, the Ontario registered pension plan, where it’s mandatory for essentially all employers without a defined benefit pension plan to contribute.

0950

I believe the federal government has it right when they say that the time is not right to introduce a major payroll tax on business. They have not ruled this out. They even talked about enhancing the CPP when the economy will support it, and that’s not now. We’ve seen some rough horizons.

Unfortunately, with Ontario being a third of the population of this country, when it's not doing well, the country as a whole suffers. Whether our manufacturers and our employers can stand another payroll tax is very questionable. That's what I think the government is saying. But of course, this Liberal government is very short on money, and I think that's really the motivation behind this plan.

They're having a tough time, and we need to allow these businesses to recover so that they can once again start to expand, hire more employees and provide additional benefits, such as an employee pension plan.

Businesses and associations have expressed great concern over the details of the ORPP, and so I think that we need to look at what some of these concerns are. It's certainly not just my opinion but the sentiments of Ontario small businesses and associations, including hundreds of local chambers of commerce across the province that have created a coalition to deal with the proposed pension plan, the ORPP.

Between the red tape regulations and payroll taxes, the government seems to be on the lookout for ways to make running a business in this province more difficult.

We had the opportunity during break week last week to meet with two of the chambers in my riding. Both presented us with letters that they forwarded to this government with their strong opposition to Bill 56. They asked us to continue to take the message back that it is not good for business and not good for people with jobs. We're looking at 600,000 people who are unemployed today, who will not benefit from this plan. They're unemployed, so they don't contribute.

Because of this plan, we're looking at another 54,000 people who had the ability to save for their own retirement but, with this bill, will lose their jobs, so they won't benefit from this.

And now we're looking at a proposed carbon tax. I know their numbers show there are 5,000 jobs lost, but that's not a realistic number. We're probably looking at hundreds of thousands of jobs, as our neighbours and our competitors aren't looking at the same type of carbon tax—once again, making our employers more uncompetitive.

Climate change is something where we need to look at a coordinated effort. I know that the closing of the coal plants was a novel plan, but when you look at the time and energy we spent on closing five plants—1,200 around the world were opened. I mean, that's not a coordinated plan. That's money and resources—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order: the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: As is the rules of the House, I'd like the member to speak to the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Okay. I will give some leniency to the member from Stormont, but please try to come back to the bill within a reasonable amount of time, if you drift a little bit. Thanks.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you, Speaker. I guess I was just going on with the pension plan, Bill 56, that the

government has got, and how we see that as just further draining money away from the people who are out there, making choices on how they spend their money.

I grew up in an area where people—I guess I look at our ancestors, who fought long and hard in many wars to be able to have your choice of where you spent your money. That's why we're supporting this bill, the pooled pension plans, because it is voluntary and it doesn't put stress on people who can't afford, for a period of time, not to be contributing to a pension plan.

When I first got out of university and started working, I had what was considered a fairly good job at the time. I think I started out with \$13,000 a year in 1977, which was a better-than-average job at that time. I didn't put money into a registered pension plan at that time. I couldn't afford it. I was putting money into a registered home ownership plan that they had at that time. I tried to put money down, because I knew my next big investment would likely be a home, which it was.

And now this Bill 56 wouldn't allow me to do that. It would take money out of my pocket and my employer's pocket, which will probably end up being my pocket twice, and won't allow me, when it defers my ability to buy a home—and that home is going to be part of my retirement plan.

Again, it's voluntary. You feel good when you go out and you make some money and you can put it where you want. When the government is in your pocket all the time, it doesn't make you feel very good. I think that's one of the major instances of this.

We talked about the red tape regulations and payroll taxes. The government seems to be on the lookout for ways of running business out of this province. They're looking at energy costs and other initiatives that have deeply affected the way that our businesses are able to operate, if at all. The manufacturing sector is a perfect example of this, as many businesses are packing up and finding more affordable places to do business, or introducing layoffs, such as Caterpillar, Heinz, Stelco, Kellogg's, Kraft, John Deere, GM, Hershey's, Siemens, Campbell Soup, Sears, BlackBerry, Ford, General Mills and Unilever, just to mention a few.

I think the member for Nipissing talked about 2,700 companies that have left since this government came in. That's a trend that I would hope this government is starting to acknowledge and look at—and maybe go down to New York state and go down to Ohio and find out why they left. An exit plan is at least a plan. Find out why they're leaving. They're telling us and they're telling their employees as they lay them off that they just can't afford to do business in Ontario anymore. Those people would want to do business in Ontario because it's a great place to live. Unfortunately, when you can't meet the bottom line, you have no choice.

Recently, our finance critic from North Bay received a letter from a business that he was trying to help. I'll quote part of the letter:

"Thanks for all your help. In the end we decided to pack up and move to the States.

"It was not an easy decision but in the end it was too hard" for our companies to do business.

"Hopefully you can turn things around."

Those are some of the comments we—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Scarborough has just joined us and is really loud.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I go down to my local coffee shop on Saturday morning for local business, and sometimes I don't walk in to a very happy person. Every time you turn around, there's a new regulation, a new tax, a hydro bill. Of course, the comment: "You have to manage your hydro bill." Well, he's not able to turn off his fridges on a hot summer day. If he does, he loses everything. People in this province, unfortunately, like to shop during the warmest parts of the day, during daylight hours. You can't change that. Those are costs that they can't mitigate. They can't close up their freezers and say, "Come in at 2 in the morning because it's cheaper to operate."

You look at what we've lost and you can attribute most of it back to this government and its reckless policies. When business is struggling, government should be trying to create incentives for business—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Ahem. Continue.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you, Speaker. When business is struggling, the government should try to create incentives for businesses to stay in the province and thrive. Instead, the Liberals continue to make it difficult to do business in this province. We're looking at the highest energy rates on the continent, the highest payroll taxes on the continent and the second-highest property taxes. Yes, maybe they have the lowest combined corporate taxes, but you have to make a profit before you pay corporate taxes. For the most part, that's the trouble: They aren't making a profit.

We talked about our pension plans, and they depend on buying shares in profitable companies. Of course, it's lucky that we're now allowed to buy more and more shares in foreign companies, because it's harder and harder to find a profitable company, at least in Ontario, which has the majority of companies in this country.

The companies would be happy to pay corporate income taxes, but it would mean that they are paying all their bills, paying their fair share, and actually have something to show for it.

This reminds me of a funny story from back in the 1970s. Growing up in the 1960s on a farm, things weren't always all that great. For the most part, farmers didn't pay taxes. They would have liked to pay taxes, but they didn't make enough money. They worked long, hard days. There was lots of work. In the wintertime, they cut wood to burn because they didn't have money to buy oil.

1000

In the 1960s, supply management came in, so there was a little more money. I remember about a year after that came in, we bought a larger tractor. It allowed you,

of course, to do more things, and it allowed us to till the land—better crops, a little more money, and now farming is starting to be profitable.

So my uncle, the first year he had to pay income tax—it was a big joke around that somebody actually was rich enough that they had to pay tax. Ray was always kind of witty, so he walked in, and my dad, as he saw him coming up, was saying, "There's the big shot paying the income tax this year." He commented to Ray, and Ray looked at him and said, "For 60 years I've been wishing that someday I'd make enough money to pay tax, and today is the day, so I'm not complaining."

We've come a long way from those days. We've grown to a standard of living that I think we're generally happy with. We're the envy of the world. This government seems to want to take that away from us. And they're taking it away from us by—you know, the income is coming in, but it's going out as taxes. It's being wasted on things like gas plants. It's being wasted on smart meters. People have to pay for that.

So when we're looking at this pension plan, I wonder why they're putting this one out, because the other one is obviously there because they need the money. You look through the government's own literature on the ORPP; they're going to utilize those funds for infrastructure.

Last week, when I sat on the committee for the pension plan, I think it was OPSEU who came in. Their pension plan trust came in, and they were talking about how well they're doing and they were for this plan and they were a combined—not combined benefit but a combined contribution plan. They were saying they were averaging 9% on their return. That was just great. So I asked the question: "You look at this plan. It's going to require you to convert over to this bill. How would you feel? Do you think the government is going to get you 9%?" Are they going to invest in infrastructure and pay 9% back to this plan? Or are they going to likely be—since they're looking at their own benefit, likely to pay more what they can get in the banks, or in the open market, which is, when they're borrowing, somewhere like 2% or 3%.

That's the trouble: You've got two masters here. You got a pension plan that's going to collect money and the government saying they're going after the best return possible, but we're going to use that money for infrastructure, so we're not interested in paying a good return. That should be a big red light to a lot of people in Bill 56, what they're really doing. This is another way of getting some money to run this province, instead of being forthright in telling people where they are.

Next week, or in two weeks, we're going to see a budget come down. I guess it's going to include revenue flow from this Bill 56 because it's money that they can get their hands on, as it will with—they're looking at selling off Hydro One even though Hydro One owes more than it's actually worth. Again, that will be a bill that we'll have to pay through—the hydro rate fees will have to be raised to pay for this because obviously, if you take revenue away from them, they have to pay the debt. Unfortunately, that's one of the things we've seen as

we've seen billions and billions and billions of dollars wasted.

I encourage people to look at retirement. I worry about the plans that we have, whether people can afford it. I don't see Bill 56 helping them because the money is going to go in and it's going to be siphoned off. Hopefully, a government in the future, maybe a PC government, will be able to return the economy so we can pay those bills off in the future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'll take a different tack than the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. This Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, I see as benefiting insurance companies and bankers. I have nothing against bankers. I guess I'm like Stephen Leacock: "When I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me...."

But more than anything, I get really, really, really rattled when I pick up a copy of the *Globe and Mail* and I see what the banks are paying out in pension money to the senior executives. The Bank of Nova Scotia: Richard Waugh—however you pronounce it—in 2013, retired with \$2 million a year in a pension. Wouldn't I like to have that? The Royal Bank: Gordon Nixon, \$1.75 million in an annual pension. The Bank of Montreal: Bill Downe, \$1 million, but—guess what?—in American funds. Somebody was thinking ahead on that one.

To the Liberals' favourite banker, from the Toronto-Dominion Bank, Ed Clark: He retires on \$2.5 million a year. Here's a guy we all read about, we all hear about, making decisions that are going to affect each and every one of us in Ontario. He's making \$2.5 million a year in a pension. He's telling you guys to bring in a pooled plan. His bank, all banks, all insurance companies, are going to make huge profits selling these things, making commissions, charging fees. The rest of us are paying for the bankers' pensions. There's something wrong with this picture.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'm not sure I'm going to top that, Speaker. I'm not even going to try.

A couple of minutes' comments here from my friend from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry: It's debates like this that really show the difference between that particular side of the House and this side of the House—a big difference. They'll say to the public, "I have a pension or I don't have a pension, but you're on your own. Just look after yourself."

Speaker, let me tell you, I've been self-employed all my life and I didn't do very well. I consider myself probably a typical Canadian. I didn't put any money aside because times were tough.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Because you're a Liberal.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Times were tough, Speaker. I'm proud to be a Liberal; very proud.

I do have the Canada Pension Plan, and that's because that's something that was a structure in place. We con-

tributed on a regular basis. I probably would have contributed to another pension plan if the opportunity was there. It wasn't.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Are we going to have to pass the hat for you, Lou?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Thank you. I appreciate it.

Here is an opportunity. Regardless of which way we go, we're trying to help Canadians, Ontarians—Ontarians, in this case—live a better life when they retire. I'm going to be honest. When I lost the election in 2011, I had to look at things: Where do I go from here? I would have survived, but I had nothing secure.

I guess I would say to my friends on the other side: We're all Canadians and we're all Ontarians, and it's nice to look after our fellow Ontarians. Unfortunately, you don't look at it that way, and it's a sad day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's a pleasure to join the debate, listening to the member from Northumberland–Quinte West saying how he was self-employed all those years and never saved any money. Of course, that's the typical Liberal way, to spend, spend, spend and never save anything. I can understand why they're all into mandatory pensions.

It was interesting in this debate when I listened to the Liberal House leader, Mr. Naqvi, talking in glowing terms of this bill—and I'm supportive of this bill and our party is supportive of it—and saying that it was a necessary leg into the pension formula. Then the member immediately behind him, the member from Mississauga–Streetsville, said it was purposely faulty legislation and he just was totally denigrating of this bill. So I don't know what's happening over on the Liberal side of the benches, but they certainly are in a state of fumbling and confusion on this bill.

I would say this: If this Liberal government was indeed focused and interested in people having a good retirement and security in their retirement, maybe they should start looking at how much money they're taking out of people's pockets on a continuing basis: the carbon tax, the WSIB, the HST, the DRC, the eco fees, the increases in licence fees, and on and on and on. They're reaping money out of hard-working people and putting them into a destitute position in this province. Then they come up and say, "We will allow you to pool your pensions."

I'll tell you what: There's nothing left. You've taken it all from them in the first place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the people I represent in London West, because this issue is critically important to my community. There was a Vital Signs report that was released earlier in the fall by London Community Foundation. It found a 300% increase in the poverty rate for seniors in my community between 2010 and 2011, which is the latest data that's available from Statistics Canada. So poverty is growing in London among the senior community.

Who are these seniors who are living in poverty? Most of them are women. I think it's time that we in this Legislature put a gender lens on this debate about PRPPs and who is benefiting and who is not benefiting from this legislation.

The Liberal government talks about gender-based analysis, talks about its commitment to a gender lens. If they were serious about applying a gender lens to the issue of women living in poverty in their senior years, they would not be advancing this idea of a PRPP. They would be looking to address some of the systemic issues that cause senior women to live in poverty when they retire.

Senior women are twice as likely to live in poverty as senior men, and this is particularly the case if they are single—and we know that women live longer than men, so they are quite likely to live out their years unattached, living in lone households. Almost one third of elderly women who are living on their own are living below the poverty line.

Women are much more likely than men to rely on income security programs like OAS and GIS. They're not out there buying PRPPs or RRSPs, because of the history, the systemic barriers that they have experienced in their participation in the labour market.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry has two minutes.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you to the speakers from Windsor–Tecumseh, Northumberland–Quinte West, Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington and London West.

The member from Northumberland–Quinte West talked about being proud to be a Liberal. I know a lot of people last weekend came up and said, "I used to be a Liberal." They said, "I just can't figure out how anybody today, after what's happened, would feel good saying they voted Liberal." That says something to what this government has done over the last number of years.

The member from London West has a great point: We're talking about a bill that does not help the 13% of the people who need help, because they don't have jobs. They won't get any benefit from this, because they don't have the money to put in. You should be targeting the people who need help, instead of a scattergun approach that only takes money out of people's pockets.

When you're looking at Bill 56, it's really all about, how can this government get its hands on our money without people really knowing they're doing it?

I tell people that you're talking about collecting pension money and then having the government use it for infrastructure, and what are they going to pay you for a return? Are they going to pay the 9% that OPSEU was very proud about getting? I don't think so.

My company had a defined contribution plan, and I think our pension did quite well. It's something; it's not like in the public service. It's half of what my wife's teacher's pension plan will be—less than half—but it's still a pension plan that's there and it's good enough,

when I've added the other options I had voluntarily, to do something with.

But this plan is going to take the money and then in 30 or 40 years, when we have to start paying out, it will be all of a sudden, "Oh, my God, look at the debt that is in the pension plan"—another debt.

Anyway, thank you, Speaker. I think it's something we should be cautious about.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming students from the PC campus associations of Trent University and Ryerson University today. Rebecca Hubble, Corey Le Blanc, Phil Menecola, Jaskaran Malhi, Alexander Walsh, Zachary Cocek, Evan Kennedy and Callum Haney are with us here.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure to welcome and acknowledge the president of CUPE Ontario, Fred Hahn, and his assistant, Wynne Hartviksen, here in the gallery for today's question period. Welcome. Enjoy.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to welcome the family of Colin Bryan, who is a page captain today: his mother, Nicole Cooper; grandmother, Nancy Cooper; brother, Jack Bryan; and sister, Claire Bryan. They're with us this morning to watch the proceedings.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's a pleasure to welcome the past president of the Ontario Dental Association, Dr. Rick Caldwell. Rick, if you wouldn't mind standing up. He was the first star last night in the Ontario Legiskaters game against the ODA, the starting goaltender in an 8-6 win for the dentists, but we will get you next year, Rick.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: With thanks to my colleague from London–Fanshawe, who provided me with the names of folks who are here with the Parkinson Society today: Jared Zaifman, John Parkhurst and Stan Marshall, who are here today. I met them.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted: We have at least three Londoners in the gallery today. Councillor Jared Zaifman, who has recently been elected to city council, is here with the Parkinson Society; Dr. Peter Fendrich, a friend and a dentist in London; and Dr. Jack McLister, another constituent of mine and the incoming president of the Ontario Dental Association.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to introduce Dr. Dave Jones, who's here from Thames Centre today. He was an excellent dentist. He's here to tell us about how we can improve dentistry throughout Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Windsor–Tecumseh, as long as he doesn't step on my introductions.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good morning, Speaker; thank you. I'd like to introduce a friend of mine from the town

of Tecumseh. Dr. Charles Frank is here today. Charles is a member of the Ontario Dental Association's executive.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It is a pleasure for me to introduce, from the Parkinson Society of Ontario, one of my constituents, Mr. Lloyd Cohen, and also Mr. Alan Muir. I had the great pleasure of meeting them this morning.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to introduce, in the gallery, Jack and Stella Pulkinghorn, who are the recipients of an MPP luncheon at Queen's Park. We're happy to have them here. Jack and Stella, please stand.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I hope everyone will join me in welcoming Dr. Kerr Banduk, a dentist from Kitchener-Waterloo, who's here today with the Ontario Dental Association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bob Delaney: I'm pleased to welcome a friend of mine—whom the Speaker will introduce by title very shortly—making his first visit to Queen's Park: Mr. Mauricio Toussaint.

I see, over in the west members' gallery, two dentist friends of mine: Dr. Pravir Patel and Dr. Lisa Bentley. Welcome.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I think a lot of you know that my granddaughter, Madison Rynard, is a page here. But joining us today is her dad, Derek Rynard; his partner, Kristian Dunkin; and a business partner, Julian Stourton, who is here from Switzerland and doing business in Toronto.

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a very special guest today. She's a student in my riding at St. Thomas More. I'd like to welcome Danielle Kydd.

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to wish a happy birthday to someone very special who's with us in the chamber today: my niece Alexandra Oakes, who also happens to be the Minister of Northern Development and Mines' legislative assistant. Again, I'd like to wish her a happy birthday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Perth-Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Me?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Yes. Perth-Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm sorry, Speaker.

I'd like to introduce Dr. Blake Clemes. He's with the Ontario Dental Association, and he's from my riding of Perth-Wellington.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): My intention is to get everybody in, so if we do this quickly, we'll take care of everyone's introductions.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'd like to welcome Dr. Visconti, a dentist from Timmins.

Hon. Bill Mauro: A very special guest for me is here today in the east members' gallery: My son Dustin Mauro is here visiting from Thunder Bay.

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's my pleasure to welcome Dr. David Stevenson here to the gallery today. Of course, David is a fine dentist in Carleton Place and plays on the—he beat us last night in that hockey game. But he's a great dentist anyway.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm glad to hear that the announcement is that the dentists didn't have to do any work after the hockey game.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have three guests today. I'd like to introduce Ryan Tripp. He is previously from my riding, in Levack, but he now lives in Muskoka. He is with the Parkinson Society of Ontario. He's actually an ambassador for the World Parkinson Congress coming up.

Debbie Davis is the CEO of the Parkinson Society. As well, A.B. Rustin is a board member with the Parkinson Society. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'd like to welcome to the gallery today a wonderful dentist in my riding, Dr. Waji Khan. Welcome.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to introduce my co-op student from Thornlea high school, Alex Dover—Alex, give us a little wave—and two interns from CJPAC, Willem Hart from my riding, and his friend Andrew Vittas. Nice to see you.

Today I'm expecting some dentists as well. From my executive, I have Dr. Bruce Rubin, and then there's his colleague Dr. Homa Jammehdiabadi, and Mr. Tom Magyarody.

Mr. Bob Delaney: I'm also pleased to welcome my own dentist, Dr. Steve Lipinski, and, as well, Dr. Larry Tenaschuk, who are here in the east members' gallery.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Speaker, please join me in welcoming Dr. Lisa Bentley from the Ontario Dental Association.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'd like to introduce Dr. David Brown, an orthodontist from Newmarket, in my riding, here today with the ODA.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'd like to welcome to the Ontario Legislature a long-time friend of mine and a heck of a ball player, Dr. Art Worth from Chatham-Kent. He's also a former president of the ODA.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I'd like to introduce Dr. Pravir Patel, who's from my riding of Brampton-Springdale.

Ms. Soo Wong: I have a couple of guests I want to introduce. First, on behalf of the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade: The page captain today is Jae Min Han. His parents are here today: Heather Kang and Matthew Han. They're in the public gallery. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park, as well as Dr. Raffy Chouljian, who is my constituent in Scarborough-Agincourt. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: It's my pleasure to welcome and acknowledge two dentists with the Ontario Dental Association, from Halton and Oakville. Here today, as you heard earlier, is Dr. Larry Tenaschuk, and also Dr. Kelvin Fung. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to welcome Dr. Roger Howard, who is in the members' gallery. He's a dentist from my riding of Ottawa South.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I also want to recognize my good friend Fred Hahn, who's here in the gallery from CUPE Ontario. I've never seen Fred wear a tie before; I never

knew he could pass for a banker, ever. And also, Wynne Hartviksen: Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Mike Colle: I'd like to welcome one of my local dentists, Dr. Sara Werb, to Queen's Park. She's a member of the Ontario Dental Association.

1040

Hon. James J. Bradley: I'd like to welcome Dr. Ivan Hrabowsky from the city of St. Catharines—a long-time dentist and a proud member of the ODA.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We could actually do this instead of question period, if you want.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That wasn't a unanimous consent.

We have with us today, in the Speaker's gallery, the Consul General of Mexico in Toronto, Mr. Mauricio Toussaint. We welcome you to your posting. Thank you for being here with us.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HOME CARE

Ms. Christine Elliott: My question is to the Premier. Premier, approximately 350,000 people over the age of 65 are currently receiving home care services in Ontario, which of course keeps them out of hospital. Health care providers, stakeholders and, most importantly, patients and their families, however, have told you that our home care system is broken. As it stands, home care services in Ontario are inadequate and inconsistent at best, and with an aging population and your fiscal mismanagement, nobody believes that the system will be equipped to handle future need.

Service quality and accessibility continues to deteriorate. Premier, how much longer do seniors and their families have to wait for you to make the necessary changes to our home care system?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is going to want to comment on specifics, but I want to just say to the member opposite, as I have said many times in this House, that we are in a transition period. There's no doubt about that. The way health care has been delivered in the past—in the face of an aging demographic and different demands from people in terms of the kind of care they want and where they want it, there have to be changes made.

One of the reasons that we put money in last year's budget to increase the wages of personal support workers was exactly the reason the member opposite is talking about: We need a more stable sector. We need that part of the health care workforce to have more reliable income and to have enough hours and enough stability in their job to be able to do the job.

I will note that the member opposite never supported any of those initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Christine Elliott: Premier, the fact of the matter is, our population is aging rapidly. Your lead expert, Gail Donner, the former dean of nursing at the University of Toronto, said in her recent report *Bringing Care Home*, "Everyone ... is frustrated with a system that fails to meet the needs of clients and families ... no one thinks the status quo is an option."

This frustration is being felt by the 75-year-old who cannot get a personal support worker following a hip replacement. This frustration is felt by a daughter trying to get physiotherapy for her father who recently suffered a stroke. This frustration is being felt by the thousands of people who cannot get the home care services that they need because of your inaction and the web of bureaucracy that your government has created. Premier, why do you continue to fail these families?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, again, let me just say that one of the reasons we put money into the budget last year to increase personal support worker salaries and one of the reasons we put \$270 million more into the budget for home care is because we know that we're in a transition and we need to make those changes. So we will continue to make changes.

I would note that the member opposite, who is in the middle of a leadership race, has said that she will cut a billion dollars out of the budget. That means public services would have to be cut. That means health care costs would have to go down, Mr. Speaker. I just think the member needs to recognize that she can't have it both ways.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. I would appreciate quiet when a question is put and quiet when an answer is put.

Wrap up.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I just want to say, you can't have it both ways. You can't, on the one hand, say there needs to be more change and more investment and, on the other hand, say you're going to make a tax cut that will take a billion dollars out of the system.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe North will come to order, and the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound will come to order.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Christine Elliott: Speaker, I would appreciate if the Premier would stop trying to put words in my mouth that I never said.

However, the Premier's own expert panel has highlighted that the two biggest issues with our home care system are excessive bureaucracy and a lack of accountability for system outcomes. Premier, this is nothing new. You've heard this for years and years from experts, stakeholders and, most importantly, from patients and their families, yet you continue to ignore the obvious.

Premier, the PC caucus has so far given you two ideas that you could put into a responsible budget. Our third ask is quite simple: Will you follow the recommendations of the Donner report, which you have endorsed? Will you make the functional changes to our system that we need in order to improve patient care? Will you tie funding to the community care access centres so that we can have improved outcomes and patient results? Will you do that, Premier?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We are doing all of those things. We are increasing our investments in home and community care: \$270 million this year and approximately the same amount next year in addition and the third year as well. That's precisely why we had Gail Donner and a team of experts come together. They presented their report to me at the end of January.

We have endorsed their recommendations. I have endorsed their recommendations on behalf of the government and indicated that it will guide our decisions moving forward. I'm working hard with the ministry right now as we speak to actually put the changes in place which will further strengthen the home and community care that we provide to all Ontarians, including our seniors.

But we've done many other things in the past several years. We've increased our investments in physiotherapy, where 200,000 more seniors are getting physiotherapy or exercise services. We're increasing investments through a whole variety of areas to actually make sure that seniors—

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Two weeks ago, Minister, I raised the issue of debt at the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. The OEFC has \$27 billion in outstanding debt largely paid for by Hydro One revenue—revenue that will be lost if you sell Hydro One.

But Minister, there's a larger problem here than just a loss of revenue. The entire value of Hydro One is already mortgaged to the OEFC. All \$16 billion of Hydro One's value has already been claimed by the OEFC to pay down its debt. That's why the law requires that all sale proceeds from any share of Hydro One must go to pay down the electricity debt.

Minister, how can you sell any part of Hydro One given that it is already fully mortgaged?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The reason that Ontarians are still paying for stranded debt is because of the mess that

the PC government put us in. We have been open and transparent in getting—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we've been very open and transparent about getting it reduced. As a result we have been reducing the stranded debt—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm prepared to get my exercise.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Please finish.

Hon. Charles Sousa: As a result of the work that Ontarians have been doing in getting it reduced, and as we have said and as we have outlined every year in our fall economic statement and in our budget, we've detailed how that's being done. We have committed by the end of this year to remove the residual stranded debt fees paid by residential users by the end of this year, and so we'll continue.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Minister of Energy or whatever minister wants to start telling the truth over there—

Interjections.

1050

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Withdraw.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again, to the Minister of Energy: When you sell your house and it's mortgaged to the bank, you can't pocket the sale price and refuse to pay off the mortgage. If you did that, you'd be charged with fraud. Any profit from a sale of Hydro One has already been mortgaged. That profit is owed to the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp.—Hydro One's banker.

Minister, your government keeps talking about unlocking the value of government assets—

Hon. Michael Coteau: Like the 407.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Will you finally admit that all of the value in Hydro One, the biggest asset you plan on putting on the auction block, is completely mortgaged already to the OEFC? It's already spoken for, Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, the leftover of Ontario Hydro is OEFC. What did the PCs leave OEFC? Debt. That's all that has been left over.

As a result, we have been taking steps to remove that debt from the ratepayer. In fact, the approach has been working. Last year, there was about \$1.5 billion in further reduction of stranded debt. This is the 10th consecutive year that stranded debt has been reduced—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carry on, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: And over the last number of years, it has gone down by \$10.8 billion. But Mr. Speaker, the reason stranded debt had even gone up and the residual portion of stranded debt went up is because they themselves artificially froze the rates because they went up by 30%, which caused the residual stranded debt to go up even higher. We're taking corrective action to make sure that it gets removed from the system.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: You need a real good briefing on the history of hydro in this province because you don't know what you're talking about.

There was \$38 billion. The reason I broke up hydro is that it had \$38 billion in debt, Minister, and we couldn't continue to go that way. We got that debt down to a residual stranded debt of \$7.8 billion.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Eglinton–Lawrence, come to order—second time.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I don't know how in the world you guys, over 12 years, brought it back up to \$27 billion, but I'm bloody well going to find out one of these days. We've asked the auditor to look into that, and we're going to find out. I suspect a lot of it is your high-priced windmills and your Green Energy Act, which is driving jobs out of the province and prices up.

So, Minister, will you finally tell—be honest with the people of Ontario: What are you going to do with the \$27 billion in debt? Are you going to leave it for the rate-payers and taxpayers of the future to pay for? That will mean skyrocketing hydro rates again—

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

Interjections.

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

Start the clock.

Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact and I am glad that the member opposite has admitted that he left such a substantial debt at the OEFC as a result of the mess that they put forward.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Sarnia–Lambton will come to order. I'm going to fast-track the names that I take.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Including anyone interjecting while I'm speaking.

Please finish.

Hon. Charles Sousa: During those days, when the economy was actually prospering, not only they did they try and mess up the hydro deal—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order—second time.

Hon. Charles Sousa: —they messed up the sale of the 407 and still left a deficit of \$5.6 billion in our coffers, which we had to correct since going forward.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario government—

Interjections.

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. In 2003, when the Premier first won her seat, her leader, Dalton McGuinty, took a progressive stand, calling the sale of Hydro One “a disaster for consumers.” More than a decade later, the Liberals have made a sharp turn to the right. Now they're the ones planning to privatize Hydro One.

My question is: Who is the right-wing ideologue in the Liberal cabinet that is pushing to privatize Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would just remind the leader of the third party first of all of the reason that we undertook a review of the assets. The sole reason that we wanted to do that is that we knew that investing in new assets, investing in new infrastructure—transit, roads, bridges—around the province is necessary in order for our economy to thrive.

I would say secondly that the leader of the third party took a look at what we said we were going to do and then ran on it, because part of her fiscal assumptions, part of her investment assumptions in her platform were exactly the assumptions that were in our budget and our platform.

I would say to the leader of the third party, we are now executing that review because we know that making the investments that we committed to is necessary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The decision to privatize Hydro One marks a hard right turn. The Premier has made a right turn that is so hard, she's now got her back to Ontarians.

The Premier must know deep down that privatizing Hydro One is a short-sighted—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. It goes both ways.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: However, after more than 10 years of taking the progressive position that Hydro One should remain in public hands, the Liberals have decided it's time for them to privatize even more of our hydro system than Mike Harris and Ernie Eves managed to.

Will the Premier tell Ontarians what's behind her sharp right turn towards privatization?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I completely understand why the leader of the third party would want to get into an ideological debate right now, because it's necessary for her to reposition herself as a progressive. She lost that brand completely when she decided not to support a budget that was going to invest in the people and the infrastructure of this province.

Having not governed ideologically, I have never suggested that ideology or polling is the way that I would

govern. I made practical decisions, and we put those into our budget and we put those into our platform. At this point, what I will say to the leader of the third party is that we're sticking to those decisions that we made. We're sticking to those practical solutions to the problems that are confronting us as an economy and as a province right now.

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This Premier has insisted over and over again that she is leading the most progressive government since the dawn of humanity, yet she is turning harder right than Ernie Eves and Mike Harris. Even Ernie Eves backed off the plan to sell off Hydro One.

Can the Premier square that circle for us today? Can she explain how going further right than Ernie Eves and Mike Harris is possibly in any way progressive and what she claims to be a progressive direction that the Liberals are supposed to have taken?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I would just say to the leader of the third party that she is a member of this Legislature, along with her caucus, who didn't support a minimum wage hike, who didn't support our pension plan, who in fact, as recently as the last couple of days, can't actually decide whether she supports fighting climate change or not.

I would say to the leader of the third party, if you want to look at practical solutions, that's great. But if you want to have a conversation about ideology, you're going to be on the losing end of that every time.

Interjections.

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. You know, I wouldn't be surprised if Ontarians are getting déjà vu all over again. Their government has made a right-wing decision to sell Hydro One. They were never consulted about that decision and they were never asked whether they wanted higher hydro bills and the loss of a very strategic asset that belongs to them. Now, according to CUPE and some legal experts, the Premier's plan might not even be legal. It is 2002 all over again.

How did the Premier lose her way?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, Mr. Speaker, I say to the leader of the third party that I understand why she's trying to find her way, because the initiatives that we've taken on this side of the House to invest in infrastructure, to put in place a retirement pension plan, to move on climate change—I know that waffling on those and not having a position on those has been very painful for her.

1100

What I will say to her is that we ran on the necessity to review the assets of this province, to ensure that we can invest in new assets. We are taking a practical approach

to that. Ed Clark is bringing out the details shortly. He will be talking about how we can approach these things in a way that will preserve the interests of the people of Ontario, that will preserve ownership and will preserve the interests in terms of regulatory and price control.

The leader of the third party hasn't seen those details. We'll wait until the details are out, and then she can comment.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I think it's important to talk to Ontarians for a minute. The Liberal government—the Premier—is planning to sell off your Hydro One. It's going to mean that your electricity bills are going to go up.

It's very possible, according to legal experts, that in fact her plan is not even legal here in the province of Ontario. Once we privatize Hydro One—let's not forget—there are no do-overs; there are no mulligans. That is going to be a situation that we can never take back. Hydro One—your Hydro One—will be gone forever. It's a bad deal for every single Ontarian.

Can the Premier tell the people of Ontario how it is that she is going to be ramming this bad deal down the throats of Ontarians without even once asking them what they think about this idea?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: First of all, the leader of the third party has absolutely no idea what we are going to do. She has no details, because those announcements have not been made. Ed Clark and his group of experts are going to be bringing forward a report, and we will, at that point, have that discussion.

But I will say to the member opposite—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm hearing a familiar voice that I can't quite see, and I know that if I could find him, he would know that I would tell him to come to order.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'll say to the member opposite that she has put forward no plan to make the investments that we know are necessary in this province. She has come forward with no practical solutions to the infrastructure deficit that we're facing. She has no plan for how we can build the roads and the bridges and the infrastructure and the transit that we need in this province if our economy is going to thrive—

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the Premier was first elected on a plan to keep Hydro One in public hands. She knows that selling Hydro One will mean a disaster for consumers. She knows this fundamentally. She knows that what she is doing might not even be legal. She knows that it's a short-term decision that will have long-term aftershocks for people and businesses across Ontario, not only soon but for generations to come.

Worst of all, the Premier has never asked Ontarians, not once, what they think about this plan, and now she's treating it like it's a done deal.

Will the Premier shut down the right-wing ideologues who are driving this and do the right thing for Ontarians?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I do not believe—nor does anyone who has looked at the economy of Ontario, nor do people who are looking to invest in Ontario—unless we invest in infrastructure in this province, that we will be able to compete in the 21st century. We're just not going to be able to. And so in our platform when we ran, we said that we are going to look at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario and we are going to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Maybe I should stay standing all the time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We are going to ask people with experience to look at those assets and to work with us, to optimize the value of those assets, so that we can invest in the infrastructure and the assets that are needed for the 21st century.

What we're not going to do is sell off, the way the 407 was sold off, so that there would be no future return—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound is warned.

Your time is up. New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Michael Harris: Speaker, I have a question to the Premier: Premier, just 10 months ago, you told Ontarians very clearly that a carbon tax wasn't in your plan. Then, just this week, you introduced a carbon pricing scheme that you yourself admitted was a tax on everything. Now Ontario's independent petroleum marketers are sounding the alarm bell that the impact of your carbon tax will actually drive up prices at the pump much higher than you've claimed.

You clearly know the impact of your scheme, but you've told Ontarians they must wait another six months for the details.

Premier, why do you think that Ontarians don't deserve to have the truth about your job-killing carbon tax today?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I wish that more members of this Legislature had had the opportunity to be with the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and I in Quebec over the last couple of days, because had they been there, they would have heard leaders from across this country, from every province—with the exception of Alberta and PEI, because they're in elections—from all party stripes, saying that it is critical that we move now, Mr. Speaker. It is important that we move to do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And it's critical not for political reasons, not for partisan reasons; it's for the future of the planet, it's for the future of our children and

our grandchildren, to make sure that we have a sustainable economy and a sustainable environment going forward. That's what this is about.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Harris: Back to the Premier: Premier, you know it's not about the environment. It's really about the money.

No one believes you anymore, Premier. You say a carbon tax is not in your plan, then we find out it is. You've rolled out the bait and switch that the tax will be reinvested in transit, when other reports indicate that you've not determined whether it will actually flow into general revenues.

Premier, you can't tell us where the money is going because you're making it up as you go. You can't tell us the cost because you have no idea of the cost—to motorists, to industry, to consumers. You just know that after driving us into debt, this is your ticket to raise revenue—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I need to hear it as much as I need to hear the answer.

Please finish.

Mr. Michael Harris: I'll repeat that line just so you do get to hear it: You just know that after driving us into debt, this is your ticket to raise revenue on the backs of hard-working Ontarians.

Premier, will you do the right thing today and provide Ontarians with the details on how much the job-killing carbon tax is going to cost those hard-working Ontarians?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Actually, we're now into a six-month design process, so we're looking for input from the members opposite, and we have lots of experience to go on. This will be a very democratic and fair process.

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that I'm perplexed that a member of the official opposition would be asking such a question, because this isn't the first—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): First of all, I've been hearing things I'm not appreciating, so the member from Lanark will come to order.

The member for Kitchener-Conestoga: The question was asked. Listen to the answer.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: So not only is this—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not going to tolerate responses.

Interjection: Sounds like a warning.

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

Interjections.

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

This is precisely the reason why I get emails asking me why we can't get control here.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's you, not me.

Any member has an opportunity to withdraw at any time.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Speaker, I withdraw.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully I can give my answer, because I think the member deserves an answer on this.

We're a little perplexed, because this isn't the first cap-and-trade system in Ontario; this is the third. We have cap and trade on NO_x. We have cap and trade on SO_x. And what party introduced those? It was brought over there. So there's the cap-and-trade party, Mr. Speaker. Quebec, Alberta—it's amazing. And they don't read, because if—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Sit. New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. Today, legal experts came to Queen's Park and told Ontarians that the Liberal plan to privatize Hydro One probably isn't legal. Public sector workers who believe in public ownership have made it clear they are going to fight the Liberals in court on this.

1110

Can the Premier tell Ontarians whether she is planning to wage a long, expensive legal battle with public money, or is she going to change the laws of the land just so she can privatize Hydro One, leaving Ontarians with higher bills?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: On behalf of the people of Ontario, the government is Hydro One's sole shareholder. As with a shareholder, the province has a right to broaden the ownership of Hydro One.

Following the lower court decision in 2002, the government passed legislation that amended the Electricity Act that clarified its position. The Electricity Act, 1998, was amended to repeal section 48.1 and replace it with section 49.(1), which authorizes the minister to "acquire, hold, dispose of and otherwise deal with securities or debt obligations of, or any ... interest in, Hydro One" or on its subsidiaries.

So finding ways to generate revenue to help Ontario invest in its long-term infrastructure needs is badly needed for highways, transit, projects like the Ring of Fire, and other things that we must replace. This is an opportunity to realize on the true potential of Hydro One, to reinvest those assets where necessary. We're doing it legally and—

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

Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Premier: I want to read something from the legal opinion released today: Experts say, "[T]here are ... grounds to challenge a decision by the Minister of Energy to sell securities, debt or any provincial interest in Hydro One as being an unreasonable or irrational exercise of the minister's discretion under the" act.

According to these experts, selling 60% of Hydro One's distribution assets would actually reduce the province's income by \$133 million per year.

The Premier's plan is irrational. It's bad for families and businesses. It's bad for economic growth. It's bad for energy conservation and a green economy. It will actually mean less money for investments in hospitals, schools and roads.

Will the Premier pull the plug on this unreasonable and irrational plan?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Finance?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: This particular issue has been raised over the course of the last day or so, and in every single case, the so-called legal opinion has said "may" or "might be illegal."

The critic on the other side talks about the plan that we have. Mr. Speaker, there is no plan that's been put out there. We have a concept we've been working on. There is no particular plan. There are no details upon which any lawyer can make an opinion based on not having seen what we're going to be doing.

We're broadening the ownership in Hydro One. We're limiting other shareholders to less than 10% if we go forward with any deal. The ratepayer will be protected; the taxpayers of Ontario will be protected. It will be done legally, properly, on behalf of the people of Ontario.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is to the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. Toyota has been a great partner and contributor to Ontario's economy since first opening here almost 30 years ago. Since that time, they have invested almost \$7 billion, creating thousands of jobs. To remind the House, Cambridge is home to the only Lexus plant outside of Japan, a testament to the quality of Ontario's auto manufacturing sector. Toyota has been a staple of my community in Cambridge for almost 30 years. Not only Cambridge's largest employer, Toyota has given much back to my community.

Just as recently as 2012, Toyota announced that it was investing over \$100 million to increase Lexus RX capacity at its Cambridge assembly plant.

Through you, Speaker, would the minister please update the House on the announcement that Toyota just made today?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I want to thank the member for the question. This is indeed good news today for Cambridge, good news for Ontario's auto sector. Once again, we have an auto sector partner that is going to be making some very significant investments here in Ontario. We've been assured with today's announcement that, in fact, the worker footprint in Cambridge and Woodstock and in Ontario will remain totally intact.

We've also received assurances that, indeed, further investments are going to be made in those plants to ramp them up—this is the good news—so that they will, by 2019, be able to manufacture some higher-end vehicles in those plants. That is better value for manufacturing here in Ontario. What it speaks to is the fact that we have some of the best-quality workers and some of the best-quality plants here in Ontario. That's why Ontario is being used—

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I'd like to thank the minister for that update. Toyota's Ontario plants have won 12 J.D. Power quality awards, including the 2014 platinum award for the highest quality among assembly plants worldwide. Toyota's Cambridge facility has received more awards than any other assembly plant in the world. I am extremely proud of the work that's being done in my community, and I know that the employees at Toyota take a lot of pride in their work.

As I understand it, Toyota is not the only Ontario auto manufacturer that has made recent announcements. Through you, Speaker, would the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure please inform the House of new developments in Ontario's auto sector?

Hon. Brad Duguid: While we recognize that the environment for auto investments remains very competitive, since November we've seen \$4 billion of investment right across the province: from Alliston, where we saw an \$857-million investment from Honda; to Linamar in Guelph, where we saw a half-billion-dollar investment by Linamar; to Markham, where they're building the sexiest car in North America, the Ford GT, which is an incredibly innovative car that they're now building in Markham; to a \$2-billion investment in Windsor by Chrysler, which is great news; and, indeed, this announcement by Toyota that they're going to continue to invest in Ontario and build even higher-end vehicles here in this province. It's great news for the auto sector.

We still have lots of work to do. We're going to work tirelessly to keep building this sector in this province.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Mrs. Julia Munro: My question is to the Premier. Millions of Ontarians with workplace pension plans are facing uncertainty. You have created this uncertainty. By ignoring the concerns of the deputations at committee, people are left with no answers. Ontarians don't know who will be forced into your plan and who will be exempt. People need to know; businesses need to know. It is time that you treat Ontarians with the respect that they deserve and stop running from the details. Premier, the question: Who is in and who is out?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Associate Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I want to thank the member opposite for this question. It is an extremely important

question that we're asking ourselves about the future of this province and how people are going to be able to afford their retirement.

I have visited 10 communities across this province, talking to people in round tables and in stakeholder forums. What people are telling us is that they are concerned about their retirement. Two thirds of workers in Ontario do not have a pension plan. When we look at the private sector, it's at 28%.

I want to actually thank the efforts of the committee for their work in looking at the framework legislation in Bill 56, which sets out the government's commitment to implementing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan by January 2017. This is about the future of this province. This is about people affording their retirement in a 21st-century economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Julia Munro: Ontarians need a mutually acceptable definition of "comparable," a definition to provide certainty. They need to know how your legislation will affect their future. Your refusal to consider amendments to your proposal contributes to the uncertainty. Without concise, transparent details, Ontarians fear the consequences of this legislation.

Ontarians want to know what pension plans you consider good enough to be exempt from the Ontario registered pension plan. When are Ontarians going to have the confidence that their defined contribution workplace pension plans will be safe?

1120

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: In fact, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan is about providing more certainty for the retirement futures of the people of this province. This is about ensuring that when people retire, they have adequate income for life and that they can continue to spend and consume in their communities that rely so much on retirement and pension income.

The member opposite knows full well that we actually accepted an amendment from your party for Bill 56, so we are working on the details of this plan. The ministry officials are reviewing all of the submissions that have come in through our consultation process, which has gone right across this province, asking the people of Ontario.

You're absolutely right: It is about assuring people that when they retire, they can retire with security and with dignity. That's what the ORPP is all about.

Interjections.

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

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Catherine Fife: To the Premier: Yesterday, the Liberal finance minister was asked about whether he'd release the full Clark report, but he wouldn't give a simple answer, let alone a sophisticated answer, to this important question.

Will the Premier commit to making all of Ed Clark's recommendations public?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Yes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Catherine Fife: The Premier's hard turn to the right and her plan to privatize hydro makes it clear that she doesn't care about good—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please put your supplementary.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much.

Again to the Premier: The Premier's hard turn to the right and her plan to privatize hydro makes it clear that she doesn't care about good or fair policy or even what's in the best interests of the people of this province. She only cares about putting politics first and the short-term interests of the Liberal Party.

It's clear that the Liberals don't want to take any responsibility for the privatization of Hydro One or public utilities.

We're hearing that the Clark report might come out on Thursday. We hear that we might hear everything, but you can't blame the people of this province for having doubts. In last year's budget, they snuck in cuts to hospitals and education.

Will the Premier promise in this House that all of Ed Clark's recommendations will be released for full public scrutiny in a single report tomorrow?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: My answer is yes, again, that all of the recommendations will be made public.

But I just want to go back to the genesis of this whole conversation. What this is about is making sure that we have the capacity to invest in the infrastructure that is needed in this province. That's the starting point for this discussion.

I know, and I think the member opposite knows—she lives in a part of this province that needs more transit. She knows that in her region, there needs to be more connectivity to Toronto. She knows that the businesses and the innovators in the Kitchener-Waterloo region want to be able to move back and forth from Toronto. She knows that in order for that to happen, there has to be more investment in public transit.

That's what this is about. That's the solution that we're looking for. The report's recommendations will be made public.

POVERTY

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: My question is for the minister responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Mr. Speaker, poverty is an issue of concern for many in the province, including the residents in my riding of Halton. In fact, it's estimated that one in 10 people are affected by poverty in my riding. Groups like Poverty Free Halton, Community Development Halton and the Halton Poverty Roundtable are working hard to address local poverty issues through a series of initiatives, including building social awareness and calling for increased

engagement from the local business community. But more can always be done. That's why I'm proud that our government launched Ontario's second Poverty Reduction Strategy in September.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, what is our government doing to ensure that we build on local solutions to reach people battling poverty?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the fantastic member from Halton for this question.

Reducing poverty has been an important priority for this government since our election in 2003. We are making a real difference in the lives of people, but we know that we are just beginning this journey. There is much more work ahead of us.

We also know that fighting poverty is not just a top-down initiative. I've always said that we need all hands on deck. We need all levels of government. We need community organizations. We need the business community and the non-profit sector. All of us need to work together to really make a difference.

I also know that poverty looks different in different parts of this great province. That's why we've announced the launch of the Local Poverty Reduction Fund: \$50 million over six years to support grassroots partners as they help lift people out of poverty. It will fund innovative programs that target groups disproportionately affected by poverty.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you to the minister for that answer.

My constituents in Halton will be happy to know that the government is partnering with different communities to combat poverty. Local organizations have taken innovative steps to educate residents and leverage community assets to maximize poverty reduction strategies. The Halton Sport Leadership Program, for example, is a program that empowers young people facing economic hardships and teaches the skills required to enter the job market. By working with organizations like these, we can help people become healthier and ready for employment.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: How can organizations apply for the Local Poverty Reduction Fund?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Last week, with the MPP from Northumberland-Quinte West, we launched the first part of a two-stage application process for the Local Poverty Reduction Fund. Right now, we're inviting organizations to submit an expression of interest for a sustainable poverty reduction project that they're interested in evaluating. In May, there will be a formal call for proposals to determine the first round of community organizations to access the fund.

A wide variety of groups are eligible to apply: not-for-profit organizations, registered charities and aboriginal communities. Fostering collaborative partnerships across Ontario and building a body of evidence to guide future decisions are invaluable in our collective poverty reduction efforts and a key component of the Poverty Reduction Strategy. I especially look forward to seeing what

comes out of the great community of Halton, who are real leaders in this.

ALCOHOL LEGISLATION

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is to the Minister of Finance. Back on February 26, the House passed my bill, the Raise a Glass to Ontario Act, at second reading, with support from the government and the official opposition members. However, when the bill could have been given hearings at committee so that some of Ontario's great small businesses like our craft breweries, our cideries and our wineries could be given a chance to comment on the reforms they want to see in the beverage alcohol sector, the government blocked it.

Minister, once the standing committee is done dealing with Bill 40, will you commit to giving hearings to the Raise a Glass to Ontario Act so that we can have a public discussion here in the Legislature where it belongs and not just in Ed Clark's office?

Hon. Charles Sousa: To the House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I find that question really odd because I think the member opposite knows, and I'm sure his House leader will remind him, that these are issues that are discussed either in committee or among the House leaders. If his House leader wants to talk about this particular issue, I'm sure he knows where to find me as the government House leader, and we can have that conversation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Todd Smith: Minister, I'm not asking to pass the bill; what I'm asking for is that any reform to the beverage alcohol sector actually receive separate debate from the massive government omnibus bill that is on its way. Hundreds of Ontario small businesses in the craft beer, wine and spirit sector depend on these reforms to show both how they can sell their product and remove red tape from the procedure, especially in areas like transportation and warehousing.

What I'm asking is: Will you commit to giving my bill committee hearings so that these businesses can actually speak their piece to MPPs in committee, or will you continue to keep this process secret and wait for the next edict to come down in Ed Clark's report?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Clearly, Speaker, I think if anybody is not being kept in the loop, it's the member opposite by his own House leader. Maybe they want to have a change.

1130

Speaker, in all seriousness, we know that changes need to be made in the beer sector in the province of Ontario. The Minister of Finance has spoken to it many times. We also know that Mr. Clark is looking into that issue, and he will be releasing his report shortly. I encourage all members to wait for the results of the recommendations that will come out of Mr. Clark's report. Of course, the Minister of Finance will be speaking to it as well next Thursday in his budget. That will allow for

us to have sufficient conversation on this very important topic. We look forward to Mr. Clark's report.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. The province of Ontario has vital interests on Toronto's waterfront. Our stake in Waterfront Toronto is worth more than a billion dollars, and we're investing millions in a new urban park at Ontario Place. The province also has an interest in protecting the ecological health of Lake Ontario.

Ports Toronto recently revealed plans for Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport that would allow large jets and a massive expansion of the airport infrastructure and operations. Torontonians are extremely concerned about the impact of these proposed plans on the city's waterfront revitalization, Ontario Place and Lake Ontario.

These plans are proceeding based on a pseudo-"environmental" assessment that has no legal recognition under the federal or the provincial environmental assessment acts. Will the government protect provincial interests on Toronto's waterfront and insist on a proper, legal environmental assessment?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I'm very pleased to get the question from the member opposite, and I appreciate her sincere concern.

The city of Toronto is the authority responsible for this and for zoning and for the waterfront. Having been a mayor, I have always been very happy when provincial governments did not try to second-guess my role or that of my city council, and we're not about to do that. We'll allow the proper environmental assessment process to go through. We'll look to the city council for proper stewardship, because we trust that Mayor Tory and his council have this well in hand.

As a party to the Waterfront Toronto agreement, we will continue to support the waterfront plan that we signed with the other two orders of government, which this government is very important to.

We're also happy and pleased with the over \$500 million that we have invested, the investments we made in George Brown and in the waterfront parks that we're making right now, that my colleagues are making. We will continue to make those investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Back to the Minister of the Environment: In fact, progressive councillors are looking to you for action, Mr. Minister.

Also, of course, he knows that airports fall under federal jurisdiction, but that does not justify silence from the provincial government, not when Ontario's interests are threatened. That's what we're talking about, Mr. Speaker: Ontario's interests. In fact, under section 32 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the provincial government may substitute a provincial EA process to ensure that provincial interests are properly addressed.

Prominent Torontonians—Paul Bedford, David Crombie, Jack Diamond, Anne Golden and Ken Greenberg—

as well as community groups like NoJetsTO and Code-BlueTO have pointed out that Ports Toronto's phony review will not give Torontonians the facts they need.

With so many vital provincial interests at stake, will the government end its silence, stand up for Toronto's waterfront and Toronto, and get that environmental assessment done—

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: This government is doing more than standing up for Toronto's waterfront. It is doing unprecedented investments, and anyone—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: We're laying over the Pan Am Games, which my colleague added.

There is more exciting stuff happening on the Toronto waterfront since we were elected than in the entire history of this province. We're very proud of that.

I also know my city councillors, Councillor McConnell and Councillor Wong-Tam. I have an excellent relationship with them. Neither of them has phoned me and said, "Minister, we want the provincial government to substitute an alternative process to the federal and municipal process"—none of them. We have no request from the mayor; we have no request from council. Maybe the third party thinks that the provincial government should insert their politics and their political agenda into municipal politics or the waterfront, but we don't.

We also have a very clear environmental assessment process that asks the Minister of the Environment to stay out of politicizing it and let the public servants do a fair-minded, evidence-based review. My ministry is already doing that, and they will complete that work.

CARBON MONOXIDE

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, many people in my community and communities across this province may not be aware of the risks carbon monoxide poses to their families and loved ones.

Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas that is often referred to as the silent killer. More than 50 people in Canada die from carbon monoxide poisoning each year, but the real tragedy is that each and every one of these deaths is preventable.

Today, new regulations around the use of carbon monoxide alarms in multi-unit dwellings come into force. With the new rules in place, we'll be able to better protect Ontarians from this silent killer.

Mr. Speaker, through you: Can the minister please explain this new regulation and share with us how it could save lives in Ontario?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to thank the member from Northumberland-Quinte West for raising such an important issue.

As the member mentioned, carbon monoxide gas is a silent killer that continues to claim too many lives in this province. Speaker, I want to thank you and the member

from Oxford for your leadership on this very important issue.

As of today, carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in the service rooms and near all sleeping areas in all residential buildings, from your average family home to small apartment buildings with up to six living units. The rules also include annual testing, battery replacement and other requirements to ensure that carbon monoxide alarms in these residences are in good working order. Large buildings, such as condos, hotels and high-rise apartments, will have until this October to come into compliance with the new rules.

Installing a carbon monoxide alarm is perhaps one of the simplest and most effective ways to alert you and your family to the presence of this lethal gas, which would help them escape in the event of a leak.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Thank you, Minister, for your action on this important issue. I'm certain that making CO alarms mandatory for homeowners and landlords will help save lives within my community and across Ontario.

CO alarms are a very important tool for alerting our families in an emergency, but often a working CO or smoke alarm is not enough on its own to protect our loved ones from danger. In the event of an emergency, when CO or smoke alarms sound, we must all know what to do and where to go. After all, we wouldn't want to leave the safety of our loved ones to chance.

Mr. Speaker, through you: Can the minister please share some information on how we should properly prepare for a carbon monoxide or fire emergency in our homes?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: It is truly important that we install carbon monoxide alarms in our homes and test the batteries regularly, but the member is absolutely right: We need to do more in order to make sure that our homes and our families are safe.

In order to protect our loved ones during an emergency, we must go further than installing and testing carbon monoxide and smoke alarms. Every one of us should take a few minutes with our households to make an emergency escape plan. Draw a floor plan; include all possible emergency exits. Show two ways out of every room, if possible, and decide who will require assistance. As the acting district chief for Toronto Fire Services said recently, set up a safe meeting spot outside the front of your home, where you can then call the fire department.

The best way to ensure the safety of yourself and your family in an emergency is to have a practised plan of action in place, because emergency safety is everybody's responsibility. I encourage everybody to go to the website emergencymanagementontario.ca for more information and draft those emergency plans.

BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

Mr. Steve Clark: My question is to the Premier. On February 26, the Greater Sudbury Police Services Board asked the Ontario Civilian Police Commission for direc-

tion after several requests for the removal of Gerry Lougheed Jr. The requests not only came from the opposition, but also from members of the public.

Despite the request from the Sudbury board, the OCPC cancelled its March meeting. The OCPC was scheduled to meet yesterday. They cancelled that meeting.

Let me remind everyone that under subsection 25(1) of the Police Services Act, your minister can request the OCPC to investigate, inquire into and report on the conduct of a member of the board. Premier, will you agree with me that it's time for the OCPC to stop cancelling meetings and start doing their work?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I think the member opposite knows very well that there is a defined process by which a police services board can refer a matter to the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, the OCPC. There is a code of conduct also outlined by way of regulation through the police services board that outlines the obligations of a member of the police services board.

1140

Speaker, as we understand it, the matter has been referred by the Greater Sudbury Police Services Board to the Ontario Civilian Police Commission.

I want to remind the member opposite and all members that the OCPC is not an arm of the government. It's independent of government. It's like a court. We, the government, do not dictate to the OCPC to take any particular action. It would be wrong. It would be breaking the law. We'll let the OCPC do their independent work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Back to the Premier: Listen, the Sudbury bribery scandal is a very serious issue. The Chief Electoral Officer tabled a historic report that highlighted apparent contraventions of the Election Act.

Despite a request from the Greater Sudbury Police Services Board, the OCPC has cancelled two meetings in a row. When we asked them why the meetings were cancelled, they referred us to their lawyer. Something's not right, Speaker. This doesn't pass the smell test.

Premier, has anyone from your office or your minister's office spoken to or met with the OCPC in any way in regard to the Sudbury bribery scandal and the request from the Greater Sudbury Police Services Board?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I want to be absolutely clear that the OCPC is an independent body. In fact, it falls under the Ministry of the Attorney General so that we can maintain the arm's-length nature of the OCPC.

To make allegations of the kind the member opposite is making is not fitting because—and we've been saying this from the very first day—we respect the independent work of the investigative bodies in this matter. We should let that process continue. We will not interfere in that process at any time whatsoever.

I want to be absolutely clear, Speaker, that the OCPC is independent from the government. We should let the OCPC do its work. We do not direct the OCPC. We do not tell them when to schedule a meeting and when not to

schedule a meeting, and we want to respect that independent adjudicative process.

TRANSPORT PAR AUTOBUS BUS TRANSPORTATION

M. Gilles Bisson: Ma question est pour le ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines. Comme vous le savez, la ville de Hearst est connectée à Thunder Bay faisant affaire avec un système d'autobus. Ce système d'autobus privé a annulé ses services.

Je t'ai demandé hier, comme je te demande aujourd'hui dans la Chambre : est-ce que le ministre est préparé à intervenir avec l'ONTC pour être capable de trouver une solution et remettre en place des services d'autobus entre la ville de Hearst et Thunder Bay, pour que le monde n'ait pas besoin d'aller 17 heures alentour par Sudbury pour arriver à un appointment médical à Thunder Bay?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I very much appreciate the question. We did have an opportunity to discuss it yesterday.

One of the things I do want to say is that I'm very proud of the fact that our government has made a commitment to keep four of the five lines of the ONTC in public hands. A little over a year ago, we made that decision and that announcement.

Earlier this week, we put a new board in place. The chair is Tom Laughren, the former mayor of Timmins, who is the chair of the ONTC. I know that these are the kinds of matters that they will want to be a part of discussing, as well.

I appreciate the challenge that's being faced with that operational decision, so it's one that I will be pursuing and following up on with the ONTC CAO and interim president as well as the board. I would encourage you to do the same.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order from the member from Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'd like to recognize Dr. Andrew Syriopoulos, a dentist from my riding, who's here with us today. Welcome.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to correct my record. I think I misspoke earlier. The cap-and-trade systems introduced by the Conservative government were on nitric oxide and sulphur oxide. I think I said sulphuric oxide.

VISITOR

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

Mr. Steve Clark: I just want to recognize Kim Hansen, a local dentist from my riding. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just a reminder for all members: Please wait until I recognize the questioner and the person giving the answer before you stand up and start answering. It's not helpful to the microphones—because they are instructed to wait until I recognize the person on either side.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1145 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will make a small reference to a constituent in Brant. Mr. John Gignac is here. John, welcome. I'm glad you're here, and I know you're here with other people. Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CARBON MONOXIDE

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise to mark a momentous occasion. As of today, all houses in Ontario with an attached garage or a fuel-burning appliance are required to have a functioning carbon monoxide detector.

A year and a half ago, after five long years of trying, the Legislature passed my bill, the Hawkins Gignac Act. Six months ago, the government put the regulations in place, but gave homeowners until today to get their detectors.

Carbon monoxide is deadly, but it has no smell, taste or colour. The only way you will know if it's in your home is with a detector. So I would encourage everyone to take action today. Check your detector, or get one.

My private member's bill was named after Laurie, Richard, Cassandra and Jordan Hawkins, a Woodstock family who tragically perished due to carbon monoxide poisoning. We are remembering them again today.

There are many people who worked tirelessly to support the Hawkins Gignac Act, to ensure that no family suffers a tragedy like that again. Many of them are here today, and I want to recognize them and thank them all for their work.

I want to commend the insurance bureau for their generosity and their work to raise awareness.

I want to recognize, as you did, Mr. Speaker, John Gignac, Laurie's uncle and hero, for his tireless work to raise awareness of the need for carbon monoxide detectors. I ask all my colleagues to join me in applauding John Gignac and the entire Hawkins Gignac family.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. This might be one of the cases where the Speaker stood on someone else's introduction, which is the reverse of what

normally happens. My apologies. Anyway, welcome. We're glad you're here.

AWESOME FOUNDATION LONDON

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise today to celebrate an awesome partnership between Oakridge Secondary School, in my riding of London West, and the Awesome Foundation London, a local chapter of the global movement that was inaugurated in London in January 2013.

Awesome London meets monthly to listen to pitches and award \$1,000 grants to people in the community with creative, and sometimes brilliant, ideas. The grants are funded and the pitch selected by Awesome London trustees, who each contribute \$100.

These no-strings-attached micro-grants have supported some incredible projects, from photography and documentary video to gardens for low-income mothers and a block party in a box.

Last month's winner was Ryan Hunt, of MakerBus, who plans to run a small electrical current through 1,200 Londoners holding hands, lighting a light bulb and entering the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's longest human circuit.

But not only is Awesome London funding all these awesome ideas; this year, they helped Oakridge Secondary School design students gain real-life experience as a creative design team. Last night, Awesome London unveiled a new logo, slogan and promotional poster that was conceived and created by Oakridge students in teacher Laura Briscoe's consumerism and design class, who worked both individually and in teams.

One of the original trustees said that Awesome London offers the kind of no-holds-barred optimism that connects people to each other and makes our community better.

Kudos to Awesome London for their optimism and confidence in the talented and awesome students of Oakridge Secondary School.

FIREFIGHTERS

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the constituents in Cambridge.

This past Saturday, I attended the Cambridge Professional Fire Fighters' Association's annual retirement party. I was pleased to be able to thank the firefighters retiring from Local 499 for their dedication to the service.

Six members of the Cambridge Professional Fire Fighters' Association were honoured in light of their recent retirement: John Rehill, Walter MacNeil, Brad Grimwood, Maggie Walsworth, Bob Laurence, and Neil Main. Three of the six have retired from firefighting, while three have moved into management positions.

Many people came out on Saturday to the Armenian Community Center in Cambridge to celebrate these courageous firefighters who have served the public over

the course of their careers. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the retiring members of Local 499 for their service and to thank the men and women serving as firefighters in my riding of Cambridge for their bravery and for their unwavering dedication to keeping our communities safe.

The members of Local 499 have been actively involved in volunteering in Cambridge. Recently, they held a boot drive in support of muscular dystrophy. They packed hampers of supplies for families in need at Christmastime. I also had the opportunity to join some of the members of Local 499 at Zehrs during Easter, where they were packing groceries to raise donations for the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank.

These truly devoted firefighters match their years of service with their vast contributions to our community of Cambridge. Thank you.

HOCKEY

Mr. Rick Nicholls: As members of this Legislature are aware, Chatham–Kent was a finalist in the 2015 Kraft Hockeyville competition, with results announced live on Hockey Night in Canada. I'm telling you, Speaker, boy, was the Chatham Memorial Arena ever rocking. It was a sea of jersey-wearing hockey fanatics.

Throughout the day there were numerous activities, such as a three-on-three hockey tournament, pony rides, a petting zoo and entertainment by local musicians.

Unfortunately, Chatham came up on the short end. It's unfortunate, but you know what? A proud hockey tradition is shaking hands after the game, win or lose, and I'd like to extend my sincere congratulations to the people of North Saanich, British Columbia, on their win.

While Chatham–Kent will not be hosting an NHL pre-season game, as a finalist in the competition they will in fact receive \$100,000 for much-needed arena upgrades. The community's spirit and the inspiring way in which everyone came together is worth more than any winning of a competition.

I had the privilege of addressing these wild hockey fanatics at the arena that night. I'm incredibly grateful to represent such a passionate riding. Congratulations to Chatham–Kent, Ontario's Hockeyville.

EVENTS IN INDIA

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Today, Prime Minister Modi is in Canada meeting with Prime Minister Harper and Premier Wynne. While it is important to discuss opportunities to strengthen bilateral trade and to expand investments, our governments must also address concerns raised by Canadians regarding years of escalating attacks on religious minorities, including Christians, Muslims and Sikhs, as well as the extremely concerning incidents of violence against women in India.

Under Modi's government, the acts of state violence against Sikhs in 1984 have been referred to as a genocide, but this government must take the next steps to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. In

India, attacks on religious institutions continue to occur, as well as acts of fear and intimidation against Christians, Muslims and other minority religions. It is important for leaders to clearly state that all people have the right to practise their faith how they choose, and to do so free from persecution and fear.

It is particularly important to clearly denounce violence against women and to enact policies to address this pernicious epidemic. It is our obligation as a democratic state to protect the universal human rights of all people and to denounce the practice of targeting people based on heritage, beliefs or gender.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Granville Anderson: Today, I would like to acknowledge a grade 9 geography class at Clarington Central Secondary School that has taken their teacher's conservation program to a new level. The students have been actively encouraging their community to recycle electronic devices, especially cellphones, for their content, coltan, a substance that is mined at great expense to the environment as well as to the communities from which it comes.

1510

The greatest producer of coltan is the Democratic Republic of Congo, where mining communities are at the mercy of rogue militias. By recycling the substance, the students are passionate about helping to lessen the demand and alleviate the strain on these communities, as well as reinvesting their efforts in their school in other eco-friendly initiatives.

With so much concern today over sustainability and climate change, I am overjoyed to see young people in my riding taking a stand for their community, for the environment and for the well-being of those elsewhere in the world. Residents of Durham should recycle their unused cellphones at Clarington Central, as well as M.J. Hobbs, Dr. Ross Tilley and Enniskillen Public School.

I again commend the students of Clarington Central high school for their efforts.

PROJECT HOAP

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'm pleased to stand in the Legislature today to congratulate an inspirational organization from my riding of Nipissing. Project HOAP, or Home Ownership Affordability Partnership, is a local non-profit organization that works to empower families by stabilizing living conditions. I trust that everyone in this Legislature recognizes the importance of affordable housing to our communities.

Project HOAP has been working in North Bay since 2003 to offer programs for low-income families with children, and programs that allow the greater community to respond to the present housing crisis. They have been so successful that Project HOAP has now completed their seventh and eighth renovation projects and are making preparations for their ninth.

I want to say congratulations to Project HOAP. Friends in North Bay, your work is not only inspiring, but it is truly making a difference in the lives of many families. I'm honoured to support this program and congratulate them on all that they have accomplished.

POLISH WAR VETERANS

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I rise today to celebrate and honour the role of Polish troops in the World War II Allied victory in Europe on this day of my father's 90th birthday. Polish war veterans like my father fought alongside Great Britain and the allies from the very first day of the war until the very last. Her people showed extraordinary military bravery and 240,000 paid the ultimate price.

Many thousands of Poles were deported to Siberia, my father included, where they barely survived in the most dreadful conditions. His work ethic, resilience and sense of social justice were surely born out of that suffering.

Thankfully, my father escaped the Soviets, became a radar operator in the British navy, and spent the war aboard ship on campaigns in the Mediterranean and the English Channel.

At the end of the war, he met my late mother in Scotland and they emigrated to live in Kingston and the Islands, the veritable land of his youthful dreams. Many of those serving overseas never returned home.

Veterans had to wait until September 2009 for their heroic efforts to be officially recognized with the unveiling of the Polish War Memorial in London, England.

We should never forget those gallant men and women, like my father, who remained firm friends of the Commonwealth through thick and thin. I hope you have a wonderful birthday, Dad. Happy birthday.

AWARDS CEREMONY

Mr. Chris Ballard: It's an honour, as usual, to stand in the House today to highlight a great event that took place in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora during constituency week.

On April 9, in honour of International Women's Week, Minister MacCharles and I had the privilege of recognizing 10 women and girls from across Newmarket–Aurora as part of Ontario's Leading Women, Leading Girls, Building Communities Recognition Program. The awards ceremony took place in the beautiful Aurora Cultural Centre in an evening filled with testimonials, congratulations, music and good cheer.

The program celebrates women and girls whose leadership improves the lives of other girls and women in our communities. The recipients are role models; they provide a positive example to women and girls, and men and boys, in their community.

Since 2006, Ontario has recognized more than 650 leading women and girls. This was an important event to recognize the political, economic and social achieve-

ments of outstanding women and girls both at home and around the world.

I want to congratulate the 10 award winners from Newmarket–Aurora: Ellen Campbell, Kristine Carbis, Nancy Coxford, Susan Lanthier-Doyle, Tammy Farbod, Leah Hans, Janice Hodgson, Emily Li, Jackie Playter and Nancee Webb. Thank you to each and every one of them for the positive impact they've made on our community.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (MONEY TRANSFERS), 2015 LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR (TRANSFERTS DE FONDS)

Mr. Singh moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 88, An Act to amend the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 with respect to money transfers / Projet de loi 88, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur la protection du consommateur en ce qui concerne les transferts de fonds.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: The bill amends the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, to limit the fees a money transferor may charge to a consumer, and to require that the money transferor disclose information regarding the fees to consumers. This would be an act of fairness and transparency, and allow a cap on those remittance fees to protect consumers.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

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

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Community and Social Services is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98, the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business for tomorrow be changed such that Mr. Fraser assumes ballot item number 43 and Mr. Hardeman assumes ballot item number 44.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister moves that notwithstanding standing order 98—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispensed.

Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

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

“Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn’t necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and almost \$700 more per household annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

“Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in taxes than 11 years ago; and

“Whereas this uncompetitive tax will not impact businesses outside of Ontario and will only serve to accelerate the demise of our once strong manufacturing sector; and

“Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

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

“To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses.”

I agree with this and will be passing it on to page Madison.

GOVERNMENT ANTI-RACISM PROGRAMS

Ms. Catherine Fife: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas by 2017, close to one third of Ontario’s population will be made up of peoples of colour and First Peoples; and

1520

“Whereas racialized communities are overrepresented when it comes to issues of income inequality, un(der)employment and precarious employment; and

“Whereas the Ontario government used to have an Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat to address persistent racial inequalities and inequities in the province; and

“Whereas there currently does not exist a dedicated section or division that provides focus for government action on issues of concern to racialized people in this province; and

“Whereas the Colour of Poverty/Colour of Change Network, the Racism Free Ontario campaign by Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), and other like-minded groups are working to create broader public awareness so that Ontarians accept and acknowledge that racism (systemic, structural, institutional, interpersonal and individualized) is still alive in our province;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to establish an Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate, to also initiate a task force to address racism in Ontario and incorporate an anti-racism framework in the development of government policy, and to do so with comprehensive community engagement so as to develop practical and sustainable solutions to redressing all forms of systemic and interpersonal racism.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature and give it to page Colin.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition from the Parry Sound area. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas both provincial Highway 559 (from Nobel Road to Killbear Park) and Highway 124 (from Parry Sound to McKellar) are busy roads with fast-moving vehicles and no paved shoulders; and

“Whereas drivers, cyclists and pedestrians are put at safety risks on these stretches of highway between Carling, McDougall and McKellar which are the only routes available; and

“Whereas maintaining unpaved highway shoulders is costly; and

“Whereas area residents and visitors are increasingly using secondary provincial highways to support healthy lifestyles, reduce health care costs and contribute to positive economic development;

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

“To install paved shoulders on Highways 559 and 124 at the earliest possible opportunity, consistent with the 2013 Ontario cycling strategy that promotes safe, sustainable transportation.”

Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and will give it to Megan.

FIRST RESPONDERS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas emergency response workers (paramedics, police officers, and firefighters) confront traumatic

events on a nearly daily basis to provide safety to the public; and

“Whereas many emergency response workers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of their work; and

“Whereas Bill 2 ‘An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder’ sets out that if an emergency response worker suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, the disorder is presumed to be an occupational disease that occurred due to their employment as an emergency response worker, unless the contrary is shown;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to unanimously endorse and quickly pass Bill 2 ‘An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder’.”

Speaker, I sign the petition and give it to page Abdullah to deliver.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

“Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

“Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

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

“That private member’s Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature.”

I support this. I will sign my name to it and hand it to page Joshua.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Catherine Fife: “Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of beds on the surgical unit, cuts to vital patient support services including hospital cleaning, and more than 87,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year to be cut from departments across the hospital, including inpatient psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical units, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care and the emergency department; and

“Whereas Ontario’s provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

“Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;

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

“(1) Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect the beds and services;

“(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature to this petition and give this to page Colin.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. John Yakabuski: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas it has been over a decade since regulation 316/03 of the Highway Traffic Act has been updated to recognize new classes of off-road vehicles and a motion to do so passed on November 7, 2013, with unanimous support of the provincial Legislature;

“Whereas owners of two-up ATVs and side-by-side UTVs deserve clarity in knowing which roadways and trails are legal for use of these off-road vehicles; and

“Whereas owners should be able to legally use their vehicles to access woodlots, trails and hunting and fishing destinations;

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

“That private member’s Bill 58, which seeks to update the Highway Traffic Act to include new classes of all-terrain and utility task vehicles, receive swift passage through the Legislature.”

Speaker, I’m pleased to support this petition, affix my name to it and send it up with Ishika.

DENTAL CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas thousands of Ontarians live with pain and infection because they cannot afford dental care;

“Whereas the promised \$45-million dental fund under the Poverty Reduction Strategy excluded impoverished adults;

“Whereas the program was designed with rigid criteria so that most of the people in need do not qualify; and

“Whereas desperately needed dental care money went unspent and was diverted to other areas even though people are still suffering without access to dental care;

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

“To do all in its power to stop the dental fund from being diverted to support other programs; and

“To fully utilize the commissioned funding to provide dental care to those in need.”

I sign this petition, Speaker, and give it to page Joshua.

HYDRO RATES

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

“Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government’s mismanagement of the energy sector;

“Whereas the billion-dollar gas plant scandal, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing” a further “35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020;

“Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, particularly in rural Ontario, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential for families in rural Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government’s mismanagement;

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

“To immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario’s power consumers, including families, farmers, and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity.”

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

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Michael Mantha: From the good people in the Goulais River area, Heyden and Searchmont.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, are being charged astronomical costs referred to as ‘delivery fees’;

“Whereas we, the customers of Algoma Power, would like the ‘delivery fees’ looked into and regulated so as to protect the consumer from big businesses gouging the consumer;

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

“Stop Algoma Power’s influx of fees for delivery and stop the onset of increasing these fees another 40% within four years.”

I agree with this petition, sign it and give it to page Colin to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“In light of the many wide-ranging concerns being raised by Ontario citizens and 80-plus action groups across Ontario and the irrefutable international evidence of a flawed technology, health concerns, environmental

effects, bird and bat kills, property losses, the tearing apart of families, friends and communities, and unprecedented costs;

“We, the undersigned, ask the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to declare an Ontario-wide moratorium on the development of wind farms.”

I totally agree with this petition, and I’ll affix my signature and send it to the table with Thomas.

1530

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Michael Mantha: “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 with this petition and present it to page Carina to bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

TAXATION

Mr. Rick Nicholls: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn’t necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and almost \$700 more per household annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

“Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

“Whereas this uncompetitive tax will not impact businesses outside of Ontario and will only serve to accelerate the demise of our once strong manufacturing sector; and

“Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

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

“To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses.”

I approve of this petition. I will sign my name to it and give it to Afayah.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: Once again, these are hundreds of signatures from people ranging from Thunder Bay to Manitowadge and Marathon. The petition:

“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 agree with this petition and present it to page Joshua to bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DES GRANDS LACS

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 26, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin / Projet de loi 66, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): When we last ended this, I believe the member from Huron–Bruce had the floor.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: To pick up where I left off, I would just like to revisit the purpose of Bill 66. The stated purpose of Bill 66 is to protect and restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River

basin and to create opportunities for individuals and communities to become involved in the protection and restoration of the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin.

When I last spoke, I had referenced some research from the legislative library, which is a great resource, and I made a comment whereby I recognized that, of 107—actually, I’ll say it this way—all but four ridings in Ontario are within the basin. In actual fact, when I went back to check out my notes, it’s all but two. So 105 ridings in Ontario are included in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin. That begs the point that this Bill 66 is very, very important. I just wanted to go back and revisit that.

It goes without saying that the PC Party is supportive of improving and protecting the environment and our Great Lakes ecosystems, but Bill 66 has raised some serious questions with regard to the duplication of adequately addressed issues. So I ask the question, why are we then proposing a comprehensive piece of legislation that may very well create conflicts and confusion, burden municipalities and development with increased costs and red tape, and reduce local planning authority? Stewardship programs do not need another layer of bureaucracy; they need adequate funding, which Bill 66 does not appear to provide.

Unfortunately, the introduction of Bill 66 reminds me of the green energy and economy act. I have to ask if this government is again proposing far-reaching legislation simply to appease special interest groups and to create the illusion of protecting the environment. Ontario cannot afford another ill-advised policy that does nothing but download costs to municipal governments and complicate governance. The absence of funding, the passing reference to consideration of economic or social impacts, the appointment of the guardians’ councils with the power to set fees and the potential for further erosion in the power of local planning authorities are all concerns that we have about Bill 66.

Another thing that I would like to share with everyone in the House today is that just this past fall, in December specifically, the governments of Canada and Ontario also signed a draft Canada-Ontario agreement, known as COA, on Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health. The COA establishes a domestic action plan to guide co-operation and coordination of efforts to restore, protect and conserve Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health over five years. The COA deals with the following issues: nutrients; harmful pollutants; discharges from vessels; areas of concern; lake-wide management; aquatic invasive species; habitat and species; groundwater quality; climate change impacts; science; promoting innovation; engaging communities; engaging First Nations; and engaging Métis.

Over and above that, the Conservation Authorities Act gives the government the power to regulate the development of shorelines for watershed management and the Planning Act provides municipalities with the authority to regulate shoreline development. Do you see a trend

and a theme here, Speaker? We already have adequate legislation in place, and so we can't help but question the relevancy of Bill 66.

I want to share with you as well that, over and above what I've just shared with you, there are additional acts that come into play. The government has already established the Toxics Reduction Act and the Environmental Protection Act to deal with harmful pollutants. As I said, you can see numerous pieces of legislation offer a framework for the protection of the Great Lakes ecosystem, and I question why Ontario simply does not fulfill its commitment under these existing agreements. There is no need for overlap and duplication of governance. Where is there a gap that necessitates Bill 66? What steps will the government take to prevent overlap and to ensure that all new regulations will be coordinated with Ontario's existing water legislation? There is a lot of room for concern, because where there are layers of legislation, there are gaps, there's wiggle room and opportunities for government to miss the mark.

Bill 66 could also potentially affect a number of other acts; for example, the Planning Act; the Condominium Act, 1998; the Greenbelt Act, 2005; the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act; and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001. We have to really consider if Bill 66 is really necessary or, as I mentioned at the outset, if it's just a piece of legislation to appease special interest groups that this government sometimes panders to.

But let's take a look specifically at some of the things Bill 66 is proposing. One is the centralization of power at the provincial level. Bill 66 proposes to establish a Great Lakes Guardians' Council to provide a forum for Great Lakes ministers, provincial representatives, representatives of First Nations and Métis communities, and representatives from conservation authorities, environmental organizations, the scientific community, and industrial, agricultural, recreational and tourism sectors to identify priorities for actions, propose projects and discuss matters related to setting targets and the development of initiatives.

1540

While there is the appearance of widespread consultation, we know, if we take a look at the cap-and-trade consultations specifically called climate change consultations, they totally ignored everything that came out of those consultations. I worry. Again, while there's a widespread appearance of consultation, how much will they really take to heart of what is shared during those consultations? Again, this could very well turn out to be a very top-down process, because the minister, "as he or she considers advisable," may extend invitations to individuals from a variety of stakeholder groups to participate in council meetings. There is a lot of authority, through Bill 66, that will rest in the hands of the minister.

This legislation does not call for the presence of specific groups as mandatory at meetings, nor does it require balanced representation from the hundreds of communities situated in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence

River basin. This could limit the opportunity for public participation, and provides no assurance that goals and targets will reflect consultation with local officials and experts.

Under Bill 66, interested parties must consult with the minister and receive approval for an initiative at the proposal stage, thus again enabling the minister to influence the proposal from its inception. A public body then prepares a draft initiative and submits it to the minister. A proposal is to include a description of the costs and benefits as well as a strategy to finance the project. Again, this is a worry. It is the minister who is ultimately the one who decides on the initiatives, and after consulting with other Great Lakes ministers, he or she may set targets relating to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin and loss of wetlands. Speaker, I say this because initiatives must be geographically focused as well.

The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change can direct a public body to develop and approve a proposal for those GFIs, and they may also set out the actions required to achieve those targets. All the while, people—experts—and citizens living within that GFI may not have an opportunity for input or influence. The minister has the option of accepting a proposal, directing a public body to make amendments to a proposal or declining approval of the project. After the consultation with other Great Lakes ministers, the minister can also amend an approved proposal. This kind of centralized power opens the door to regulation via ministerial directive, which this government has used too frequently to direct energy policy. So it's a huge flag at this time.

While the minister, through this bill, is to prepare a report at least once every three years to outline the status of initiatives, what happens if the established targets are not met? Again, accountability is lacking, which is becoming the norm from this government.

While municipalities will be able to submit a proposal for an initiative, another public body may make a submission and circumvent that municipality, allowing special interest groups to supersede elected officials—another flag.

I would like to see more specifics on who will comprise the guardians' council, but as we've come to know through the cap-and-trade initiative and the neonic issue, this government is heavy on directive and light on the details—yet another flag.

Going back to the guardians' council, given that an invitation by the minister is required, this does not sound like an open forum for participation. There is no guarantee that all relevant stakeholders will be consulted, and the council may very well cause more cost and delay instead of ensuring remedial action on areas of concern.

This guardians' council will determine priority areas, yet there appears to be little guarantee that it must consider economic impacts, local property rights, and local land use and development. Nor does Bill 66 explain how much this new level of bureaucracy will cost and how it will be funded. Speaker, there's another flag:

Who's going to pay for all of this? Is this going to be yet another downloaded burden on municipalities? Again, the devil is always in the details with this Liberal government.

I have a concern about which sources of water are affected by this legislation. The bill speaks to areas:

“(i) adjacent or close to the shoreline of a Great Lake, the St. Lawrence River or any other lake other than a Great Lake,

“(ii) within, adjacent or close to a permanent or intermittent tributary of a lake, or

“(iii) within, adjacent or close to wetlands.”

This description, again, raises questions about impacts on small water sources on private property, which could affect land use for homeowners, businesses and local communities.

Under section 26 of Bill 66, the Lieutenant Governor in Council is given the authority to:

—regulate or prohibit activities that may adversely affect the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin in applicable areas that are close to shorelines, tributaries or wetlands;

—require individuals to take action to protect the health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin;

—designate an enforcement body and enable the appointment of officers to issue orders and to enforce regulations and charge fees;

—govern the amount of fees and the payment of those fees.

Another provision allows access to a property without the consent of the owner or occupier, without a warrant, and a person is guilty of obstruction if he or she prevents or obstructs an authorized person from entering property or carrying out authorized actions or refuses to comply with a request.

Speaker, that is a huge flag, as my friend from Carleton-Mississippi Mills would surely attest to. You cannot—you cannot—go onto property without someone's consent.

I want to repeat that point, just to make sure everybody heard it: According to Bill 66, another provision allows—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): We've got about four conversations going on. If you want to have a group meeting, take it outside, please.

Continue.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you, Speaker.

Again, I just want to go back and revisit that point. Another provision within Bill 66 allows access to a property without the consent of the owner or occupier, without a warrant, and a person is guilty of obstruction if he or she prevents or obstructs an authorized person from entering property or carrying out authorized actions or refuses to comply with a request—yet another flag, Speaker—and for this, fines range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 a day for an individual, and \$50,000 to \$100,000 a day for a corporation.

One clause stood out specifically in my mind: “If a corporation commits an offence ... a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation who directed, authorized, assented to ... or failed to take all reasonable care to prevent the ... offence, or who participated in the commission of the offence, is also guilty of the offence, whether or not the corporation has been prosecuted for the offence.”

As municipalities are corporations, does this not expose elected officials and staff to a legal hazard and financial hardship if they have to defend against penalties? Yet another flag.

There are also restrictions on legal recovery of losses or costs. Speaking to my constituents in Huron-Bruce, I have received no requests for increased fees or penalties and restrictions on the use of the Great Lakes. Given the cuts to infrastructure funding that we've experienced across the province, the last thing municipalities want is more downloading of costs and requirements to amend official plans to conform to this legislation.

Provisions to Bill 66 would make lakeshore development fairly time-consuming and onerous, and add one more layer of costs and red tape for home builders and developers.

Now, let's talk about funding; specifically, the absence of funding to implement GFIs. Given the scope of Bill 66, it is rather concerning that there is no cost benefit or funding allocated. But again, Speaker, there is another common thread creeping through: When was the last time we saw this Liberal government do any cost analysis with regard to the Green Energy Act, cap and trade—the list could go on and on. But that's a discussion for another day.

Ministry staff confirmed—and this is very unfortunate; I recall this meeting very clearly—that there would be no money for this initiative in the 2015 budget. The costs associated with the guardians' council and enforcement could be quite substantial, and if there is no money in the budget for implementation, the costs of identifying and complying with targets may well cost local governments, farmers and businesses millions of dollars.

1550

New shoreline regulations, fees and penalties could end up creating a new revenue source for a cash-strapped government. Again, is there a theme happening here? Submitting Bill 66 without a cost estimation or allotted funding is a very, very big red flag. After almost 12 years of reckless management, honestly, this Liberal government cannot be trusted with an open-ended spending initiative. The funding of geographically focused initiatives—GFIs—and the guardians' council remains unclear. How much will it cost and, again, where will these funds come from? I might add, we question where these funds are going to come from.

What we saw last fall in public accounts, and in speaking to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change—we learned that MOECC could be facing a potential cut of \$91 million in the upcoming budget. There's a lot of concern around this.

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: In public accounts; that's right.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Really?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Yes.

Another aim of Bill 66 is to ensure the establishment and maintenance of monitoring and reporting programs to improve understanding and management of the Great Lakes. With a view to saving the overall burdened taxpayers of Ontario some money in monitoring costs, I would like to bring Environment Canada's Great Lakes Surveillance Program to the minister's attention. This program is led by scientists at Ontario's office of water quality monitoring and surveillance. It has monitored water quality in the Great Lakes for over 40 years. Why do we need another redundant layer? Again, this program has been in existence for 40 years already.

This program provides some of the most comprehensive, systematic and detailed information that is available in the world for large lakes. There are just under 300 sites monitored on the Great Lakes and all of the surveillance program data is stored at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Ontario, and can be retrieved upon request. Why duplicate something, especially when the province is broke?

The monitoring parameters that Ontario's office of water quality monitoring and surveillance performs include temperature, clarity, pH levels, nutrients, major ions, some biological parameters, metals and organic contaminants. Surveillance may also be done for selected compounds of emerging concern. The majority of the laboratory analyses are conducted by Environment Canada's National Laboratory for Environmental Testing.

My office, in preparing, researching and understanding the impacts of Bill 66, contacted Environment Canada's water quality monitoring division and was assured that their freshwater quality monitoring program continues to perform a range of ongoing monitoring activities tailored specifically for the Great Lakes basin, and that the Great Lakes-focused reports and publications on the results of monitoring are being produced by both Environment Canada's water quality scientists and experts in co-operation with provincial, federal and international partners.

This water quality monitoring information supports decision-making under the Canada-US Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the Canadian federal Great Lakes Program, the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, and lake-wide management plans.

Environment Canada's water quality science also supports action to restore and protect the Great Lakes under the Great Lakes nutrient initiative and the Great Lakes area of concern.

With top-notch data like this that is available with a phone call or a press of a button, I have to question why this Liberal government would need to create a new layer of bureaucracy to measure and monitor the Great Lakes. Really, this would be unacceptable duplication and just

add more cost, which we're afraid will either be passed along to municipalities that have already had too much downloading on their shoulders or else burden taxpayers' shoulders even more.

When we talk about municipalities, I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about the erosion in the power of local planning authorities as well. Going back to statements at ROMA, the member from Simcoe-Grey—my interim leader, Jim Wilson—spoke about the importance of a healthy and effective working relationship between municipal and provincial levels of government. He spoke of the need for fairness, accountability, recognition of municipal priorities and respect for local decision-making power.

If we apply the Premier's rural lens to Bill 66's impact on municipalities, a number of concerns are evident. I'll talk about those concerns in a moment. But I have to tell you that according to news, and members of municipal government who participated in ROMA, they were quite excited that Premier Wynne referenced the need to have a rural lens throughout her speech at ROMA.

I have an article right here that actually is an interesting read. I'll share a couple of quick quotes: "Several hundred conference attendees took in the seminar, but it was when the term 'rural lens' was on the lips of Premier Kathleen Wynne three times during her conference address that Mayor Ginn said he knew the idea was finally getting across.

"Ginn said that awareness at the provincial level is certainly an important step in getting policy-makers to respect the specialized needs of rural Ontario, but action will have to follow."

Speaker, I raise the question today very sincerely, and it's not being smart; it's just standing up for overburdened municipalities across Ontario. I question if the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change applied the rural lens to Bill 66. You'll see through my comments—because I applied the rural lens to this bill, and I think you'll see that he has not. They're not walking their own talk, yet this is something we get time and time again from this Liberal government.

Again, if we apply the rural lens that the Premier referenced as an important tool to making sure policy fits in rural Ontario, there are a number of concerns evident with respect to Bill 66.

Municipalities have faced a number of significant cutbacks in financial transfers, and Bill 66 will download even more costs onto cash-strapped local governments. Despite all of the pushback from municipal councils across Ontario at the government removing municipal land use planning authority under the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, the Liberals have once more introduced a bill that will lead to a greater loss of municipal autonomy.

According to Bill 66, a geographically focused initiative, known as a GFI, prevails in the case of a conflict between a designated policy set out in the proposal and an official plan, zoning bylaw or policy statement issued under the Planning Act. This bill, Bill 66, will require

municipalities to incur costs and amend their official plans with the legislation, and notes that in cases where there are conflicts with other legislation or regulation, “the provision that provides the greatest protection to the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin prevails.”

If an official plan is not amended to conform with designated policies, the minister, together with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, can issue a joint, non-appealable order to amend the official plan. Does that sound like municipal autonomy to you? I don’t think so.

Also, Bill 66 prevents a municipality from performing any public works improvements in an area that is part of a proposal under Bill 66, which could very well conflict with geographically focused initiatives.

It just doesn’t make any sense whatsoever, Speaker. Generations of Ontarians have grown up spending vacation time along the shores of our Great Lakes. I imagine that many people here today have fond memories of going to the cottage and swimming and playing on the beach.

But we need to talk about another threat with specific respect to the loss of municipal autonomy. We have a lot of tourism in Huron–Bruce, as does every lake’s shoreline in Ontario. I can’t be emphatic enough when I say, if we’re going to employ Great Lakes protection, we have to all agree right here, right now in this House that we cannot put industrial wind turbines in our lakes. I think the member from Scarborough, the Minister of Economic Development, can certainly attest that he wouldn’t want turbines in his lake, as we saw happen in 2011.

Going back to municipalities, I’d like to share with you that municipal governments depend on development fees and property taxes for funding, yet Bill 66 could result in development restrictions, delays and confusion in conflicting regulations. We have no reassurance from this Liberal government that Bill 66 would not download costs, as I said, to already overburdened municipalities, especially as this bill does not provide an estimate of the costs for local government, farmers and businesses to comply with any new regulations; nor do we know if this bill actually takes into consideration their ability to pay.

1600

Just to wrap up—I have just over five minutes here—I’d like to share some concluding comments. Again, care for the environment, care for the Great Lakes can never, ever be painted by just one political colour. We all need to do our best to protect what’s a most precious natural resource that we’re so fortunate to have in our province.

While the PC Party is committed to a healthy and prosperous Great Lakes region, I question if it would not be a more expedient and effective approach to work with our federal and American partners to coordinate efforts to protect and remediate issues facing the Great Lakes. In reviewing Ontario’s agreement with the federal government and other available legislative tools, is there a need to create a separate provincial framework? Bill 66 is positioned to create an extra layer of bureaucracy, and I question: Do we need it?

In Bill 66, there is a concern that the province’s direction is drifting more towards creating bureaucracies and regulations and away from the fundamental and adequately funded front-line programs which produce tangible improvements. From a rural lens perspective, Ontario doesn’t need another layer of bureaucracy to tell local decision-makers how to run their communities. What the province needs is for the Liberal government to honour its current agreements and adequately fund and staff programs. I would dare say we do not need more delay, more review and more burdensome regulations.

Funding needs to flow to projects. We all know that adding another layer of bureaucracy could very well be a hurdle in that funding flowing smoothly. Measures to protect our natural heritage must balance environmental concerns with economic ones. We always should be thinking of our fiscal house first and then everything else falls into place from that.

The government must ensure that a sustainable infrastructure for tourism, fishing, industry, transportation and waste water systems is fully supported, and recognize the major role the Great Lakes play in the greater economy of the province. Bill 66 must also recognize the important steps the agricultural sector has taken to address environmental concerns and ensure that this bill does not negatively impact farming operations.

Aspects of Bill 66 which result in the centralization of decision-making to the upper tier of government make it possible to facilitate the downloading of costs to municipalities. The loss of local decision-making and the heavy-handed penalties for non-compliance absolutely needs to be reviewed as this type of legislative overreach does nothing to engender a respectful balance between provincial and municipal levels of government.

I just want to take a moment here with a little sidebar. In my riding of Huron–Bruce, we have a number of people that live along the shoreline. They’ve lived there their entire lives. They absolutely care. One person that I want to give a shout-out to is my constituent manager, Lynne DiCocco. Lynne actually is retiring on Friday. She’s retiring for a second time. Her first career was as a teacher. She was so frustrated with what was going on with the development of industrial wind turbines in the area of Huron–Bruce that she jumped readily and full-heartedly into supporting me in my campaign in 2011. I couldn’t help but recognize her sincere concern and her dedication to the riding. So I offered her an opportunity to work with me, and the three and a half years have just flown by. Before I close off, I just want to say to Lynne, thank you for everything. You lead with your heart. Your dedication to detail and your exact research and commitment to all of Huron–Bruce has made me a better MPP.

Speaker, in closing, I need to go back and say this: I have raised a number of very, very important questions associated with Bill 66. It’s my sincere hope—that the PC Party can help improve this piece of legislation with amendments when this bill makes its way to committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to comment on some of the statements that have been made by the member from Huron–Bruce. I think she does bring a genuine passion to this issue. I do want to say, though, that the most salient point that she made, for me, was the lack of autonomy around municipalities. I have to say, this was a theme that we heard at ROMA this year. It's true that language can be very powerful. They were very pleased that the Premier said "rural Ontario" several times, but there is a genuine concern out of there on behalf of rural municipalities around the interference of centralized power and policy from Queen's Park in those municipalities.

It really does remind me of my time as a trustee at the school board, where, over the years, we were mandated more and more and more to do the work of the province, with very few tools to do so. It's so interesting that as we bring forward these issues of firing teachers across the province, the Minister of Education comes back and blames us as trustees, especially in this caucus, for doing what we actually were legislated to do, which was to have the consultation and do the consolidation of those schools.

Of course, the Premier, when she was a trustee, didn't do that work. She ran a deficit, and a supervisor came into the Toronto Board of Education and she lost her seat at the table because the supervisor had to come in because they ran a deficit. It's a little hypocritical.

The member from Huron–Bruce I think draws the point that legislation needs to be truly consultative. When this does get to committee, as it should, we are going to be very vigilant around introducing amendments that actually make it stronger and that it's not just window dressing, because the environment is too important.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It was interesting listening to the member for Kitchener–Waterloo, given the incredible transfer of authority and autonomy to municipalities when we took over from a government that eviscerated school boards, took away their taxing authority and rendered school trustees much more marginal than they ever had been.

Coming from the member from Huron–Bruce—criticizing us when they forced amalgamation, downloaded 40% of all rural highways onto the rural municipal tax bill, plus downloaded public health and social services at a time when, in every other province, those things were being uploaded.

This government now provides higher levels of municipal funding than any other government in its history.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: No one believes that.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Actually, we do. Some of us were mayors of cities in adjacent jurisdictions while this was going on.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: That's not true.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It is true. And if you were ever active in municipal politics you would know that Ontario municipalities—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I listened to you. I really listened to you without interrupting you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I think it's time to listen to me. I would like interaction through me.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Minister, if you want to get in a cross-debate, you lose time. Try to stick to the issue and talk through me. Thank you.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It's very hard, Mr. Speaker, when you're being interrupted. You can barely hear yourself think.

We went through massive, unprecedented downloads. We have actually given new financial tools to that.

It's also interesting, this description of bureaucracy. There is no bureaucracy. There's nothing enforced. As a matter of fact, it was mostly rural municipalities, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and others who designed a lot of the infrastructure that's going. It's all volunteers. It does not actually duplicate anything. This is a volunteer process that actually catalyzes and connects existing organizations. There is no overarching authority; it is entirely a volunteer network where the province takes responsibility. We're actually putting \$15 million a year into supporting municipalities, farm organizations and environmental groups to do that.

I'm sorry I can't address it, but sadly I lost about one-third of my time, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I guess we shouldn't be interacting with each other.

The member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Maybe they shouldn't be heckling.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I agree.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): If you would like to come up and do my job, you're welcome.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Okay. Thank you.

Continue.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I have great difficulty in seeing why this piece of legislation is needed. It talks about the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River basin, and we all know that the water quality in the Great Lakes, in the St. Lawrence River, in the Ottawa River and in all the lakes across southern Ontario has been improving for years. That's happening, I would say, without government help—sometimes in spite of government help, because people in Ontario are becoming more educated and willing to do what they can to fix the environment, to not pollute, to not detract from the health of our waters, our lands, our wetlands, endangered species and all of those things. People do that.

1610

This piece of legislation does nothing more than what we already do with other legislation, except it's going to create more bureaucracies, like the guardians' council, which will be appointed by somebody but not elected—so very undemocratic. To me, that is dangerous because

we are supposed to be a democratic place where people have their say with their ballot in an election year, and that's not going to happen. We're going to legislate democracy away. We've tried that before, and that was not a good idea.

It's going to give more power to groups potentially that do not have the best interests certainly of private property landowners. Let me speak to that question, the private property landowners. It gives access to property without a warrant, which is a terrible thing. We see that in too much legislation and that practice has to end.

Mr. Speaker, I see I'm out of time. It's a piece of legislation we don't need and we shouldn't have.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to commend the member from Huron–Bruce on her one-hour lead on this Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act, because I could hear in her voice and in her statements the passion she wants to bring from her riding and comment on this bill. I enjoyed your debate.

This bill is the latest bill that's been presented. It has more action and result than the one that was previously presented.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's true.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Yes, it is true. There is a little more teeth in this particular bill, but we know it's not the full picture of how it's supposed to look when it comes to lake protection in Ontario. I think everyone here knows that water is a resource we cannot afford to allow to go down a road where there isn't protection. So things that we can do that are going to help proactively look after our waters, lakes, oceans and even ponds in local communities—wetlands are very important.

This is a bill that needs to be debated. It certainly is something that we'd like to see when we get to committee. As the member from Kitchener–Waterloo mentioned, it looks like there's a lot of work to be done on this bill in order to make sure that it is going to be effective.

There are Earth Days and cleanup days, and I've participated in many of those. I've gone to the Thames River that runs through the city of London, and you wouldn't imagine the things you pull out of that river. You've got bikes and tires, appliances and clothing—anything you can imagine.

So we do have to take better care of our waters and our lakes and oceans. This is certainly a bill that we need to have a discussion about and go forward on.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Huron–Bruce has two minutes.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I certainly appreciate the comments from the members from Kitchener–Waterloo, Carleton–Mississippi Mills, London–Fanshawe and the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Clearly, the fact of the matter is, we all care about the Great Lakes. The manner in which we facilitate that care is what has come into question, and we really do have to work together. As has been suggested by my colleagues to my left, we really do have to try and get together and

not be railroaded in committee to make sure we are comfortable with what's coming forward.

I want to close by sharing a couple of things. First of all, again, I really want to thank Lynne—all the best on your second retirement. Enjoy the lakeshore, as you so deservedly have the opportunity to do now.

But to close, I just want to again go back to the article in a local paper, the Citizen, Thursday, March 26, where the mayor from Central Huron was reflecting on the reference and the seeming commitment to the rural lens that the Premier thought should be laid on every piece of policy that comes through. He said:

“I wish I had a dollar for every time I heard someone complain about a policy made in Toronto....” The article goes on to say, “The driving force behind the development of the rural lens, Ginn said, was the provincial policy statement and its ongoing ignorance of the needs of rural communities.”

Just for everybody today listening and watching, I would invite you all to go and check out this rural lens and apply it to policies affecting your own local municipality. For the full ROMA rural lens, the report can be found on the ROMA website at www.roma.on.ca.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, today we're debating Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015. It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak to this bill. I want to say I appreciate the fact that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is here. He pays attention to his legislation, and he's in the House when we debate it. Even when we disagree, I appreciate the fact that he listens to those disagreements.

I want to start with a few observations: first, that the Ontario NDP believes that access to water is a basic human right—life is impossible without it—and that the Great Lakes is a shared public good. They are a common heritage to all of us in this part of the world.

The Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River basin is hugely important to Ontario's ecology, its tourism and its economy. The Great Lakes define us. They deal with our thirst. They provide us with transport. They provide us with power. They're an extraordinary resource that has shaped the way we have lived in this part of North America. We all need lakes and rivers that are drinkable, that are swimmable and that are fishable. I note that in the preamble to the bill those goals are set out as well. I'm appreciative of that approach.

As you are well aware, Speaker—because you represent Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, you're close to the water—comprehensive government action is long overdue in dealing with the problems that we face with the Great Lakes. They're currently threatened by invasive species and the destruction of shoreline habitats. They're threatened by algae blooms and by low water levels linked to global warming. They're threatened by pollution from sources like sewer overflows, microbeads, pesticide runoff and untreated waste water.

There's no doubt that an ecosystem approach to dealing with the problems of the Great Lakes is what's

needed to bring everyone together to solve a problem in a particular area. Breaking us and our actions down into silos is not going to address the substantial, profound problems and challenges that we face with the Great Lakes.

At the end of the day, we need clear accountability. We need to know that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change will be accountable for fulfilling the goals of this act so there's no confusion over who is to be called on when a problem presents itself—no confusion for the minister involved and no confusion for the government involved; there is a point person who will be dealing with what's before us.

My, Speaker, you've become so much more handsome in the last few minutes, and I don't know what it is.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Wayne Gates): I appreciate that.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: We welcome the introduction of the Great Lakes act, but I want to say to the minister and I want to say to the chamber as a whole that without follow-through, without investment and without enforcement, this bill will just be a plan to create a plan. We have to ensure that the bill is not merely symbolic but that it sets strong targets and timelines, ensures clear accountability, is adequately funded and leads to effective enforcement and measurable progress.

The Great Lakes need protection, but the government must not use this act as a means to avoid accountability and to download costly provincial responsibilities onto other public bodies, notably municipalities.

I want to give credit to those citizen activists, those environmental activists, those people who have a great love for the Great Lakes who have worked diligently through the years advancing this agenda.

This is the third iteration of this bill, Speaker. The people who have pushed for the cleanup of the lakes and for action on the lakes never stopped, never were discouraged and never gave up because they understood what was at stake.

1620

The threat to the lakes is substantial, and a strong response is way overdue. I measure the response not by the number of reports that have been published, not by the number of laws that have been passed, but by the realities that people who live on the Great Lakes have to respond to, year to year.

I'll give you an example. Last year, toxic algae blooms shut down the water system in Toledo, Ohio—shut it down. On Saturday, August 2, the people of Toledo, Ohio, were told that they couldn't drink the water, that they couldn't wash with it and that they should stay away from it. Local news outlets told people, "Don't use the ice cubes from your refrigerator's ice-cube-making system because they could be contaminated."

Let me quote the headline from one of the local news organizations: "Algae Infects Lake Erie, Forces State of Emergency Due to Toxic Water.

"Water was deemed unsafe to use for all purposes for nearly 400,000 people"—400,000 people. My colleague

here from Hamilton Mountain—a city about the size of that, 400,000, 450,000.

Imagine you, Speaker, representing an area, and finding out when you wake up on a Saturday morning that no one in your riding can use the water, that they have to depend on bottled water or whatever they've saved in any other context. It is a crisis. It is an emergency. And it isn't something distant or far off; it has, in fact, happened—a major city forced to shut down its water system because of the deterioration of, the contamination of, one of the Great Lakes. The water couldn't be boiled to make it drinkable. That concentrated the toxin. The governor of Ohio declared an emergency for Toledo and the surrounding countryside. They had to go into action quickly, bringing bottled water, water containers, into the city so people could at least drink. They couldn't wash, they couldn't do their dishes, they couldn't do their laundry, but at least they had water to drink.

Detroit and Cleveland had to test their water. Think about it, Speaker: Detroit, Cleveland, Windsor—major cities in a situation where public officials couldn't be certain that the water would be safe—had to test on a regular basis to ensure that their responsibility to the people of their city was carried out. No water; no city. And this problem is not going away.

That shutdown of the municipal water system in Toledo caught the attention of people across North America. National Geographic wrote an extensive article, parts of which I'm going to quote, about this problem, because it bears directly on what we're dealing with today. The headline was, "Driven by Climate Change, Algae Blooms Behind Ohio Water Scare Are New Normal: Climate Change and Increased Runoff Are Triggering More Potentially Toxic Blooms."

You, Speaker, know about this issue. I had an opportunity a few days ago to talk to you about this, and you said, "If you're going to talk about the Great Lakes, for God's sake, talk about Lake Erie and talk about the problem with the algae blooms."

We all here have to recognize the fact that as the world gets hotter, lakes like Lake Erie, which are very shallow, are going to become more and more hospitable to these algae blooms. As we see more and more invasive species like zebra mussels, which take out of the water the relatively benign algae, they leave ecological space for these toxic algae. So we've got climate change making the lakes hotter, we've got invasive species disrupting the ecosystem, and we have a problem with pollution—fertilizer, leaks from septic tanks—leaking into that lake and making it impossible for people to even use the water for washing.

Speaker, the kind of algae that were blooming in Lake Erie need warm temperatures and the nutrients phosphorus and nitrogen to grow. We combine all those things and we get water that we can't drink, that we shouldn't even be near.

I want to note that strong winds—as you're well aware, as the world gets hotter, we'll get more intense

storm activity—can drive blooms at the water’s surface down into the depths of the lake, where water intake pipes can draw contaminated water into systems serving municipalities.

Speaker, it’s not just a problem on the surface; it’s not just a problem of something looking ugly—and it is. It’s a problem threatening the water systems of millions of people in the central part of North America.

One of the people with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the United States, who was interviewed by National Geographic, noted that it didn’t take very long for aquatic systems like Lake Erie to get thrown off balance, but it takes patience and long-term management to get them back to a healthy state.

Mr. Davis said that the biggest thing people need to be aware of is that there is no short-term solution. Our lakes and coastal systems are out of balance. Anyone who represents an area whose drinking water system is threatened knows precisely how profound the problem is.

Speaker, I took your advice about the problem in Fort Erie, and I Googled a bit and came across a website—the Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada real estate blog—talking about toxic algae in Lake Erie. I have to say to all of you here that for a site that’s put up by a real estate firm, it was a very well written, very well researched article on the problem that was faced and the history—and very graphic in its description.

What is toxic blue-green algae and why is it a problem? Here’s what they had to say:

“It reeks of rotting fish or an open sewer; strong and nauseating. It can contain *E. coli* bacteria, which is harmful when ingested by humans or pets. It can also contain cyanotoxin, which can cause skin irritation, respiratory difficulty and gastrointestinal distress.

“Toxic algae appears every summer. The more frequent and heavy the rain downpours, the worse it becomes.” As you’re well aware, Speaker, we’re going to see more frequent extreme downpours in the years to come. “Algae feed on phosphorus. New farming techniques, climate change, and changes in Lake Erie’s ecosystem make pollution a stubborn problem.”

Now, in the 1960s, Lake Erie water quality was usually problematic. Lake Erie was written off as a dead lake, and it took billions of dollars of investment, tight regulation and action at all levels of government on both sides of the border to actually bring that lake back. And for a while we had success. But the algae blooms have returned. As it gets hotter, the conditions that cause the algae to bloom are friendlier to them than they are to us.

In the summer of 2011, “Lake Erie faced the largest algae bloom in recorded history, with one sixth of its waters covered, and tainting drinking water for 2.8 million people. Toxic blue-green algae spread in some areas as far as one could see, and up onto the shore. Hundreds of thousands of dead fish washed onto shores.”

Speaker, I grew up in Hamilton. I remember going out to Burlington and just walking along the beach strip and seeing thousands of fish—even then, as a kid—washed up on the shore. The stink was incredible. I know what people were facing when they dealt with this in 2011.

The Great Lakes face multiple threats. Pollution, global warming and invasive species are three of the biggest. A bill—a law—is not enough to protect the Great Lakes, even in the face of imminent threat. I’ve debated many a water bill in this Legislature. Believe me, Speaker, I have; I have seen them come and go since 2006. Many have passed, and yet we continue to face severe problems with the health of the Great Lakes.

1630

I have to ask: Will the government have the strength and the will to take on the problems? This minister has a long history with environmental issues. I don’t have a question about his interest in them. Will his government let him do what needs to be done? Will it give him the budget that he needs to do the task? Will the Premier let him do what he has to do?

We can pass a thousand bills like this. We can pass bills like this every day, but if there’s no effective climate plan, if there’s no effective enforcement of laws to protect the environment, then the laws will just jam up server space at some IT facility somewhere here in Ontario and will have no other effect, and our lakes will deteriorate.

Let me tell you why I’m worried that even a good bill is not enough, because without enforcement, the problems that we see will just continue to visit themselves upon us.

Timmins Press reported on March 17 about the interim report on the Gogama area train derailment, the one that occurred March 7. The Transportation Safety Board said that it might have been the result of very heavy oil trains passing over those tracks. The Transportation Safety Board said, “Preliminary indications are that track infrastructure failures may have played a role in each of the Gogama accidents.”

Over a period of three weeks there were three major train derailments. Luckily, in one case, the train was empty; it was empty cars being shuttled back to be re-filled. But we’re not always lucky. In one of those incidents we had a major fire.

“In two incidents, one on February 14, the other on March 7, CN freight trains hauling between 94 and 100 tank cars loaded with crude oil had derailments while travelling along the CN mainline, which is part of what CN calls the Ruel Subdivision.”

There were permanent slow orders on much of this rail line, and the transportation board very discreetly in their report said, “There were permanent slow orders on much of the subdivision”—that’s the rail line—“to protect against various infrastructure and track maintenance issues.”

“At the time of the March 7 derailment, the eastbound freight was moving at 43 miles per hour,” said the Transportation Safety Board. “The two locomotives had crossed the Makami River steel bridge. The train began braking on its own and the crew looked back to see that a fireball erupted among the oil tank cars about 700 feet away.

“One of the cars broke free of the train and rolled down the riverbank, breaking through the ice and into the

Makami River. Other cars rolled off the tracks as well, 38 altogether. 'A number of the cars were breached, released product'"—that's dumped this huge volume of diluted bitumen, tar sands oil—"and ignited a large pool fire which destroyed the steel rail bridge. Most of the remaining cars sustained fire damage ranging from minor to severe. About 700 feet of track was destroyed,' said the Transportation Safety Board...."

They're still examining. They're looking at the rail components from the derailment site; they're sampling and testing product from the cars.

I want to tell you, Speaker, that France Gélinas, the member from Nickel Belt, was in her home on the morning of March 7 when she noticed all these messages come piling in on her BlackBerry. At 8 a.m. she phones back and talks to people in Gogama, who say, "We've had this massive derailment. We're in the town. We can see these huge flames. We can see this pillar of smoke." So she drove out. It's about two and a half hours. She could see the flames, 10 metres shooting into the air, and 300 metres above that, this plume of smoke—heavy, thick, oily smoke—carrying soot and unburned oil all over that region. That fire burned for three days; 32 tanker cars were involved.

Madame Gélinas came to the area, to Gogama, around 11; at about 1 p.m. it started to snow. You know those big, fluffy, wet flakes that come down? You know the ones that we've all seen sort of towards the end of winter or the beginning of winter? They're not really hard and sharp. These had come down from the clouds above and they drifted down through that plume of smoke. So what they were getting in Gogama was grey snow, not white snow—big fluffy, flakes of snow that had picked up oil and soot as they drifted down. That spread all over the lake, all over the river and all over the adjoining houses. Speaker, as you well know, it would have settled down onto the branches of trees, onto the needles of pine trees, on pine cones. It would have spread itself on the rocks. You had this layer of grey snow all around. For three days that fire burned, dumping oil in the water, in the river and the lakes.

It's my understanding from Madame Gélinas that there has been a significant effort to try and clean up. The cleanup crews understand that diluted bitumen doesn't float for very long. It falls to the bottom of the lakes, so they put nets all along the bottom of the lake, all along the bottom of the river. But I want to say to you, Speaker—and I've snorkeled some northern lakes. They're not like a plastic basin. They're lumpy. They have rocks sticking up here and there. I'm sure there are people who have, with their own boats, discovered rocks in those lakes from time to time. If they're successful in getting 50% of the oil that was spilled, that will be impressive. If they're able to get 60% of the oil, that will be impressive; 70% of the oil will be impressive. But they won't get 100% of that oil. All the oil and soot that has coated the pine needles and the branches of the trees throughout that region is going to be part of that environment as all that snow melts. And it is melting. It is melting now.

Madame Gélinas and I together wrote a letter to the minister on March 10 asking him to take action to clean up the spill. By all accounts, in fact, action has been taken, and he wrote back to that effect. But we also asked—and I repeat it in this chamber today—that there needs to be an investigation. If, in fact, CN Rail is responsible for this spill, if they were, through an act of commission or omission, responsible for contaminating this large part of Nickel Belt, this part of a watershed that runs into Lake Huron, it isn't just a question of remediation, it's also a question of laying charges and seeking damages. If you rob a bank, and the money is recovered, you still robbed a bank. If you contaminate a large area, if you contaminate a lake or river, and they're able to get all that oil—which, frankly, I can't see physically happening—you still caused a threat to the environment.

When we wrote to the minister, we said, "Where environmental laws have been broken, CN and the owners of the oil"—I think that was Valero petroleum—"should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. You should also ensure that containment and cleanup are undertaken by CN and that this is overseen by your ministry."

I want to thank the staff at the Ministry of the Environment. I want to thank the first responders. I want to thank all of those who have been part of that cleanup. Again, there are profound physical limits to the amount that they can actually clean up. But I also say, if we're going to have real protection of water, then those who create this kind of contamination have to be charged. It has to be factored into their business plan. They have to know that if they just come close to incinerating a village in the middle of the night, but they fail to do that and just simply contaminate the environment for many square kilometres, that is of serious consequence to them as corporate executives and as corporations. The minister has substantial power to order remediation and cleanup and he has substantial power to prosecute this corporation.

1640

I would also suggest, and Madame Gélinas suggested, that it would be good for the Ministry of the Environment to take leadership and meet with the people from that region and help them prepare their claims, because right now they're at a bit of a loss. They don't know how to calculate a claim in this case. They don't know, when the ice melts, if their waterlines running into the lake will bring in water or oil. They don't know, as the ice and the snow melt and the water goes into the soil, whether their wells will be contaminated or not. The day after the derailment they probably weren't contaminated, but the snow has melted now. The grey snow has melted, and the soot and the oil are spread everywhere.

For us, for this Legislature, we know that there are substantial powers in the Environmental Protection Act to prosecute. There are substantial penalties. I would say that an investigation should be done. The results of the investigation should be made public. If the corporations involved are responsible, then there should be charges laid and fines levied and whatever other penalties are available.

This is a long story. I raise this story because, if we're actually going to protect the Great Lakes, we have to know that there will be substantial enforcement against those who damage the Great Lakes. If there is not substantial enforcement against them, then we have an interesting debate here today and we'll have other interesting debates in committee and we'll probably have an interesting debate at third reading. But in the end, will you be able to drink the water in Fort Erie? I don't know. Will you be able to drink the water in Gogama? I don't know.

I am hopeful that investigation will take place. I'm hopeful that charges will be laid if the evidence is there. I have to ask you, Speaker: If you can crash a train, flood a river with oil and almost incinerate a village and not be charged, what do you have to do in this province to get in trouble with the law? Because, I would say, this pretty much sets you in a position.

Interjections.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I gather there are many comments by other members.

I've talked about my concerns with lack of enforcement in northern Ontario—or, sorry, so far, an apparent lack of enforcement. That remains to be seen. I look forward to seeing what comes out.

I want to talk about a threat to a source of water that's closer to this Legislative Building, and that's the threat to the Great Lakes and the need for action arising from Line 9. I wrote to the minister in February laying out my concerns with a pipeline that crosses major waterways all along the north shore of Lake Ontario.

The provincial government has spoken out. I remember when Mr. Bradley, as Minister of the Environment, raised his objections to the National Energy Board. We pressed him to go further. He said, "It was outside our legal jurisdiction." I actually sought other legal advice, and the best I could get was, "It's unclear." I'd say that where it's unclear and where you have a national government, a Harper government for whom the environment is not even a factor of consideration—in fact, it may well be a negative consideration—it's up to the province of Ontario to defend the people of Ontario. When we are abandoned by the federal government, what instruments, what tools, are at our hands to take these people on?

I wrote to the minister and said:

"As you know, Enbridge is in the process of applying for 'leave to open' approval for its Line 9B pipeline, which will carry diluted bitumen"—the same material that burned in Gogama—"across major river systems from North Westover to Montreal. A pipeline spill here would have a devastating effect on these river systems, whose watersheds supply drinking water for more than half of Ontarians."

Speaker, more than half of Ontarians are in the risk area for a substantial leak from that pipeline.

Enbridge's application comes after the National Energy Board inexplicably reversed its previous decision to suspend its approval of the project. If you remember, the suspension was due to Enbridge's failure to install

emergency shut-off valves on either side of all major water crossings as it is required to do. Based on pretty much the same information it possessed when it suspended the approval, the National Energy Board has now decided that Enbridge's preferred shut-off system is adequate after all.

Speaker, to leave the safety of our drinking water in the hands of the Harper government is irresponsible. I alerted the minister and the government to a recent report by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration in the United States. Its September 18, 2014, advisory warns that reversing the flow of a pipeline or changing the product can have a "significant impact" on the line's safety and integrity and may not be advisable in some cases. Both risk factors apply to the line 9B pipeline.

The American advisory recommends hydrostatic pressure tests in light of recent pipeline spills and other information that the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration has become aware of, and yet the NEB's approval of the line 9B pipeline reversal did not require such a test to confirm pipeline integrity. I guess we will get to find out. Maybe it will blow; maybe it won't—hopefully not in Hamilton Harbour, hopefully not into the Humber River, hopefully not into the Ganaraska, hopefully not into the Moira. Take your pick. There are many great rivers flowing into Lake Ontario that are crossed by that pipeline.

It was reasonable for the province to request hydrostatic pressure testing. It was reasonable for the NEB to say, "You can't put this into effect until you put shut-off valves on either side of the river." But, Speaker, we're in a situation where our drinking water, our Lake Ontario, our rivers are at threat with a federal government that won't act and a provincial government, to date, that hasn't. We need more active intervention on this file. We need more active intervention.

I'll note that on March 31, Toronto city council, equally aware of this problem, passed a resolution put forward by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Sarah Doucette—two sensible councillors—asking Enbridge to install automatic shut-off valves on either side of the city of Toronto's major watercourses.

"City council request that the National Energy Board not allow Enbridge the leave to open on the grounds that condition 16 of the National Energy Board's decision has not been fully met at water crossings along line 9B and therefore the greater Toronto area's drinking water have been left at risk."

Their summary noted:

"The NEB approved Enbridge's application, subject to 30 detailed conditions. These 30 conditions need to be met before Enbridge can apply for a leave to open"—to actually carry forward the project they want to carry forward.

The city of Toronto and other intervenors have no formal input into that leave-to-open decision, but the National Energy Board asked Enbridge to consult with the city. The city notes that the Canadian codes and

standards association require that automatic shut-off valves be placed on both sides of major water crossings, which include the Humber, Don and Rouge, as well as other watercourses within Toronto.

Speaker, it is a good thing for us to debate a future law, and hopefully a future law will be put in place with the budget, the enforcement, the other coterie of laws that are needed to make it effective, but it is just as important to use the laws that are already on the books to protect the water that we depend on every day to drink. We don't want to be in Hamilton, Kingston, Toronto, Belleville, Brockville or Cornwall—take your pick—in a situation where we have to shut down our water system.

1650

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority expressed huge concerns about the lack of automatic shut-off valves for the pipeline crossing through the Don. They said that there were not enough automatic shut-off valves in the GTA, given the significance of our watershed, urban population and infrastructure, especially our drinking water intakes and source water protection areas. The TRCA—Toronto and Region Conservation Authority—pointed out that it would take up to two hours before Enbridge even detects a leak or spill through their automated system, and then for the automatic shut-off valves to be triggered. That means that for more than two hours, oil could be spilling into our rivers and beginning to flow down to our drinking water. The distance between a shut-off valve and the watercourse means that even when the valve is closed, the oil remaining in the pipeline may continue to flow towards the watercourse.

No one in this city, and no one in any of the cities along the north shore of Lake Ontario, wants to be in a position where they have to shut down their water system because there's been a pipeline spill and that oil is flowing toward the water intake valves. If you were to shut off the water in Toronto, because the water is supplied also to the cities north of Toronto, you're talking about 3.2 million people who would be deprived of drinking water—totally unmanageable, Speaker.

We need to use the laws that are already on the books. We need to be willing to push into uncharted territory to protect our drinking water. We know that the federal government isn't going to do that. It's up to us here at the provincial level. The National Energy Board is in a fetal position on the floor with regard to protecting the environment. It's left to us to do something about it.

I want to look to the future and why this bill will be totally ineffective if we don't have action on climate change. Everyone knows that the sewage systems in our cities and towns in this province were designed for a climate that no longer exists. It's over. What was a 100-year storm 20 or 30 years ago is now going to be a five- or 10-year storm. That means that we will not only have basements flooded with sewage, but we will also have sewer overflows into the lakes.

There's no question that there will be more intense rainfall events, and we need the planning today for the adaptation. Again, whatever value there is to this bill, if

we don't have green infrastructure, trees, permeable paving—all of those elements—along with an investment in a sewer water system, then our lakes and our rivers will be flooded with sewage on a regular basis. This bill will not be enough.

Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller released a report a few years ago in 2012. It was called Ready for Change? An Assessment of Ontario's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. He felt that the province was starting to address some of the issues around climate change. He endorsed the government's plan, Climate Ready: Ontario's Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2014), but he did note very substantial gaps in that plan that will affect us, that affect the course of this bill. And this is another matter, but where the Environmental Commissioner was prescient: "'For example, despite the importance of our energy distribution and transmission system,' says Miller, 'the Climate Ready plan released in 2011 does not identify any actions to be taken by the Ministry of Energy. This concerns me because scientists are predicting an increase in devastating ice storms, like the one that toppled power lines and transmission towers and caused blackouts in 1998.'"

Well, he said that in 2012. In December 2013, the ice storm swept through the GTA, causing blackouts—for some people, for weeks. We weren't ready, Speaker. An adaptation plan for our energy system—our electricity system—was not carried through and, as far as I can tell, is still not in the process of being carried through.

The Environmental Commissioner noted that climate change threatened thousands of tourism and recreation jobs, and hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue for the tourism industry, and noted a few rainfall events: "In July of 2009, Hamilton got 109 millimetres of rain in two hours, one of the biggest bursts of rain on record in Canada. Insurance losses were between \$200 and \$300 million." That followed "unprecedented rainfall in Peterborough in 2004, floods swept through the downtown, causing more than \$112 million in damage." Toronto in 2013: \$600 million in damage. The costs are mounting up.

In addition to this bill, there has to be a plan not only to slow down global warming but to adapt to that warming that we aren't going to be able to avoid at all. Without that adaptation and that preparation, we cannot keep our lakes clean. We can't keep them drinkable or swimmable or fishable; they won't be.

Let's look at some of the key provisions of the bill itself. I have set out what I think is the context: a need for enforcement, the imminence of the threat and the scale of the problems facing us in the future.

The bill's stated purpose is "to protect and restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin and to create opportunities for individuals and communities to become involved" in the protection and restoration of the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin. A fair goal. I think it makes sense to try to mobilize people and try to bring communities onside and get them involved in protecting the health of

the lakes. There's certainly the interest out there; no doubt about it, Speaker.

The bill's preamble refers to the Great Lakes Strategy's vision of Great Lakes that are drinkable, swimmable and fishable; something we agree with. Not a problem.

There are already several statutes that protect water and the Great Lakes, but these are spread across different ministries and jurisdictions. This act brings that together and focuses attention on specific areas within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin.

The act has several components—I'm going to address a few of them here—including the Guardians' Council, the Great Lakes Strategy, target and plans, proposals and geographically focused initiatives.

The Great Lakes Guardians' Council: The bill establishes a Great Lakes Guardians' Council made up of the Minister of the Environment as well as other stakeholders with connections to the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River basin. The council will meet at least once a year to discuss priorities for action, funding measures, targets and initiatives.

It's important to say that this Guardians' Council is a forum. It's not a body that has decision-making power. As best I can tell—and perhaps the minister will enlarge upon this at a later point—it's a place where you get all the stakeholders together to try to hash through the problems of the day; what interests will be touched by addressing or not addressing those issues; and, hopefully, developing a framework of thought and concept that will allow the government of the day to move forward on those issues.

The minister, as he or she considers advisable, may invite other Great Lakes ministers to the council meetings. That would be other ministers of the crown who have some involvement in the Great Lakes Strategy, such as the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

The minister shall, as he or she considers advisable, invite representatives from municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities with a relationship to the basin, and environmental organizations, the scientific community, and the industrial, agricultural, recreational and tourism sectors in the basin—a pretty broad net. There is always the danger that it will just be a talking shop. But again, I think it could be a useful tool for a minister to be able to canvass opinion across a broad range of interests fairly quickly.

1700

I'll say, Speaker, that should the bill proceed, should this be put in place, it is going to be fairly critical for it to be open, for the public to be able to follow the discussions, for there to be a public record, and it would be advisable for the minister to make sure that it was pretty broad in terms of those who attend. If we're going to have that sort of body, openness and a broad spectrum of opinion are going to be required.

The Great Lakes Strategy: The act requires the minister to maintain and update Ontario's Great Lakes

Strategy, which was released in December 2012, and to review the strategy at least every six years. The strategy must include principles and performance measures as well as monitoring and reporting provisions. The minister must report to the assembly every three years—I think that's a good idea: having the minister report, having an opportunity to question the minister, requiring the minister to highlight what's been done. I assume the minister will not highlight what has been omitted; that will be our job. We will bring it to the minister's attention, no doubt about it.

I think it's a good idea for the minister to develop a strategy. I think it's a good idea for him or her to report on the progress of that strategy. But I add this, Speaker: When you put together a strategy, you should cost it. I've been through a lot of organizations in my lifetime and I've dealt with a lot of phantom goals. If you don't have to cost it, then you can have 100 goals. If you have to cost it, very quickly you realize you aren't going to be doing 100 things; you may be doing five. I think it's going to be important for the integrity of this process to have price tags affixed to initiatives so that people will be forced to make real choices and forced to narrow their priorities to those that are actually doable.

Targets and plans: The act allows the Minister of the Environment to set a qualitative or quantitative target to protect and restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin. It says the minister "may" establish a plan to achieve this target after consulting with other Great Lakes ministers. I would hope that the minister would have to establish a plan. We will see.

The minister must specifically set a target to address algae blooms within two years. No question, two years—I mean, you could quibble, you could say one year. My guess is, to actually go out and consult broadly, to look at the science—sure, two years may be a reasonable length of time, but whatever comes back has to be concrete. People who live along the shores of Lake Erie, people who love to go to Lake Erie, who love to go to Long Point, who love to go to Port Dover—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: There's lots.

They have to know there will be concrete goals set. It's obvious that we would want a virtual elimination of algae blooms within a set period of time. My hope is that in fact that one comes forward very quickly.

In addition, the Minister of Natural Resources "may," and it should be "shall," set a target of preventing the net loss of wetlands. I actually think that the government should be looking at restoring wetlands. It's critical to the health of the lake, critical to the ecosystem, critical to species diversity—not just protecting but expanding.

The targets need to be concrete, measurable and ambitious. I actually had a chance to look through the Great Lakes Strategy from 2012, read some sections in detail, others I could see that I'd read much of that before in other circumstances. But there was a vagueness in the targets that I think has to be avoided in whatever comes out of this bill.

Protecting water for human and ecological health—we've got the goal here: "Drinking water meets a high standard of safety—as demonstrated by municipal residential drinking water systems meeting provincial drinking water standards."

So you'd ask, is that all municipal water systems? Is that some municipal water systems? Is that most municipal water systems? It has to be clearly defined.

"Reduced levels of harmful pollutants in the Great Lakes ecosystem—as demonstrated by declining fish tissue contaminant levels and fish consumption advisories...." Well, you can decline from 100 to 99 and that's a decline. You can decline from 100 to 90 and that's a decline. Speaker, when a plan is set forward, there have to be meaningful targets that people can assess and that a minister or government can be held accountable for. That's what we need in setting these targets.

The bill also provides for proposals and geographically focused initiatives. The minister may request initiation of these initiatives, may ask for amendments to them. He can actually have a fair amount of impact on local zoning and local planning. And there will be times and places where that will be of great consequence, because the government's responsibility is for the Great Lakes basin as a whole, for the watershed as a whole. They may have a broader vision than a municipality; there may be a zoning decision that will conflict with good environmental planning. It's useful for the minister to be able to speak to this.

I do have a concern, though, Speaker, and that's that we'd like to hear from the minister how it's going to be ensured that there won't be a downloading of responsibilities on municipalities. Fair enough that you want to have a legislative framework within which they operate. Fair enough that you want to make sure that they have regard for a higher level of environmental protection. But governments come and go, ministers come and go, fairness comes and goes, and municipalities are often stretched to their financial limits now. We have to have an explanation of how downloading will be avoided in this context.

There's a concern that the latest version of this bill adds a new clause allowing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations that exempt "any person or class of persons from any provisions of this act or the regulations...." The Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance strongly opposes the addition of this clause, remembering how a similar clause was used by the Ministry of Natural Resources to gut the Endangered Species Act. So the question here for the minister and the ministry is, what is the basis for any exemptions? How does the bill ensure they won't be abused? Because absent a clear mechanism for making sure that this doesn't allow any minister to undermine the fundamentals of the bill, we'd have to oppose this. And I would ask other legislators to oppose this. An exemption that allows the purpose and the thrust of the bill to be profoundly undermined doesn't make any sense to me, Speaker—none.

We've seen commentary posted by a number of those who are stakeholders and have an interest in the bill. The

Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance is a group brought together that contains Ecojustice, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Environmental Defence, Ducks Unlimited, Nature Canada and Sierra Club Ontario. So a fairly substantial body of environmental non-governmental organizations—although would Ducks Unlimited call themselves that? They may well—certainly people who represent a broad spectrum of opinion, a fair amount of knowledge. They have an interest in this bill and they have been a driving force in making sure that the government of the day addresses the question of the Great Lakes.

They have concerns about improvements they want to see in this bill. They want to have the act's purposes strengthened to specifically refer to coastal areas, migratory habitats, important bird and biodiversity areas, and add urban and rural storm water and promoting green infrastructure as an example of response to climate change. It seems like a reasonable thrust to me. I'm sure that when we have committee hearings they will expand on their concerns here.

It certainly makes sense to me that they're pressing for formal recognition of green infrastructure. As you're probably aware, Speaker, if a city has a large canopy, a very large planting of trees, those trees can hold a lot of water in rainstorms, and prevent sewer overflow. Their leaves hold just huge quantities of water. It's a way of slowing down the impact. It gives us shade, cools down cities, holds water and is a lot less expensive than building a lot of concrete sewer lines, or a fairly cheap supplement or additional measure to make the impact of our investments go further.

1710

They suggest that there be an alignment in the direction of all ministries with the Great Lakes Strategy so that all ministries that have any impact on the Great Lakes will have their goals and actions aligned with it. They suggest a strengthening around targets. The minister, they suggest, must set within a reasonable time frame at least one target with respect to each of the act's purposes. The minister shall—not may—prepare a plan to achieve an established target. The Minister of Natural Resources shall—not may—establish a target to address the loss of wetlands. The target will seek to address or reverse wetland loss.

The Minister of Natural Resources may only set a target for wetlands, since wetlands fall within MNR jurisdiction. Otherwise, only the Ministry of the Environment is responsible for setting targets, making it very clear who is accountable, who has authority, who has responsibility. They emphasize that they have a very strong objection to the no-exemptions clause. They don't want exemptions to be part of this bill.

I gather, and my colleague from the Progressive Conservative Party raised this in her speech, that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has concerns. They are a substantial organization. They're ones that should be part of this process. I'm assuming they've talked with the minister already. I have no doubt that they will appear before

a committee. I think we should listen to them. Where there are problems that are demonstrably present, where we can see how we can reconcile the different interests, we should be trying to accommodate what their concerns are. They are a thoughtful group.

AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, has concerns as well. I've mentioned this, about the question of downloading. They want to be reassured that they won't simply have to assume costs for environmental protection that have been left behind by the province. I think it's a reasonable request on their part. We want our cities, our municipalities and our towns to function well. They can't function well if they're always stressed financially. They, in particular, say the province and the federal government should be responsible for funding policies to protect the basin, including financial support for capital upgrades that may be needed by municipalities, agriculture and industry. I think it's reasonable to say that the senior levels of government should be carrying the bulk of the tab for all of this.

Speaker, if you start going through the numbers around the Great Lakes, they're quite extraordinary, and you can go on for a long time. I won't go on for a long time. But I'll just note that more than 80% of Ontarians get their drinking water from the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes make up 20% of Earth's fresh surface water—it's extraordinary. But the Great Lakes replenish slowly, at about 1% per year. Effectively, what we have is what's left over from the last ice age. If we lose it, if we mess it up, we don't get a second round for a long time—a long, long time. That's why having a bill that is thorough, strategic and effective in partnership with other actions, like action on climate change, action on climate change adaptation, and why enforcement and budgeting are all needed to actually make sure that these Great Lakes that define us are protected by us. Thank you, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I thank the member from Toronto–Danforth. Questions and comments?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I am a big fan of the member for Toronto–Danforth, and I want to thank him for what I think was an extraordinarily intelligent and constructive speech. I'll do something ministers are not supposed to do: I liked some of the critiques you made, and I hope that we can work together to try to improve the bill a bit.

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: No, but I really do.

I want to address two things that the member said, because I thought that was a very thoughtful speech, and very helpful. One is on downloading to municipalities. I want to give you my assurance that that is the exact opposite of what we're doing. When I was mayor of that suburb of Kenora, I watched the mayor of Kenora—I'm joking. Winnipeg is a suburb of Kenora; that's my joke.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'd never heard it referred to that way.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Yes. Dave Canfield was the mayor there, and I watched the health and social service downloading, and how frustrating it was for a small

municipality like Kenora, with 19 bridges, to absorb the kind of capital downloading that they saw. I'd rather jump off the top of the Ferguson Block than ever be party to that.

The second thing was money. You're right, because it does give you discipline. There's \$15 million a year here. I wish it was more, but given the constrained period we're in, it's significant new money annually. I hope we can share in that conversation.

But I just want to point out that the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills said there was nothing wrong with the Great Lakes and they're getting better. That's not my read on it, Mr. Speaker. We have incredible problems with pharmaceuticals and with invasive species. We have acidification destroying the daphnia, the basic phytoplankton that is the basis of our life. We've got pharmaceuticals—neonics, as they're called, actually break down in water, and what we're finding in our research is that, never mind bees, they're terrible to water invertebrates and amphibians, because they are breaking down in our water system and becoming four or five times more concentrated than they are when they're laid in the fields. So we have that.

We also have the Invasive Species Act, the toxics act, which we're applying, the climate change work we're doing, and the water source protection act, so there are many pieces of legislation that have to come together.

Thank you very much to the member for Toronto–Danforth for his leadership on this. I appreciate it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise today to speak on Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act. I've listened very carefully to the comments made by the member from Toronto–Danforth, and I know he's passionate about the environmental file. Some of the concerns that I've heard brought up I've heard not only in this bill, but in the previous bill the government brought in on the Great Lakes Protection Act.

There is a real concern out there about what's going to be downloaded. You may make the promise now that it won't happen. However, it's like the Ontario Clean Water Act. We're seeing tremendous costs that will be associated with that down the road as we introduce source water protection. We know that already. That has happened. We see it and we understand that that is a fact of life.

However, it's so easy to sit and pass legislation in this Legislature and say, "Well, no, we're going to absorb all the costs." In fact, Mr. Speaker, you know that in almost all cases someone else pays the costs, and that's a real problem that we will have, I think, with some of the work around the Great Lakes Protection Act.

I don't think there's a soul who doesn't want to see the Great Lakes—you know, they are a group of lakes that are the—

Mr. John Yakabuski: The jewel.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: —the jewel of clean water on the whole planet, not just in Canada, not just in the US,

but right across the world. I don't think there's anything else like it, so we would all be fools if we did not want to make sure that that group of lakes were kept completely clean and perfect for many, many generations to come.

But we also have to look at all of our other jurisdictional partners who we have to be concerned about, as well: all the American states that abut them, and American cities like Chicago, Detroit and all those places. They all have a role to play, too.

We can stand here, say we're doing a wonderful job and pass this legislation, but there's a lot of other work that has to be done down the road. I could go on all day on this, and maybe I will get a chance to chat to this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Miss Monique Taylor: I am absolutely pleased, privileged and proud to be able to stand and speak to my caucus member the member from Toronto–Danforth and the absolutely wonderful presentation that he put on for us today. I'll tell you, I was completely engulfed in everything that he had to say. It was really a complete learning experience, with the in-depth knowledge and work that he has done on this bill. I'm happy to hear the minister thank the member for that work and recognize the work that he puts into this type of bill.

The member raised some really great issues about what this bill would do for our future, when we have climate change and invasive species, and we hear about algae bloom and what that's doing to Lake Erie, and the concerns that are happening with our lakes.

1720

So I'm pleased to see a bill like this come forward, but the member also raised concerns that there has to be teeth and that it has to be the minister "shall" instead of "may." He said that quite a few times. I heard the minister say that those are things that are being looked at. I hope so.

Another concern was the fact that there has to be money put behind this to make sure it can work, so that municipalities aren't being downloaded with the costs and concerns to ensure that the Great Lakes Strategy vision can live up to that vision, saying that the Great Lakes are drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

I know that's something that I, of course, love to enjoy as I live in the beautiful province of Ontario and the country of Canada. I know that many of us do, because if we travel to other parts of the world, we know that they don't have the beauties and pleasures of just that clean drinking water.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this Great Lakes Protection Act today, and thank you to the members who spoke before me.

I just want to add and reiterate how vital the protection of the Great Lakes is for our communities and our province. The Great Lakes are an international symbol of this country and especially our province, and the diversity and vitality must be maintained through our greatest efforts.

Without the wildlife diversity, the watershed dynamic and the way the waters of the Great Lakes have shaped our province, we should simply not be the same. Our history would be entirely different, and so would we.

In Durham, where we border Lake Ontario to the south, I know how much opportunity the lakes provide for people to experience nature, to enjoy the outdoors and the waterways that come with the lake, and to take pride in being from a lush community that borders it.

That is why I'm glad we are expanding the minister's powers to prevent the loss of the ecosystem that characterizes the lakes, commit us to reducing algae levels and enforce monitoring and reporting standards. It would also bolster our abilities and the minister's purview for combatting the threat of carbon monoxide acidification.

We will open the conversation and ensure that we remain engaged on the protection of the lakes, as well as equipping our communities with the resources they need to help preserve the waterways.

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this great bit of legislation, and thanks to the minister for bringing this forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Toronto–Danforth has two minutes.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: You say that as if you're not looking forward to it, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, you were so nice to the member from Niagara Falls, I was a little hurt.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I know it's a brutal place some days.

I want to thank the minister, and I want to thank the members from Simcoe North, Hamilton Mountain and Durham for their kind words and their substantive comment.

Minister, the question of downloading is a live one. The member from Simcoe North came back to that as well. It is going to be an issue that you obviously have concern about and we have concern about. We're going to want to see it addressed in committee.

I think all of us have had a life beside this lake. I have to say that, two summers ago, I had relatives come to visit me from Latvia. I had visited them back in the 1970s, and we walked on the beaches along the Baltic. They were just completely blown away by the fact that we were in the middle of a continent and it looked like they were on the ocean. They loved walking along the beach. They loved the feel of, the sound of and the look of Lake Ontario. They couldn't get over it.

I have to say, for everyone in this chamber and, frankly, everyone in this province, that the protection of these lakes that have given us so much is of crucial importance for our lives and our sense of self.

Minister, you have a very tough task ahead of you. As legislators, we have a tough task ahead of us to make sure that this bill is right and that the resources are there. Minister, you're going to have to think a lot about this one, and your government is going to have to put the resources in, and occasionally you're going to have to

bite if you want to see the protection that needs to be there for the water.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'm very pleased to rise today to speak in support of Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act, introduced by our wonderful Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. I would also like to say that I'm delighted to join the discussion today, and the member from Toronto–Danforth has done a wonderful, eloquent job at speaking to this bill as well.

Mr. Mike Colle: Say you're sharing your time.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Sorry. I am sharing my time—thank you. I will be sharing my time with the members from Etobicoke–Lakeshore and Eglinton–Lawrence.

The Great Lakes are one of Ontario's greatest assets. The region has an annual GDP of \$5.2 trillion, representing the fourth-largest economy in the world. That economy includes almost 75% of Canada's manufacturing; over half of the total trade in merchandise between Canada and the United States; 80% of Ontario's power generation; and 95% of Ontario's agricultural lands depend on the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River basin.

The region holds one fifth of all the fresh water on Earth. It provides more than 80% of Ontario's drinking water and is home to the world's most unique ecosystems. Residents and visitors alike enjoy its unparalleled beauty and its many recreational opportunities.

For millennia, indigenous peoples have called the Great Lakes home. The Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe creation stories tell of this region being created for mutual sustenance, a spiritual landscape with great powers of regeneration.

It is undeniable that the Great Lakes are a foundation for Ontario's strength and success. However, our Great Lakes are under stress. Lakes Michigan, Erie and Ontario are all in decline, despite very credible efforts by governments, municipalities and NGOs to mitigate the effects of human activity. The health of the Great Lakes is under threat from the increased levels of sewage and stormwater pollution, new and historic manufacturing and industrial chemicals of concern, urban growth and population pressures, rising levels of phosphorus and other nutrients that generate harmful algae blooms and cause oxygen depletion, degradation of shorelines and, of course, invasive species.

Climate change is also challenging the resilience of the Great Lakes to the problems that can arise from severe weather conditions and changes in the thaw-and-freeze cycle. While the health of the Great Lakes has been improved through past and current measures, the health of three of Ontario's four Great Lakes remains in decline due to these pressures.

If we don't take stronger collaborative action to address the challenges faced by our Great Lakes, we can expect economic implications such as increased costs for treating drinking water, decreases in property value, especially for those on the shorelines, lost productivity from illness, increased health care costs, and revenue losses for recreation, tourism and industries.

Despite the size and importance of the Great Lakes to our economy, quality of life and environment, there is currently no comprehensive legislation that provides clear direction and requirements to protect the Great Lakes. Our minister is well aware that we need an integrated and coordinated watershed approach to tackle the present challenges. The proposed Great Lakes Protection Act recognizes the importance of the Great Lakes to our environmental sustainability, our economic growth, and individual health and well-being.

The act recognizes that the long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes is under threat; that we must take immediate action by establishing clear protection and restoration targets that will help all partners work toward common restoration and protection outcomes; that we must develop geographically focused initiatives to better coordinate local action and address local issues; and that we must work together across sectors, municipalities and state borders to help restore protection and keep the Great Lakes healthy for generations to come.

To increase collaboration, the act will establish the Great Lakes Guardians' Council, an unprecedented gathering of ministers, municipalities and First Nations with the farming, environmental, conservation, industrial, recreational and scientific communities. The council will provide a forum to build and implement the strong inter-jurisdictional agreements necessary to keep the Great Lakes healthy for generations to come.

1730

My community of Kingston and the Islands is located within the St. Lawrence River watershed, and it's one of the many communities in Ontario that will benefit from more responsible stewardship of the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River region. We have a responsibility to steward the Great Lakes for the continued prosperity of our communities, so it is my pleasure to lend my wholehearted support to this bill.

Thank you. Merci. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: It gives me pleasure to rise in the Legislature this afternoon to speak to Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act. My riding is the riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and as you might surmise from its name, it is directly on the shore of Lake Ontario. Therefore, to my residents, this is not just an abstract discussion that we're having here about protecting the Great Lakes. Pieces of this legislation will directly impact the life and enjoyment of residents of my community.

In fact, over the first half of my life, I lived directly on the waterfront in Etobicoke. Starting from my early years, I saw the transformation, the degradation and then the slow remediation of an urban waterfront, which has been wonderful to observe. As a young'un, the first public policy debates that I attended were on the regional remedial action plan for the waterfront here in the GTA.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: You were a rap artist.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: A rap artist, indeed. I won't be sharing any of that with the Legislature this afternoon, though.

The projects that I observed over my lifetime in a community like Etobicoke–Lakeshore have done tremendous work to restore wetlands and habitats. While those projects are important, they haven't been part of a broader plan to look after all of the Great Lakes that we have in Ontario. We're blessed to have four of the five Great Lakes within our boundaries or on the edge of our boundaries.

As we know, the Great Lakes regional economy is the fourth-largest economy in the world; 75% of the manufacturing of Canada, 80% of Ontario's power generation and 95% of Ontario's agricultural lands depend on the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River basin. As the Great Lakes are so important to the future of Ontario, it's very important that we look after the health of the Great Lakes.

The health of the Great Lakes is under threat from a number of factors: increased levels of harmful pollutants, urban growth, rising levels of phosphorus, hardened shorelines and invasive species. Over the last 15 years, changes in the Great Lakes have revealed disruptions to the food chain and increasing algal blooms. Climate change, of course, is also another factor that has a detrimental effect on the Great Lakes and their resiliency to be able to sustain the challenges that lie ahead. This government continues to take action on climate change and take the necessary steps to ensure protection of our environment.

For all of these reasons, it's necessary that this legislation that will protect the Great Lakes is so important and needs to be adopted by this Legislature. We have to protect the Great Lakes. Where we find they're in decline, we must restore them to good health so they're drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

Despite the size and importance of the Great Lakes to our economy, quality of life and environment, there is no current comprehensive plan that provides clear direction and requirements to protect the lakes. The tools provided in this legislation will help meet the goals of the Great Lakes Strategy and the Canada–Ontario agreement, such as the ability to establish targets and to develop geographically focused initiatives. That's why I'm so pleased that our government is proposing a strengthened Great Lakes Protection Act.

This act will establish a Great Lakes Guardians' Council, which will provide a collaborative forum for discussing Great Lakes issues and priorities. The council will be a forum to set priorities for action and identify partnerships and potential sources of funding. As the member for Toronto–Danforth alluded to, I too am very concerned that this does not turn into a downloading exercise and that we find creative ways of financing the improvements that will need to be undertaken to protect the Great Lakes.

The legislation will also require the monitoring of and regular reporting on the health of the Great Lakes, including working to develop a target for the reduction of algal blooms within two years. Algal blooms are an issue for the residents who live in Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Again, this is something that residents of my community can attest to.

The ability of the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to establish a target for preventing the net loss of wetlands is also extremely important, and as we've seen the degradation of the shoreline over a number of decades, the ability to not only protect the wetlands that we have but to begin to restore and rehabilitate areas that have been degraded is very important.

I could speak a great deal more about this, but I'm happy to turn over the balance of my time to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mr. Mike Colle: Just in terms of this bill, the one aspect of it which I think needs to be appreciated and strengthened is the fact that you just cannot clean up the Great Lakes from within the Great Lakes; you have to look at the land use planning around the Great Lakes watersheds and wetland areas. What flows into the lakes from all the rivers and streams and creeks and the type of land use that's taking place—you can clean and put in, like at Lake Wilcox; there's an artificial lung there. But you have to have proper land use planning. You can't do what we're doing in Toronto. We have a wall-to-wall concrete jungle of condos. We've lost our waterfront here; it's just concrete. It's like a Soviet-style wall between the people and the lake, and that isn't good for Lake Ontario. People talk about jets. I say, "Well, yes, you're against the jets. Why aren't you against the concrete walls and the approval of condo after condo after condo?"

That's why, a number of years ago—I think not too many were here. I was looking around to see anybody who was here at that time, but there weren't—about 10 or 15 years ago, I started a project trying to protect the source waters of the Great Lakes. I was trying to protect an area called the Oak Ridges moraine. I took it upon myself to walk from Peterborough all the way to King City to try to rally people to understand that we couldn't pave all the watercourses at the point of where they start. That's what they were doing.

In the 1980s and 1990s, everything was being paved. Farmland was being sold off, paved over. It was easy to build developments on farmland. So we were losing all the sensitive wetlands and the water sources. The Oak Ridges moraine was the rain barrel of Lake Ontario.

You can clean up the beaches down here in Toronto, but what good is cleaning up the beaches if you've got all this crap coming down from the Oak Ridges moraine? That's what they were doing. The Humber was polluted, the Don was polluted, the Ganaraska was polluted, the Credit was polluted, the Rouge, because of all the dumping and all the uncontrolled development taking place.

After about five years of talking about it in this House—where nobody hardly listened for five years—the Conservative government, when about 5,000 people showed up at a meeting in Richmond Hill, said, "Oh, we

see the light. Maybe we're going to stop the paving of the Oak Ridges moraine."

That's what is so critically important, that in this legislation you can't clean up the Great Lakes unless you do something about land use planning. That is something that we've got to be much more visionary about. I think the member from Mississippi Mills talked about the fact that we have to get people involved. The government can't do all this. People will do it if you partner with people. People have the right intentions, but you can't have this top-down policy: "Here, we've got this grandiose plan for the Great Lakes." The ordinary farmer, the ordinary hunter, angler, the person who walks in the park, a cyclist, a person who owns land, a little piece of property near the waterfront—they've got to be part of it, but they aren't going to be part of it if it's a top-down, "we-know-everything" approach.

1740

And I know Lake Simcoe had the same thing. You've got to engage the people. That's what I think is missing in this bill. It's a needed bill, because we obviously can't have this ad hoc approach because we're dealing with all these other US jurisdictions, the states. We're dealing with about 500 municipalities, and each one has a different set of rules about what they can dump and the type of sewage system, and land use planning. So we need some coordination, and that's what is good about this bill. This coordination is critical so that we're working together towards the same goal. I think that's the most important aspect of this bill—and to develop some partnerships and co-operation with all parts of society, not just the people here at Queen's Park. They don't know everything.

You've got to get out, get your boots on, walk along the shores of our Great Lakes and appreciate the fact that these lakes are an incredible world phenomenon. Most people don't realize that if you emptied Lake Superior, you could cover all of North America one foot deep. That is how big, deep and profound Lake Superior is.

Nobody understands how much value these lakes have. We sometimes take them for granted because we're blessed that we have so many wonderful waterways all across this great province. So we have to get that sensitivity to appreciate that this water is a very, very rare resource that we're not paying enough attention to.

One of the things that worries me most is this addiction to bottled water. People think, "Oh well, I don't have to worry about the water in Lake Erie or Lake Ontario because I can go buy bottled water." You see them in the grocery stores now, people buying water in these big plastic, PCB-type containers. They're drinking that and they say, "What do I care about the water from the tap? I can drink this plastic water."

That is a dangerous trend. What it does is it gets people desensitized about the necessity to have good, clean, local water sources, not bottled plastic water that you pay—I think you pay more for a bottle of that plastic water than you pay for gas. I think it's more expensive, which is ridiculous. So people buy this plastic water; they drink it and drink it, and they don't worry about the

critical need to pay attention to the water quality in our Great Lakes.

If you look at our Great Lakes, they're endless sources of everything recreation—and we've heard about the economy and the beauty. But as you know, one of the things that's also happening is this development of waterfront sprawl, I call it. Everybody wants to build a subdivision or buy a big, beautiful home on the waterfront, wherever it may be. It could be a river. We've got to be very careful with that, because I think shorelines should be public. They should be under public supervision. What they've done in Toronto is basically concrete the whole thing. That isn't good for the lake, for the people, us and our kids.

I don't know if you were ever a kid who used to go smelt fishing. You know, the smelts have disappeared from Lake Ontario. We used to go down to Port Credit at this time of year. It was Stanley Cup time. We would go and get garbage bags full of smelts. You go to Port Credit today, Mr. Speaker, and you aren't going to catch any smelts at all—zero. They've disappeared.

These smelts were eaten by the people of Toronto. They were fried up with a little bit of bread crumb, a little bit of egg. Everybody ate smelts, and now they've disappeared.

Why have they disappeared? Do you know why the smelts have disappeared? It's because of the fact that we haven't paid enough attention to what drains into Lake Ontario or the invasive species in Lake Ontario. So we've lost this wonderful little fish. I know nobody thinks that while we catch these big trout up here in the north, but the little smelt is gone. I think that little smelt is representative of what's happened to our Great Lakes.

You've got to pay attention to the small details, and then the big picture takes care of itself. That is what I wanted around the Great Lakes. Get the public involved, not just the gurus at Queen's Park. Everybody's got to be involved—and they will be involved, because they love their Great Lakes and they love their water.

That's all I've got to say, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Speaker, for this opportunity to speak for two minutes about this—and yes, it will be exciting, because where I live in the riding of Nipissing, the city of North Bay and the surrounding area, we are blessed to have Lake Nipissing, which flows into the Great Lakes. This is one of the sources that we were talking about.

All I'm going to suggest in the minute and a half I have is that I'm hoping that the Liberals, who are presenting this bill, don't botch it as much as they've botched the fisheries in Lake Nipissing in my hometown of North Bay. This can't be a repeat of what we saw them do there.

They have completely botched the fisheries in Lake Nipissing. I call it a catch-and-release lake today. You cannot keep a pickerel out of Lake Nipissing that is shorter than 46 centimetres; that's 18 inches. The only

fish you can keep now from Lake Nipissing are 18 inches or greater, and I must confess, Speaker, I must not be the greatest fisherman in the world, because I've never caught a pickerel that's 18 inches or greater. I've never seen one, to be perfectly frank.

The problem is that the Liberal government has botched the entire management of the lake so badly that they will not allow restocking, even though the community groups have offered to pay for the restocking program themselves. This government, up to and including this week, has said that restocking is not going to happen in Lake Nipissing. They will not address the fact that the cormorants have taken out hundreds of thousands of pounds of fish as well, and they will not use a cormorant cull to satisfy the Lake Nipissing fisheries.

That's an example of what we can expect.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Wayne Gates: In the last two days, I've been lucky enough to be here for Bill 37, the invasive species bill, and talk about zebra mussels. I've been here today to listen to Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

If you take a look at my riding of Niagara Falls, we have beautiful Fort Erie that sits on Lake Erie, we have Niagara-on-the-Lake that sits on Lake Ontario and—some of you people might have heard of it—we also have Niagara Falls.

But here are the concerns with the bill, and I wish I could have talked to the minister about them. There's no real funding in the bill, same as they have with the invasive species bill. Bill 66 offers the opportunity to download on municipalities. Even though the minister said that he doesn't want that to happen, it doesn't say it in the bill, and that's important.

The problem is there isn't a lot of hard action in the bill. I'll give you a couple of examples; I'm going to try to get through them in my allotted time.

Section 9(1): The minister "may" establish targets relating to the Great Lakes.

Section 9(3): The Minister of Natural Resources "may" establish targets protecting wetlands.

Section 11(1): The minister "may" appoint a body to implement proposals regarding geographic areas around the Great Lakes.

Cabinet "may" make regulations to protect areas to which the bill applies.

Here's the problem, and here's something that happens all the time: When I was involved with bargaining—and I did that a lot of times. I did over 150 collective agreements. In the collective agreements, we're always looking for soft words. One of the softest words you can put in a collective agreement is "may"; make no mistake about it.

What you have to do, if you're serious about fixing the Great Lakes—and believe me, we'd better be serious about it, because we had some examples from our lead here about what's going on in Lake Erie—you have to put words in place that aren't going to say "may." You have to get rid of the weasel words that are in the bill.

Let's put in what should be in, and what should be in are "will," "must" or "shall." They're the types of words that you need in this bill because we have to protect our Great Lakes for our kids and our grandkids.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I've really enjoyed the opportunity that I've had this afternoon to listen to speakers from all three parties speak with passion and with eloquence regarding Bill 66, the Great Lakes Protection Act—obviously something very important.

1750

In particular, I want to reference my good friend and colleague, the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. He talked at length about his own experience from a number of years ago. While I wasn't serving at that time, back in 2000, 2001, 2002, as a member of provincial Parliament, I did have the privilege of working here and around this place as a staff person to members of provincial Parliament.

I remember the member from Eglinton–Lawrence dedicating himself, as he referenced, in that march, in that journey that he took across the Oak Ridges moraine. I say that it was his tireless efforts and his enthusiasm and his passion for defending and finding ways creatively to convince others in power at that time to enhance and protect the Oak Ridges moraine that actually led the then government of the day, the Conservative government of the day, I think somewhat belatedly, to actually see the light around that particular issue. It was, from my perspective as a York region resident at that time, a very belated attempt on the part of the Conservative government to try to respond favourably or to get in front of a parade—by "parade," I'm not just talking about the march the member from Eglinton–Lawrence from our caucus led—to get ahead of an issue that was bubbling up throughout the greater Toronto and Hamilton area at that particular point in time.

So to that member, to every member who has spoken from our side of the Legislature, and frankly even to those who have spoken from the opposition caucuses, with the passion and with the concern and care that they have for this incredible resource that belongs to all of us, it is heartening to see. It's why it's important for us to move forward with this balanced legislation. I certainly sincerely hope that we do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonnell: I'm happy to speak today on this bill. I think that we've looked back, and we definitely have some concerns. There's a lot of talk about cost—no source—or talk about, will there or will there not be downloading? We talked about the guardians' council—quite a name. There's no indication of what the cost will be or where it will come from.

We heard a lot of talk today—and it was a PC government that put a lot of these protection areas in place, if you look back. It was a PC government, the Harris government, that put the Oak Ridges moraine in. It shows that there was concern.

My background is as an engineer, and I like to think that we use science. If we're going to really have any legislation or anything that does something—we've been cleaning up the lakes and they have improved much over the last 30 or 40 years—we must include all the partners that are around, all the people who border on the Great Lakes. The majority of them, or at least a good portion of them, are in the US. A lot of the issues we're looking at are not Ontario-made. They come from the Ohio Valley, they come from Michigan. They have a great interest in working too, but you can only have so many committees looking after these Great Lakes. If you're going to have results, you've got to do something that actually works.

In working with our partners and coming back—it's like this initiative on climate change, and trying to do it ourselves. Again, these problems don't have borders. If you're going to do anything, you've got to work with your partners to come up with something or you end up bankrupting Ontario, like this party has done.

We have to work on something that has a solution, has a cost to it and has measurable targets. I think we want to see that in the bill, and we're looking for amendments so that we can support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I guess the member from Eglinton–Lawrence is doing it.

Mr. Mike Colle: I want to thank all those who added interventions: the members from Nipissing, Niagara Falls, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, and the minister.

I just think that this bill is imperative because we need to coordinate and establish these partnerships. Right now, there are too many different jurisdictions that don't have

any direction and they have to work together because there's too much at stake.

If we don't work together—we saw what happened in BC just this weekend when there wasn't enough stewardship of the waterways outside Vancouver. You see what happens when people are negligent, and they closed down the coast guard station there. That's what happens. The member from Danforth talked about what happened in Toledo.

These things can happen if you aren't prepared to deal with the serious interventions that are required. You can't do it after the fact.

Right now, we are susceptible to these types of disastrous things, plus, whether you're a denier about climate change or you believe in climate change, the reality is that we've never seen such insane weather in all my years. We had the ice storm. We had that one storm in Toronto where more rain came down in an hour than came down in three months. These crazy things are happening and no one can explain them, so we have to be prepared. You can only be prepared if you're doing this preventive work, if there's coordination, and you have to have people engaged.

That's why I think the minister is the right person to try to get people enthusiastic about being part of this Great Lakes protection, which we need for our children and our children's children. Let's bring the smelts back to Lake Ontario, Mr. Speaker.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): On that note, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1756.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. 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	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	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
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	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: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
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 / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Randy Hillier
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Continued from back cover

Ontario Retirement Pension Plan

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	3499
Hon. Mitzie Hunter.....	3499

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	3499
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	3500

Poverty

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	3500
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	3500

Alcohol legislation

Mr. Todd Smith.....	3501
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	3501

Environmental protection

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	3501
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	3501

Carbon monoxide

Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	3502
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	3502

By-election in Sudbury

Mr. Steve Clark.....	3502
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	3503

Transport par autobus / Bus transportation

M. Gilles Bisson.....	3503
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	3503

Visitor

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	3503
-----------------------	------

Correction of record

Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	3503
--------------------------	------

Visitor

Mr. Steve Clark.....	3504
----------------------	------

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS /
PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	3504
------------------------------------	------

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

Carbon monoxide

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	3504
-------------------------	------

Awesome Foundation London

Ms. Peggy Sattler.....	3504
------------------------	------

Firefighters

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	3504
---------------------------	------

Hockey

Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	3505
------------------------	------

Events in India

Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	3505
------------------------	------

Environmental protection

Mr. Granville Anderson.....	3505
-----------------------------	------

Project HOAP

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	3505
------------------------	------

Polish war veterans

Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	3506
------------------------	------

Awards ceremony

Mr. Chris Ballard.....	3506
------------------------	------

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Money
Transfers), 2015, Bill 88, Mr. Singh / Loi de 2015
modifiant la Loi sur la protection du
consommateur (transferts de fonds), projet de loi
88, M. Singh**

First reading agreed to.....	3506
------------------------------	------

Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	3506
------------------------	------

MOTIONS

Private members' public business

Hon. Helena Jaczek.....	3506
-------------------------	------

Motion agreed to.....	3507
-----------------------	------

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Taxation

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	3507
-----------------------	------

Government anti-racism programs

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	3507
-------------------------	------

Highway improvement

Mr. Norm Miller.....	3507
----------------------	------

First responders

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	3507
------------------------------	------

Off-road vehicles

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	3508
------------------------	------

Hospital funding

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	3508
-------------------------	------

Off-road vehicles

Mr. John Yakabuski.....	3508
-------------------------	------

Dental care

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	3508
------------------------------	------

Hydro rates

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	3509
-----------------------	------

Hydro rates

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	3509
-------------------------	------

Wind turbines

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	3509
---------------------------	------

Off-road vehicles

Mr. Michael Mantha 3509

Taxation

Mr. Rick Nicholls 3509

Government services

Mr. Michael Mantha 3510

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

**Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66,
Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des
Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray**

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson..... 3510

Ms. Catherine Fife 3515

Hon. Glen R. Murray 3515

Mr. Jack MacLaren..... 3515

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong..... 3516

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson..... 3516

Mr. Peter Tabuns 3516

Hon. Glen R. Murray 3524

Mr. Garfield Dunlop..... 3524

Miss Monique Taylor 3525

Mr. Granville Anderson..... 3525

Mr. Peter Tabuns 3525

Ms. Sophie Kiwala 3526

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn 3526

Mr. Mike Colle 3527

Mr. Victor Fedeli 3528

Mr. Wayne Gates 3529

Hon. Steven Del Duca 3529

Mr. Jim McDonell 3529

Mr. Mike Colle 3530

Second reading debate deemed adjourned..... 3530

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 15 April 2015 / Mercredi 15 avril 2015

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015, Bill 57, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 sur les régimes de pension agrés collectifs, projet de loi 57, M. Sousa

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	3481
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	3481
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	3481
Mr. Chris Ballard	3482
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	3482
Mr. Chris Ballard	3482
Ms. Daiene Vernile	3483
Hon. Mario Sergio.....	3484
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde	3485
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	3485
Ms. Peggy Sattler	3485
Mr. Bob Delaney	3486
Mr. Jack MacLaren	3486
Hon. Mario Sergio.....	3486
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	3487
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	3490
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	3490
Mr. Randy Hillier	3490
Ms. Peggy Sattler	3490
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	3491
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	3491

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Jim Wilson	3491
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	3491
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	3491
Mr. Todd Smith.....	3491
Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	3491
Hon. Deborah Matthews	3491
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	3491
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	3491
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde	3492
Ms. Laurie Scott	3492
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	3492
Mr. Bob Delaney	3492
Mr. Garfield Dunlop	3492
Miss Monique Taylor	3492
Mr. John Fraser	3492
Mr. Randy Pettapiece	3492
Mr. Gilles Bisson	3492

Hon. Bill Mauro	3492
Mr. Randy Hillier	3492
Mme France Gélinas	3492
Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	3492
Mrs. Gila Martow	3492
Mr. Bob Delaney	3492
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	3492
Mr. Chris Ballard	3492
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	3492
Ms. Harinder Malhi.....	3492
Ms. Soo Wong.....	3492
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	3492
Mr. John Fraser	3492
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	3492
Mr. Mike Colle.....	3493
Hon. James J. Bradley	3493
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	3493

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Home care

Ms. Christine Elliott	3493
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	3493
Hon. Eric Hoskins	3494

Privatization of public assets

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	3494
Hon. Charles Sousa	3494

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	3495
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	3495

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	3496
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	3496

Energy policies

Mr. Michael Harris.....	3497
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	3497
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	3497

Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns	3498
Hon. Charles Sousa	3498
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	3498

Automotive industry

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	3498
Hon. Brad Duguid	3498

Continued on inside back cover